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S A N D I E G O

VOL. 45 | NO. 16 | APRIL 16, 2020

Reader

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LETTERS

We welcome letters pertaining to the contents of the Reader. Submit them at sreader.com/letters or phone them in at 619-235-3000. Include your name and neighborhood. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Fair and Cooperative

I just read an article by Ken Leighton that has incorrect statements. The statement contained a quote from Chad Elliott, owner of Oceanside Jewelers that was not verified ("Oceanside anguishes over its businesses," Neighborhood News, April 7). The statement read: "Meanwhile the landlord keeps calling, wanting his rent. If this [loan program] happens first, great." I am the landlord of this location. My email is to clarify that we did not call Chad [or his business] once to collect the rent. Chad contacted us about the inability to pay and we wrote back explicitly saying that although the rent is not waived, we will work with him in good faith to make sure he stays current on his obligations. A statement in this form was provided to all tenants who reached out to us. It is important to be careful about what is published, especially during this time. We are not heartless landlords and do not wish to be portrayed as such. We want nothing more than to work together with the downtown Oceanside community to get through this extremely difficult time, which affects us all. You

can reach me at any time to fact check any comments made by our tenants between 206-228 N. Coast Hwy, Oceanside.

Allen Adem
Pier View LLC

The statement from Chad Elliott about his landlord is how I transcribed it from his conversation with me. After the article was published online, Mr. Elliott asked that that line be taken out since his landlord was in fact being fair and cooperative.

Ken Leighton

Pandemic of anger

"No Walking Distance," April 9, (Letters) makes the point that on a sidewalk you will come closer than six feet to someone walking the opposite direction. Therefore we should open the parks because you can walk in those and never get too close to others. It's a very good idea. In addition, many people actually NEED parks or other nice places to walk for other reasons. Some suffer from claustrophobia and simply can't handle been cooped up in their house or maybe even their neighborhood. For others, parks and natural areas provide the environment they need in order to feel relaxed and compatible with society, a very important concept to keep in mind during these highly stressful and uncertain times. We already have one pandemic to deal with; we can't afford another one of anxiety and anger by people who feel as though their whole lives are being controlled. I propose that they open the parks but divide households into

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San Diego Reader

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April 16, 2020



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTY GRAHAM

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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

By Reader stringers

VISTA

Jump-in knock-out Snapchat Evidence of gang-readiness doubles as evidence of crime

Local gangsters allegedly video-recorded beatings intended to “jump in” new members and kept those videos on their Snapchat accounts, according to experts who testified in San Diego County superior court on March 10. “They use Snapchat to boost their morale within the gang, to get new members; they give out orders and take orders through Snapchat,” said gang specialist Timothy Clark, who has been with the Sheriff for 16 years, during a pre-trial hearing. Clark also claimed that street thugs use different social media to keep homies up-to-the-minute on important information. “They announce on Facebook where the cops currently are, around the city.”

Sheriff’s gang specialists served warrants to search the social media accounts of 18-year-old Issac Augustin Jaime Guerrero after he was caught putting up graffiti in another gang’s territory, according to testimony. Guerrero is a Vista Home Boy, and it is alleged that he painted VHB in a park in Oceanside that is claimed by the Posole



Sheriff’s photo of Vista Home Boys beating 13-year-old unconscious.

gang. It is further alleged that Guerrero wrote his gang moniker, GRIZZ1 (Grizz One) and the symbol X3 — “an homage to the Mexican Mafia, which in California is a prison gang,” according to expert testimony. (The number 13 or X3 refers to the 13th letter of the alphabet, which in turn refers to the Mexican Mafia, according to experts.) The Vista Home Boys is a unique gang, because the city of Vista has only one Hispanic gang,



Well, that’s one way to advertise your gang. Recruitment beat-down videos are another.

which claims the entire city, according to experts. Clark claimed that a subset of the VHB gang started calling itself “the Townsite Boys” and tried to break away, “but that was not allowed.” Clark said there are 201 “documented” VHB gang members, and perhaps another 20 or 30 “suspected” gang members.

The sheriff’s warrant for social media obtained photos and videos of persons as young as 13 and 14, allegedly taken in Vista, near Northcrest Lane and Weston Circle. They were seen flashing gang signs and hanging out with known gangsters. In many of the recordings, the V symbol is seen, “The V is for Vista Home Boys; that’s their main sign they will hold up walking down the street,” one expert testified.

Issac Guerrero was seen signing VHB, according to testimony. There were other hand signs, such as EBK for Every Body Killer, and CSK for Center Street Killer —

a specific threat issued to a particular gang. Investigators claimed the Snapchat messages and videos revealed Guerrero giving instructions to someone to “rush them for 22 seconds.” The experts said this was Guerrero directing others to beat two 13-year-old hopefuls for 22 seconds as a “jump-in” — an initiation ritual for VHB. Guerrero is accused of saying to another gangster, “It’s a little reality check,” referencing the beating of

the 13-year-olds. “Take a video if you can.” The boys would be assaulted for 22-seconds because V is the 22nd letter of the alphabet, according to the experts. Guerrero allegedly said, “It is not official until they have a meeting.” (It was unclear if the “meeting” was the beating or a different get-together.)

A 14-year-old named Alberto and a 15-year-old named Martinez were seen beating two different 13-year-olds in two different videos, according to the experts. The videos were offered as evidence and played in court for a judge. In one video, the 13-year-old was beaten until he fell unconscious onto the ground. A voice off-camera was heard counting out loud until the boy went down, which happened at 17 seconds. The boy was then awakened and he got up and the older boys hit him again until the required 22 seconds was completed. During the beating, the boy did not hit back, but he did put up his arms and bend over, trying to shelter his head.

Clark gave his opinion that the beating was an initiation into the VHB. He said it was not a random attack. “They picked him up off the ground and shook his hand, so it was a jump-in. They did not threaten him afterwards.” Clark said that a wannabe gangster will suffer the attack “to show their toughness.” The jump-in and the video are proof that the initiate will be able to survive an attack by a rival gang member, Clark said. He added that one of the 13-year-old boys seen in the video later claimed to be a member of the VHB. “The gang has just grown by two people.”

At the hearing, defense attorney Alvaro Gonzalez contested the experts’ description of defendant Guerrero as a “shot caller.” The attorney expressed amazement that such a claim would be made about an 18-year-old, and implied that someone of shot-caller status would be older and have a substantial

criminal record. “You have to put in work to become an OG or a shot-caller,” Gonzalez asserted. He also pointed out that Guerrero was not in the videos of the 13-year-olds getting beaten, and argued that maybe the 13-year-olds chose to join the gang because they lived in the neighborhood, they thought it was cool, maybe their family members were gang members and they were continuing the tradition, maybe they needed protection. He declared that there was no evidence they were threatened, and suggested that they made a decision to voluntarily participate, even though “it may be barbaric.”

Prosecutor Anita Spinetta countered that the street gang used the beating videos like “a recruiting video, like joining the Marines,” she argued that if Guerrero was not a “shot caller,” he was at the very least an “aider and abettor” for the beatings.

EVA KNOTT

OCEANSIDE

The public interest (rate) Local gov’t loans lauded, lambasted

COVID-19 has, “unleashed an economic war on our city,” said city councilman Christopher Rodriguez at an April 1 emergency council meeting he had organized just two days earlier. “We must go on the offensive and support struggling businesses and the thousands



“We must go on the offensive and support struggling businesses and the thousands of employees they support.”

of employees they support.” And with that, he unveiled his plan to pull out \$3 million from city coffers and disperse it to 150 to 300 local businesses in “gap funding micro loans.” The businesses selected would each get between \$10,000 and \$20,000. City Clerk Zeb Navarro said that 76 people had contacted the city in support of the small business loan program, while two were against. Those who wrote in support included the owners of South Oceanside clothing store/coffee shop Captain’s Grounds, and Oceanside Jewelers, a downtown shop which buys and resells gold, coins and jewelry. (“We’re all waiting for something to happen,” says Oceanside Jewelers owner Chad Elliott. He says he’s heard nothing back from two different loan providers connected with the Small Business Association. “Meanwhile the landlord keeps calling, wanting his rent. If this [loan program]

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Mayoral candidate Bry spies with her little eye... a corporate boondoggle that undermines our democracy.

Will COVID KO conventions?

And how will hotels handle homebound hardship?

The San Diego hotel lobby has long used other peoples' money — obtained through an ever-growing tax on transient room occupants — to underwrite its developments and finance its powerful sway over city hall. Most recently, closed-door lobbying by Mayor Kevin Faulconer, who benefits from his wife's convention-related party-booking business, resulted in a council vote to avoid declaring the tax-raising Measure C dead despite the initiative's failure to muster a legally-required two-thirds vote. The council's move dovetails neatly with the strategy of the hotel lobby, as well as those of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce and construction unions, which rests on the hope that the state supreme court throws out retroactively the super-majority vote currently required to impose tax increases.

Pushback against the council's move to ignore a vote of the electorate came from Democratic councilwoman Barbara

Bry, running for mayor against Assembly Democrat Todd Gloria. Gloria is endorsed by the Chamber of Commerce, California Restaurant Association, and the San Diego Hotel-Motel Association, and he's a beneficiary of six-figure campaign cash from lodging interests such as Evans Hotels, whose growth is dependent on an expanded convention center financed with new tax dollars. Councilwomen Vivian Moreno and Monica Montgomery joined Bry in opposing the council's failure to declare Measure C dead. Alliance San Diego, a non-profit advocacy group opposed to the initiative, contended in a statement that the council had "undermined our democracy. As Council President Pro Tem Barbara Bry stated in rejecting the move, this is a break in faith with voters."

Enter the worldwide catastrophe called the COVID-19 pandemic, which has shut down the convention business everywhere, and which some predict could mark the ultimate end of such costly gatherings, forcing most such activities online. Depending on the unpredictable course of the epidemic, the lucrative national meeting business could virtually evaporate, some say, with many convention venues, financed by public debt, destroying the balance sheets of their municipal sponsors.

Such could be the case in the city of New Orleans, hard hit by COVID-19, where a financial watchdog has just released an April 9 report questioning the wisdom of paying \$767 million in public subsidies for a mammoth Omni Hotel next to the city's convention center. "In a matter of weeks, the coronavirus pandemic has dealt a sig-

continued on page 36

Neal Obermeyer



UNDER THE RADAR

Faulconer's COVID-19 bust

Add San Diego mayor **Kevin Faulconer** to the long list of locals hit directly in the pocketbook by the coronavirus shutdown of San Diego's tourist business. Last year, Restaurant Events, the convention-related food, booze, and entertainment booking agency operated by the mayor's wife **Katherine Stuart Faulconer**, hauled in over \$100,000, according to Faulconer's latest financial disclosure report, filed March 30. The business, which arranges to close downtown city streets for private parties, is valued at between \$100,000 and \$1 million, the document says. Sources of 2019 revenue to the firm totaling more than \$10,000 each were Cold Beer and Cheeseburgers, the Cohn Restaurant Group, Union Kitchen, Machu Picchu, and Sevilla. The current pandemic has shuttered all.

In the way of gifts to the mayor, the Mexican government forked over \$1170 to cover Faulconer's June 2019 trip to Los Cabos in Baja California Sur for the North American Mayors' Summit. Besides that, he picked up \$2164 in the form of "lodging reimbursement for Challenged Athletes Foundation Million Dollar Challenge fundraising ride," according to the report. The athletes' foundation is said to provide "prosthetics and direct assistance to children, adults, and wounded veterans with physical challenges and disabilities."

Faulconer has appeared in television promotions for the group. The mayor also received a \$250 admission to the Gold Key Awards from the Hotel-Motel Association on February 19 of last year, along with a \$98 pass to the California Restaurant Association's San Diego chapter Gold Medallion event on May 30, 2019. He got a \$100 ticket on March 19 of last year to watch the Sacramento Kings, the basketball team co-owned by members of the wealthy La Jolla clan led by Qualcomm co-founder **Irwin Jacobs**, and \$132 worth of tickets to 2019's Comic-Con. During 2018, Faulconer collected total pay and benefits of \$120,652 in his mayoral compensation package, according to *TransparentCalifornia.com*.

Diminished priorities As a big money pro-Democratic political action committee prepares to rip into Republican President **Donald Trump** over his handling of the COVID-19 epidemic, a familiar local name is among its billionaire funders. Qualcomm co-founder Irwin Jacobs and his wife **Joan Jacobs** each kicked in \$50,000 on January 15 to Priorities USA, according to the latest federal disclosure records. The PAC is currently rolling out TV spots bashing Trump,

featuring nurses and doctors complaining about lack of medical supplies and other federal support during the crisis, reports CNN. The group has endorsed Democrat **Joe Biden** for President.

Priorities says it aims to collect a total of \$150 million before the summer's Democratic Convention, but the coronavirus-related stock market crash has reduced the giving power of many major contributors. "I am not sure what other donors are feeling but for me, political donations have not been top of mind the last two weeks," **Rob-**



Irwin Jacobs is happy to throw money at any effort to discredit President Trump.

ert Wolf, a Wall Street maven and Priorities fundraiser told *Fortune*. "I have been focusing on the health and well-being of my family, friends and the community, working on my business from home, and giving to some charitable organizations on the front lines of the crisis." Meanwhile, among other favorite causes of Jacobs is the high-dollar campaign of granddaughter **Sarah Jacobs** against San Diego city councilwoman **Georgette**

Gomez, a fellow Democrat, for the 53rd District House seat that **Susan Davis** is vacating.

No defibrillators by any other name

San Diego's city council has approved a five-year endorsement deal with AED Brands featuring a total minimum take for the City of \$787,500. Under the arrangement, the City has become AED's "official Automated External Defibrillator Partner," per a February 14 staff report. "AED Brands will provide an annual marketing fee and sales stipends to support San Diego Fire Rescue's San Diego Project Heart Beat." The report adds that "marketing rights and benefits provided to AED Brands, LLC under this



Wall Street bigshot Robert Wolf says political donations don't seem important during the pandemic.

Agreement include the right to be designated and referred to as the 'Official AED Partner of the City of San Diego,' and this designation to be used in marketing efforts; logo placement on official City vehicles, and webpages. In addition, they will have the right to participate with [San Diego Project Heart Beat] in a minimum of three national trade shows, City hosted health and safety events, and speaking engagements. Lastly, the right to promote the partnership

when offering products and services to businesses, municipalities, and school districts and the exclusive AED products featured for all sales opportunities from grants awarded by the City to not-for-profit organizations." ...Eight so-called Military Treatment Facilities were visited by auditors, but the document made public blacked out each of their names on security grounds. Don't expect to find anything about the Navy Hospital

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Dear Hipster:

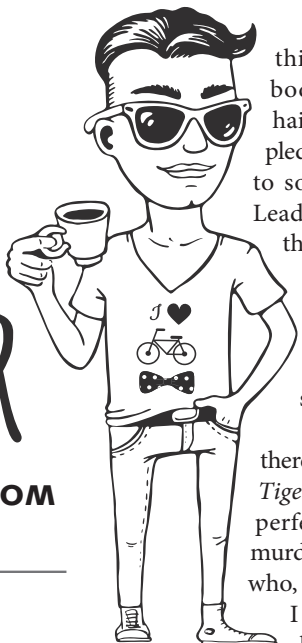
The more people tell me to watch Tiger King, the less I want to watch Tiger King. Am I being a total hipster because I refuse to watch Tiger King as my go-to quarantine binge watching entertainment?

— KATE, NORTH COUNTY

Yes. Totally. It's Hipster AF for you to abstain from a widespread pop cultural phenomenon purely on account of how insatiable the general public's appetite for it has become.

It's also totally valid. I think there's something suspicious about universally popular stuff. You can't come up with a thing that doesn't have at least some enemies. For every 10,000,000 people who like chocolate, there's some hipster like my brother who bakes chocolate chip cookies without the chocolate chips in them. If you ask enough people, sooner or later some goon is going to tell you about how *OK Computer* is "just not that good." I mean, there are people out there who hate puppies.

And yet, good luck finding anyone who isn't raving about *Tiger King*. That kind of unrestrained praise always gets my left eyebrow lifting skywards in the universal gesture of hipster skepticism (the same gesture I taught Stephen Colbert and the Rock at a really weird party in the '90s). If I can't find a hater anywhere in the crowd, I start wondering if people are piling on purely because everybody else is piling on. Next



thing you know, everybody's cutting off their hair, wearing robes, and pledging eternal allegiance to some sort of Supreme Leader. Yeah, sure, maybe there are a few intermediate steps in between Netflix mania and full-blown cult status, but these are slippery slopes, friends.

Now, I'm not saying there's anything wrong with *Tiger King*. I'm sure it's a perfectly fine docudrama murder mystery about a guy who, I'll have you all know, I was hyping way before he was cool. Yeah.

That's right. I endorsed Joe Exotic for President back in 2016, before Cardi B and the rest of you were tagging him on Instagram posts by your sponsored cats. I bet nobody remembered that, eh? But, hey, Hipster's not bitter. He's used to being ahead of the curve. That's what makes Hipster hipster. If anything, I'm glad the rest of the world finally caught up to me circa four years ago.

Anyways, let me tie this little old rant up with a bow and get back to sheltering-in-place and endlessly rearranging my vinyl collection in new and inventive ways. I tell you all, you should trust that healthy, hipster skepticism when it gets you questioning whether everyone's doing something because

everyone's doing it or because it's worth doing on its own. At the end of the day, your hipster side may well be the only thing keeping you from lacing on a set of Nike Decades and dusting off the old purple shroud.

Or, maybe *Tiger King* is really all that and a bag of chips (as they might have said had it aired in the '90s). I wouldn't know. Joe Exotic didn't deliver on his promise to dominate the 2016 election like a hungry tiger dominates the carcass of an unfortunate sambar, and I've been over it ever since.

— DJ Stevens



Doesn't anyone hate this show?

LETTERS

continued from page 1

either two or three groups and have certain days when any one group is allowed to go to the parks. That way the parks would not get crowded and people would have the space they need. Obviously there would need to be consequences for going to a park on the wrong day just as there are now consequences for going to a park ANY day. Perhaps even not allowing children in the parks unless accompanied by their parents might be good. Opening the parks, even on a restricted basis, could give us all space to walk safely and would give some people the type of environment to visit to soothe their special needs.

Richard Robertson
Navajo

National City pub crawl

I was born and raised in National City and I'm still here. I'm 78. There has never been called Mile of Bars ("National City will never be Mile of Bars again," Neighborhood News, March 17). It has been called Little Times Square, and everybody that was in the mili-

tary here anywhere in the world if you were to mention Little Times Square, they knew where it was. Today there are probably five bars in National City. These new breweries are just another bar and no matter if they have dancing or they don't have dancing. McDinis was always noted as the greatest place to go, because the original McDinis that was on Eighth and Roosevelt had a beer from anywhere in the world. If you asked for a beer and they did not have it, you could drink for free. Mile of Cars was built after the bars were there. There were no bars after that, except for Stoney's, which came in later, and a couple of ... Mexican bars. So whoever gave you this information about the Mile of Bars has their head stuck up their ass because they don't know what they're talking about. If you want to send somebody over here and look around, you're going to find all that's a bunch of smoke, and you're Tin Fork guy, who doesn't know a spoon from a knife, did an interview at Cabo Wabo, which is Eighth Street just east of Highland Avenue. That's one of the bars.

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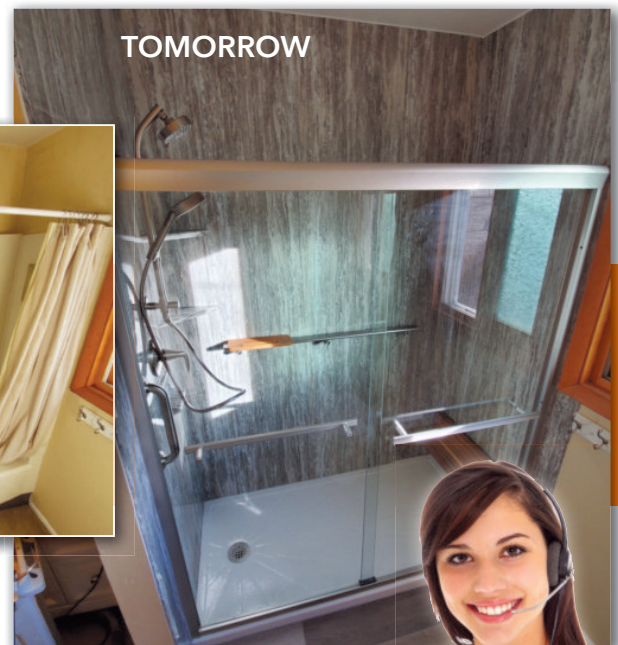
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happens first, great.”)

Rodriguez did not share the details of his program until the day of the meeting. His plan says that businesses are supposed to pay back the loan in 24 months. Veterans are given priority, as are businesses with more employees. “We’re not lending money to randomness,” Rodriguez said. But councilman Jack Feller did not like the surprise. “This is a total blindside to me to have people talking



City manager Lorson isn't sure the city should loan money it doesn't have.

about this before we even had a meeting. It was totally inappropriate to get emails on this on Monday morning. Where did this come from?” (Rodriguez advanced the plan himself through the chamber of commerce and the Mainstreet Business Association.) Then Feller raised the obvious question: should the city, an entity which does not normally provide business loans, now be distributing money to businesses that are claiming to be on the brink of survival? “We cannot in good faith give money to people without getting our return on investment. If they fail, will we



Christopher Rodriguez- “We're not lending money to randomness.”

be suing these people...? I would hate to be in that position. We're going after people for a \$50 parking ticket. This is a lot more serious.”

One local businesswoman who wrote in in support of Rodriguez’s proposed loan program indicated she understood this program would have a lower qualifying credit threshold than that used by the Small Business Association. In

a letter to the city, she explained that her credit score does not reach the SBA loan threshold: “I support the effort to provide micro-loans to the Oceanside business community. There are many business owners like me with credit scores who did not meet the small business requirement... since we are not homeowners and don't receive the benefit of that.”

At that April 1 meeting, the city council voted to have staff come back to its April 22 meeting with ideas about how or if a city-sponsored small business loan program could be implemented. On April 2, Rodriguez sent out a press release headlined: “City of

Oceanside moves toward \$3 million relief fund for small business.” Later that day, Oceanside city manager Deanna Lorson stated: “This press release was not issued by city staff.” At the meeting, she had expressed concerns that city staff was currently turning in “12 hours a day, seven days a week working on COVID issues. I don't have time to get very in-depth on this.” Rodriguez said the chamber of commerce and the Mainstreet Oceanside business association could help screen applicants, but Lorson did not seem too keen on that idea. “If we're going to extend city funds, it needs to have city staff doing final review and approval. Ultimately, I think we need to protect our city's ability to provide our core services.” Lorson added that the city will have to be looking at possible departmen-

“Cities are not tasked with the obligation to be a lending agency for businesses. There are no grounds for this.”

tal budget cuts because of plummeting sales tax income, and that property tax income may also be delayed. Further, “Transit Occupancy Tax will be very close to zero, since virtually all hotels aren't operating,” and the quarter-million dollars a month that traditionally come from business license fees will be greatly sidelined. “We normally get about \$100,000 a month in [Ocean's Eleven Casino] card room revenue, and that's now down to zero. Tenants in the harbor pay \$231,000 a month, and many have asked for rent relief.”

The only other North County city to approve a COVID-19-related business loan program is San Marcos, a city that has twice the amount in reserves as Oceanside, noted Lorson.

On April 6, Richard Rider, chairman of San Diego Tax Fighters, said that day's headlines made it clear what Oceanside should do. “The city of San Diego, Mayor Faulconer, gave \$7 million to businesses. Now San Diego is laying off/furloughing 800 employees because the tax revenue won't be coming in. The city of Oceanside should have learned from that. Or apparently, at least one of its councilmen should have.”



L@@K- SUPER-CLEAN NO COVID RENT N@W!

Rider, an oft-quoted fiscal watchdog, suggested that Oceanside should no more be distributing small business loans than banks should be providing police protection. “Cities are not tasked with the obligation to be a lending agency for businesses. There are no grounds for this. But it has become the compulsion of politicians to do something to show that they are leading. And it's easy to look like you are leading when you are giving away OPM – other people's money. It's insane for a city that is having trouble paying its own bills to be helicoptering money to

banned the units for as long as the local emergency is on. Palm Springs, Big Bear Lake, Placer, and Nevada counties have also shut them down. Several states have suspended them, making an exception only for critical workers. But San Diego, reeling from the travel slowdown, hasn't joined them. Instead, some hosts have sought to create a niche for their vacation rentals. “Unlike the closed city beaches, this tucked away unpatrolled beach can still be enjoyed,” says one Airbnb listing in Pt Loma. April's rental rate is 20 percent off “due to scaffolding” on the building's exterior, and some rentals have been discounted even more. Some have become available long-term. Another local listing for a large home advertises its cleanliness: “COVID-19 disinfected to CDC standards.” There is a lot to disinfect: self check-in keypads. Doorknobs. Homes packed with amenities from coffee to cookware to bottles of bathroom lotions. (The virus can live on surfaces for hours, and up to three days on plastic and stainless steel, a study has found. Coronavirus spreads mainly through respiratory droplets, but scientists aren't sure if people can get it by touching a contaminated object, then their mouth, nose, or eyes. Another unknown is how long the air in a room occupied by someone with COVID-19 remains infectious.)

“Our last numbers from the end of 2019 shows 15,000 homes for rent on any given night, of which nearly 6,000 are hotel-compatible units (studio and one bedroom units), which includes vacation rentals and home-sharing platforms like Airbnb,” says Kerri Verbeke Kapich, chief operating officer with the San Diego Tourism Authority. “In fiscal year 2019, the city of San Diego collected \$249.6 million in TOT (the transient occupancy or hotel tax), of which \$29 million was from non-traditional lodging units such as vacation rentals and home sharing platforms like Airbnb,” Kapich says. But 2020 is another story: on travel forums, San Diego plans wobbled as March wore on and the toll

continued on page 35

small businesses.”

Policeman-turned-Oceanside city councilman Ryan Keim admitted that “there is a real chance we will simply not be able to do this.” He said he attended a meeting of some 20 local restaurant owners who gave him “dire” stories of survival. “It gave me a sense of urgency. What if we lose half our hotels and half our restaurants but save our workers? Those are things we need to look at. These are tough policy decisions. Mistakes will probably be made.”

KEN LEIGHTON

RENTVILLE

Vacation rentals vacated Stay-at-home trumps stay-at-someone-else's-home

On March 19, Governor Gavin Newsom issued a stay-at-home order for California in an effort to slow the spread of coronavirus. And the Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends avoiding all non-essential travel, even trips across town. So it's not surprising that tony vacation destinations have placed temporary bans and restrictions on short-term rentals to help stop the spread of coronavirus. On April 4, Newport Beach



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PHOTOGRAPH BY ERBU YILDIZ

Local writer makes good: Jordan Kisner.

Something to read while you stay at home

Author Jordan Kisner's recently released essay collection *Thin Places: Essays from In Between* takes its title from a Celtic proverb that says, "Heaven and earth are only three feet apart, but in the thin places that distance is even smaller." The book treats, with satisfying clarity and detail, regions where, as she puts it, barriers of one kind or another wear thin and become porous. Between places, between people, between a person and her affliction, even between belief and its opposite.

Kisner lives in New York now, but she grew up in Cardiff-by-the-Sea, so one might expect her to put our local, porous stretch of national border under her scope. But no: she travels instead to the Laredo-Nuevo Laredo Metropolitan area, "a city that's American on its

north side and Mexican on the south," because someone mentioned to her "a documentary about debutantes on the border who dress like Martha Washington. Which isn't actually true" — the debutantes dress up as part of "America's most elaborate homage to its first president," put on by the Washington's Birthday Celebration Association — "but I was so taken aback by the sentence that I made a note of it. The more I looked into it, the more curious and strange and resonant it sounded." The essay notes that 96 percent of the city's population is identified as Hispanic. "I thought it spoke so beautifully to the way that identity becomes more muddled and yet somehow more polarized the closer you get to the border. Notions of America and what it means to be an American start to feel higher and higher stakes — even as they get more and more confused — as you start to move toward the geographical point beyond which you are no longer in America."

The thin place provided by her San Diego days lay not to the south, but to the west. "It was formative living on the edge of the ocean. I got to grow up near this sense of vastness, spending time looking at the horizon. I think the happiest I ever am is when I'm swimming in the ocean, but I was terrified of it as a kid, and obsessed with it, and loved it. I found it to be everything that the world was: a little scary, and exciting, and unclassifiable, and totally unpredictable."

When it comes to the current crisis, "I'm finding a lot of resonance between the mood we all seem to be occupying and some of the moods I tried to describe. The first essay describes waiting as a kind of thin place, being stuck between a world you've known and one you can't quite see yet. It feels like the waiting we're doing globally. It's uncomfortable, and transformative, in the way that

thin places tend to be. I've been thinking about something I wrote about how subway platforms got easier to sustain once they put in a clock that told you how long until the train would come. Now we're waiting with no assurance of how long the wait will be, or what's coming on the other side."

Thirteen at dinner

So, my dear family, here we are. We've found a limit: the number at which you can't necessarily hold a single conversation together at table. But I'm going to propose a topic anyway:

Son, 20: Being stripped of the things I like to do, I've been reminded of the things I used to like, and rekindled some of that enjoyment. I've been gardening again.

Son, 16: I've realized again how much I like fishing. We've been going to the jetty in Mission Bay, fishing off the rocks. I really enjoy catching fish.

Brother, 52: I've always thought enjoying fishing meant enjoying waiting.

Son, 16: No, there's already so much waiting in our lives now.

Wife, 49: You learn to be more grateful, and

"Depending on your particular turn of mind or heart at any given moment, other people are either hell or heaven."

something you've learned during these days. I've gotten a more profound sense of how, depending on your particular turn of mind or heart at any given moment, other people are either hell or heaven. This time is either burden or gift. Anyone else?

Daughter, 13: At a certain point during summer, days blur together.

I've reached that point. I've had so much free time, and I've been able to do a bunch of reading.

Daughter, 18: I've learned how enjoyable it is to read a book with other people. I hadn't ever thought of it as enjoyable, because it sounded stressful, like homework. "Oh, you have to have read it by this time so you can both talk about it, and if you fall behind, then they can't talk to you." But I started reading the *Keeper of the Lost Cities* series with Other Daughter, and then Still Other Daughter started reading it too, because we have the books and we're all together.

Daughter, 11: For my age, the books should be too long to read, but the author keeps giving you cliffhanger after cliffhanger after cliffhanger, even when you're in the middle of a chapter. I've learned that doing things with your family, without even seeing anybody else, can actually be fun. It's weird.

Son, 23: I've learned how much of our identity we place in our peers, and how faceless I feel without them.

Nephew, 20: I've learned that I've got a lot of work to do; I can't just wing everything.

how you can live with less. My homeschool group is pretty resilient, they're posting all kinds of things online. Museum tours you can take, recipes, Zoom meetings so people can connect and talk about how they're coping.

Father, 77: I read a meditation that put it in historical context. It's helpful to be invited to



Jean-Paul Sartre, Mr. Hell is Other People himself.

step back and consider the sweep of history. Europe was afflicted by the Black Death for centuries. At one point, one out of three people died. I've had the luxury of living in this pocket of history. Humanity has suffered terribly.

Mother, 78: We're in no man's land here. I'm curious about people's spiritual lives, maybe realizing that we depend on God more than we thought we did. ■



Meditations on heterotopias.



Walter Mencken's

SD ON THE QT

Almost factual news

Reminder: San Diego Reader approved by FDA*

*Filling Downtime Administration



FDA statement: "While many print publications have succumbed to the coronavirus due to their advanced age and underlying market conditions — we're thinking here of *San Diego Magazine*, *San Diego Home & Garden*, and wow, even *CityBeat*? — the *San Diego Reader* continues to publish, bringing relevant local coverage, a solid crossword puzzle, and lots of really good weed ads to people brave enough to venture out of their homes and pick up a copy. Good job!"

OAN v CNN re: FDR

Locally based news network suggests retroactive cancellation of longtime President

President Trump's regular, televised briefings on the coronavirus and our nation's efforts to fight it have proven hugely popular, but not universally so. Cable news outlet CNN has regularly provided truncated or no coverage of the events, and its defenders have justified the decision by saying that the briefings are more propaganda rallies than news conferences. In response, One America News President (and longtime San Diegan) Harris Rightwing today called for history to "cancel President Franklin Delano Roosevelt," who held office from 1933-1945.

"Look" offered Rightwing,

"there are lots of reasons to cancel FDR, the man who exploited the Great Depression and the Second World War to implement his vision of Big Government, a bureaucratic boondoggle that haunts us to this very day. But what I'm proposing here is one very specific reason, using CNN's own reasoning: his use of mass media — at that time, radio — to push feel-good propaganda at the American people at a time when many of them were suffering and even dying. Roosevelt's fireside chats sought to bolster a nation that found itself dragged out of the frying pan of economic devastat-



Rightwing: "Looking back, I'm both embarrassed that we aired such blatant propaganda and proud that we stood with the opposition during a time of great national crisis."

and thrown into the fire of a second war in Europe, just one generation after its declaration of 'Never again.' Did he tell them the whole truth? Hell, no. Did he hold out hope where he could, however slim? Hell, yes. Was he a

great leader? Absolutely. So when Trump gives us good news about ventilators in Colorado or possible benefits from hydroxychloroquine, people either need to shut up and cheer along or get busy putting FDR in his place."

Un-convention-al

Convention Center braces for an itinerant iteration of its annual showpiece



Comic-Con organizers considered the popular appeal at this moment in history of an event that regularly packs enormous numbers of people into extremely close quarters for hours at a time, and decided that this was as good a year as any for a vacation.

COVID-CON promises to bring more than 800 homeless people to the Convention Center floor

for a cultural gathering unlike any other! Unfortunately, the event is not open to the general public, but those lucky

enough to make it inside can expect plenty of the same cool stuff that has made Comic-Con a San Diego institution:



Image Reha-bat-itation

Chinese media campaign reaches local news outlets

Clockwise from upper left: 1. Bat soup served at Wuhan wet market, likely epicenter of the coronavirus. (Well, either that or the Wuhan Institute of Virology, but let's stick with bats for the moment.) 2. "American" super-hero Bat-Man receives instructions from Chinese Minister of National Public Standing Wat Hoomi regarding Chinese effort to shift blame for, downplay severity of, and highlight response to the country's coronavirus outbreak. 3. Early stealth efforts involve indoctrination of the young, as evidenced by this event at the local Museum of Making Music. Look kids, *Bats in the Band!* Bats are cool and fun and also cute, and definitely should not be associated with Chinese people who eat them and then contract a virus that sparks a global pandemic! 4. Local media are lured into providing favorable coverage to Chinese operative as he tours the region spreading good will, thus reinforcing positive associations with bats, and by extension, China.



Hoomi: "Everyone loves Bat-man! Therefore, everyone loves bats! The Chinese people love bats! Therefore, everyone loves the Chinese people! Logic dictates that the coronavirus is not our problem!"

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BORDER DOGS are our kryptonite

The first time I saw Biggie, she was sitting next to the Border Patrol Yukon parked at the K rail at the east end of Spooner's Mesa looking down into Smuggler's Gulch and south into Mexico. A man's hand hung out the window, and she was cautiously eating food that fell from it.

She looked at me and sized me up while she finished the food from those fingers. Then she barked at me. She looked to be about 40 pounds, long and lean with a bigger dog's bark.

The border patrol agent in the truck jumped out, startled. This agent was an ultra-athlete and looked it. Standing still, he looked like he belonged in a caped superhero outfit, flying chin out in a stiff wind. He was tough, loud, quick, and a natural leader.

"I barbecued some chicken for her this morning," he said.

Biggie, meanwhile, was making sure she wasn't caught between us. Her eyes gleamed with smarts and she kept her lean black and white body stretched long so she could spring away.

Her eyes stayed on my hands as I pulled out my peanut butter snacks.

"Is she from here or over there?" I asked, pointing over the fence. The agent shrugged.

"Sit," I said.

Biggie turned her head away and then looked at the treat in my hand. She trotted 30 feet further away from potential abduction.

And then she executed a perfect 'sit' and fixed me with a hard stink-eye.

The agent laughed, and I threw her the snack. She examined it first, then ate it while she kept an

eye on us. And she moved closer and sat again.

That was in 2014. My first pictures of her start then, 11 months before I took her and her pups off the mesa — and as a result broke many hearts, including my own.

I am a reporter. It makes you an outsider. I hike in the Tijuana River Valley to just be me, to walk around in a fascinating place where, like everywhere else, I don't belong.

Before Biggie, I used to go up Spooner's Mesa — roughly halfway between the ocean and the San Ysidro border crossing — two or three times a month. The hike starts with a difficult climb, rising 400 feet in four tenths of a mile. After I met her, I started heading up there more often, and more often than not straight to that spot to look for Biggie.

When she was there, Biggie barked two big

barks, then grinned at me and did that perfect sit.

She wouldn't come near unless I sat on the ground, so I did, and slowly coaxed her toward me. After the first month of tossing her treats, the tossing distance shortened to ten feet. Then it became seven, and then four feet, until she eased in and took the treat off my knee.

Soon, she would stand next to me, her back legs stretched to spring away, her tail wrapped under her body and her eyes on my hands. She had started sniffing the ground where I sat once I got up.

One day, I reached up and scratched her neck. She stayed stiff for a few seconds and then relaxed a little and let me scratch for a long minute. I surprised her by wiping the

gunk out of the corners of her eyes and she jumped back away from me, blinking, and laid down next to the Yukon.

For nearly a year, the patrol agents fed her so well that she didn't have to hunt or scavenge. When she wasn't at her usual spot, I'd ask the agent of the day about her. If he didn't know me, he'd say he didn't know anything about any dog. I'd show my bag of treats and tell him I walked up that big hill to see Biggie. Some assured me the dog was not going hungry.

Working the line is a lonely job and you have to stay alert.

A dog like Biggie — or the little white terrier I knew at the lookout on East Smugglers, until an agent took her home — is the perfect companion. They don't

distract you, they just hang out. No quarrels, no incessant chatter. Just a pal who likes the truck's shade and looks out for you.

Agents who start their careers at remote stations say the first time they head out alone to remote posts, someone loads them up with a big bag of dog food and says, "You'll understand when you get there." The strays and feral dogs know those white trucks and Jeeps with the green stripe. They stay in the vehicles' shade, eat well, keep agents company, and bark warnings when something happens nearby — long before the agent can hear it.

Some agents showed me food they brought for the stray dogs — cans of dog food and bags of treats. A few times, I

arrived as Biggie polished off a Styrofoam tray of tacos or a burger while the agent sitting in the Yukon did the same.

Eventually, I learned that there are a handful of agents who come to work early so they can feed the dogs and cats on their own time. They keep mental lists of the strays in the seven miles between the ocean and the official border crossing. There are also agents who try to catch the strays and take them to shelters — if they don't just take them home.

"These guys are feeding this poor dog garbage," one of those agents told me one day while I gave Biggie treats that he approved of. "She needs a better diet."

We dislike each other, this agent and I. He yells at me regularly, and I scold him right back. He

has been working the line for almost 20 years, going back to when a handful of agents dealt with stampedes of thousands. The newer agents respect him deeply and say that he taught them things that saved their lives.

"What she needs is a home," I say.

"Well, take her, nobody's stopping you," he says. "Lots of agents have taken home border dogs. They usually make good pets." "Why don't you take her home? You're feeding her and you obviously care about her," I push.

He looks away, then glares at me.

"My wife says I can't bring any more home," he finally says. "We already have five."

Stray dogs show up here in this thin strip of wild land regularly; no

one knows why. South of the fence, the Benito Juarez highway separates the U.S. from the urban landscape of Tijuana. North is the river valley, a crazy mix of scratch farmers and horse boarding places in the flood plain, with subdivisions of houses marking the place where the land rises high enough not to flood regularly.

Every dog that turns ups is a mystery you explore as you get to know the dog. Biggie, for example, knows commands, and she knows them in English. She is a fearless chaser of vehicles and is very careful to avoid being caught.

By March, I am walking up that damned hill twice a week, carrying extra water and treats. She has plenty of food from

continued on page 37

RESEARCH STUDIES

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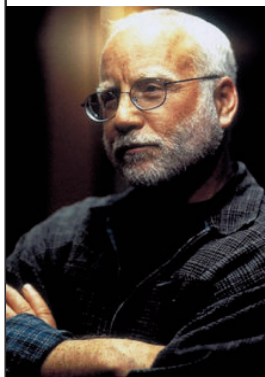
Your Week

AND WELCOME TO IT

Thursday | 16

NORTH COAST REPERTORY THEATRE CONVERSATIONS

Enjoy conversations among North Coast Rep artistic director, playwrights,



RICHARD DREYFUSS

actors, and directors. The online series began with Richard Dreyfuss, who discussed his love for the theatre as well as his film career and his passion for civics in

in the classroom. Other guests on the show include local actor/writer Omri Schein, TV actor Yvette Freeman (*ER*, *Orange is the New Black*), Lucie Arnaz, Judith Ivy, and Linda Purl.

WHEN: Thursdays, 6 pm. Through May 7.

WHERE: northcoastrep.org

Friday | 17

BAND TOGETHER, LOCAL LIVESTREAM CONCERTS



LOW VOLTS

The Same Same But Different Music Festival has yet to announce its 2020 lineup for later this year, but they're working with Band Together to present local bands in nightly livestream concerts. Upcoming live performances

are listed on the website, which also archives past editions showing Low Volts, Band of Gringos, Aviator Stash, Shane Hall, and Vokab Kompany.

WHEN: Nightly, 8 pm. Through April 30.

WHERE: ssbdfest.com/bandtogether

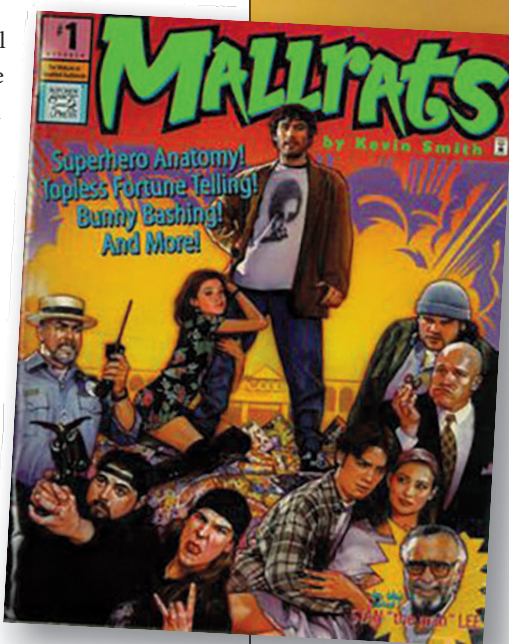
Saturday | 18

COMIC BOOK ONLINE CLASSES

San Diego non-profit educational corporation Little Fish Comic Book Studio offers exposure to the comic art form through classes and camps directed at students of all ages. Teachers work at giving a working understanding of what it takes to be a professional comic creator, while giving participant-catered instruction at a pace that works best for them. Classes are available online right now, and extra classes are being added to meet demand.

WHEN: Sundays and Saturdays, 10 am. Through Sunday, May 31.

WHERE: lilfish.us



Monday | 20

FOCUS MOVIE MONDAYS: MALLRATS

Mallrats (1995): After both are dumped by their girlfriends, T.S. and Brodie seek refuge in the local mall. T.S.'s girlfriend, Brandi, is in a dating game show at the mall, which was the initial



SATURDAY, APRIL 18: COMIC BOOK ONLINE CLASSES

cause of their breakup. Meanwhile, Brodie's ex, Rene, has begun dating a sleazy store manager. T.S. and Brodie seek out ways to ruin the game show. Join us for a live watch party with writ-

er/director Kevin Smith. Focus Features will be livestreaming a film on their Facebook page every Monday in April for free, and filmmakers will be answering email queries sent in advance.

WHEN: Monday, April 20, 5 pm.

WHERE: facebook.com/FocusFeatures

Quilts + Textiles offers online classes and a virtual gallery docent tour throughout the month on its Facebook and Instagram pages. Visit the website for activities, online challenges, and coloring pages. Visions Art Museum began as Quilt San Diego, founded in 1985 to promote contemporary quilt making as fine art. In 2007, volunteers organized a community build and created the permanent location in the arts district at Liberty Station.



STIR CRAZY CHALLENGE FIBER DESIGNS BY ANN L. SCOTT

Tuesday | 21

STIR CRAZY PROJECTS AND VIRTUAL GALLERY

Visions Art Museum: Contemporary

WHEN: Weekdays, 11 am. Through Thursday, April 30.

WHERE: visionsartmuseum.org/stircrazy

SHEEP and GOATS

Masao Abe

All I-Thou relationships among men and between man and God are possible only within an endlessly expanding self-awakening. Zen calls this our “Original Face,” the face we have before we are born. “Before we are born” does not refer to “before” in its temporal sense, but in its ontological sense. The discovery of one’s prenatal face—in its ontological sense—places us within an endlessly expanding self-awakening. To the extent that we are men, whether from the East or from the West,

this is equally true of all of us. We should not think that we will come to our awakening at some future time and place and will then be awakened. On the contrary, we are originally—right here and now—in the expanding of self-awakening that spreads endlessly into all directions. This is why we can talk about relationships with the world and about an I-Thou relationship with God.

— from “God, Emptiness, and the True Self”

Masao Abe (1915-2006) was a Japanese philosopher and professor of religious studies who

was well known for his participation in Buddhist-Christian interfaith dialogue and his writings on Zen as a worldview. He saw reverence of the Buddha as a stage on the way to conceiving of a “formless” Buddha, which allowed one to awaken to one’s True Self. In developing this view of reality, Abe also overcame the positive nihilism espoused by modern Western philosophy associated with Friedrich Nietzsche. Abe’s desire to enter into dialogue with Christian thinkers in the West was in part due to a concern for securing the spiritual foundations of humanity in an age of globalism.



Find more excerpts online at SDReader.com/worship

HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTING: Have an event? We want it! Festivals, lectures, sporting events (including surfing, kayaking, and sailing), Meetups, conventions, book signings, art gallery openings, conferences, dance performances, expos, poetry readings, classes & workshops — all are welcome. You can submit an event at sdrreader.com/events/submit.

ART

Oceanside Theatre Virtual Art Exhibit: Pop! The “Pop!” exhibit coincided with Oceanside Theatre Company’s production of Sweet Charity. Visit online to take the virtual tour and learn more about the 1960s Pop Art movement. Sundays, 8am; through Thursday, April 30, free. Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

San Diego Watercolor Society: Cheeky Monkey See April Members Show, Cheeky Monkey, online after April 2. Thursdays, 11am; Fridays, 11am; Saturdays, 11am; Sundays, 11am; through Saturday, April 25, Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Visions Art Museum Virtual Gallery Online classes and a virtual gallery docent tour throughout the month on Facebook and Instagram pages. Visit the website for activities, online challenges, coloring pages, and more. Thursdays, 11am; Fridays, 11am; through Thursday, April 30, Online Internet

Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Women’s Museum California Virtual Exhibits Create a digital exhibit where you are the curator and visit virtual exhibits where you can explore stories about women yesterday and today on the website. Thursdays, 12pm; Fridays, 12pm; through Monday, June 1, Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

And Something Different Studio: Art Classes Online art classes with Leslie Pierce/ And Something Different Studio. Thursdays, 12pm; Fridays, 12pm; Saturdays, 12pm; through Saturday, May 30, free. Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Consciousness Expansion with Sound & Meditation Teresa’s joyful presence is a Blessing. Take time out of your busy life to sit with her in the bliss of Meditation and explore the expansion of consciousness through the power of sound. This Dharma Center class is online. Thursday, April 16, 7pm; free. 18 and up. Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Live Lesson Masters Live Lesson Masters is a network of musicians and instructors who are ready to impart their lifetime of knowledge and experience upon you.

Real time, face to face, all online. Thursdays, 8am; Fridays, 8am; Saturdays, 8am; Sundays, 8am; through Sunday, May 31, Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Lovejoy Creations Studio Live Painting Sessions Daily YouTube live painting sessions and videos. Thursdays, 10am; Fridays, 10am; through Friday, May 29, Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Outside the Lens Virtual Photography Workshops Virtual Workshops, Screenings and other events coming soon. Check their website for updates with specific classes and dates. Thursdays, 12pm; Fridays, 12pm; through Saturday, May 30, Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

San Diego School of Ballet Online Classes Online ballet, pilates, tap and stretch classes for students at home. The classes are 1 hour and are free with a suggested donation. Thursdays, 10am; Fridays, 10am; through Friday, May 29, Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Screenwriting Join me as we wade through the ins and outs of screenwriting, the elements that comprise a successful screenplay, and how to identify these elements in successful scripts and movies. Sunday, April 19, 12pm; Ink Spot, 2730 Historic Decatur Rd., Barracks 16 #202. (LIBERTY STATION)

Songbirds Virtual Music Classes Virtual music classes for families available beginning April 6. Tuition includes three classes per week for 10 weeks. Thursdays, 9am; Fridays, 9am; through Friday, May 29, Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Theatre Arts School of San Diego Online Classes Free and low cost online classes available for young theatre artists to feel inspired, supported, and engaged. Participate in classes remotely from home using ZOOM. Thursdays, 10am; Fridays, 10am; Saturdays, 10am; Sundays, 10am; through Thursday, April 30, Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Women’s Financial Fitness Online Session 2 In an effort to promote public health and safety, we are hosting free online discussions to give women a place to come together virtually, and provide encouragement during this time of uncertainty. Thursday, April 16, 5pm; free. Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

FOR KIDS

Children’s Discovery Museum Live Storytime We’re going live on Facebook. We’re bringing some of our daily activities to you so you can enjoy them in the comfort of your home. Thursdays, 12:30pm; Fridays, 12:30pm; through Sunday, May 3,

free. Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

SPECIAL EVENTS

Bags & Baubles Online Auction You’re invited to an exclusive pre-sale online auction for Bags & Baubles guests! We have a selection of handbags, jewelry, sunglasses, and men’s items that will be up for bid online from the comfort of your home. CONTACT US FOR QUESTIONS: Email events@face4pets.org or call 858-337-0452. Friday, April 17, 12pm; Saturday, April 18, 12pm; Sunday, April 19, 12pm; free-\$35. Online Internet Events, All over the world from. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

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The 400-year-old cake

“We’re looking at real bargains here.”

The tilapia looks up at me mournfully. He has been battered and fried, but, oh man, he still looks disturbingly like his former self. On the other hand, at \$3.99, who am I to refuse him?

I look around, and I’m astonished. In place of some eateries’ basic cut-down take-out menus, Northgate Market is just careening along with what looks like all the good food it always sticks out into its chafing dishes.

I was waiting for a bus to take me here when my Scottish friend Annie tooted up in her car. “I’ve always wanted to go there,” she said. “Hop in.”

Comforting to see they have strict six-foot distance policing at the entrance. The guy does it all by sign language.

Plus, they only let a certain number in, for that separation thing. You see carts coming out bulging with a month’s worth of siege supplies.

“I need cans of tomatoes and Kleenex,” says Annie. “See you.”

So I head to the left to where the food section is, right next to Cocina Doña Tina, the cafe part of this Northgate. You’d normally get your food in here and take it out to chow down with a beer on Doña Tina’s patio. Sigh.

But still, in here, it’s riches. Okay, not every chafing dish is full, like normal, but there is still plenty to go around.

For starters, they have signs up. “Cuaresma! En Northgate Market.”

I ask the guy, Bryan, what *cuaresma* is. “Lent,” he says. Oh yeah. This is on the Tuesday before Easter. Turns out *cuaresma* refers to the forty (*cuarenta*) days leading up to Easter, whereas the English word “Lent” is all about the lengthening days of spring.

Whatever, they certainly have take-out food deals going. Sixteen ounce shrimp cocktail is going for \$7.99, lentils are \$3.99 lb, chile rellenos are \$2.99 each, breaded fish fillets are \$7.99 lb, and hey, *mojarra*, whole fried tilapia, are \$3.99 each. So we’re looking at real bargains here.

But me, I’m looking for certain kinds of take-

out, because honestly, by the time you get some things home, they look like a listing pile of sludge.

Happily, I find some promising options. You follow the curve of the counter, and you come to chafing dish meals like hey, beef *barbacoa* (\$8.99

lb), which is chunks and shreds of beef in a red-rich sauce. Looks too wicked for words. And even more wicked are the giant *chicharrones con carne*, thick pork rinds, curling skin plus fat plus a layer of meat (\$11.99 lb.) I’m thinking that would get you quite a few rinds.

On the other side are those poor tilapia, following you with their eyes wherever you wander.

Yes, there are the more challenging dishes, such as beef guts (*tripitas*, \$9.99 lb), pork rinds in green sauce (\$7.99) or — what’s this? *Capirotada tradicional*? My attention wanders to the easy ones, things like *bistec ranchero*, \$7.99, or *caldo de rez* (beef stew, \$9.99).

I end up ordering the beef *barbacoa* (\$5.30), one *tortita de camaron* (\$3.76), some Mexican rice (\$1.32), and some sweet fried plantains for dessert (1.50). I mean, is this a deal, or what? And okay, for tomorrow, I get a whole tilapia. Because, at \$3.99, why wouldn’t you?

Besides, I know that as soon as I get into Scottish Annie’s car and she gets a whiff of it, she’s going to say, “Och! It’s braw. Gimme some.”

“Do people crowd in for take-out?” I ask Bryan.

“No! Nobody’s buying to-go any more,” he says. “Everyone comes to the store to get ingredients for meals they can cook at home. It’s cheaper. We have had to put staff on vacation in this section.”

I also get one of their *olla* drinks (pineapple, spinach, and lime mix, \$2.59, dee-lish, and reeefreshing!). I’m just about to join a line (and every checkout has a long one) when I spot the bright colors of that *capirotada* again. I have to go ask what the heck it is.

Turns out this is one ancient special food for Lent. Bread pudding with lots of fruit and nuts on top. It’s basically toasted *bolillo* (“the Mexican baguette”) soaked in mulled *piloncillo* (solid raw cane sugar) with cloves and cinnamon sticks, plus



Giant *chicharrones*



Ancient special: *capirotada tradicional* for last week’s Lent



Giving you the eye: whole fried tilapia

nuts, seeds, and dried fruit such as apples, dates, and raisins. Pecans, almonds, pine nuts, and walnuts are scattered around the top.

Here’s the thing that gets to me: This *capirotada* (friar’s hat) has been made every year, unchanged, in Mexico, since at least the year 1640. It’s all about Easter and the Passion of Christ. If you can believe it, the Holy Office of the Inquisition recorded the *capirotada*’s many ingredients back then, and keeps them in its archives to this day. Many in Mexico see this food as a reminder of Christ’s suffering. The bread is the body of Christ, the syrup is the blood, the cloves are the nails, the cinnamon sticks are the wood of the cross, and the

melted cheese is the shroud.

A beautiful thing about living on the border. We share these traditions. I get a half-pound (\$2.50).

“That’s a bonny cake, but why did you get it?” says Annie.

“Och, it’s a long story, lass,” I say.

And the take-out? The beef *barbacoa* has to be #1. It’s rich, chunky, and so good with the flavor-filled rice. But the tilapia comes a close second. Its flesh is tender and savory without being salty. Shrimp torta? A little fishy for my tastes. But this place is a jewel: if you’re hard up and hungry, count on these guys. ■

The Place: Northgate Gonzalez Market, 1950 Main Street, 619-237-8022, and seven other locations in San Diego County

Hours (take-out only): 8am-8pm, daily

Prices: 16oz shrimp cocktail, \$7.99; lentils \$3.99 lb; chile relleno, \$2.99; breaded fish fillets, \$7.99 lb; fried tilapia, \$3.99; beef *barbacoa*, \$8.99 lb; *chicharrones con carne*, \$11.99 lb; *tripitas*, \$9.99 lb; *bistec ranchero*, \$7.99; beef stew, \$9.99; *tortita de camaron* (shrimp), \$3.76; fried plantain, \$1.50

Buses: 12, 901, 929

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Turn off the news and eat a cookie

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These essential businesses still bake cookies

Caked; 8680 Miralani Drive, Miramar, *Uncle Biff's California Killer Cookies*; 650 University Ave & 150 S. Solana Hills Dr., *The Cravory*; 3960 West Point Loma Blvd. Since the call went out for all but essential businesses to close during the coronavirus crisis, exactly what constitutes an "essential business" has been a point of public debate. "Are restaurants?" some wonder; "Are bakeries?"

Yes to both. At least that's the government's position, despite the fear and misgivings of some in our citizenry.

I'm not here to settle that discussion from any public policy standpoint. But I am here to say that cookies have been essential to my own well-being, while at home in isolation.

It's embarrassing to admit, but after the first couple bites, I whispered to the cookie, "Where have you been all my life?"

Caked covers a lot of ground with its daily cookie selections, ranging from \$3 apiece to \$30 per dozen. Along with chocolate chip and nutty cookie variants, it features gluten-free options and cookies incorporating toffee, taro, ube, and matcha green tea. It's one of at least three cookie specialists around town that remains open and serving cookies via take-out, by post, and (if you live close enough) restaurant delivery services.

Another is Uncle Biff's Killer Cookies, which has been baking cookies in Hillcrest for 32 years. It happens to have opened a second location in Solana Beach, just about the same time non-essential businesses were ordered to close. This is a cookie company that does stuff like melt a piece of sea-salted caramel over the top of any cookie in a repertoire that includes things like an Oreo stuffed peanut butter chocolate chip cookie.

Biff's isn't signed up with any delivery services, but does offer its own localized delivery with a dozen cookies for \$26.50, which includes three

bonus cookies during the pandemic. It encourages pick up orders, though, because if you pre-order you may pick up your cookies hot, out of the oven. That also allows you to order a \$13.50 half dozen, which includes a bonus seventh cookie.

The third cookie business I found is one of the county's most popular: The Cravory Cookie Company, of Point Loma. It's known for treats such as its almond joyous cookie (toasted coconut dough, sweetened coconut, toasted almonds, dark chocolate, and sea salt), and the cookie monster, a bright blue vanilla cookie containing crushed Oreos, marshmallow, caramel, and chips of peanut butter, chocolate, and white chocolate.

Depending how you order, a dozen cookies cost \$20-28, whether you order 12 of one flavor, or put together a mix based on Cravory's signature cookies, or its rotating monthly flavors. I found a \$20 deal on UberEats, and before long had a nifty, and essential box of cookies at my doorstep.

by Ian Anderson

Okay, maybe not my physical well-being. Sugar and chocolate chunks aren't the nutrients we need in order to survive a pandemic. But psychologically, turning off the news and eating a cookie has done wonders for my spirits.

It started with perhaps the best cookie I've ever tried: a strawberry chocolate chip cookie from cookie and brownie specialist Caked.

The small bakery graduated from cottage kitchen, farmers market business last year to its own

kitchen and counter shop in Miramar.

Caked technically calls it a "chocolate chipped strawberry cookie," but the point here is that the chewy pink cookie tastes like

fresh strawberry shortcake with nuggets of chocolate throughout.

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by Ian Anderson

FEAST!



A box of cravory cookies delivered.



Chocolate chipped strawberry cookies from Caked.



An Oreo stuffed peanut butter chocolate chip cookie as seen on the facebook page of Uncle Biff's Killer Cookies.



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Farmers Market: masked shopper edition

I don't know what it says about our appetites in isolation, but well before noon the stand for Da-Le-Ranch meats had sold out of rabbit. Duck breast and Cornish game hen too.

This was the tentative re-opening of the Little Italy farmers market, which had been shut down the first few weeks of coronavirus restrictions. It was operating at its usual time and place — 8 am 'til 2 pm on Date Street and the Piazza della Famiglia. But its usual 175 or more vendors had been whittled down to 19, all agricultural producers plus the fishmonger, Dry Dock Fish Co. And instead of the usual six blocks, the market stands were spread apart over two.

Other restrictions applied, including how many shoppers were on each block at one time. Further social distancing guidelines included standing six feet apart from fellow shoppers, and likewise standing back from the booths themselves, pointing at the products you want, rather than the old sample and squeeze policy.

On a normal Saturday, these blocks would be overcrowded with people, including couples and families, brushing shoulders as they bounce from booth to booth. By comparison, this edition saw 50 people at a time at most, well spread out and mostly shopping alone (as



Vegetables for sale at the farmers market.

encouraged by a list of Covid-19 shopping guidelines posted at each entrance).

Compared to normal times, the place looked almost deserted, but as evidenced by that sold-out rabbit, looks can be deceiving.

"Obviously there's way less traffic than our normal operation would be," market manager Catt White told me, from behind a protective face mask we're all now encouraged to wear. I've got mine too. But, she pointed out, "Every single person who is here, is here to shop. And there's a lot of people shopping for two or three households, so the sales have been pretty good."

From what I could see, she

was right. This was not the usual browsing and lingering crowd. The customers I saw quickly moved from table to table, asking questions, pointing out their produce, and then going on their way. After 20 minutes, all the customers who had been there when I arrived, had gone, and a new round in their place.

Every one of the market vendors were wearing masks, and more than half the shoppers. While a few masked shoppers appeared anxious about being out in public, for the most part, face coverings and six feet of space between us made most seem a little more outgoing and friendly. Maybe because we've all spent too much time

at home lately, maybe because the market didn't feel as harried without the crowd, or perhaps because wearing masks allowed a good-natured anonymity on this sunny day so close to the waterfront.

Many of the vendors present were familiar local farms: Maciel Family Farms, J Organics, and Rodney Kawano Farms. A few were here from Central California. Vendors were accepting cash, but contactless payments were encouraged. At Da-Le-Ranch I bought chicken using Apple Pay on my phone. At Rodney's I bought some beautiful strawberries with Venmo.

Most of the farmers I spoke with remain in high spirits



Farmers market vendors and customers wearing masks on April 4.

despite a loss in market business. Most farmers markets remain closed county-wide, and many restaurant clients have shut their doors, so farms have been stepping up their CSA box programs, and finding other ways to distribute product, hoping to avoid plowing under unused crops.

Some farmers markets, such as the county's oldest farmers market in Vista, have remained open each week, while most remain closed at this writing. Some, such as the La Mesa and South Bay markets, have

continued by implementing a pre-order and drive-thru pick-up model.

The city of San Diego initially shut down all farmers markets, but has tentatively allowed them to resume. Little Italy Mercato Certified Farmers' Market will return next Saturday, for now. And others may follow on a case by case basis. See the list of active farms markets below, and check the progress of your local farms and local markets at the San Diego Farm Bureau website.

by Ian Anderson



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blurt the inside track

Vile luxury “People who aren’t from or living in New York City may not understand the duality of our existence. So many think they want to move here and start an exciting metropolitan life. In one sense this city does have an energy like no other place on Earth.”



Imperial Triumphant: “The masks do a lot of the work.”

That’s Zachary Ilya Ezrin, often known simply as Ilya, guitarist of Imperial Triumphant, describing the band’s hometown. “It’s filled with drive, the inspiration to work hard and climb to the top,” Ilya continues. “It’s an amazing crossroads for greatness. On the other hand, it’s bogged down with a heavy grey atmosphere; an omnipresent bleakness built on all the past broken dreams and evil that goes on here. It can be suffocatingly painful.”

The conceptual metal power trio, which includes drummer Kenny Grohowski and bassist/keyboardist Steve Blanco was to have played Brick By Brick on April 18. They’ve played the hard rocking venue before, and stamped it with their collective approval.

San Diego is a very cool town,” remarks Ilya. “Our most recent [SD gig] was last year when we toured with Behold the Arctopus. It was maybe one of the best shows on the tour. The San Diego crowd was the most passionate and energized. We ended up having a few gear

problems during the set but it was such a good crowd that nobody cared.”

Their arsenal includes most of the extreme metal tropes. But they also throw in horns, keyboards, and other unexpected sounds.

Their use of masks and costumes also makes them

stand out. Those, explains Ilya, “all stem from a desire to make our stage attire reflect the music we’re performing. This solidifies the concert and presents the music in a more concentrated, digestible form. Our influences were from films such as *Metropolis*, *Eyes Wide Shut*, and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. The act is always evolving.

All the costumes, he acknowledges, “make everything more difficult. But at the same time somehow easier. Once we put the masks on, the ritual has begun. The masks do a lot of the work.” The most recent album is *Vile Luxury*, so expect a fair amount from that. The next album, Ilya cautions, “isn’t something we can speak too much about. the music is moving towards an even more dystopian sound than previous recordings. We used vintage instruments, sounds, and techniques to achieve this retro-dystopian atmosphere.”

— Andrew Hamlin

“Beat this, chump,” my cousin challenged me via Instagram. He dove onto his

back with both legs crunched in a near fetal position, then feverishly spun in circles on his back.

I watched the 15-second video a couple more times as I stirred chicken adobo on my stove. I decreased the heat to simmer down the soy sauce and vinegar. Afrika Bambaata and the Soulsonic Force’s “Planet Rock” was already playing in my office about 30 feet away from our kitchen. “Turn it up, please,” I yelled to my kids — interrupting their hip-hop dance session on the TikTok app. “Film me real quick, then send it to your tito’s (uncle’s) IG.”

I dropped onto the linoleum floor and did some footwork, a preliminary break-dance maneuver in which I balance on one hand at a time as my feet shuffle around me in a clockwork motion. I picked up momentum then did a few swipes, a variation of footwork where I kick my legs into the air in a gyrating motion. Then rolled into a backspin, completing about ten revolutions before kicking myself up onto my feet and freezing.

“Like Bruce Lee, Dad,” yelled our 10-year-old daughter. “Take that, Tito.”

On March 14, Kate “Edukat” Morrissey guest DJed and breakdanced at the Poder B-girl competition in Mexico City.

A couple days after she returned to her University Heights home, Governor Newsom issued the stay at home order. So she was called out by her fellow b-girls (breakdance girls) online. “I almost kicked the kitchen table when I tried to do a 1990 — which is like spinning on your hand,” she said. “We have a dance friendly house: we just move the furniture and we have tile floor” to spin freely.

“The whole dance scene was getting involved in online battles and it kind of exploded that week,” she said in an April 1 phone interview. “It wasn’t just people in the breaking scene — San Diego has a really rich community of a lot of different styles of dance, whether it’s



waacking, popping.”

Edukat is a breaking instructor at Culture Shock Dance Studio in Old Town. “I’ve been connecting with my students, and I’ve been doing Zoom classes with them,” she continued. “I created a private Facebook group, so I post challenges for my kids, because they’re all home from school. They record themselves and post the videos in the Facebook group.”

The stay-at-home orders have affected the other branches of our hip-hop culture. Local graffiti artists known for their large and colorful murals throughout our county are doodling on sketch pads and clothing articles, then posting their pieces on Instagram. Hip-hop DJs are mixing on Facebook and Instagram Live — then uploading their mixes on SoundCloud.

“A lot of DJs have been asking about repairs, because they have the downtime to get their equipment done,” said Neal Cunningham of From Scratch DJ Repair. “I’m sending pics and videos back and forth with them.”

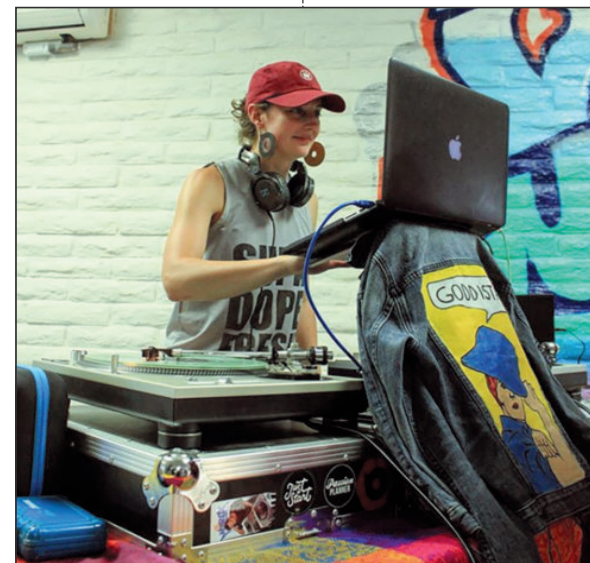
Some rap-musicians reverted to slinging merch on their sites — including shirts, hats, autographed memorabilia and CDs — as they await for venues to open up again.

“When Bandcamp said 100 percent of the proceeds go to artists,” Edukat said, “I definitely jumped in on that and tried to support a couple of people, like Ric Scales, a local rap artist, he was one of the guys I liked.”

On March 20, fans reportedly purchased \$4.3 million of music and merch from Bandcamp to support artists impacted by the coronavirus.

Ricardo Rodriguez, known in the Tijuana hip-hop scene as “Badts” said his freestyle-rap comrades have taken to online battling since Baja’s stay at home orders went into effect. “Our freestyle MCs at the moment are doing something called the 16 Bars Challenge, and it’s on an international level — including CaineF, who was a multi freestyle rap champion in Tijuana, and two years ago he placed third in the Red Bull Mexico competition.”

Tecate resident Izhar Padilla, known as “SBeaTz” in the hip-hop community was slated to compete in



Breakdancer Edukat has been challenging her students to show their moves via private Facebook group.

Poland’s Grand Beatbox Battle on April 3-6.

“Because of COVID-19, it had to be moved to December of this year,” SBeaTz said, “and in the meantime, the promoters did something extra where online beatbox battles were carried out on the Discord community and friend platform.”

Beatboxing is a method of vocal percussion in which

the performer imitates the sound of an electronic drum machine using the voice.

SBeaTz’s buddy, Mike Gonzalez from Ensenada, entered the online Grand Beatbox Battle.

“Mike passed the first stage of elimination being among 120 different beatboxers from around the world, then he went to the pre-elimination stage on March 30, being among the top ten official rankings at Grand Beatbox Battle online.”

SBeaTz founded Baja California Beatbox in 2015, it’s the first and only known beatbox community in Baja; he and his buddies compete

throughout Baja, Sonora, and the U.S. “The lockdown affects us,” he said. “In the meantime, we will start to organizing online events either by Discord or video call by the Zoom platform.”

— Mike Madriaga

Find Blurt online at SDReader.com/blurt

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PHOTOGRAPH BY LUIS “L-RAD” PRADO

LOCAL *five*

JAY ALLEN SANFORD

Find LIVE FIVE online at sandiegoreader.com/music



CATTLE DECAPITATION

Originally formed by members of the Locust and known for wearing beef jerky masks onstage, heavy metal vegetarians Cattle Decapitation have a new coronavirus themed music video for their song “Bring Back the Plague” featuring visual cues like toilet paper, hand sanitizers, face masks, boredom, video games, latex gloves, hand washing, and people fighting over retail goods. Says frontman Travis Ryan, “With the cancellation of our ironically titled Europandemic Tour and

social distancing recommendations set in place, we found ourselves with not much to do. So we figured, why not address the elephant in the room in the form of a music video for ‘Bring Back the Plague’ and just film it on our mobile phones instead of with an actual crew? Dave [McGraw] didn’t even have access to a drum kit and nobody is leaving their houses anyways, so we decided to lighten the mood with a video.”



MEGADETH

Megadeth frontman Dave Mustaine says the band will soon get back to recording a new album, having taken a break after he was diagnosed with throat cancer. Currently cancer-free according to his most recent tests, Mustaine has shared a Quarantine Playlist via Spotify, described as “A collection of songs to help you get through this weird and uncertain time.” The playlist features some of Megadeth’s classic songs, along with tracks from Exodus, Suicidal Tendencies, Ozzy

Osbourne, Angel Witch, Carcass, Accept, and more. Mustaine explains the project in a video clip posted on the band’s Facebook page. “Me, I’ve been staying indoors, I’m on Day 12 right now. I’ve been washing my hands a lot, and listening to a lot of Megadeth music, putting the final touches on a new book, and working on the new Megadeth album. Looking forward to doing our next tour, once this is all over.”



BLINK 182

Last year, Blink 182 released their first new music in three years, beginning with a series of singles previewing their eighth studio full-length *Nine* (their first album on Columbia Records). “Blame It On My Youth” was produced by Tim Pagnotta, with a lyric video created by graffiti artist RISK, and “Generational Divide” came with a video directed by Kevin Kerslake. The trio followed up with singles for “Darkside,” “Happy Days,” and “I Really Wish I Hated You,” as well as a surprise holiday tune

that dropped last December, “Not Another Christmas Song.” The band has invited fans quarantined at home to contribute footage shot during the pandemic shutdown for their upcoming “Happy Days” video. Vocalist-bassist Mark Hoppus also has a side band with All Time Low frontman Alex Gaskarth, Simple Creatures, who cite the Cure, the Descendents, and Bad Religion as central influences. The duo’s second EP *Everything Opposite* is streaming free online through April.



JASON MRAZ

Acoustic pop star Jason Mraz may be one of the most successful recording artists to emerge from the same city that also birthed Blink 182, Adam Lambert, and Iron Butterfly. His major label debut release, *Waiting for My Rocket to Come*, was quickly certified platinum by the RIAA in 2004 and reached number two on Billboard’s Heatseekers chart. A followup, *Mr. A-Z*, entered the Billboard 200 album chart at number five, earning a Grammy nomination for “Best Engineered Album, Non-Classical,” while its producer, the prolific Steve Lillywhite, received a nomination for “Producer of the Year.” His single “I Won’t Give Up” was awarded 6X

platinum status from the RIAA last year, in commemoration for having sold over 6,000,000 digital downloads. He’s even turned up on the Broadway stage, appearing in a production of *Waitress*, composed by his friend Sara Bareilles, playing lovelorn singing gynecologist Dr Pomatter. Mayor Kevin Faulconer even once declared an official Jason Mraz Day. The 2014 San Diego Music Award Artist of the Year has launched a new *La La La Livestream* concert series, assisted by his wife Christina Carano at their Oceanside avocado farm, with real-time broadcasts happening every Wednesday morning in April at 10am.



THE ROUGH

Melodic punk-influenced rockers the Rough formed in 2016. Drew Smith (Avenue Army) and Darren Sader (Bankers Hill) were originally accompanied by two other players (including Drew’s brother Mike), but they’re currently backed by two more Avenue Army members, bassist-singer Max Bergstrom and guitarist Vaughn Esparza. (Bergstrom founded the original incarnation of Avenue Army in Saint Paul, Minnesota before relocating to San Diego.) After releasing their debut self-titled EP

in 2017, the Rough began landing a steady series of gigs at area venues such as the Merrow, Brick By Brick, Dirk’s Nightclub, Navajo Live, the Salty Frog, and Himmelberg’s. They just released a new single for “Stay,” taken from their sophomore EP *Clean Cut*, released via No Pants Records. A lyric video for their track “Satin Gloves” can be found on their YouTube channel, which also includes live performance clips taped at the Merrow in Hillcrest.

You can submit a listing, download mp3s, watch videos, subscribe to event alerts, get directions, and find more information about these shows online at SDReader.com/music.

THIS WEEK'S SHOWS

Moustache Bar:

Thursday, 8pm — Beauty Queen.

Online Internet Events:

Thursday, 1pm — Virtual Music Lounge.

Friday, 12pm — Casbah Live.

Friday, Monday, & Wednesday, 5pm — Hangin' at Home.

Friday, 7pm — Neil Young's Fireside Session.

Friday, 6pm — Shut In & Sing: AMA Showcase.

Friday & Monday, 2pm — Vanessa Silberman Couch Concert.

Saturday, 6pm — Don LeMaster of San Diego Musical Theatre.

Free.

Saturday, 5:30pm — Ron Pope Live From Home.

Sunday, 6pm — Shut In & Sing: Rounder Records Showcase.

Tuesday, 6pm — Elephant Stone.

Free.

Wednesday, 10am — Jason Mraz La La La Livestream.

Wednesday, 6pm — Shut In & Sing: Our Native Daughters.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Haydn Voyages: After the Storm

The season opens with an evocative California adventure featuring a mix of music, pairing two Haydn masterpieces with works suggestive of our own time and place. Terry Riley's Good Medicine Dance is the final segment of his epic Salome Dances for Peace, which updates the legend of Salome to today (or at least to 1987). Caroline Shaw's Valencia is an ode to the common supermarket orange, but also in the composer's words "a kind of celebration of awareness of the natural, unadorned food that is still available to us." Refreshments will be available at the upper deck bar starting at 3 pm, as well as after each concert for a chance to mingle with performers and audience members. Each creative program will also include informative and entertaining commentary between selections from noted UC Santa Barbara musicologist Derek Katz. Sunday, April 19, 4pm; San Diego Maritime Museum, 1492 N. Harbor Drive.

London Symphony Orchestra: Bernstein, Stravinsky & more

London Symphony Orchestra performs a live online concert featuring works by Bernstein, Stravinsky and more. Sunday, April 19, 12pm; Online Internet Events, All over the world from.

London Symphony Orchestra: Mahler

London Symphony Orchestra performs a live online concert featuring Mahler's Symphony No. 2. Thursday, April 16, 12:30pm; Online Internet Events, All over the world from.

IMMORTAL BEAUTY

BY GARRETT HARRIS

Taking comfort from the future

Best bets from Symphony 2020-21 season

"As we all know very well, music has a unique power to heal the human soul.

In music, there are no boundaries of language or limits of understanding. All you have to do is to listen, and let the music do its work. — Rafael Payare, music director, San Diego Symphony

The Symphony has announced its 2020-21 Masterworks Season. I've selected a few concerts for which I am personally pumped.

October 9 and 10 — a cure for disappointment

Rafael Payare, conductor
Jeff Thayer, violin
Alisa Weilerstein, cello
Inon Barnatan, piano
Reinaldo Moya: *Siempre lunes, siempre marzo* (Always Monday, Always March)

Beethoven: *Triple Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Piano*
Shostakovich: *Symphony No. 5*

One of the big disappointments of the recent cancellations for the symphony was the April 3, 4 and 5

concerts of Rachmaninoff's *Piano Concerto No. 3* and Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 5*. This season opener for 2020-21 more than makes up for that. I've never had the opportunity to hear the Beethoven *Triple Concerto* in a live setting, and I'm sure the Shostakovich will bring the house down with Payare conducting.

November 6 and 7 — more Shostakovich
Rafael Payare, conductor
Beethoven: *Symphony No. 1*
Shostakovich: *Symphony No. 8*

The more Shostakovich we can get, the better. What appeals to me most here is having two symphonies on the same concert program.

December 5 and 6 — best symphony you've never heard
Edo de Waart, conductor
Garrick Ohlsson, piano
Beethoven: *Piano Concerto No. 3*

Elgar: *Symphony No. 1*
For me, this is one of the top five concerts of the year. Garrick Ohlsson is an absolute master at the keyboard, unsurpassed on the world stage, and this Beethoven

concerto is one of my favorites. The Elgar symphony is the best symphony many audiences haven't heard. I find it to be astonishing in its structure and emotional tone.

January 29 and 30 — Song of the Earth

Rafael Payare, conductor
Michelle DeYoung, mezzo-soprano
Stefan Vinke, tenor
Beethoven: *Symphony No. 6, Pastoral*
Mahler: *Das Lied von der Erde*

This one is a bit of a head-scratcher, as we just had Beethoven's *Sixth* in January of this year. However, a chance to hear Mahler's titanic *Das Lied von der Erde* (Song of the Earth) is not to be missed. I wouldn't be surprised if some audience members travel from neighboring counties for this one.

February 5 and 7 — musical lovemaking
Matthias Pintscher, conductor

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 8*
Rachmaninoff: *Symphony No. 2*



Rafael Payare, advocate for the healing power of music.

Another double symphony concert, and this one features two of my particular favorites. Beethoven's *Eighth* is underrated due to being sandwiched between the *Seventh* and *Ninth*, but I enjoy it more than the *Seventh*. The Rachmaninoff is nothing short of musical lovemaking and, of course, I like that.

March 12 and 13 — The most compelling concert of the season

Rafael Payare, conductor
Marc-André Hamelin, piano
Wagner: "Prelude and Liebestod" from *Tristan und Isolde*
Liszt: *Piano Concerto No. 2*
Bartok: *Concerto for Orchestra*

When I saw this concert I said, out loud, "Oh really, *Tristan*? We shall see."

And we shall. This is the most compelling concert of the season for me. Should anyone be afraid of Bartok, there is no need to worry. The *Concerto for Orchestra* is a true crowd-pleaser.

May 21, 22, and 23 — pure fire
Rafael Payare, conductor
Alisa Weilerstein, cello
R. Strass: *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*
Elgar: *Cello Concerto*
Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 4*

If they pull it off, this season-closing concert could set a new standard for the San Diego Symphony. The question is, after a season of such powerful music, will our orchestra be exhausted, or will they be in prime fighting shape to take on this pure fire finale?

See more CLASSICAL MUSIC at SDReader.com/classical

Seattle Symphony Online Concerts

Live concert performances broadcast online every Thursday and Saturday. Thursdays, 7pm; Saturdays, 7pm; through Saturday, May 30, Online Internet Events, All over the world from.

UPCOMING SHOWS

Amplified Aleworks:

Saturday, May 2 — Awake at Last and Assuming We Survive.

Athenaeum Music and Arts Library:

Friday, May 15 — Camarada Presents Over the Rainbow. \$30-\$35.

Auditorium at the Scripps Research Institute:

Thursday, May 21 — George Garzone/Peter Erskine/Alan Pasqua/Derek Oles. \$35-\$40.

BNS Brewing & Distilling:

Saturday, May 2 — West of 5. Free.

Belly Up Tavern:

Friday, May 1 — DSB.
Sunday, May 3 — Allan Rayman.
Thursday, May 7 — Amyl & the Sniffers.
Friday, May 8 — Margaret Glaspy and Kate Davis.

Saturday, May 9 — Real Estate and Meg Baird.
Monday, May 11 — Rufus Wainwright. \$52-\$92.
Tuesday, May 12 — Alejandro Escovedo ft. Don Antonio & Alex Ruiz.

Brick by Brick:

Friday, May 15 — Napalm Death and the Locust.
Monday, May 18 — Swallow the Sun and Infected Rain.
Friday, May 22 — The Flatliners.

Callaway Vineyard & Winery:

Saturday, May 16 — King Taylor Project. Free.

Carvers Steak & Chops:

Friday, May 22 — Miss Demeanor.

Casbah:

Friday, May 1 — True Widow.
Sunday, May 3 — LA LUZ.
Sunday, May 10 — Jens Lekman. \$22-\$25.
Tuesday, May 12 — Overcoats. \$15.
Thursday, May 14 — Kevin Devine and John K. Samson.
Friday, May 15 — King Buzzo feat. Trevor Dunn.
Sunday, May 17 — Anti-Flag and Bad Cop/Bad Cop. \$20.
Monday, May 18 — Buzzcocks. \$30.
Tuesday, May 19 — Weather Warlock and Solo Mellotron.

\$12.
Saturday, May 23 — GBH 40th Anniversary Tour. \$26-\$30.

Coomber Craft Wines:

Friday, May 15 — The Ram.

De Oro Mine Co:

Friday, May 22 — Sonic Tonic.

Fast Times:

Sunday, May 17 — West of 5. Free.

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House of Blues:

Sunday, May 3 — Kiefer.
 Thursday, May 7 — Bombay Bicycle Club.
 Friday, May 8 — Mxmtoon and Temporex.
 Saturday, May 9 — Astrid S.
 Sunday, May 10 — Monsieurr Perine.
 Tuesday, May 12 — Little Dragon.
 Tuesday, May 12 — Looote.
 Saturday, May 16 — Ambar Lucid. **Free.**
 Saturday, May 16 — Girl Talk. \$27.
 Sunday, May 17 — La Oreja De Van Gogh.
 Thursday, May 21 — Wild Rivers and Harmaleighs.

Humphreys by the Bay:

Saturday, May 2 — Judy Collins.
 Tuesday, May 12 — Boz Scaggs.
 Wednesday, May 13 — The Revivalists.
 Sunday, May 17 — Christopher Cross.

Intercontinental Hotel:

Saturday, Apr. 25 — Silent Saturday Rooftop Headphone Party. \$10-\$25.

Jacobs Music Center/Copley Symphony Hall:

Saturday, May 2 — Casablanca In Concert. \$20-\$100.

La Fleur's Winery:

Saturday, May 9 — Jess Wright. **Free.**

La Jolla Community Center:

Friday, May 22 — Rob Thorsen, Hugo Suarez, Richard Sellers. \$18-\$25.

La Mesa Wine Works:

Sunday, May 3 — Rolf Olsen Quartet. **Free.**

BOOZE NEWS

BY IAN ANDERSON

Drink local beer. The economy depends on it

Drink local. This has long been a rallying cry of San Diego's beer industry. But nearly a month into California's shutdown, the overture has more urgency than ever. Particularly for breweries that rely on taproom sales and keg distribution as opposed to grocery store sales, the shutdown of public drinking spaces is an existential threat.

Last week's national survey of breweries by craft beer trade group the Brewers Association reports that, if current social distancing measures continue for three months, 46.4 percent of brewery owners in the U.S. expect to go out of business. Of those, 12.7 percent doubt they will last another month.

The county experienced its first shutdown-era closing

at the end of March, when ten-year-old Vista beermaker **Iron Fist Brewing Company** closed its doors permanently. The family-owned-and-operated business had been waging a stiff battle against rising competition in recent years, and in a press release, cited a "lack of traction" with its distributor as a contributing factor to its closing. However, it was also clear that with "the forced shutdown... we just couldn't sustain any longer."

The craft beer industry operates on slim margins, and in recent years we've grown accustomed to seeing between 10 and 20 breweries close annually, according to the an industry tracker maintained by the blog Craft Beer in San Diego. Roughly 142 distinct beer companies currently operate in San Diego, so if the Brewers Association survey prediction proves out in San Diego, we could see 18 breweries close by May. By July, that number could rise to 66.

Those numbers will hopefully be tempered by the maturity of San Diego's beer market relative to other parts of the country, and the promise of state, federal, and local relief efforts — including moratoriums on evictions through May. The Brewers Association survey shows about half of breweries are counting on disaster loans and delayed payroll tax payments to get by. Nearly 56 percent are counting on \$10,000 dollar grants, such as those being offered by the city of San Diego. And nearly 85 percent are hoping to survive with help from the forgivable small business loans established by the

stimulus relief bill enacted by congress.

However, uncertain loan amounts and a botched rollout in the federal program have already forced businesses to re-apply for the

count, an estimated two-thirds of those are out of work. Most of those still employed continue with reduced income, as taprooms have cut hours for to-go beer sales and typically employ one or two people per shift in otherwise empty venues.

And while the status of this industry may not appear a pressing concern to non-beer drinkers, consider this: San Diego's economic development department has estimated the craft beer business creates a relatively high employment multiplier of 5.7. This means for every job directly created by the craft beer industry, 4.7 other jobs are indirectly created in the local economy.

So as your fridge empties of the beer you purchased last month

while panic buying, don't replenish with out-of-town beer at the grocery store. Contact your local brewery about ordering beer for curbside pick-up, home delivery, or shipping by mail. These are the ways many of our breweries are still selling beer. Many currently continue to make fresh beer, and new can releases are still being announced weekly.



Vista brewery Iron Fist Brewing sits quiet and empty, the first brewery to permanently close during the coronavirus pandemic

program, and sown confusion as to whether federal aid will be too little too late for breweries experiencing, per the survey, a 66 percent drop in sales on average since the pandemic began.

Over the past 30 years, San Diego's beer industry grew from Karl Strauss's downtown brewpub into an economic engine that pumped some \$1.2 billion annually into the local economy. As of one year ago, it employed 6480 people.

In a single month, by the Brewers Association's

For more craft booze news, see sandiegoreader.com/news/booze-news

Magnolia Performing Arts Center:

Saturday, May 2 — Mayor Wells & Friends.
 Tuesday, May 5 — Citizen Cope.
 Saturday, May 9 — Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan.
 Wednesday, May 13 — Lindsey

Buckingham.

Saturday, May 16 — David Crosby.

Martini Above Fourth I Table + Stage:

Thursday, May 21 — Reina del Cid. \$20.

Molly Malone's Waypoint Saloon:

Friday, May 8 — Miss Demeanor.

Mr. Peabody's Bar & Grill:

Thursday, May 7 — The Sickstring Outlaws.
 Friday, May 8 — Black Cherry Lightnin'.
 Saturday, May 9 — The Traumatized.

Music Box:

Friday, May 1 — Macy Gray. \$40-\$42.
 Saturday, May 2 — Fruition and Proxima Parada. \$18-\$20.
 Sunday, May 3 — Mrs. Henry Presents Music From The Band. \$14-\$16.
 Monday, May 4 — Tops and Sorry Girls.
 Wednesday, May 6 — Manic Focus and Mersiv.
 Friday, May 8 — Jack Harlow and Guapdad 4000. \$20-\$22.
 Sunday, May 10 — Abbey Road. \$22-\$27.
 Wednesday, May 13 — The Sounds and Starbenders. \$30.
 Thursday, May 14 — Goody Grace. \$15-\$20.
 Friday, May 15 — The Menzingers. \$24-\$27.
 Saturday, May 16 — Weyes Blood and Spelling. \$20-\$22.

North Island Credit Union Amphitheatre:

Sunday, May 17 — Brad Paisley and Jordan Davis.

Observatory North Park:

Friday, May 1 — The Garden and George Clanton.
 Thursday, May 7 — The Glitch Mob.
 Saturday, May 9 — The Buttertones and Iguana Death Cult.
 Wednesday, May 13 — Durand Jones & The Indications and Daisy. \$28.
 Wednesday, May 20 — Trampled By Turtles.
 Thursday, May 21 — Stereolab and Deradoorian.

Friday, May 22 — Gogol Bordello.

Old Town State Historic Park:

Saturday, May 2 — Fiesta Old Town Cinco de Mayo. **Free.**
 Sunday, May 3 — Fiesta Old Town Cinco de Mayo. **Free.**

Online Internet Events:

Thursday, Apr. 23 — Virtual Music Lounge.
 Friday, Apr. 24 — Casbah Live.
 Friday, Apr. 24 — Vanessa Silberman Couch Concert.
 Friday, Apr. 24 — Hangin' at Home:
 Friday, Apr. 24 — Shut In & Sing: Smithsonian Folkways.
 Friday, Apr. 24 — Neil Young's Fireside Session.
 Saturday, Apr. 25 — Ron Pope Live From Home.
 Saturday, Apr. 25 — Don LeMaster of San Diego Musical Theatre. **Free.**
 Monday, Apr. 27 — Vanessa Silberman Couch Concert.
 Monday, Apr. 27 — Hangin' at Home:
 Tuesday, Apr. 28 — Elephant Stone. **Free.**
 Wednesday, Apr. 29 — Jason Mraz La La La Livestream.
 Wednesday, Apr. 29 — Hangin' at Home:
 Thursday, Apr. 30 — International Jazz Day All-Star Global Concert.
 Thursday, Apr. 30 — Virtual Music Lounge.
 Friday, May 1 — Casbah Live.
 Saturday, May 2 — Ron Pope Live From Home.
 Sunday, May 3 — Shut In & Sing: Cantina Navarro.
 Wednesday, May 6 — Jason Mraz La La La Livestream.
 Wednesday, May 6 — Shut In & Sing: AMA UK Showcase.
 Thursday, May 7 — Romeo Entertainment Group: Couch Concert Series.
 Friday, May 8 — Casbah Live.
 Saturday, May 9 — Ron Pope Live From Home.

Saturday, May 9 — Shut In & Sing: Shut In & Pluck (Instrumental).

Open Air Theatre:

Saturday, May 2 — Keshia and Big Freedia.
 Wednesday, May 6 — Russ.
 Wednesday, May 20 — Norah Jones and Mavis Staples.

Pechanga Arena San Diego:

Friday, May 8 — Ozuna.

San Diego Civic Theatre:

Monday, May 11 — Dead Can Dance and Agnes Obel.
 Saturday, May 16 — Ravi Shankar Centennial Concert.

Soda Bar:

Monday, May 4 — Loving and Michael Seyer.
 Friday, May 15 — Supersuckers and Scott H. Biram.
 Saturday, May 16 — CHOLO GOTH NIGHT feat. Dave Parley.
 Sunday, May 17 — The Dears. \$15-\$18.

Soma:

Wednesday, May 13 — Tycho.
 Tuesday, May 19 — Foals and Cherry Glazerr. \$40.
 Friday, May 22 — Chicano Batman.

South Coast Winery Resort & Spa:

Thursday, May 7 — Granger Smith. \$48-\$160.

Spanish Landing Park:

Thursday, May 7 — Gator By The Bay. \$35-\$55.
 Friday, May 8 — Gator By The Bay. \$35-\$55.
 Saturday, May 9 — Gator By The Bay. \$35-\$55.

Spreckels Theatre:

Sunday, May 17 — Adam Ant. \$45-\$60.

Stage Room:

Friday, May 1 — Soccer Mommy and Emily Reo.

Winstons Beach Club:

Saturday, May 9 — Hot Buttered Rum and MohaviSoul.

People COME FIRST

We add our thoughts and prayers to the many who are facing difficulties and challenges related to COVID-19.

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And when it's time, we look forward to providing a place where people come first and friends know your name. A place where you know your way around and where the staff knows what you like.

Until then, we support the efforts of local and national governments to minimize the spread of the disease.



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Femmes, fatal and otherwise

Theft, drugs, and bad romance drive this week's trio of tales.

THE WHISTLERS (2019)

Birds warble in the background as career detective Cristi (Vlad Ivanov) pulls up to Gilda's (Catrinel Marlon) house. Or do they?

Broken into seven chapters — all but one named after a principal character — Corneliu Porumboiu's icy, camp-free caper comedy prides itself on cunningly backtracking audiences through a tale of pure and simple

thing she does after finding a bag of money Cristi has stashed in the cellar is donate it to the Church in exchange for prayers that her baby isn't homosexual.) Porumboiu is a master of doling out information, and nothing would please him more than viewers needing to hit the rewind button to see what they missed.

All this and the best use of a clip from *The Searchers* this side of *Mean Streets*. But as wild and enjoyable a ride as it is, I cannot for the life of me fathom how the hell this wraps in Singapore.

MOVIES



VFW: The return of Hammertime! Fred Williamson helps to prove that old guys rule.

greed, complexly told. Who better than Cristi, a mafia whistle-blower working both sides of the badge, to drill into the ancient art of the “whistling language,” a Canary Islands variation of Morse Code designed to fool cops into thinking it's the skirl of birds they're hearing, not criminals getting a fix on \$30 million in stolen greenbacks? When Cristi and Gilda first meet, the statuesque, smokey-eyed knockout introduces herself as Zsolt's (Sabin Tambrea) partner, willing to do anything to help spring him from prison, even if it means masquerading as a high-priced call girl and sleeping with a cop. But what happens in Bucharest stays in Bucharest: once they hit the Canaries, all signs of romantic chemistry are off. For all his crime-solving knowhow, Cristi is stiffer than buckram. Even his Mama (Chapter 5) can't reconcile her unmarried and childless son's behavior. (The first

VFW (2019)

Joe Begos' previous feature, *Bliss*, hypothesized a street drug that turned its users into vampires. This time, it's zombies — not in the traditional sense of flesh-eating ghouls given the appearance of life, but rather, a group of addled automatons hooked on Hype, the latest opioid *du jour* sweeping the nation. Begos' crowning achievement here is assembling a platoon of blood-thirsty B movie veterans: Stephen Lang (*Avatar*, *Don't Breathe*); William Sadler (*Trespass*, *Roadracers*); Fred ‘The Hammer’ Williamson (*Black Caesar*, *Bucktown*); Martin Kove (*White Line Fever*, *The Karate Kid*); David Patrick Kelly (*The Warriors*, *Wild at Heart*), and, cheerfully reprising his role as the sponge at the end of the bar, George Wendt. Together with newcomer Tom Williamson, the vets defend their tavern against an onslaught of mutants operating out of an abandoned movie

theatre across the street. (Never mind the excessive gore; this viewer would have been equally happy spending the

Boz (played by the aptly named Travis Hammer), the punks simply have no style — other than using a machete to open skulls as one might cleave a coconut. The disregard for idiosyncrasy among the young carries forward in Lizard (Sierra McCormick), the innocent teen avenging her sister's death who inadvertently drags the vets into the conflict by seeking refuge in their watering hole. Never mind that it takes a full reel before the Lang gang questions her presence, she later goes soft by lecturing her protector on the evils of alcoholism. Fortunately, each of the warhorses is afforded a moment in the spotlight, and it shines brightest on Lou (Kove), a used car salesman whose first inclination is to haggle a deal with the braindead Boz.

THE INVISIBLE MAN (2020)

The official cause of death should have been listed as “suicide by invisibility” when a mad scientist with an inflamed ego, living (where else?) in the spooky castle atop the hill, invents a see-through suit to reclaim the only woman who ever dared dump him. Had they stuck to this premise — and paid more attention to James Whales' fleet 71 minute version released in 1933 — it would have made for a su-

perior horror addition to the #MeToo movement. Nobody will believe Cecilia (a non-stop Elisabeth Moss), particularly when her abusive ex continues to make her life miserable from beyond the grave. He first appears in the form of a stovetop brush fire, followed by one of the film's few spectacularly subtle special effects: the visibility of a ghostly cold-night's breath condensation. The compound tension derived from the dark tones and menacingly slow drift of writer-director Leigh Whannel's camera pull the audience to the seat's edge for the first hour or so before things begin to sloppily veer in the direction of a slasher pic. (Alas, what's a Blumhouse movie without the unnecessary gore to placate fans of such things?) The surprises dry up quicker than a train of thought, and unseeable logic soon becomes too much to bear. A hospitalized character, one wrist slit by a fountain pen, fails to produce even a trickle of blood while being dragged across the linoleum. And the police officer friend with whom Cecilia initially sought shelter is the same one assigned to investigate the case? In spite of that, a good hour and an immense performance are yours for the download.

—Scott Marks



The Whistlers: Catrinel Marlon makes a superb addition to cinema's long list of femme fatales in Corneliu Porumboiu's complex crime comedy.



The Invisible Man: Elisabeth Moss takes refuge from an unseen enemy.

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PERSONALS

CAMPO INDIAN RESERVATION
The community and non tribal lives matter. As an environmentalist I've cleared my agenda to give this issue my complete attention.

C DUBB I am captured by your beautiful soul, getting to know a genuine man is amazing, like you!

GARY & MARSH R stay well & stay safe. Brian B

MERNIE Stay well, Brian B

TODAY IS JUST TIME will tomorrow be yesterday? Is up still up? Hey wait, there's the Reader!!!! It's Thursday! Thanks, Reader crew!!

TO MY POOH BEAR Happy Anniversary to the world's best wife and many more to come!! I love you to infinity and beyond. KK (760) 871-9153 / keller5588@gmail.com

TAKEN BY ET(S) DEC. 10 2019. Have photo of cyborg. Would like to hear about similar experiences. Serious only please. Jasonmamh@gmail.com

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THANK YOU BLESSED FATHER I love you in answering my prayer. MG

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NOTICES

READER BRUNCH AT THE PARK 2020 Join the San Diego Reader at our second annual Reader Brunch at the Park event on Saturday, October 17, 2020 at NTC Park in Liberty Station. Brace yourself for the most brunch-tastic event around. A brunch battle like no other, attendees will spend the afternoon munching on unlimited brunch bites from 20+ vendors. Don't forget to cast your vote for the Best Classic Brunch Bite. Brunch without booze is just a sad breakfast, so be sure to stop by the bar for your full-sized pours. Proceeds from the bar will benefit *Traveling Stories*. Mingle with other like-minded brunch enthusiasts under the San Diego sun while listening to live music and enjoying photo ops, lawn games and so much more... because brunch is always a good idea!

GARDENING TIP or new growers #1... green side up! Enjoy the plants with friends.

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VIRTUAL BOARD GAME NIGHT There is no substitute for face-to-face gatherings and the sole purpose of our group is to close the social distancing gap, but drastic times call for drastic measures. We're going to give this a shot and return to our normal activities as soon as possible. Details will follow based on the number of RSVPs, but this will most likely be a Zoom (or Google Hangouts) link and we'll

play the same types of games we do in person... somehow. Join as a team or individual. We'll take care of the rest. Email for details: john@gamenightsandiego.com john@gamenightsandiego.com

BILL AGAINST FREE SPEECH Research sneaky earn it bill trying to ban online encryption + privacy + free speech. Petition now on actionnetwork.org!

TACOTOPIA 2020: TACOS VS BURGERS This year only, we are celebrating the pure magic of both tacos and burgers! The San Diego Reader is pleased to invite you to the biggest clash of the cuisine festival, known as 'Reader Tacotopia 2020: Tacos vs Burgers!' The largest UNLIMITED taco and burger event in San Diego on September 12, 2020. This event will take place in beautiful Golden Hill Park. At Tacos vs Burgers, we will take advantage of our SoCal surroundings by gathering the very best taco and burger vendors all in one place for your gastronomic pleasure. At the end of the day, attendees will ultimately decide who will win the Best Taco Award and the Best Burger Award. The unlimited taco and burger tastings, full-sized pours and margaritas available at the bar, live music, lucha libre wrestling, lawn games and San Diego sun will make this our most popular event ever! ReaderTacotopia.com

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CLASSES / LESSONS



FREE GUITAR CLASS OFFERED BY SDCDD Will be on ZOOM app for the rest of the semester. Free guitar classes for beginner and intermediate students after receiving enrollment code (given by instructor) offered by the San Diego Continuing Education Emeritus program. Students must enroll in order to take the course. This class is open to students of all ages but is catered towards 55+. Call (619) 388-1873 to register. This class is being taught by San Diego Music Award Winner, Nicholas Costa from MY MYND, and Jake Najor and the Moment of Truth. MY MYND. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfe_w7-agkfozORaMHRZzLg?view_as=subscriber. https://open.spotify.com/artist/4HgiuYzppladtj08BlcoA?si=VvgI70lWRm-hgRN6K0B4VQ. Instagram: nickcostamymynd. MY MYND Instagram: mymyndmusic (619) 388-1873

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VIRTUAL BACHATA AND SALSA LESSONS If you want access to these classes plus all of our other awesome classes we are offering online for the month of April, please sign up here. https://melomanoentertainment.square.site/virtual-cla.../39... It's only \$50 for the whole month and you get unlimited access!! We will send you the classes we have already recorded for the month and we are recording all new classes too so you can download them and keep them forever! info@melomanoentertainment.com

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ROOMMATES

ISO A ROOMMATE Hey there! I'm moving there from Portland Oregon as soon as lockdown is over! I'm looking for a roommate and don't smoke, don't smoke weed nothing & don't do drugs at all. I drink wine occasionally. I'm not very social at home with friends I keep to myself... I'm a real estate agent and I'm 37. Single. RaeJacqueleen@gmail.com if you wanna email me RaeJacqueleen@gmail.com

ISO MIRA MESA / LA JOLLA ROOMMATE Hi... I am looking for a studio or 1bd/1ba apartment or room with attached bath near Miramar, Mira Mesa, La Jolla area. Preferably with a parking spot available. My budget - \$1700. I am a full-time engineer working for a networking company. Recently moved to SD from Reno,NV. Feel free to DM me if you have any offers: https://www.facebook.com/gandharv.gibz. Thanks!

SDSU ROOMMATE WANTED Hey everyone.. I'm transferring as a junior to SDSU for school next semester and was looking for roommates to rent an apartment or house with. Really just looking

for people that are clean and that I can get along with. If anyone is interested or has any questions just hit me up. https://www.facebook.com/anthony.salgado.9210



ROOMMATE A FEW BLOCKS AWAY FROM SDSU Hi! I'm looking for someone to sublet my room over the summer from May - July, in a house that is a few blocks away from SDSU. It's a single room that is about 11.5 by 12.5 ft, with a built in closet and carpet. There is a full bathroom that is down the hall from this room that is shared with half the girls in the house. There are 5 other girls that live in the house that are all super friendly and welcoming, as well as 2 cats! The house has a big living room and big backyard patio with a view of the canyon behind it, and a garage and driveway in the front to park in. Rent is \$900 a month (utilities not included), with an option to sign on to the lease for next year (none of the girls currently in the house will be resigning so the whole house is open as of right now). The neighbors are all super friendly, and we have both families and college students living around us. If you're interested or have any questions please email me at alisonaiken14@gmail.com. alisonaiken14@gmail.com

ROOMMATE WANTED! I'm looking to move to SD around the end of August from SC. If you're interested in finding a place and need roommates feel free to message me //www.facebook.com/aprilnimmons

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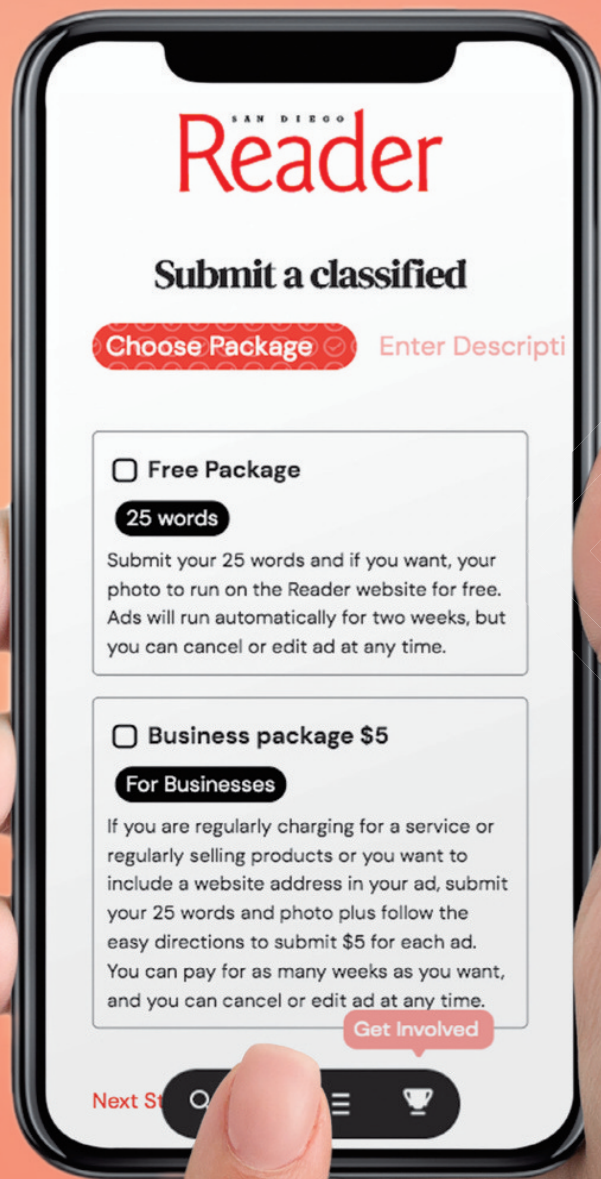


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UNREAL ESTATE

by Dave Rice

“Private and secluded at the end of a cul de sac, the legendary Casa de las Joyas — also known as La Jolla’s Taj Mahal — exudes charm and character rarely experienced,” opens the *Realtor.com* listing pitch for 7902 Roseland Drive, a 3857-square-foot home constructed in 1928 and perched just above La Jolla Shores at the base of Mount Soledad.

The property was designed by Herbert E. Palmer, recognized as a master architect by the city,



Enjoy “unique Indian vernacular architecture with Spanish Eclectic influences” in this La Jolla landmark residence.

as his personal residence. Palmer, an Englishman with reported ties to the royal family, came to California in 1923 after travels to South Africa and India.

He had hoped to build a much larger school of architecture in the same style, over which he would have presided, but The Great Depression dashed

Palmer’s plans and his chosen school site was instead built out as the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club. He remained in the area and became known for Medi-

terranean Revival designs that received acclaim throughout La Jolla.

Casa de las Joyas, sited on a secluded quarter-acre lot, “has been beautifully restored to preserve the integrity of [Palmer’s] original 1928 design, including columns, arches, fountain, carved wood, frescoes, and stone mosaics.” It’s also undergone expansion and remodeling “to accommodate today’s comfortable living,” including an updated kitchen and added family room.

According to a city profile, “Palmer became known for emphasizing outdoor activity areas such as garden courtyards and terraces, as well as for adding artistic elements.” Listing materials suggest he sought the same for his residence, noting the “gorgeous ocean and North Shore views from most

rooms, most of which open to patios or balconies,” along with “lush gardens with a brick patio, firepit, and a 42’ mosaic tiled pool for *al fresco* living.”

Interior details include elaborate arched passageways and domed ceilings, custom stonework integrated as detail into the walls, floors, and entry staircase. From the outside, the prominent tri-domed roofline is indeed reminiscent of India’s famous mausoleum. The circular meditation room “has top of the world 360-degree views of the ocean, La Jolla Shores, and hillside,” and could potentially be repurposed as a bedroom.

The home’s “unique Indian vernacular architecture with Spanish Eclectic influences, characterized by the highly visible mogul domes” were suf-

continued on page 37

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Annals of Isolation

— In Melbourne, Australia, "a bit of boredom in isolation" led 27-year-old astrophysicist Daniel Reardon to experiment on March 26 with an idea to stop people from touching their faces – a necklace and accompanying bracelet of magnets that would sound an alarm whenever someone reached up, *The Guardian* reported. When that didn't work, Reardon started playing with the powerful neodymium magnets, clipping them to his earlobes and nostrils, and that's where things went wrong. Two magnets inside his nostrils became stuck together, and he couldn't separate them. Reardon tried using pliers, but they became magnetized: "Every time I brought the pliers close to my nose, my entire nose would shift toward the pliers and then the pliers would stick to the magnet," he said. Finally, his partner "took me to the hospital that she works in because she wanted all her colleagues to laugh at me," and doctors applied an anesthetic spray, then manually removed the magnets. "Needless to say, I am not going to play with the magnets anymore," Reardon said.

— Donuts Delite in Rochester, New York, has found a special way to pay tribute to immunologist Dr. Anthony Fauci. Since March 23, the shop has been printing Dr. Fauci's image on thin, edible paper, then applying it to the buttercream frosting on its doughnuts. Nick Semeraro, franchisee of the shop, told the *Democrat & Chronicle*: "He's on TV giving us the facts;

you've got to respect that. ... People are buying them like crazy. We're making more right now." The doc doughnuts go for \$20 per dozen, curbside pickup and delivery available.

— A survey commissioned by Mentimeter, an interactive presentation company, found that 12% of people working from home turn their computer's camera off during a video meeting because they're wearing few or no clothes, United Press International reported on March 26. Along with that, Walmart Executive Vice President Dan Bartlett told *The Washington Post*, "we're seeing increased sales in tops, but not bottoms," a phenomenon presumably driven by video conferencing workers who do leave their cameras on.

— App developers Daniel Ahmadizadeh and Christopher Smeder have good news for those in the dating pool during this time of social distancing and staying at home. Quarantine Together is a text-based app they launched on March 15 that asks users once a day whether they've washed their hands, and if they say yes, they're introduced to another user. Nivi Jayasekar of San Francisco told CNN she was eager to give it a shot: "It was a hilarious idea. I feel like it's an opportunity to form a deeper connection with someone before meeting them," she said. Ahmadizadeh reports that sign-ups have been growing by 50% every day.

All In

— MedFet UK, a small company that supplies people who indulge in medical fe-

ishes, donated its entire inventory ("just a few sets") of disposable medical scrubs to Britain's National Health Service on March 27 after being contacted by desperate procurement officers, *Metro News* reported. "When we, a tiny company set up to serve a small section of the kink community, find ourselves being sought out as a last-resort supplier to our National Health Service in a time of crisis, something is seriously wrong," the company posted on Twitter. It also took the opportunity to provide a PSA: "Whether getting ready for some kinky fun or guarding against a virus outbreak, the single most effective method of infection control is scrupulous hand hygiene."

Discovery

— Friends Callum Gow, Josh Grossman and Carson Schiefner in British Columbia, Canada, all in their early 20s, decided a hike away from more heavily traveled trails near Alouette Lake would be a good way to maintain social distance on March 20. There have long been rumors of a stash of gold hidden in the area, but the treasure they discovered was completely different: a secret camp, including supplies, that hadn't been touched for almost 30 years. "It was almost like one of those time capsules that you run into," Schiefner told the CBC. The hikers found sealed boxes, a radio, a Coleman stove, first aid supplies, a knife, tobacco and, apropos for the current day, a big roll of toilet paper. A log book revealed the camp had been used from 1986 until 1991, and through social media, the hikers managed to find some of the original

campers, including Rick Senft. He explained that a group of friends calling themselves the B.C. Weirdness Federation set up the camp, but "life gets in the way" and they gathered there less and less. "They're probably some of the best years I had," he reminisced.

Desperate Measures

— After three days quarantined in his house in Mexico, Antonio Munoz got a yen for Cheetos. With the neighborhood store just feet away, but out of reach for a nonessential trip outside, Munoz enlisted the help of his chihuahua, Chokis. Munoz attached a note and \$20 to Chokis' collar and sent the dog across the street. Sure enough, Chokis returned with the Cheetos, and Munoz told *Metro News* on March 25 he has repeated the trip two other times, bringing back different flavors of potato chips.

Can't Win

— A tractor-trailer crash and subsequent fire near Dallas on April 1 lay waste to an entire load of a hot commodity in these bizarre times: toilet paper. The Associated Press reported the driver was unharmed, but the TP "burned extensively" and spilled over the interstate, which had to be closed to traffic. The truck was hauling the large rolls typically used in business restrooms.

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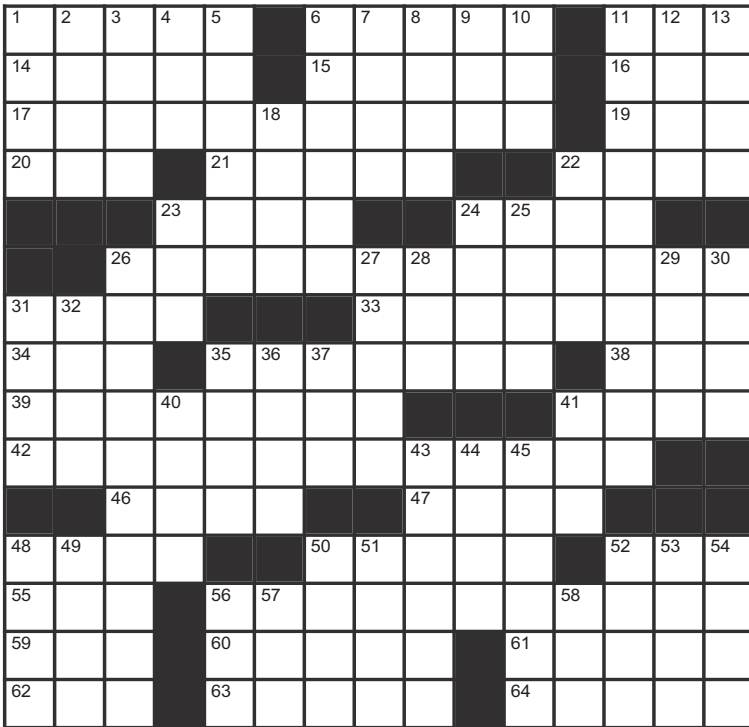
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Across

1. "The United States is not, and never will be, at war with ____": Obama
 6. Part of OTOH
 11. Chinese zodiac animal of 2020
 14. "Throw ____ From the Train" (1987 Danny DeVito comedy)
 15. Green
 16. Señora Perón
 17. Cold beverage sweetened with sugar and condensed milk that originated in Southeast Asia
 19. Cardinal ____
 20. Tic-tac-toe win
 21. Toodle-oo
 22. Drench
 23. All-Star infielder Miguel
 24. Go-getter
 26. One teaching pizza slices and S-turns
 31. Longer forearm bone
 33. Hostile look
 34. Org. behind the Bay of Pigs invasion
 35. "No, no, really ..."
 38. Charlotte of "The Facts of Life"
 39. It creates an adjustable loop
 41. Producer of boxing rings
 42. Popular Asian honeymoon destination

46. Norms: Abbr.

47. Agreeable (to)
 48. Exclamations from Scrooge
 50. Jet similar to a 747
 52. POTUS #36
 55. Wrath
 56. Agree ... or what you'll do when solving 17-, 26-, 35- or 42-Across
 59. No later than
 60. Drum used for a drumroll
 61. Sample
 62. Smoked fish
 63. Razzle-dazzle
 64. River frolicker

23. Reggae relative

24. Prohibitionists
 25. Remove from power
 26. Mobile home?
 27. "Law & Order" actor Jeremy
 28. Cable co. acquired by AT&T
 29. Word before surgeon or tradition
 30. Rod's partner
 31. Golden State school inits.
 32. Philanthropist Wallace
 35. "Just joshing!"
 36. Rustic lodgings
 37. Show tiredness
 40. Olive discards
 41. Recycling ____
 43. "Just a little longer"
 44. Weapon used when saying "En garde!"
 45. Mailed
 48. Sound ____ (and homophone of 53-Down)
 49. Grammy winner India. ____
 50. Good buy
 51. Michael of "Arrested Development"
 52. For fear that
 53. Memory unit (and homophone of 48-Down)
 54. Taunt from the bleachers
 56. Compass dir.
 57. Bus. letter accompanier
 58. Cheerios grain

Down

1. "If ____ believe ..."
 2. Manhattan area north of TriBeCa
 3. "Hahahahahaha!"
 4. "Who ____ kidding?"
 5. Tiki bar drink
 6. Equivalent of 32,000 ounces
 7. "And there you have it!"
 8. Google results
 9. December 31, e.g.
 10. Stephen of "V for Vendetta"
 11. It may offer dining options and a spa
 12. Running shoe brand
 13. Fail miserably
 18. "Please, Mommy ... Please, Daddy?"
 22. Mennonites, e.g.

SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE:
 S P E W A R M P A D B A T
 K E R R G E I S H A I D O
 I T S Y B I T S Y S P I D E R
 L I T T L E M A N T A T E
 M I R O L O B S
 O P E R A S B E T O M A A
 T I N Y D E S K C O N C E R T
 O D E L E T S N E A R T O
 K A Y E M Y O B
 M I N I A T U R E G O L F
 K E N O N U L L
 W E E W I L L I E W I N K I E
 A T P A G A T H A F I N K
 I S T N A M E L Y L A N E

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 2) Submit the correct answers to the puzzle along with your name.
 3) Entries must be faxed to **619-231-0489** or mailed to *Reader Puzzle*, 2323 Broadway Suite 200, San Diego, CA 92102; or scanned and emailed to puzzles@sdreader.com. Submissions by email must be attached in JPG format, maximum file size of 1MB. Submissions that don't fit the format will not be counted or viewed. One win per person within a 4 week period.
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 1) All answers must be legible and entered in the spaces provided.
 2) Late entries will not be considered.
 3) We will draw **1** name from weekly puzzle submissions.
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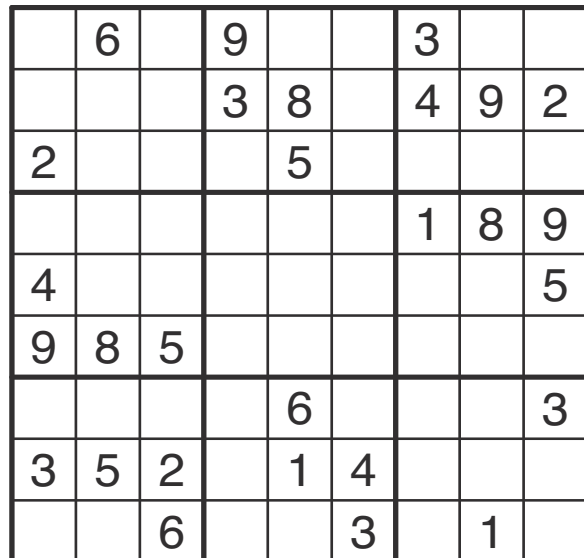
Winners will be contacted for prize redemption.

☛ Jose Pena, Otay Mesa, 1.

Name: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Email: _____ Phone # _____

SUDOKU

HARD:



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Winners will be contacted for prize redemption.

☛ Gary Lorenc, Encinitas, 2.

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SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S SUDOKU PUZZLE:

HARD:

1	7	9	6	3	5	4	2	8
3	6	2	4	8	7	1	5	9
5	4	8	2	9	1	6	7	3
7	8	4	9	6	2	3	1	5
2	9	5	3	1	4	8	6	7
6	1	3	5	7	8	9	4	2
9	2	7	1	4	3	5	8	6
4	5	6	8	2	9	7	3	1
8	3	1	7	5	6	2	9	4

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Continued from page 6

grew. On March 4, a New Yorker asked on March 4 if his family, coming to visit the zoo and other attractions in April, should cancel because of the epidemic. “Up to you,” said a local contributor whose own travel plans weren’t changing at all. No, said another, “unless you have underlying health issues and are prone to sickness.” Someone noted that there had been about 80 influenza deaths in San Diego County this season and zero coronavirus deaths. “My doctor didn’t think this was worse than flu deaths,” the original poster said. “I am just concerned since we are traveling to places with crowds.” But few sounded worried. “You live in NYC where you are in crowds all the time,” read one reply. “If you do your normal travel there, then coming here should be easy for you.”

But by the end of March, New York had been declared the epicenter of the pandemic in the United States. And the week before that happened, the should-we-travel-to-San Diego thread swerved. A poster who had downplayed the threat told how he had cancelled every last work and play travel plan, writing, “What a difference 10 days make.”

SHEILA PELL

SANTEE

“What did you do, fall in?” Bathroom break leads to Mojave mine mishap

Santee resident Randolph Blattler, 60, is lucky to be alive. Blattler spent more than nine hours at the bottom of an abandoned mine in the Mojave Desert before being rescued on March 21. He had been out shooting firearms with his friends in the open range off State Highway 127, near the Dumont Dunes Recreation Area, south of Tacopa. At twilight, they decided it was time to hit the road, and Blattler decided to go to the bathroom before leaving. But when he walked away from the group, “he just vanished,” according to Matt Graeff of the Inyo County Sheriff’s Department, one of Blattler’s rescuers. After searching around for about an hour, Blattler’s friends put two and two together. “His friend Christopher said he had seen two mine holes earlier in the day,” said Graeff. “But he wasn’t sure that Blattler had seen them.”

Graeff described the mine holes as about seven feet across, noting, “You can’t walk up and look into the hole without jeopardizing yourself.” Blattler’s friends leaned over the hole just enough to see their friend’s feet some 50 feet below. (Graeff says there’s a dogleg in the mineshaft that probably saved Blattler’s life; it kept him

from falling 70 to 100 feet to the bottom.) Then the group realized they could hear him breathing. “It’s amazing how sound comes up [amplified] through that shaft,” said Graeff.

The group was up on a hill at the 1400-foot level and so had cell service. After they called for help, the Inyo County Sheriff’s Department, headquartered five hours away in Independence on Highway 395, called in the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department’s Cave/Mine Rescue Team, along with rescue teams from Las Vegas and Pah-rump, NV. “They assembled their crews and were on the scene within hours,” said Graeff. “He was barely conscious when we finally brought him up at 6:30 am.” Blattler was airlifted to the Las Vegas hospital where reportedly he was put into an induced coma because of a severe head injury. “Amazingly, he has no broken bones,” said Graeff.



Baker’s Baja sojourn has turned into an adventure in self-isolation.

“There are a lot of mines out there,” said Graeff. Old mines attract explorer hobbyists, and are privately owned. Even if they’re inactive and abandoned, the owners don’t have to seal them off. “We’ve now reached out to the owner to encourage him to do so, but we can’t make him,” said Graeff.

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NEWS TICKER

continued from page 3

nificant economic blow to New Orleans, hitting the tourism and convention industries particularly hard,” says the grim analysis by the non-profit Bureau of Government Research. “Despite the extraordinary new circumstances, Convention Center officials are pressing forward to finalize a deal to build a 1200-room hotel attached to the center. The report goes on to highlight “the risks of moving forward with the project absent an informed analysis of the pandemic’s longer-term impacts on tourism and conventions,” a project which neither Faulconer nor the council has yet set out to accomplish in San Diego.

“The report recommends that the Convention Center and its board refrain from entering into any agreements concerning the hotel project while the pandemic is ongoing,” concludes a summary. “It further recommends that they com-



Is this fire truck about to violate a clear prohibition? Typical boys club move.

mission a new or updated hotel feasibility study once the pandemic subsides, taking into account anticipated longer-term impacts from the pandemic on convention activity.”

Meanwhile, convention sponsors are contemplating moves to online meetings, reducing the justification for physical expansions like the one planned in San Diego. “Venues and planners can work together to find digital/virtual solutions to reduce some of the spatial needs for the event.” Gary Shapiro, president and CEO of the Consumer Technology Association told a March 26

meeting industry blog. “Virtual events are changing the way we meet, and could greatly reduce the spatial requirements for a meeting. As the meetings industry embarks on the road to recovery following coronavirus, hybrid events could greatly assist in financial balancing while we slowly incorporate the return of face-to-face interactions.”

Matt Potter

Semi-secret settlement

Was abuse of woman handled through abuse of power?

A two-year-old lawsuit involv-

ing a host of explosive sexual harassment allegations by an 18-year veteran of San Diego’s fire and rescue department has been settled, with a \$525,000 payment quietly approved by the city council during an April 7 virtual meeting. In her 45-page complaint, lodged April 20, 2018, fire captain Sara Alfaro alleged she had been victimized by years of sexual harassment by her male peers, claiming, “the atmosphere of the SDFD is undeniably a boys’ club.”

Per the complaint, “In 2013, when Alfaro was at the Station 29 and had her hands full with gear and equipment, now retired Captain Broderick Perkins approached her and partially unzipped her top, exposing her chest,” the complaint alleged. “Previously, when she was at Station 12, Captain Perkins had also slapped her buttocks when she was standing on a ladder. Around 2014-2015,” the document contends, “when Alfaro was the only

permanent female firefighter at Station 10, she left a towel with her last name embroidered on it in a bathroom at the station, and later received a text message with a photograph of a penis physically resting on the towel, next to her name.” Further, “A picture of Alfaro’s face with a penis photoshopped in beside it was later passed around the department. Men in the department openly express male chauvinist and misogynist views in Alfaro’s presence. Alfaro has heard male coworkers in the workplace referring to women as ‘subservient’ and discussing the bodies of the few women in the department.” And “instead of taking immediate steps to protect Alfaro, SDFD and the city’s HR department disclosed the fact of her complaints and its investigation to the men of the department, over Alfaro’s repeated warnings that this would cause retribution by her male colleagues.”

The settlement approval came as part of the already obscure special meeting’s so-called consent agenda, on which are placed a group of items that are not subject to public discussion before unanimous approval. Because transparency laws, including many aspects of the state’s open meeting act and the public records act, are being pushed aside during the coronavirus emergency, questions have arisen regarding whether the pandemic has become a way to justify shutting down public oversight of local government. “By seeking blanket exemptions from the state’s good government and transparency laws, California’s municipal leaders, through the League of California Cities, are mimicking their counterparts in authoritarian-leaning countries,” asserted an April 1 editorial by the *Sacramento Bee* “They are trying to use COVID-19 as an excuse to evade democracy’s rule.”

Matt Potter

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Under the radar

continued from page 3

in Balboa Park, but a few references in the Pentagon's Office of Inspector General report released April 6 provide some intriguing details. "The central energy plant at a major Navy medical center was easily accessible through a large door that was left open and unattended; a member of the audit team entered and walked through the facility undetected and unchallenged," says the audit report. "Access to fuel tanks and backup generators by unauthorized personnel increases the risk of damage, sabotage, or acts of terrorism, potentially resulting in failure of medical equipment and loss of life."

— Matt Potter (@sdmattpotter)

The Reader offers \$25 for news tips published in this column. Call our voice mail at 619-235-3000, ext. 440, or sandiegoreader.com/staff/matt-potter/contact/.

Border dogs

continued from page 13

the agents with whom she spends her days. I bring a brush and she leans against me or lays down at my feet.

On this very warm March day, when I get up to get back to hiking, she runs alongside, barking. I instantly know she wants to show me something. She herds me to a spot at an intersection of dirt roads overlooking the south end of Goat Canyon and the beginning of Tijuana.

There sits a wire trap big enough for a dog her size or larger. In the middle of it, a big bowl of savory wet food that I can almost smell.

My heart drops and I feel sick. Biggie seems delighted. She runs around the trap and tries

to herd me closer. I realize she wants me to get the food out for her, but I can picture myself caught in the trap with the bowl of food, waiting for someone to get me out.

"Can't do it, Biggie," I say.

So she runs barking around the trap a few more times and then runs away, head high as if she's laughing at this clumsy trap.

I worry about the trap and I spread the word: if she gets captured, get word to me and I will go get her. And I start to think seriously about taking Biggie home.

Once I spread the word I will claim Biggie, patrol agents start telling me about border dogs.

Dozens of agents have taken dogs home as their own. Few volunteer the information, but other agents tell me. Someone tells me to ask the big tough agent with the honey-colored eyes about his 'fat sausage' chihuahua, and I do. That's my precious angel, he says, and shows me pictures on his phone: his motorcycle, his girl, and a fat little dog. Another shows his three-year-old daughter in pigtails and bows with her arms wrapped around a dog wearing a matching bow.

There are a handful of agents who are known for catching the strays and getting them to the veterinary emergency room or to rescue groups.

A tech at my vet's office tells me one day how she got her dog: she was working at night in the Mission Valley vet emergency room and a Border Patrol agent came in with his jacket bundled in his arms. He put the jacket down on the counter and she found he had five tiny pups, maybe three weeks old.

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Architect/first resident Herbert E. Palmer was known for his emphasis of outdoor activity areas.

UNREAL ESTATE

continued from page 32

ficient for the city's historical resources board to declare the home in 2012 "an important, clearly recognizable landmark in the La Jolla community." The distinction is important because it qualifies the property for reduced taxes under the Mills Act, which encourages the preservation of historic structures.

Public records indicate ownership of the

Casa currently lies with Bibi and Mahmoud Ladjevardi, Airbnb "superhosts" who purchased the property in 1999 for a reported \$1.2 million and who offer it as a daily vacation rental.

Casa de las Joyas has been on and off the market several times, with sale attempts dating back to 2013 and carrying asking prices as high as \$2.8 million. The most recent listing went active in mid-March; the sellers are currently seeking a price of \$2,350,000. ■

He'd found them on the border and was detailed to the pet ER. She nurtured them until they were old enough and found them homes. She kept one who lived for 16 years.

I tell this story to an assistant chief and he nods.

"Now you know our secret. Border dogs are our kryptonite," he says.

One day I find Biggie hanging out with one of the PAs, who is leaning against the open truck door, feeding Biggie from a pouch.

The agent gives me a listen-here look.

"You see how close she is? I could drop a rope over her so easily," the agent says. "Just like this. Not me, someone who wanted to take her could catch her so easily."

It seems like that could go awfully wrong, I say.

"They fight a little,"

she says. "But not as much as you'd think."

"So why don't you do that?" I ask.

"My boyfriend says we have enough dogs," she says. "But someone who wanted to could get her. You could just slip it right around her neck. I bet she wouldn't fight."

Biggie is oblivious to the sinister conversation. She is looking at this agent with her true love expression, a look I thought was reserved for me.

I am startled by how jealous I feel, even thought this is an agent I genuinely like.

Have you ever done that? I ask.

She tells me about a mom and pup that turned up at the other end of the mesa, dogs I'd seen a while back. She'd snared the pup first, with mom watching, she said. When she grabbed mom, the dog bit into her, hard.

Instead of ropes and traps, Biggie gets caught by her own body. She goes into heat and a big brown dog shows up and hangs around for a few days.

By September, she is still long and slender, but with a huge belly hanging low. The patrol agents are worried, and there's talk of calling animal control.

I don't realize it, but I am angry that she's still there. One day, I scold a smart young man about it, an agent who knows a lot about dogs. Why the hell hasn't somebody taken her home?

"Marty, you're the only one who can touch her," he says. "There are a couple of agents who've claimed her, but they can't catch her. One even offered \$100 to anyone who can. You're the only one who can touch her." He shares advice from his girlfriend, a veterinary tech, about how to get rid



In the nest, with the Army surplus blanket she apparently purchased and dragged in, since no one had disturbed the nest. The pups are about a week and a half.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTY GRAHAM

of fleas before someone takes her home. I decide that when I get back from a family trip, I will bring her home so she can have her pups indoors.

We will sort the rest out later, I decide. I have talked about Biggie to my vet, my friends, to many people.

My friend Corey has rescued many dogs. "Dog rescues don't always go well," she warns me as I show her a new set of Biggie pictures. Corey explains that Biggie has a lot of space, a lot of friends who feed her plenty of food. She may not like life with a small yard and a woman who thinks she should walk on a leash. She may bite. She may hunt smaller animals. She may be infested with parasites and horrifying diseases.

But Corey knows what it is to have a dog in your heart, however unlikely and difficult the dog may be. She encourages me in a practical and grounded way. She will loan me the crate and slip

leash I will need, and she offers to keep my elderly dog during a two-week quarantine to protect my dog from any disease Biggie might be carrying.

I fly off to Denver determined to snatch Biggie when I return.

The day I get back, it rains all day. Campo wash floods across the road and cuts off access to Spooner's Mesa.

On a Wednesday, the water recedes, and I drive to the border with the crate and a slip leash. As I drive down the road, a Border Patrol Jeep races up behind me and lights me up. I pull over, thinking this must be a new guy.

It is not. It is one of my favorite agents, a young, quick-witted guy with a light-the-room grin. He asks, "Have you seen the dog? Nobody's seen her for days."

I hurry up the hill, calling and searching for Biggie. I run into a supervisor who says he saw her briefly on Monday at the regular spot. Her nipples

were leaking — a sign dogs are about to go into labor. No one has seen her since.

I search until the sun sets and go home with my feet blistered and the crate empty.

On Thursday, I can't walk it. I worry even more, sure that Biggie went into labor alone in Tuesday's downpour somewhere on the mesa. After a miserable day, I drive down to the border and straight for the border fence, scaring up one of the ATV team regulars.

He recognizes my car and his first question is, "Have you seen the dog?"

"I came to ask you that," I say. We both stare up to the top of Spooner's where she ought to be.

He shakes his head. "We've been looking for her." If the patrol agents can't find her, there's no way I will. They are skilled, persistent trackers and they know every inch of the mesa.

"We'll keep looking for her," he says. "Go home and come back



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when it's light."

On Saturday, I walk across the top of Spooner's, calling for Biggie again. She has not chased a single Border Patrol truck in five days. I cross through the wash just before the mesa's east end, calling for her, and walk up to the K-rail where I usually find her. I look back and see Biggie limping so slowly up the slope behind me. She looks weak and confused, and has to stop to rest on this short, mild hill.

I open both cans of food I brought for her. She inhales them. I feed her the whole bag of meaty treats and my own snack of peanut butter and crackers. She drinks all the water I have and leans against me for a minute.

Her teats are between half full and full. She is disoriented, shaking and panting continuously. She is stiff-legged and clumsy.

As soon as she's sure there is no more food, she runs back toward the wash and disappears into the brush. I call my veterinarian friend and describe Biggie's condition. "Nature will drain the mom's body to keep the pups alive," she tells me. "There's a dangerous calcium deficiency that doesn't usually show up until the pups are older. But those are the symptoms. If that's what it is, Biggie can have a seizure, become paralyzed, and die within an hour, she says. In the office, a vet would inject her with calcium and she'd recover quickly. But outside, with pups hidden somewhere — pups who will die of hypothermia if they're alone for 10 minutes — her situation is very tricky and dangerous.

"You shouldn't move the pups if you don't absolutely have to," she says. "If you handle them, their

mom might abandon them or try to move them, and either way, it will be fatal to the pups. You must leave them in place, and she must stay with them for at least two weeks. You must not disturb the nest. Meanwhile, feed her cans of puppy food and a stiff shot of bone meal with each can. Assuming she hasn't already died."

It's early enough to round up supplies and return before nightfall. I stay past dark, serving calcium laced food. I can come back Sunday, but not every day after that.

A patrol agent friend gets me the number for a watch commander he trusts, and I call. I tell him I need help getting the food and bone meal into Biggie. And I try to tell him why it's so important to me, what a great dog Biggie is.

"Ms. Graham," he interrupts. "I have a dog. You can skip this part. I get it. I'll put my elite mobile team on it."

So I haul in cases of canned puppy food with taped on sauce cups of bone meal, and gallons of water, and the agents take on the emergency feeding. Simple instructions. If she shows up, feed her.

Biggie's all-she-can-eat buffet is set up within hours at the K-rail, far enough from the wash that it won't draw predators to the nest. Some patrol agents leave notes with date and time and amount of food. More just feed her. I calculate from the empties in the trash bag that Biggie is getting four cans a day and at least one shot of bone meal with each can. I also find full and empty cans of food the agents brought for her.

By Wednesday, she looks much, much better. Her gait is normal and she isn't confused. She is back

to her speedy, sassy self.

Her trips out of the nest are brief. Each trip I take to the feeding station, I prepare myself not to see her. I know she has to stay with her pups as much as possible. Besides, the steep Spooner's is wearing me out. I'm sick of inhaling the ubiquitous gnats, and the panoramic view has lost its charm.

Some days, I park at the bottom, to talk myself into that walk.

Sitting there one afternoon, I look to the K-rail 400 feet up and see the far away silhouette of an agent who looks like he is flying chin forward into a stiff wind while spooning dog food out of a can. I know Biggie is there by her friend.

At that moment, I realize how smart Biggie is. She's found the right people and gotten into our hearts. A lot of hearts. Even when they knew she was their kryptonite.

That Biggie feels her nest is secure is vital to the pup's survival. The days tick by, a week, ten days, two weeks. We are hoping for four, but three is the minimum. Sometimes she leads me toward the nest but then stops short, and I honor her boundary. I am pretty sure where the nest is but I tell no one, and I feel smug about my restraint. So it comes as a shock when one of the agents pulls alongside and tells me how cute the pups are. I manage not to yell at him, instead asking when he saw them. Oh, he says, a couple of agents have pictures.

"They're supposed to stay out of there!" I snap. He winces and says they probably stumbled onto the nest during a pursuit. "They certainly wouldn't touch anything." And he rushes away, saying he has to respond to a call.

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an agent, I casually mention how great the puppy pictures are. Yeah, he says, the pup with white paws is really cute. He tells me about a third set of pictures.

When he leaves, I stomp with indignation. Am I the only person in the river valley who has not seen the pups? And then the comedy of my assumptions hits me. I laugh at the thought that I could keep a location secret from professional trackers, and that I could keep people who really care about Biggie away from her.

So I finally look for the nest. Biggie seems highly amused by my thrashing around in the wash and does not help me find it. So I go find the PA at the K-rail and she guides me into the crack in the ground where Biggie has sheltered her pups. The ground around

it is covered with Vibram footprints from Border Patrol boots.

Biggie sits with us as we peer in at the tiny dogs whose ears are still rolled up. Their eyes are barely open and they look like little fat seals. Biggie seems pleased and proud.

And I realize the pups we weren't going to touch are lying on a blanket that covers the floor of the hole she carved.

"There's a blanket in there," I say.

The PA hesitates a second. "I gotta get back to the truck," she says, and goes.

"You're a resourceful dog, Biggie," I say. "Getting yourself an Army surplus blanket like that. Dragging it up that big hill and getting it under the pups folded up and neat like that?"

And she crawls into the tiny hole with her tiny pups, the two survivors



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTY GRAHAM

The Biggie buffet at the K-rail, freshly stocked with food and water.

of what must have been a much larger litter.

The next time I come up, a few days later in a drizzling rain, I meet Biggie at the K-rail, feed her, and walk with her to the nest. There's a different, nicer blanket on the floor of the hole. The army

blanket is now covering the top of the hole, held in place by rocks.

And the pups are moving around. It's been 16 days since they were born and the bolder of the two is coming as far out of his safe place as his new legs will let him. There's

a new metal water dish about 50 feet south in the wash, and Biggie leads me past it so she can show me something else she's very pleased about.

My girl has been hard at work, digging a tunnel as wide as her ribcage and as long as she is with

her back paws stretched behind her. She has dug a bulb at the bottom she can turn around in. It's carved on a sharp downhill angle into soil that crumbles.

She's getting ready to move the pups. If anything goes wrong, we would never be able to get the pups out without collapsing the tunnel — and it's too steep for the wobbly little creatures to get out on their own, which was her goal.

She jumps in and out a few times to show me, and I act happy for her. But that vague dread of having to figure out how to abduct her congeals into terrible anxiety. Because I have to snatch them before she moves the pups. By the time I get to my car at the bottom of that hill, I am certain I have to snatch her that night. It is near sunset, and night at the border is the worst time to be

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on this mission. I have to let the agents know that when the alarms trip, it will be me. But I can't go so high that it becomes news they must share with the other agencies in the valley.

So I find a group who are taking a break, and I walk into their midst. They are on their phones, helmets off, and lounging on the ATVs like Barcaloungers.

I have to snatch the dogs tonight, I explain, and I try to describe the tunnel. If they could let the team know that tonight, when the sensors trip up on the mesa, it's probably me, I'd appreciate it. I know they will still come quickly, but maybe we can lower the adrenalin a little.

"You don't have to come back tonight," one tells me. "We'll take care of it. Come tomorrow when it's light."

It has to be tonight, I insist. She's going to move them to the new spot.

The agent asks me where it is, though we both know he can easily follow my tracks from the nest to the new spot. He knows the place I describe.

"We'll take care of it. I mean it," he says. "Come back tomorrow."

When I return the next day, anxious and wound up, I first check that tunnel. It is collapsed, stomped down until it crumbled, leaving loose dirt covered with Vibram prints from several different-sized boots. Then I check the nest and find the pups still there. Finally, I look for Biggie and find her eating at the K-rail. I play with her, pet her, and then drop the rope around her bare neck just the way the agent showed me, and stuff her into the trunk of my car,



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTY GRAHAM

As the mama hormones wore off, she became wild again. The pups at 9 weeks.

onto the huge dog bed I put on the floor.

I drive to the nest, scramble down into the crack and gently lift the pups. They were the size of guinea pigs, helpless and soft, and I called them Buster and Willie. Biggie was crying in the trunk until I gave her her

pups, setting them gently into her chest. She nudges them with her nose and grows quiet, content to have them.

When I let her out, we are in my garage, and she comes into my kitchen, which opens on a small yard where she spends the next six weeks teaching

her pups to be dogs.

As I write this, Willie snores on the floor near my feet. He is four now, twice his mother's size, with a wiry brindle coat nothing like her sleek black and white. He is exhausted from playing with his brother, who lives with friends nearby. They

see each at least once a week and often more.

If he wants to charm me, he runs far and fast, bounces and spins back to me, and executes his mother's perfect sit.

When I take him to the border — less often than I would like these days — he is treated as a celebrity. He has posed for pictures with a certain superhero type, and many other agents.

The woman Biggie lives with — on a few acres near Santa Maria where the McNab border collies she resembles are treasured working dogs — hasn't sent a picture for a while. As sad as I remain that she couldn't stand to live in this small, crowded house in this dense, noisy neighborhood, I know she is happy with her new home, new name and family, and new life.

—Marty Graham

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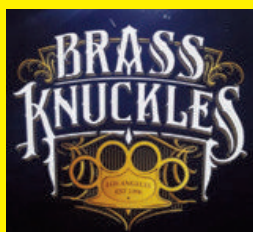
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Biscotti Gorilla Glue #4 Skywalker OG R.G.

VAPES, EDIBLES, CBD, AND MORE ALSO AVAILABLE!

Check our website for the full product line.

Ask about our daily 0Z specials!



San Diego
HeadStash

Unbeatable, Old Fashioned Service

sdheadstash.com

Ask about our money back guarantee!

7 days, 6am-9pm
(last order by 8pm)

619-715-5036
(San Diego)

760-300-3244
(North County)

GRAND OPENING

in Chula Vista! Open 24/7!

Celebrate 4/20 with us! Monday, April 20, 10am-5pm
FREE EDIBLES FROM BABYLON'S GARDEN + 2 FREE PRE-ROLLS!
Any patient with any donation while supplies last.

FREE 1/2-OZ OF SHAKE!
First-time patients only with any donation. Must mention ad.

\$8/GRAM ANY SHELF!
Pick your favorite flower for just \$8/G!

Exclusive Shake \$5 /G	Select Strains \$100 /OZ	Shake \$5 2G	Wax \$50 /OZ	Moonrocks \$10 /G	Full Nugs \$50 /OZ
\$10	Presidential Pre-Rolls \$10	BRASS MONKEY \$15 /G (Trim)	Babylon's Garden \$25 /G (Nug)	1000mg Brownie \$30 (1000mg Edibles)	Stndrd Edibles \$10 (200mg) \$20 (400mg)
\$20	Exotic Carts \$15	H.H. Vapes \$20	Jeff Sessions Vapes \$25	Uplifted Vapes \$35	

Chula Vista's Finest Meds

2675 FAIVRE ST.
Chula Vista, CA 91911
619-940-3255

OPEN 24/7!

Now Open 24/7 in El Cajon!

Uplifted Vapes Event! Mon, Apr. 20, 4-6pm.



BUY 1 VAPE, GET 1 FREE!

Limit 1 per patient. Valid for \$35 Uplifted Vapes.

\$9 /G PRIVATE RESERVE Any patient, no limit!	\$7 /G SELECT PRIVATE RESERVE STRAINS	\$85 OZ SPECIAL SHELF
\$4 /G SPECIAL SHELF Any patient, no limit!	\$35 /2G BRASS MONKEY Brass Monkey Shatter	\$25 /G Live Resin Shatter
\$10	\$10	3/\$25 Twisted Moonrock Pre-Rolls
\$30 Uplifted (1G Vapes)	2/\$35 BRASS MONKEY & H.H. Vapes	\$25 2/\$45 Jeff Sessions (1G Vapes)
\$20 Punch Chocolates (225mg)	\$17 Stndrd Gummies (400mg)	

All offers expire Apr. 22, 2020. Must mention ad for special pricing.

El Cajon Kush Society

13739 Highway 8 Business, El Cajon, CA 92021

619-792-5582 • Open 24/7!

Exclusive Deals Delivery Service

FREE DELIVERY!

Text us for the full menu & pics!



619-396-6983 (San Diego)

619-396-9462 (North County)

9am-Midnight Daily • We serve all of San Diego County!

FREE 1/2 OZ SHAKE

Min. \$40 orders. Must mention ad, first-time patients only.

TOP SHELF \$45 /OZ	PRIVATE RESERVE \$100 /OZ	EXCLUSIVE \$180 /OZ
TOP SHELF SHAKE \$25 /OZ	EXCLUSIVE INDOOR SHAKE \$50 /OZ	
WEDDING CAKE \$45 /OZ	CANDY FROST \$80 /OZ	SUNSET SHERBET \$90 /OZ
FORBIDDEN FRUIT \$150 /OZ	OG GLUE \$180 /OZ	ICE CREAM \$210 /OZ
SHATTER \$15 /G	CRUMBLE \$15 /G	
BRASS MONKEY \$20 (1G VAPES)	ROVE \$20 (1G VAPES)	STINZY \$20 (1G VAPES)
\$10 (500MG GUMMIES)	STONE PATCH \$10 (500MG GUMMIES)	HOUSE PRE-ROLLS \$5
		H.H. VAPES \$25 (1G VAPES)
		KIEF 2G \$10

420 Winter Garden Greens 420
OPEN 24/7 IN LAKESIDE/EL CAJON!
9018 Winter Gardens Blvd.
 Lakeside, CA 92040 • 619-733-4451

PATIENT APPRECIATION DAY ON MONDAY, 4/20!

10am-2pm: FREE EDIBLES FROM BABYLON'S GARDEN!
 2pm-5pm: BUY 1, GET 1 FREE STNDRD PRODUCT!

\$9/GRAM ■ \$120 1/2-OZ ■ \$230 OZ
ANY JAR IN THE STORE! No limit! Must mention the Reader ad.

TOP SHELF \$5/G ■ \$65 1/2-OZ ■ \$120 OZ		Private Reserve Shake \$100 OZ OR 14G \$60	
House Shake \$20 OZ Fire Shake \$50 OZ		Trim Shatter & Crumble \$15/G Nug Shatter & Crumble \$25/G	
710 KINGPEN \$25 (1G VAPES)	West Coast Cure Vape \$45/1G	Full Green Nugs \$50/OZ	Full Green Nugs \$100/OZ
Dabwood Vapes \$15	& H.H. Vapes \$20 (1G)	Exotic Carts \$15	Uplifted Vapes \$35
Presidential Pre-Rolls \$10	Hurricane Pre-Rolls \$10	Twisted Moonrock Pre-Rolls \$10	Golani Pre-Rolls \$10
Wow Rice Krispie Treats \$10 (500MG)	Blackout Brownies \$35 (1000MG)	Moonrocks \$10/G	Hash \$15/G
Stndrd Gummies \$10 (200MG) \$20 (400MG)	Babylon Gardens \$35 (1000MG Candy)	Sour Belts \$10 (300MG Gummies)	Caviar Candy \$35 (1000MG)
Jeff Sessions \$25 (1G Vapes)	Diamond Sticks \$20	Twisted Vapes \$20 (1G)	7G \$50 Select Strains
Diamond Sauce \$65/G	710 Shatter \$20/G	Wax \$10/G	House Nug Shatter \$15/G
The Syrup \$35 (1000MG)	Cbd Tincture \$40 (1000MG)	Podz \$25 (0.5G) \$45 (1G)	Plug and Play \$35 (1G VAPES)

CALIFORNIA CANNABIS DELIVERY

4/20 SPECIALS! MENTION THIS AD FOR SPECIAL PRICING THRU 4/21!

CALL OR TEXT: 619-627-4697 ■ 8AM-12AM DAILY

Min. order of \$30-\$100 for delivery depending on location. Call for details.

www.CaliforniaCannabisSDDelivery.com ■ @calidelivery

FREE 1/2 OZ OF EXCLUSIVE SHAKE + 100MG EDIBLE!

First-time patients only. Must mention this ad before 4/21/2020.

TEXT "**ADD**" TO **833-349-2722** TO RECEIVE OUR DAILY DEALS!

Top-Shelf \$5/GRAM	Private Reserve \$8/GRAM	Exclusive \$9/GRAM	Exotic Shelf \$12/GRAM	OZ Specials Starting at \$30/\$40/\$60/\$100 \$120 (Top Shelf) \$150 (Private Reserve) \$180 (Exclusive) \$200 (Exotic)
\$20 & H.H. Vapes	Shatter \$15/G	White Fire Budder \$35	Exclusive Shake 4 OZ \$100	
Off White MOONROCK KINGPEN & Clear 5 for \$100 (1G Vapes) Mix & Match with many more brands! FTP only.				
\$40 (1G Vapes)	Rove Carts \$20	Stoney Patch Candy \$10 (150mg)	STIIZY \$35 Real Deal 1G Pods! All day, every day!	
Mystery Baking Black Label Bar \$40 (1000mg Edible)	6 for \$100 (100mg Edible)	Babylon's Garden \$75 Diamonds \$40 Crumble	Volcanic Crumble 6G \$100	
5 Rice Krispie Treats \$10 (100mg each)	Babylon Gardens Edibles \$35 (1000mg) \$10 (150mg)	7 for \$100	Moonrocks \$20/G	House Pre-Rolls 4 for \$10
Best CBD Selection in San Diego! Free 100mg Edible + Exclusive Pre-Roll! with every order for returning patients only. Must mention ad.				

420 SPECIAL! FREE OZ + WAX + PRE-ROLL + EDIBLE + GRINDER + LIGHTER!
 Any patient w/min. \$50 donation from Thurs, 4/16, thru Mon, 4/20. Must mention ad.

FREE 3.5 GRAMS OF NUGS + FREE 100MG EDIBLE!
 First-time patients only w/min. \$10 donation. Must mention ad.

TEXT "**DANK**" TO 714-41 TO RECEIVE OUR DAILY SPECIALS!

TOP-SHELF \$4/G or 3G \$10 Any patient, no limit!	PRIVATE RESERVE \$8/GRAM Any patient, no limit!	V.I.P. SHELF \$9/GRAM Any patient, no limit!
WAX \$5 Select strain.	SHATTER 12G \$100 Select strain.	CRUMBLE 7G \$100 Select strain.
7 GRAMS \$50 Choose from 25 different strains!	Volcanic Crumble \$20/G	Exclusive Shake 3 OZ \$100
JEFF SESSIONS CARTS \$25 (1000MG)	MOONROCK \$15/Gram Limited time only! Limit per patient.	STIIZY \$40 or 2 for \$70 (1G Vapes)
SHATTER & CRUMBLE Select strains. \$20	3 for \$100 (1G VAPES)	BRASS CARTRIDGES \$7
Starting at \$15	3 RICE KRISPIE TREATS \$10	4 JOINTS \$10

Must Present Ad For Special Pricing. Offers Cannot Be Combined.

Exotic Greens 12038 Woodside Ave. Lakeside, CA 92040 619-486-0134

OPEN 24/7 IN CHULA VISTA!

Join us on Monday for our 4/20 Giveaway!

PRIVATE RESERVE - OUR BEST SHELF!
\$9/G ■ 14G \$120 ■ \$230 OZ

UPLIFTED VAPES \$30 (1G)	TWISTED, MARIO & EXOTIC CARTS \$15 (1G VAPES)	TWISTED MOONROCK PRE-ROLLS 3 FOR \$25
BABYLON'S GARDEN \$30 (1000MG GUMMIES)	GOLDEN SHATTER & CRUMBLE \$15/G ■ 2G \$25	
OZ SPECIALS \$50/\$85/\$100	\$10	FREE JOINT! Any patient with any donation!

PAYLESS MEDS
 1214 Broadway ■ (Entrance between Planet Fitness and Dollar Tree)
 Chula Vista, CA 91911 ■ 619-909-1175 ■ OPEN 24/7!

EMERGENCY DENTIST

Spanish speaking

We are here to help!



If you are experiencing any dental emergency

Like severe tooth pain,

abscess, fractured teeth, please call us so we can help you with your dental emergency and save you an unnecessary visit to a hospital emergency room.

We can help you at our following locations:

CHULA VISTA

619-397-4111

2454 Fenton Street Ste 100

Chula Vista CA 91915

SAN DIEGO

619-697-6677

8736 Lake Murray Blvd Ste 108

San Diego CA 92119



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www.EstrellaDental.com