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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.

Hugely liberal thinking

I've noticed the size of the Reader has decreased hugely over the year. Honestly the paper sucks now. Your liberal Democrat-type thinking and articles geared towards liberalism could be one the contributing factors to this. Maybe if you would stop being part of the sheople brigade and write what's really going on people would enjoy the paper again.

Steven Smith

Comments from SDReader.com — not edited for punctuation, spelling, or grammar.

"San Diego's nay-sayers on opening up businesses now"

Cover Stories
May 20

Understandable that "Robert" has fears for his health. However, as a retired government employee, his pension is still coming in like clockwork. It's easy to think economic impacts are second to his concerns, since he has no change in income. "There are still way too many critically ill Covid patients coming into the hospital every day," the nurse interviewed said. From the chart I saw on the current situation, for 15 May was maybe 15 cases for the whole county. If you are one of those 15, it's a serious issue. Out of the entire county population, that comes out a little differently. And as I understand it, South Bay hospitals are getting overflow patients from Imperial County? Tamiflu for the regular flu? How many patients even get to the point they need that? And how many of those patients got the flu shot to try to stave off the illness? Call-

ing COVID a "Beast" does nothing to define it, other than to apply a fear label to it. And if rotating patients in their bed is a new technique for dealing with pneumonia for this nurse....I have some questions about her level of competency.

—Wabbitsd

"Will a \$46,000 federally funded COVID-19 drone fly in El Cajon?"

News Ticker
May 22

I'd hoped that as chief of police this guy was showing some class and not wearing some ridiculous military rank insignia. But that's not it, I'm now certain. I have no recollection of when these chiefs started militarizing their uniforms. I'd long assumed that some military-sounding titles were the best that the cops could come up with. Even in England where all this ranking started, the only rank in the "bobbies" that sounds military is sergeant. The basic level there is constable. The next level is sergeant, and above that comes inspector. But then they move to civilian titles such as deputy superintendent and superintendent. And they sure don't wear military rank insignia. So nowadays in California, at least, we have the chief of police usually wearing four stars, as in the four stars of a full general in the Army or Air Force or Marine Corps. That's a rarefied rank that usually involves command of tens of thousands of troops, or sailors, or whatever. But who here in San Diego wears those four stars on his collar? Gore, our slimy sheriff does, as does Chief McCoy in Oceanside. I don't know for sure about the cop in San Diego, but his predecessors all wore four stars. A few years ago the chief of the tiny Coronado PD was wearing four stars. So they like to put themselves in league with major military figures of the past and present. (As a point of reference, the Army has only about 14 four-star generals, and it is certain that the AF, Navy and USMC each have

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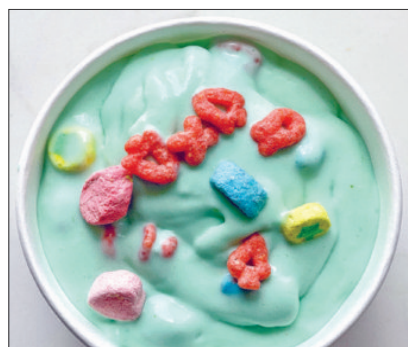
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May 28, 2020



PHOTOGRAPH BY BIANCA MADRAGA

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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

By Reader stringers

UNIVERSITY CITY

Digging for treasure

Proposed train tunnel could save time and money

Instead of widening I-5, widen the options for transit. That was the idea behind a lawsuit in 2013 that claimed the proposed freeway expansion between La Jolla and Oceanside would lead to “an enormous surge in greenhouse gas emissions.”

There were better ways to tackle congestion, argued the Cleveland National Forest Foundation’s suit against the federal Department of Transportation. The case settled, and last week, the fulfillment of its main terms was announced: a feasibility study for a double-track rail tunnel through Miramar Hill (the land under UTC’s existing transit stop) in University City. While the lawsuit had found the widening project inconsistent with the state’s emissions reduction goals, the study shows the tunnel – an existing plan that got sidelined – could reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by 70,000 to 84,000 metric tons.

which would include connections to light rail, local bus, and bus-rapid transit, making it easier to get downtown, the airport, and destinations served by the Sprinter light rail system, which connects with the corridor at Oceanside.

The proposal’s advantages are not merely environmental: the tunnel could lop six to seven minutes off peak travel time between San Diego and Los Angeles. And a prior federal study found the tunnel, with other corridor improvements, would reduce travel time between San Diego and Los Angeles to two hours. Further, the study concluded that for the 1300-1700 passengers using it daily, transit would cost \$180 per month, while driving a car would cost \$507.

SHEILA PELL

SANTEE

Hoodwinked?

Is “Klantee” really a thing of the past?

On May 2, a man wearing a KKK hood was photographed making his way among the fruit stands while shopping in the Vons store in Santee. The picture went viral and made the international news. Though he was identified by the Santee Sheriff’s department, the hooded man was not charged and his name was not published.

On May 7th, Dustin Hart and his wife Brittany went shopping at Food 4 Less in Santee while wearing velcro swastikas attached to their masks. Brittany wore a T-shirt with Pepe The Frog and the word “Honk” on it – both white supremacist symbols used by the alt-right. A store clerk



“Hey, is this uh, white grapefruit?”

Shekel and Dusty Shekel III. Hart signs in as reichard_nixon on IG and as uBeartron on Twitter and BitChute. On one of his Facebook pages, Hart posted his donation to Planned Parenthood followed by the message: “When you realize Planned Parenthood might be a good thing - Abortion is the leading killer of black lives in America.”

Asked to comment about his recent public actions, Hart said, “I can’t talk about anything until the hate crime investigation is

white supremacists are a direct threat to me and my family, and silence is compliance. Members of our family were murdered at the hands of Nazis. Jewish people were murdered last year in Poway.” The activist said their child was a victim of hate at school when another child “started going up to Jewish kids and telling them that he should put a plastic bag over their heads, ‘like Nazis did to the Jews.’”

Cati Marie lives in Santee and went to

“Denying racism exists in Santee when many of us have experienced it is insulting.”

over.” He added there are no charges against him at this moment, “but apparently there is still an investigation. They called me, but haven’t informed me that the investigation is closed.” Hart wrote on his Facebook page that he is a “TransJew” and therefore cannot be anti-semitic.

In the now-removed video of the incident, Hart claimed that he wore the swastika as a “peaceful protest against governor Newsom” and his mandate to shelter at home during the pandemic. He said it was not intended as a Nazi speech, despite the white-supremacist imagery on Brittany’s T-shirt. Before the incidents, Hart used Threadless and Weebly to sell those T-shirts. A local group of activists succeeded in getting his stores removed from the two platforms, but they were unable to take down his storefront at wix.com. The activist said one of the people who worked to have the stores removed had to go to the police after Hart retaliated. “Hate should not be profitable, and companies have the power and authority to remove it from their platforms. Therefore, we need to demand accountability. Dustin makes a profit, and the online platforms make a profit from the sale of hate-related items and speech. They are not government entities. It isn’t a free speech issue.” The activist, who wished to remain anonymous, got involved “because

school with Dustin Hart. “The kid was always looking for attention. My strongest memory of him was doing gross things in front of as many people as possible. It was like he got off on it. I don’t believe he is a racist, but I do believe he was seeking attention.”

Hart changed the name of his Wix store on May 18 and deleted the Facebook post where he advertised it. As of May 19, the store was still operational under a different name. On the main page, Hart writes, “We are proud to offer censorship-free service.” Hart sent this reporter an invoice for \$30 for a T-shirt ordered with the design of a pink Pepe the Frog and a black and white hat inscribed with the word “Honk” and surrounded by Nazi SS symbols and several swastikas in red. Hart demanded that the \$30 be paid up front and asked for credit card information via email.

Hart is an Alpine resident, and many people questioned his choice to come shop in Santee while wearing Nazi and alt-right paraphernalia. Santee city council member Stephen Houlahan said, “This individual lives in Alpine, but grew up in Santee, so it’s a failure of our community to reach out to this individual, and there’s probably more like him. He did not choose to go to Barrio Logan or to an area that is predominantly minority. He felt a great degree of safety. To

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PHOTO CREDIT: LARDOONCONCRETE.COM

Hopefully, the underground savings will help with the aboveground spendings.

The two sides had struggled for years before coming together on the analysis, but have finally “worked this out for the common good,” says the forest foundation’s co-founder, Duncan McFetridge. Key to the settlement were improvements on the busy Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo rail corridor. The tunnel, which would cost roughly half a billion dollars, would be useable by both Coaster and Amtrak trains. A new transit station would be built at the mall,

and sheriff’s deputies asked him to remove the decals, and he posted a 14-minute video of the confrontation on BitChute, a preferred platform for hate-speech content. On May 18, Hart removed the video, replacing it with another showing him yelling homophobic slurs and profanities at an unidentified man who had confronted him about his swastika on May 8th in front of a post office building.

Hart operates under several aliases. He has at least two Facebook accounts as Dusty



How is El Cajon Police Chief Mike Moulton supposed to fight coronavirus without a good surveillance drone?

Spartan(burg) spending
SoCar is no SoCal when it comes to coronadrones

San Diego politicians are finding some novel uses for federal COVID-19 bailout funds, judging from a review of coming city council agendas from the county's eighteen incorporated municipalities. In El Cajon, the police department wants to acquire an "Unmanned Aerial System (Drone) with FLIR Camera" for \$45,575 and "a Mobile High Definition Camera Trailer" costing \$30,000, according to a report by chief of police Mike Moulton that was prepared for the council's May 26 agenda. Also on the police department's shopping list: \$13,780 worth of "tourniquet holders." El Cajon applied for the grant money on April 28 and was awarded \$89,355 on May 8, the document says. The report adds that funds from the program "must be utilized to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus."

"Allowable projects and purchases include, but are not limited to overtime, equipment, supplies, training, and travel expenses," says the memo regarding the Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding program oper-

ated by the U.S. Justice Department. A law enforcement drone purchasing request using COVID-19 funding was rejected on Monday, May 18, by South Carolina's Spartanburg County Council. In that case, ten aerial drones costing \$10,700 each for a total of \$107,000 were part of Sheriff Chuck Wright's proposed coronavirus grant tab, along with "472 personal protective equipment kits at \$63,205; 185 cases of gloves at \$30,525; 285 cases of hand sanitizer at \$6,270," according to the *Spartanburg Herald*. Total value: \$207,000. "This is unfortunate timing," said council chairman Manning Lynch as he joined a 4 to 3 majority vote to reject buying the drones. "You're bringing up something that's a tad bit controversial, potentially highly invasive at a time when we've had basic constitutional rights struck from us," added Lynch. "I'm proud Spartanburg County has not been a party to that in anything we've done. At the same time, it makes me nervous as heck when I think of all the things, not allowing assembly to practice our religious faith is kind of amazing. It's hard to believe that that's going on in this country and state and this town right now. I'm a little leery of the government wanting any more access to my private life right this minute."

Said colleague Roger Nutt: "If I need somebody between me and the Constitution, it would be Sheriff Chuck Wright. Only problem is, after I'm long gone and the Sheriff's gone, there will be other people in charge. There's no idea what those folks will think about using drones - looking into people's backyards,

continued on page 9



The Phoenix 30 made by UAV Solutions is a drone commonly used by law enforcement.

Neal Obermeyer



UNDER THE RADAR

Lorena's fantasy Disneyland has been closed since March 14, sending ripples of angst through the ranks of investors and tourists alike. But before the park locked its gates against the COVID-19 pandemic, a crew of state Assembly and Senate Democrats got free tickets of admission worth thousands of dollars, according to the company's first-quarter lobbying disclosure report, filed April 21. Among the lucky legislators was Assemblywoman **Lorena Gonzalez** — who with husband **Nathan Fletcher** has been a longtime recipient of free park passes — receiving \$418 worth of Disneyland tickets on March 7. The Gonzalez family trips to Disney have become traditional. Last year on March 2, she tweeted a photo of the couple and their combined family at the main gate, saying, "With all my boys at @Disneyland today! Not stopped by a little rain!" Her 2019 personal disclosure form, filed this February, showed the value of the tickets to be \$500. This year her fellow Assembly Democrat **Jim Cooper** got \$500 in complimentary admission, as did colleagues **Joaquin Arambula** and **Eduardo Garcia**. District 3 California Board of Equalization member **Tony Vasquez** also received the \$500 freebie package. Senate Democrat **Ben Hueso**, currently running for a seat on the San Diego Board of Supervisors, got tickets valued at \$209 on the same date, as did Assemblyman **Robert Rivas**. Democratic senator **Lena Gonzalez**, no relation to Lorena, picked up tickets worth \$500. Meanwhile,



Nathan Fletcher - tagging along to Happiest Place on Earth

as Disney begins tentatively planning for reopening the parks in a post-COVID-19 world, some customers say they won't be returning soon. "I will not be back to any part of Disney until the hype and mask-wearing has been discontinued," said one quoted by the *Washington Post*. "It has nothing to do with being upset about the inconvenience and everything to do with my being treated as a free responsible adult."

Musical virus Nobody's sure when going to concerts will be safe again in the wake of the global coronavirus meltdown. Still, the San Diego county fair board staff is already out booking big name acts for June of next year and taking heat from one its members for building a new music venue. Train, the American rock band from San Francisco, is set for Friday, June 11 as a paid

show and dinner package, at \$325,000. The next highest paid is to be country star **Brantley Gilbert** on June 12 for \$285,000. Then comes TLC at \$135,000. Folk and blues singer **Melissa Etheridge** gets only \$75,000 for a June 9 show. Lack of immediate refunds for a Gilbert concert canceled by coronavirus earlier this month by the Red Rocks Amphitheatre outside of Denver, owned

by the city and county, has riled some fans. "If the event cannot be rescheduled once the ban is lifted, a refund will automatically be issued to the credit card you used to purchase, within 30 business days," the sponsor emailed ticketholders after the cancellation. That didn't sit right with **Aaron Batte**, who complained about the policy to TV station KDVR. "We don't know if or when there will be a new date. Should we be patient and wait for 30 days to go by, 60 days to go by, 90 days to go by, just to then find out they can't get it rescheduled — and now they've held on to that money, in my case, almost a year?" As for the Del Mar fair, Chula Vista attorney **David Watson** quit the board last month, asserting that management had gone awry. "Even before the advent of COVID-19, the organization was facing extreme financial turmoil because of historical reliance on horse racing revenues," Watson said in a statement cited by the *Union-Tribune* April 21. "Significant bond financing is based on future revenue from racing as well as the creation of a new concert venue. Those revenues are now at great risk."

Conjugal suite life

Anaheim's Magic Kingdom isn't the only venue visited for free by county supervisor Nathan Fletcher and his spouse, Assembly Democrat Lorena Gonzalez, per Fletcher's financial disclosure Form 700 for 2019, filed with the county March 16. On January 7, 2019, the couple got "2 suite tickets" from AT&T valued at \$469. Though no destination is named, the Orlando Magic played the Kings at Sacramento's Golden 1 Center, where the cell phone giant has a luxury suite to provide legislator freebies. On January 17, the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians gave a "spouse only Gift" of admission to the casino lobby's Back to Session Bash in Sacramento. Gonzalez also picked up two dinners valued at \$126 and \$113 from Viejas in March and April, per Fletcher's disclosure. In addition,

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Brantley Gilbert - booked at \$285K for next year's Fair

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Dear Hipster:

If I were to spend my quarantine trying to master an incredibly complicated game (you know, the kind of thing everybody always says it takes a lifetime to master), would it be cooler to learn chess, the so-called game of kings, or go? Instead, maybe I should dedicate myself to memorizing all the killer, two-letter 'x' and 'z' words in Scrabble that aren't really words unless you're playing Scrabble. I could even learn to play cards, something like poker or contract bridge, which have all kinds of rules and secret lingo that only players can decode. If I had to pick one of these things, which would be the most badass?

—MADI

Are you sure you don't want to just get into baking? Last thing I knew, everybody bakes now. Used

to be only hipsters were coaxing life out of sourdough starters and mastering the art of handmade puff pastry just for kicks.

For sure, board gaming has wild hipster cred. Generally, when you get hipsters playing board games together, you're dealing with more of a "Hey How Can We Make Settlers of Catan Into a Drinking Game?" scenario than a "Yo Bro I'm The Next Bobby Fischer" scenario. To put it another way: getting so worked up over a game of Risk that you want to throttle your erstwhile best friends is one thing. Dedicating yourself to a compressed lifetime of studying the Sicilian Defense, the Pinckney Rule, or the Blackwood Convention (two of those are real things from the games you mentioned,



and I will leave you to figure out which) is another thing entirely. Thus, I am not sure it can ever be perceived as "cool" to throw yourself headfirst into the mastery of a game like chess or go.

As a quick point of color commentary on the choice between chess and go, I will say that I have noticed go players tend to spend an inordinate amount of time trying to convince people that go is the more "complex," and therefore purportedly superior, game.

That may well be true, but it always sounds a little insecure to me, and you know what they say about kings who have to say "I am the king..."

Trolling go players aside, I suspect the most hipster of your options would be teaching yourself bridge. Unlike the other games you mention, you don't need full-on prodigy skills to move beyond basic aptitude, you just need time, so it's at least a realistic goal. More importantly, bridge has a bit of a "lost artform" mystique about it, because,

if you'll pardon my reliance on stereotypes here, it's got a real reputation as something exclusively understood by a shrinking number of old people. Can you think of some other things that, until recently, were only understood by shrinking numbers of old people? How about typewriters, vinyl records, lumberjacks, those bicycles with one giant wheel, film cameras, tweed, fermented foods, and just about every other hipster affection/affectation you can point out from the last decade?

Of course, there is no rhyme or reason to the hipster desire to resurrect the antiquated and obsolete. Why vinyl records, but not landlines? Both deliver higher fidelity at the cost of convenience, but only one passes muster. Thus, you could easily ask, "why bridge," and I could only reply "why not bridge?" and we are both maybe right.

—DJ Stevens

LETTERS

continued from page 1

fewer than that.) Moreover there are some skeptics who think that such numbers are excessive. But to pile it on, the odious sheriff of LA county has been photographed wearing five stars. He wants to put himself in the company of such officers as Eisenhower, Nimitz, MacArthur, Hap Arnold, Halsey, and Bradley. They all commanded forces in wartime in the millions. This misuse of military insignia by cops may be harmless, or maybe not. Ask yourself why the chief of a small city PD with a couple hundred employees thinks he should wear four military stars on his collar or epaulets, as though he is a major commander or war hero. Is it really harmless, or do these guys (and a few gals) really think of themselves in such highfalutin terms? If they do, we are on the downslope to a police state, and we all should reconsider their role in society.

—Visduh

"Palomar College pours money into Rancho Bernardo campus" Neighborhood News May 19

This is an excellent report by Ken, and covers news that would never make the pages of the You-Tee. He has touched on many related issues, but those of declining enrollment and scads of former retail space coming available are both 800 pound gorillas in the room. The legislation that made school bond issues "easy"

to pass was short-sighted, in that school districts such as Palomar College can get approval for work that far exceeds the real need. The voters should put the brakes on all this spending until enrollment sorts itself out. Here in No. County we've seen Cal State, SM grow from nothing into a large campus with many buildings and many more under construction in less than thirty years. Where are all the students coming from? And where will they come from in even greater numbers in the future? The current declines in community college enrollment say that they will not keep coming. "Build it and they will come" might apply in a few places, but when it comes to colleges and universities, if the people in the right age brackets are not plentiful and lack interest, they won't show up regardless of how fancy the campus looks. The main point of the disparity of spending between a satellite campus in RB vs Fallbrook is a good one. The only justification could be that the taxes raised to pay off the bonds will come from the more affluent area of RB due to sky-high home prices and hence bigger tax bills. But nobody seems to have raised that point. Final comment: These career school administrators are a breed apart. They can do a lousy job, thumb their noses at the board members who employ them, get away with all sorts of wrongdoing, and still stay employed with very generous salaries. And if by chance one board fires them, they will soon resurface at another school or district.

—Visduh



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bring a baby with them - they had a level of comfort.” Houlahan got into a heated argument with councilmember Rob McNelis during a May 13 virtual board meeting on May 13 after local residents accused McNelis of denying that there is racism in Santee. Several of the public comments accused McNelis of being complicit after his supporters led racist attacks against a woman of color, Evelyn Andrade-Heymsfield, who was his opponent during the 2018 elections. Andrade-Heymsfield wrote to the council, and her words were read out loud during the meeting, along with other 31 public letters. “I lived in Santee for one short year, and during that time I was constantly told I didn’t belong there, I was not one of them. Out of fear for the safety for my family, we had to install a security system for our home. When I ran for office, people suggested I look in the mirror, because people who look like me cannot win in Santee. There is racism in Santee and it is offensive to people like me to claim ‘this is not who we are anymore,’ so please stop saying it. Do something to change this current reality. Denying racism exists in Santee when many of us have experienced it is insulting.”

McNelis responded that “a few of these comments are super disturbing to me, because they have no idea who the heck I am.” The councilmember said his mom’s real first name was Guadalupe. “She was ashamed by that, and changed her name to Marie.” McNelis claimed there were no Hispanics in Santee when he moved there in 1994, and that he became best friends with one of the few he met at his daughter’s kindergarten. He then added that the majority of people in Santee are thriving there, regardless of their background. McNelis claimed that people who are looking for trouble in Santee find trouble. He said he takes personal offense when people say Santee is a racist community because of everything Santee provided for him and his family. “None of these incidents were racist in any way, shape or form,” he claimed, because the people involved were protesting Governor Newsom. He blamed the media for looking for opportunities to call Santee “Klantee” — “because that’s what the media does.”

ANA NITA

ON CAMPUS

Palomar-ket forces Ex-President’s million-dollar office not the only questionable expense

White college kids in Rancho Bernardo get a real campus. But the Latinos and Native Americans near Fallbrook get trailer park classrooms. That was the gist of an outburst from board member John Halcon at the May 12 meeting of the Palomar College Governing



Palomar trustees Miyamoto and Halcon. “Everyone who thinks the Fallbrook campus will be viewed as a slum, raise your hand.”

Board. He was reacting to Palomar’s acting superintendent/president Jack Kahn, who had just told his elected board how the last of the Measure M bond money should be spent. The measure’s 2006 passage gave Palomar \$694 million to spend on capital improvements.

“What we have is a trailer park there,” Halcon said of the Palomar North campus, which is a collection of some 12 rented modular buildings east of Fallbrook and south of Rainbow. He was outraged that, of the \$151 million still unspent, President Kahn was suggesting that just \$10 million be spent on Palomar North. The Fallbrook campus would get no permanent structures based on President Kahn’s proposals, just new landscaping, paving, expanded front porches, signage and some new “shade structures” to complement the existing pre-fab classrooms. “It will be viewed as a slum,” Halcon said from his home during the Zoomed-in board meeting. He said the Hispanics of Fallbrook and the Native Americans from the nearby Pala Reservation who attend Palomar North would be slighted. “We are short-changing the minority community in North County San Diego.”

Others agreed. “I represent Fallbrook and Bonsall,” explained trustee Norma Miyamoto of Fallbrook. “The main reason I ran was to make sure the Fallbrook and Bonsall communities did not get stuck with the modular village commonly referred to as a trailer park.” Miyamoto, a former college administrator, said that Palomar’s satellite campus in Rancho Bernardo is “a beautiful, state-of-the-art facility — Rancho Bernardo being more of a college-bound community with a more white and Asian population. We wouldn’t dare settle for an interim village in that community. And yet here in Fallbrook, with a high amount of Latino communities and Native American population, we’re feeling comfortable offering that as a possible community. That gives me cause for concern.” Palomar’s Rancho Bernardo campus received \$72.5 million for new construction from Measure M. “We

made a commitment to that [Fallbrook] center and modules don’t qualify as a center,” added trustee Mark Evilsizer.

It often appeared as if acting president Kahn was acting independently of the five member Palomar board of trustees that oversees him. “Jack, I made clear to you my oppo-



“What we have is a trailer park there.”



Rancho Bernardo campus, Palomar College.

sition, yet none of the board members were ever invited to participate in that discussion,” says Halcon about the meetings where Kahn decided to keep the Fallbrook campus in portable buildings. When pressed by trustee Halcon, President Kahn admitted that 19 new buildings have been built on the main San Marcos campus, including a theater arts complex (\$22.7 million) and a new library

(\$67 million). Kahn explained how he relied on input from Palomar’s “executive cabinet” and “strategic planning council” for direction. He says it was decided that of the major projects currently being considered, it would be better to either spend \$54.5 million on a student center or \$65 million on an athletic center/kinesiology complex — to be built at Palomar’s main San Marcos campus. He also argued that the decision against building at the Fallbrook campus was not connected to race. “Keep in mind, [main campus] San Marcos has almost the same proportion of students of color as Fallbrook. Our logic is, we want to put the infrastructure on the main campus to have the biggest impact on the largest number of students. Our main campus is predominantly students of color.”

Whatever the students’ skin tone, it seems there are fewer of them, which raised the question: why build at all? “The main campus is losing students each year,” said Halcon. Palomar College (including satellite campuses) was once projected to have 47,500 students enrolled by the year 2022. Its enrollment peaked at 31,519 in 2009 and is approximately 30,000 now. Teresa Platt lives

two miles west from Palomar’s Fallbrook campus; she helped create the community group Save Gird Valley, which worked on defeating Measure EE in 2018. That \$38 million bond measure would have built a new high school on Gird Road in Bonsall. “It was the sixth time the community had voted no to building a new school in that

continued on page 30

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Walter Mencken's

SD ON THE QT

Almost factual news



Ad depicting line of eager patrons outside of Viejas on re-opening day. "Life is like a casino," observes Viejas spokesman Ron Ponyup. "Most people are suckers, happy to be governed by chance. A few pay enough attention to learn how things work, and they may do all right for a while. But eventually, the house wins — always. Everyone dies. May as well have some fun trying to beat the odds before the inevitable!"

A Calculated Risk

Casinos defend decision to re-open despite governor's concerns

Hateful Thought or Thoughtful Hate?

Tagger plasters extreme views all over seemingly reasonable building in Allied Gardens



"I was shocked," said local American Sam Eagle. "This is America. I know we have freedom of speech, but that does not give anyone the right to undermine an extremely profitable — and at the moment, unfortunately, extremely wobbly — trade relationship with one of the only nations on earth that has sufficient technological infrastructure combined with sufficient numbers of desperate workers to fulfill America's manufacturing needs. As for the coronavirus, they've told us that they're looking into it, that they've done everything they can, and that it's under control. What possible good can come from challenging that narrative? It's not going to bring anybody's grandmother back. Neither will reparations. Frankly, I think it's disgusting to consider putting a dollar amount on the worth of a human life, or even 100,000 human lives. The past is past. All we can do now is move forward and acknowledge that everybody has different strengths. Here in America, we're good at living comfortable lives and having democracy. There in China, they're good at making stuff for cheap. Apples and oranges, really."

All Dolled Up to Go Out

Newly reopened restaurants prepare to enforce social distancing with surplus sex dolls.

"Turns out they look pretty good with their clothes on, too!"



Eating out may never be the same, thanks to COVID-19. Here, Real Dolls Candy, Mandy, and Brandy hold down three spots at a grand banquet in Little Italy's Born & Raised.

Matt McMullen had a problem. The founder of San Marcos-based luxury sex doll company RealDoll had, as he puts it, "a factory full of way too many bodies in close proximity. I mean, literally stacked up on each other. That kind of crowding is bad for any company's bottom line these days, but especially mine. I needed to create some space, move some merchandise. What happened was, I knew the lockdown would increase Joe Pubic's private me-time. And ordinarily, whenever you have an explosion in masturbation, I have an explosion in

sales. And ever since I passed 40, I've realized how nice it can be to cuddle a bit in the afterglow. I figured I'd be moving product like never before. But what I didn't count on was 30% unemployment in San Diego County alone. You get that kind of economic buzz-kill, you're likely to turn to less expensive methods for sexual gratification. But as they say, every crisis is an opportunity. I read how some restaurants were placing giant stuffed animals or even mannequins in seats to create the appealing illusion of fullness while still keeping things safe. And my

girls are a hell of a lot better looking than stuffed animals and mannequins. So until things get back to, um, normal in the sex doll industry, I'm renting them out to select establishments. And because some of them have AI features,

they can even make conversation with solo diners who are eager to get out of the house, but still feel skittish about dating in a pandemic. Who knows — if the evening goes well, you can even take her home! For six grand or so."

School at Home ≠ Homeschool

San Diego Schools welcome end of so-called "distance learning"

"School is about so much more than data transfer from teacher to student," says Dahmer High School English teacher Pamela Ratched. "It's about the crucial socialization that takes part in the classroom, the lunchroom, and everywhere that students interact. High school teaches kids about the rest of their lives — the social order of American society, and their place in that order. And as we got into distanced learning, we started to see that order break down. We saw kids thriving in loving home environments

when they should have been learning fear and a sense of helpless self-loathing here in school. We saw them exploring new avenues of learning when they should have been absorbing the helpful patterns of behavior that will groom them for a life of menial service labor. It was worrying, to say the least. Thankfully, we had access to a veritable army of cyber-bullies, skilled at distanced behavioral regulation, at our disposal. And best of all, because all our kids were on school computers, they



An unpopular nerd receives a virtual swishy from one of the district's paid cyberbullies while attending school from home.

couldn't block the degrading abuse they so desperately needed to experience. Still, it'll be good when schools re-open in the fall and we can get back

to IRL conditioning. There's just something about seeing the spark go out of a child's eyes that you can't quite appreciate over Zoom."

NEWS TICKER

continued from page 3

seeing if they have derelict vehicles, things we don't do now. In this case, it really is a stretch to say because of COVID, we need drones." The paper reported that a compromise that would have limited the drone purchase to five also died on a 4-3 vote. Following the failure, the sheriff said he wasn't giving up. "Maybe we can word it differently to address their legitimate concerns."

Musk money mutes decorous Dems

Except for Gonzalez, who has nothing to lose Those wondering why Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez's Twitter attack on electric car and space rocket maven Elon Musk for opening his Tesla-making plant in violation of COVID-19 quarantine rules wasn't more widely endorsed by fellow Democrats might look to Musk's political giving.

paigns, ranging from \$4700 for Sylvia Rubio for Assembly to \$2800 to Rudy Salas, all went to Democrats, with the GOP's Heath Flora tying Democrats Steve Glazer, James Ramos, and Blanca Rubio for tenth place with \$2500. The Asian Pacific Islander Leadership PAC, which backs Democrats, got \$5,000, as did the Bay Area Legislative Leaders PAC, also benefiting Democrats. In all, Tesla spent \$102,212 on state politics last year, the disclosure data shows.

Gonzalez went after Musk with her "F*ck Elon Musk" tweet on May 9 after the car titan announced he would re-open Tesla's San Francisco Bay Area car-making plant despite Alameda County's ban on such operations during the COVID-19 crisis. While Alameda county and city of Fremont officials tried to negotiate for settlement of the dispute, Musk threatened to sue the county, move to Nevada, and proceeded with opening the California factory, the *Mercury News* reported. "We are the enforcement agency, but as of now, they are negotiating, so we're basically hoping those negotiations go well. So, we're not stepping in at this point," Fremont Councilman Vinnie Bacon, a sometimes dissident Democrat, said. "I think that's the more prudent approach as opposed to going in guns blazing," Bacon added.

"Tesla is an important partner for the city of Fremont and a part of Silicon

continued on page 32



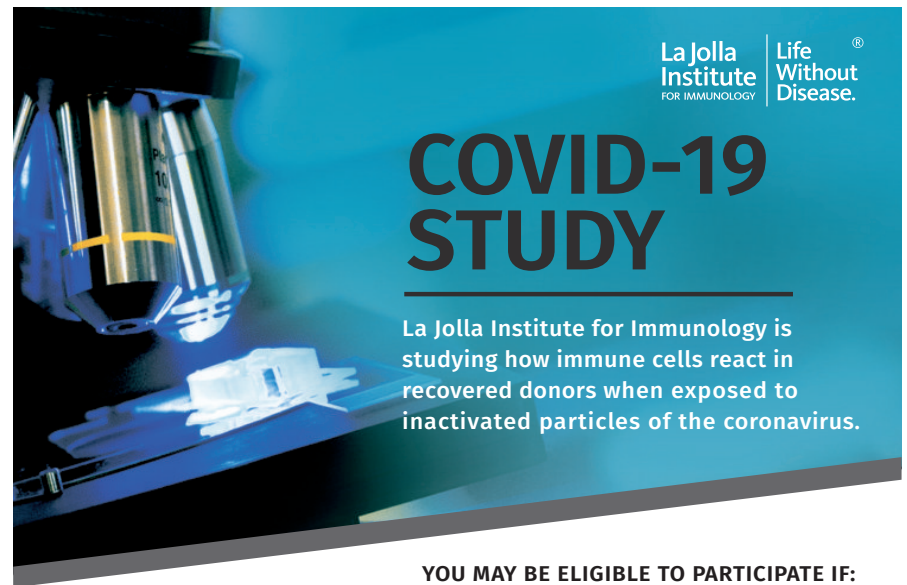
Telsa gave to Toni (left), but left Lorena lacking.

No specifications are contained in the El Cajon report for either the drone or the Mobile High Definition Camera Trailer included in the COVID-19 grant purchase. EyeQ Monitoring, a vendor of such surveillance products and services, describes a similar-sounding device on its website as "designed to make temporary site security and intelligence simple. As soon as our equipment arrives, simply park it where you want, raise the mast, and your site is live - allowing your team and ours to view the site remotely via desktop, smartphone or tablet."

Matt Potter

Two San Diego legislators — state senate pro-tem Toni Atkins and Assembly member Shirley Weber, both Democrats — have each received contributions from Tesla. In addition, San Diego city council Democrat Chris Ward's 2020 state Assembly campaign got \$1000 from Tesla on March 28 of last year. Atkins's state senate reelection bid took in a total of \$2200 from Tesla in March and June of last year, according to the auto manufacturer's major donor disclosure report for 2019, and Weber picked up \$2000 on March 14, 2019.

Tesla's top nine contributions to California cam-



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Reverse Zonies



Shannon Carlson, right, is a licensed real estate agent living in Phoenix's West Valley. "They call it the California Wave 2.0," she said. "That's the jargon in Phoenix regarding the many transplants from California."

IT'S ALMOST ZONIE SEASON — that time of year when the arrival of triple-digit heat prompts Arizonans to head west in search of cool ocean breezes. But over the last year, I've been driving east to Phoenix to view their \$200,000-\$350,000 homes for sale. During my search, I've learned from other San Diego-transplants about the pros and cons of leaving "America's Finest City" to move to America's Fastest Growing County.

"The data shows that about 691,000 people left California for other pastures around the U.S., while only about 501,000 people moved into the Golden State in 2018," according to an ABC 10 News report in November. The 2018 data also

showed that most former Californians moved to Texas (86,164) and Arizona (68,516).

Jake Moran, 23, ventured to hotter, drier pastures in July 2018 when he moved from south San Diego to Tempe, the home of Arizona State University. "I work full time and I get minimum wage: \$11 per hour," he said. "I am more than able to afford living out here, even between food, gas and everything — I'm totally fine. Whereas if I was living in San Diego making minimum wage" — which went up to \$13 per hour at the beginning of the year — "I'd be pretty thin and I wouldn't have much to stretch."

In January, I spoke to Moran at Zia Record

Exchange, where he works. He assisted me in purchasing a used Nintendo Wii console for \$45 and a cassette for my boombox.

"Here, I split the rent and utilities and pay \$620 a month with my roommate," he continued. "We have a two-bedroom apartment."

"Will you ever move back to San Diego?" I asked.

"I visit my family, mom, and eight siblings every three months," he said. "In my foreseeable future, I'd stay here for about 5 years. If I were to move, it wouldn't be to San Diego. It's not my style. It's cramped, everyone always wants to do something, and the cost of everything is so much."

I spoke to Shannon Carlson, a single mother of four who transplanted from Rancho to Goodyear — a city about 20 miles west of Phoenix — in April of 2018. We spoke in November, when the temperature in Phoenix was in the 90s.

“The heat wasn’t even an issue for me,” Carlson said. “Before living in San Diego, I relocated from the islands because my parents are from Hawaii and Guam, so heat to me is nothing new.”

“How long does it take you to drive back to San Diego?” I asked her. “About 4 hours and 40 minutes,” she responded. “I think we are the closest in terms of commuting from San Diego on the Google map app.”

That’s a half hour better than it takes me to get to Chandler, southeast of Phoenix. For a year, I’ve been looking for a house there.

Carlson is a licensed real estate agent in the state of Arizona; like us, she’s saving up to buy a home. For now, she’s renting from a friend who relocated from Rancho Bernardo.

“My friend bought the house here in 2018,” Carlson said. “It’s a four-bedroom, two-bath, and it’s 2400 square feet. It’s like \$1200 a month. It’s crazy, because here you can pay your mortgage and it’s nothing compared to our rent in San Diego. In Rancho, I was renting a four-bedroom and two-bath, and it was 2200 square feet for \$2500. We save so much here in Goodyear.”

Before my wife and I checked out the Phoenix area, we looked at homes in Temecula and El Centro. Initially, those cities made sense. We’d still be within two hours of our family and friends, and could continue our work

in San Diego during the transition. But while trekking between real estate listings in Imperial and Riverside Counties, we realized the areas weren’t good fits for us.

El Centro homes sell for about half the price of San Diego homes with comparable square footage, but the school district rating wasn’t good enough. On the *Niche.com* site, El Centro Elementary School District received a C+. *Niche.com* grades and rankings are calculated “using dozens of public data sets and millions of reviews,” according to the site. “Our data scientists and user researchers rigorously analyze data and user opinions to assess the key aspects of K-12 schools, colleges, and places to live.”

While Temecula Valley Unified School District received an A on the *Niche* site, the downside there is the traffic on the I-15 and I-215, and how far inland the homes are from the freeway exits. Without traffic, it takes about an hour and 15 minutes, driving the speed limit, to reach our home in the Cherokee Point neighborhood of East San Diego.

“This traffic is killing me,” said Paul, a U.S. Navy retiree who worked at Naval Base San Diego. “When I visit my old friends and do side jobs down in San Diego, five additional hours of my day are lost in driving — it should only be about three or four hours. There’s too many San Diegans making the same drive, and we’re clogging up the 15. I don’t think it’s worth it to move out here and travel to work in San Diego.”

According to Zillow — the “leading real estate and rental marketplace dedicated to empowering consumers with



Jake Moran moved from San Diego to Tempe, Arizona where he works for minimum wage at Zia Record Exchange. He says, “I am more than able to afford living out here, even between food, gas and everything — I’m totally fine.”

data” — as of February 2020, the median home value in San Diego County is \$602,153. Temecula is \$484,022; El Centro is \$249,730; and Maricopa County in Arizona, which includes Phoenix and its neighboring cities in the west and east valleys, is \$293,886.

Despite the longer trek and higher-than-El Centro home prices, Maricopa County seemed more viable for our needs. Maricopa County was ranked in April 2019 by the U.S. Census Bureau as the number one county in U.S. growth, with 81,244 additional residents from July 2017 to June 2018 alone. This spurt also helped lock down its fourth-most-populous county-in-the-U.S. ranking, with about 4.4 million residents.

Maricopa County is home to Phoenix, Mesa, Chandler, Scottsdale, Tempe, Glendale and other cities spread throughout its 9224 square miles.

“I moved to Arizona in September 2019, because the house I lived in in Linda Vista was built in 1942, and it had a serious mold issue and was falling apart,” Gail J. said. “I could no longer do the repairs.”

Gail, 62, lived in San Diego County for almost 40 years. Around September, she sold her Linda Vista home and purchased a 1300-square-foot, three-bedroom and two-bath home north of Phoenix.

“I bought my house outright for \$170,000,”

she said. “I could never afford to do that in California — I couldn’t even afford rent in San Diego.”

Gail is a single grandmother taking care of her twin 11-year-old grandchildren. “In July of 2016, my oldest daughter, the twins’ mother, lost her battle with men-

tal health and drug addiction,” she said. “I suffered what some call a broken heart. And six weeks later, I collapsed outside of my church in Clairemont, and had it not been for an off-duty police officer and my pastor performing CPR and using a defibrillator, I would not have made it. Three weeks later, when I got out of the hospital, my husband of 15 years left me. On January 13, 2017, my oldest son became the victim of a murder-suicide from being in the wrong place at the wrong time. So all I wanted to do was crawl into a bed and sleep my life away, but I had the twins to take care of. My grandkids really keep me on my toes. So we moved here to start all over, and now we have our new home.”

Ramon M. calls himself and his fellow-trans-

continued on page 33

During COVID-19, we are here for you with WELLNESS COACHING

We are all facing a unique time as we attempt to stay well during the COVID-19 pandemic. Wellness coaching can help individuals deal with this added level of stress and related challenges.

Our wellness coaching teams can support people with:

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- Improving relationships and social connection

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Your Week

AND WELCOME TO IT

Thursday | 28

YONDER MOUNTAIN STRING BAND



YONDER MOUNTAIN STRING BAND

Long-time festival favorites and jam-grass pioneers Yonder Mountain String Band is a progressive bluegrass group with nearly as many live albums to their credit as studio full-lengths. They've joined forces with JamBase to present Yonder May, a weekly video broadcast of YMSB sets from the 1990s and early 2000s, culled from the band's personal, fan-gifted VHS tape collection (i.e., bootlegs) and hand-edited on vintage videotape machines before being digitized by guitarist and founding member Adam Aijala.

WHEN: Thursday, May 28, 1 pm
WHERE: jambase.com

Friday | 29

LIVE ANIMAL FRIDAY: SEA STARS

The San Diego Children's Discovery Museum teams up with the Living Coast Discovery Center to bring you an up close look at sea stars and other invertebrates found along our San Diego beaches. Follow the Facebook



page to be notified when they go live.

WHEN: Friday, May 29, 10 am
WHERE: facebook.com/sdcdm

Saturday | 30

SLAY AT HOME VIRTUAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

This two-day online event features exclusive performances from over 30 bands, livestreams from the artists' homes, music commissioned especially for Slay at Home, and over a dozen cover collaborations performed remotely by the participants.



TESSERACT

Performers include Tesseract, Twelve Foot Ninja, Myrone, Darkest Hour, Astronoid, Silvertomb, Contracult Collective, A.A. Williams, Suicide Silence, Steve 'N' Seagulls, Angel Vivaldi, Spirit Adrift, and Johnny Booth and appearances Pustulus Maximus of Gwar, comedian Don Jamieson, and blood painter Vincent Castiglia.

WHEN: Friday and Saturday May 29 and 30, 4 pm
WHERE: slayathomefest.com

Sunday | 31

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST CINEMA

See seven 360 projects that were entered into the SXSW Virtual Cinema



THROUGH SUNDAY, MAY 31: SXSW VIRTUAL CINEMA COMPETITION

Competition prior to its cancellation by the city of Austin. Each of these works

showcases how virtual reality can take users to places they can't otherwise go. Participating projects will be available on Oculus TV from May 22-31. Titles include: *After the Fallout*, *The Curious Life of Bill Mont*, *Ferenj: A Graphic Memoir in VR*, *Gr8ness*, *Look at Me*, *Notre-Dame de Paris: A Unique Journey*, *Back In Time*, and *A Song Within Us*.

WHEN: May 22 through May 31, 12 pm.
WHERE: sxsw.com

Tuesday | 2

ACHIEVING YOUR ZERO WASTE POTENTIAL

Join Solana Center for a webinar to learn the basics of waste reduction. Workshop will cover the following topics: techniques and tips to reduce, reuse, or recycle; why our single-use culture needs to end; where our stuff comes from and where it goes; and how to adapt the basics of Zero Waste to the new reality of social distancing. This webinar will be held using Zoom. You will receive an email with link and password to join the day before the webinar occurs.

WHEN: Tuesday, June 2, 10 am to 11 am
WHERE: solanacenter.org



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.

BOOK SIGNINGS

Warwick's Author Livestream: Jason Stanley Warwick's will host professor of philosophy at Yale University and author of *How Propaganda Works*, Jason Stanley, in conversation with author branding expert, digital marketing strategist, and host of The Premise podcast, Jennifer Thompson, as Stanley discusses the new paperback edition of his book, *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*. Thursday, May 28, 4pm; facebook.com/warwickbooks/live. (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, andsomethingdifferentstudiogallery.com/artclassesandworkshopsinsandiego. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Emotional Health During & After the Pandemic Life during the pandemic brings heightened levels of stress. We are confronted each day by unsettling news. We are concerned for our health and our loved ones. We are anxious about what the future may bring. Thankfully, it's possible to manage and heal stress, during the pandemic and beyond. Register at: belovedsandiego.org/emotional-health-online-course. Saturday, May 30, 11am; free. (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, <https://www.livelessonmasters.com/>. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Meditations for Writers Each week in these weekly one-hour zoom sessions with Rebecca Jane, you will learn meditations that come from a variety of wisdom traditions. These are breathing techniques that you can practice every day. Saturday, May 30, 12:30pm; \$5. 18 and up. sandiegowriters.org. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Mostly Meditation This is a meditation only session. Brief instruction provided at the beginning of class as needed. All levels are welcome. With Dhyaana Sunday, May 31, 11am; free.

BOOZE NEWS

BY IAN ANDERSON

Brewery taprooms are back, with a catch

At noon on Thursday, May 21, for the first time in more than two months, **Mike Hess Brewing** opened its North Park, Imperial Beach, and Ocean Beach taprooms to customers, allowing them once again to sit together and talk over a beer, at a brewery.

The Hess beer businesses were among the first to open for business following the news, announced late on May 20, that San Diego county restaurants had been given the green light to welcome back customers, more than two months after a statewide order prohibited dine-in food and drink service throughout California.

To re-open, businesses must follow strict safety protocols designed to prevent the spread of coronavirus, including guidelines for social distancing, wearing masks, and sanitation. The exact rules are outlined in an Industry Guidance document issued by San Diego County, in conjunction with OSHA and the California Department of Public Health.

That document specifies that "Brewpubs, breweries, bars,

pubs, craft distilleries, and wineries should remain closed." However, it adds this very important caveat: "...unless they are offering sit-down, dine-in meals. Alcohol can only be sold in the same transaction as a meal."

That gives a re-opening edge to brewpubs, which combine a brewery and full-service restaurant, and for business partnerships such as the Hess beergarden in Imperial Beach, which operates in collaboration with City Tacos.

However, for most brewery taprooms, the option to reopen now hinges on another point of county guidance, which states alcohol businesses that do not serve food themselves, "can contract with another vendor to do so... provided both businesses follow the guidance below and alcohol is only sold in the same transaction as a meal."

For the Mike Hess Brewing taprooms in North Park and Ocean Beach to open under the new guidelines, cofounder Mike Hess says he followed the **California Craft Brewers Association** suggestion to "be creative."

In Ocean Beach, that meant working in conjunction with a neighborhood restaurant, OB Deli, which provides ready-made sandwiches that are sold to guests, along with beer, in the taproom. At the North Park brewery, beers can be purchased only with a \$5 credit for food for the Eat Your Heart Out food truck, which will remain parked on-site during business hours going forward.

Chula Vista's **Bay Bridge Brewing** likewise re-opened Thursday, with a plan for rotating food trucks to park in its beer garden. Cofounder Jim Shirey points out that food trucks on the Bay Bridge back patio were already a regular feature at the brewery, and that some of them will now be returning to business themselves, after having had no place to park these two shut down months.

Aside from COVID-19 safety protocols, such as spacing out tables outside on the patio, return-

ing customers will find Bay Bridge beers available in 16-ounce crowlers. That's a change from pre-pandemic days: Shirey says a new crowler machine was an investment that allowed the busi-



Shortly after noon on May 21, socially distanced patrons returned to the Mike Hess brewery in North Park for the first time since the statewide shutdown went into effect on March 17.

ness to fill and sell 4-packs in order to weather the shutdown.

While most breweries and even brewpubs did not open immediately under the new guidelines, several were poised to do so by the end of May or beginning of June, as they prepared their businesses to meet the new protocols, which require all service employees to wear face coverings. Customers are expected to wear face coverings when not eating or drinking, but customers in the same party may sit together without them.

Most of the early afternoon customers at Mike Hess North Park enjoyed beers together without wearing masks. Some had made it a point to visit after learning about the re-opening on social media; others had been walking by, or stopped in to buy take-out beer and hand sanitizer and stayed when they realized they could enjoy their first drink out in more than nine weeks.

The majority of San Diego brewery taprooms

do not serve meals on a regular basis, and even those readying to re-open soon are being cautious with regard to meeting the new restrictions. For example, **Rip Current Brewing** in San Marcos doesn't serve food, but its North Park taproom shares a space with the Craft House counter restaurant. That's why Rip Current cofounder Paul Sangster is rehiring bar staff now to open the North Park location soon, but holding off on San Marcos, for now.

"We are working to better understand what level of food service is required to re-open," he says, noting that for the moment, public messaging has brewery owners remaining cautious. "It has been difficult to get clarity on this topic that could lead some breweries (not us) to

doing something basic and re-opening," he says. A lot of customers may remain cautious too. Hess hopes returning customers will remain respectful of breweries' obligations to strictly follow county guidelines regarding masks, distancing, and sanitation.

Sangster is optimistic, though he expects it will take time before taprooms start seeing customers return in greater numbers. When I reached out to Sangster in mid-March, when the stay home order first went into effect, he correctly predicted it would be two months before on-premise service would resume. Today, he's forecasting a slow week or two before beer fans feel secure enough to return to their favorite brewery establishments.

"I also wouldn't be surprised," he says, "to see a surge in customers during late May and June."

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

18 and up. dharmacenter.com. (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, outsidethelens.org/workshops. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Painting Class: Sunset Palm Tree Two hour painting class via Zoom. Use your own supplies. Can use other materials: crayons, markers, colored pencils, watercolors, pastels, etc. Thursday, May 28, 2pm; \$25. lovejoycreations.com/. (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, sandiegoballet.org/school/online-ballet-classes. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Mosaics 4: My Boundaries Are... MOSAICS is an annual creative showcase that features San Diego artists as they share their experiences with a special theme.

"Personal boundaries" is the theme for 2020. Saturday, May 30, 2pm; free-\$5. eventbrite.com/e/mosaics-4-my-boundaries-are-online-week-long-event-tickets-94101469027. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Twin TempleVision Twin Temple announces the spawning of TTV (Twin TempleVision), a hellish new weekly livestream, broadcasted from their Satanic ritual chamber. The duo shares devilish jokes, answers burning questions from fans, and of course performs Doo-Wop and blasphemous rites that you can join along with at home. Sunday, May 31, 3pm; facebook.com/twintempleforever. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Voices for Children CASA Volunteer Information Session As a Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteer, you will work with a child or teen in foster care by advocating for their needs while serving as a consistent and supportive person in their life. Learn more and RSVP for an Information Session at link. Thursday, May 28, 6pm; free. 21 and up. speakupnow.org/. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

WIB-Southern California: Business Operations Fireside Chat This event is ideal for those thinking about a transition or working to identify the ideal next path in their career. WIB's SIPs Fireside Chats are 60 minute QA panels with life science professionals from

the MAPS (Mentorship, Advisors, Peers, and Sponsorships) programs who share how they transitioned from one type of role in life science to another. Thursday, May 28, 5pm; free-\$5. womeninbio.org/event/SoCal052820. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

FOR KIDS

Free Diaper Drive-Throughs Miracle Babies will be hosting a series of diaper drive-through events at separate locations in San Diego. These drive-throughs are being held for local San Diego

families in need during this difficult time and require prior registration via email. Parents will be asked to display diaper size needed on their parking lot to limit contact. Diapers will be loaded directly into families' vehicle for a no-contact experience. These events require participants to register, please email events@miraclebabies.org to sign up or volunteer. Sunday, May 31, 10am; free. Scripps Health Campus, 10140 Campus Point Court. (LA JOLLA)

Live Fun Animal Friday Sea Stars We're splashing through your screen with the Living Coast Discovery Center to bring you

up close with sea stars and other invertebrates found along our San Diego beaches. Friday, May 29, 10am; free. facebook.com/events/1214713938880067. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

Seaport Streams Seaport Streams delivers family-friendly content bringing a some much-needed silliness and recreation to our homebound audience. The episodes are accessible via a live streaming Vimeo channel and on Seaport Village's Facebook page. Friday, May 29, 10:30am; facebook.com/SeaportVillage/. (DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO)

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Existential eating out

Thanks to First Night and a little grog, people are excited, like, “We’re ba-ack!”

Word got out this morning. “Today’s the day!” (This was last Thursday.) Everybody talking about the reopening of restaurants for sit-down.

So hey, I decide just to hop on the Orange Line, ride it down to the Santa Fe Depot, hike up to Little Italy, and see what’s giving.

At first, everything is closed. But there is a lone hope at Petrini’s, on the corner of India and Ash. “We’ll be opening tomorrow for dining in,” says a guy shifting chairs about.

Great, but I need today. Tonight. First time in a couple of months! Feels like a couple of years I’ve been passing these husks of restaurants.

The lights are brighter further up India. Isola has people sitting inside, drinking drinks. But I don’t see any eating going on. Bunch of guys on electric scooters have stopped and clustered around one place, Sorrento. Everyone is extra friendly. “No sit-down food here,” says this tall guy. “But Bolt, just at the end of the next block, they’re dining in. And next block, there’s Zinqué. That’s about it right now. Hey, it’s first night off the leash.”

Now I’m worried places will start closing down. Past nine already. Good sign: Piazza de la Famiglia is all lit up, and tables and chairs have been spread out. I’m just kinda staring when my buddy Nicholas turns up, in his top hat and tails as usual. He is one of Little Italy’s bona fide eccentrics. And now he’s excited. “Cafe life!” he says. “Civilization!”

“We’ve just come from Bolt,” says his friend Robert. “Two hours!”

So yes, got to check out this new joint, Zinqué. Opened here in Little Italy recently. I hump it up to Hawthorn. And wow. Brand-new-looking place in a brand new building, and open on the corner with Kettner. People sitting and noshing. Turns out it’s a small chain. Out of LA, looks like. Because I see it’s “also in Venice and Weho.” (D’agh? Weho? China? Oh. West Hollywood.) People eating sal-

ady things and drinking wine like it’s just another summer night. Long wait to sit down, but they say the kitchen closes really soon, anyway. Server guy says they open 6:30 tomorrow for breakfast.



So now, only chance is The Bolt. I mean, I was there maybe 6 weeks ago, buying a takeout burger, fish and chips, and a beer. In a plastic pint pot. F&C were supposed to be for my friend

Annie. She wouldn’t allow “those smelly things” in her car. So, sigh, I had to eat the whole caboodle. But what was hell was balancing them and that squishy beer as well. So now I’m really looking forward to doing this properly.

Place is crowded but not crowded. Like a freshly thinned forest. Ah yes. Distance seating. Everybody not eating or drinking is masked. Kinda looks like a scene from a Vegas Western musical. Specially with the corrugated iron walling, colored Christmas lights hanging from the black ceiling. I mean, who’d a think you could persuade all these yuppies to dress up like this? Because most of them don’t have masks; they’re sporting bandannas, around their faces or around their necks. Also, thanks to First Night, and a little grog, conversation’s up, table-crossing. People are excited, like, “We’re ba-ack!”

Couple sitting outside sipping and chowing. Jen has a Tropical IPA, Tom’s onto a stout. Both Bolt-brewed, natch. \$7 each. I remember now, owner Clint saying Bolt was San Diego’s first-ever craft brewery. He opened it in 1987, when he was 19. I see Jen and Tom are also eating a grilled chicken club sandwich (\$14.95), and a San Diego burger (with avo, bacon, \$15.95). I have to take a moment. Just the act of doing this — eating, drinking on the sidewalk, together — feels like something you’ve got to use a big word for. Existential? OK, let’s just say awesome.

“You may be just in time,” says Molly who, oh yeah, is the owner with husband Clint. “Kitchen closes at 10.”



Molly brings my (way too big) meal



First customers? Jen and Tom don’t have to eat (and drink) at home!

Ayee! Like, now I have to wait until someone leaves to get within the joint’s maximum capacity. Molly gives me the menu. Pub menu. Starters like Parmesan garlic fries, (\$6.95), breaded fried pickle spears (\$8.95), wings (\$12.95).

Hmm. Like the idea of wings, mainly because they’re dunked in mango habanero. (You could opt for BBQ or Buffalo.) Plus a pot of ranch dressing.

Then in the mains: the ones I had last time were fish and chips (\$13.95, and just fine, with four pieces of cod that made for two meals), and a bacon cheeseburger (\$13.95). Predictably delish. Prices not bad for Little Italy rents.

So tonight? Go for the mango habanero wings, and a BLTA toasted sandwich (\$12.95). Oh, and the luxury of one of their basic Bolt brews, Love Canoe (\$7).

Takes another ten minutes of standing at their corner door (you have to wait outside), but a couple of people finally get up and leave. Molly wipes down their table and signals me in.

At the next table, Crystal and Dan and Ryan are celebrating Dan’s birthday, which just happens to be today. “You, sir, were born under a good



Nicholas and Robert: setting the tone

sign,” I say.

“It’s been tough, these two months,” says one of the guys wiping down stools and tables. “Tonight couldn’t have come soon enough.”

I grasp the cool one and take a long, slow slurp of my Love Canoe. Out of a glass, not a squishy plastic soup pot. These little things! On the sound system, Neil Diamond sings “Sweet Caroline.”

All is well with the world. ■

The Place: Bolt Brewery and Eatery, 1971 India Street, Little Italy, 619-917-6082

Hours 11am-10pm (till 1am, Thursday, Friday)

Prices: BLTA toasted sandwich \$12.95; six mango habanero wings, \$13.95; beer and parmesan fries, \$14.95; fried zucchini, parmesan, ranch, \$9.95; wings (6), \$13.95; three sliders (grilled onions, cheese), \$11.95; Bacon Cheese Burger (half-pounder, cheddar), \$13.95; All-American Burger (half-pounder, bacon), \$15.99; Bolt Burger (no bacon), \$12.95; BLT, \$11; grilled cheese on toast, \$8; fish and chips (fries, cole slaw, tartar sauce), \$13.95; chicken tenders, \$13.95; Caesar salad, \$11.95

Bus: 83

Nearest Bus Stops: (Northbound) India at Cedar; (Southbound) Kettner at Grape

Trolley: Green Line

Nearest Trolley Stop: County Center/Little Italy

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Stuck at home treats

For the latest reviews from Reader writers and a complete searchable list of 2000 restaurants, please visit SDReader.com/feast

Metl Bar delivers boozy ice cream to San Diego

Metl Bar & Restaurant; 748 5th Avenue, Downtown San Diego. Rock music should have been what drew me to Metl Bar & Restaurant. That's the new mantle of the

Gaslamp space previously called The Hopping Pig. New ownership gave it a rock bar revamp late last year, while maintaining its rotational draft beer lineup and perking up its craft cocktail program.

Longtime Hopping Pig general manager Jenna Elskamp took over the venue, along with her husband Randy, and they sunk their lifestyle into the place, playing classic punk tunes on Tuesday nights, and hosting live music Thursdays through Saturdays.

FEAST!

Not that a great rock show wouldn't be a thousand percent welcome catharsis right about now, but something else brought me around in the meantime: boozy ice cream.

Which is exactly like it sounds, only better. Metl's creations sit at the intersection of small batch ice cream and craft cocktail culture. It might be as straightforward as turning a negroni into gelato. The paloma gelato gets a creative upgrade over its tequila cocktail inspiration: rather than lime juice and grape soda, the ice cream version gets charred grapefruit, lime zest, and tain.

Randy Elskamp is an industry veteran, having been a bartender at agave bar Cantina Mayahuel, and the couple started making ice cream with alcohol years ago to serve at parties. Friends have been coming back



A Metl cheeseburger & batanga ice cream, made with Corralejo Tequila & Mexican Coke.



Adios Quarandream: inspired by the Adios Motherfucker cocktail, made with vodka, gin, rum, blue cucacao, lemon zest, & Lucky Charms cereal.

asking for more. One of them made the menu at Hopping pig a couple years back: a mezcil peanut butter ice cream made with Reese's peanut butter cups.

The Elskamps carried the idea forward to Metl, but Randy says the concept has really taken off during the shutdown. Once take-out cocktails became legal, boozy ice cream turned out to be a kind of perfect stuck at home treat for those no longer allowed to sip drinks at the bar. They're now making up to 18 different flavors.

Metl is set up for pick-up, offers free delivery on orders over 20 bucks. I called in for a cheeseburger and poutine, though my real target was



Paloma gelato: boozy ice cream made with Don lorenzo tequila, charred grapefruit, lime zest, & tain.

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the ice cream: batanga, inspired by the simple drink of tequila, Coca Cola, and lime. I couldn't resist the idea of Metl's ice cream version, flavored with Mexican Coke. I don't know whether the Corralejo Tequila contributed to the ice cream's pleasantly soft texture, but it definitely brought the slight buzz. Each eight ounce tub of boozy ice cream contains two ounces of booze (priced \$5-6 apiece).

In addition to refining the pandemic's ideal stuck-at-home dessert, the Metl team has been doing something greater good work as well. From the very first day California closed dining rooms, Metl has been serving free meals to out of work hospitality workers. "We're such an industry bar, and industry people," says Randy Elskamp, "You see some of your best friends and you know they're hurting... We put it out there, if you're hungry and need a meal, we'll hook it up."

Their actions inspired a few of their vendors to jump in and sponsor additional meals, including Corralejo Tequila, Makers Mark, Illegal Mezcal, Skrewball Peanut Butter Whiskey, and mineral water brand Topo Chico.

The additional support has



A double-cut, bone-in fried pork chop, with panko and sesame crust.

helped the Metl Meal Program give away about a thousand meals and counting, including burgers, soups, and sometimes including bottles of hand sanitizer. And as the shut-down has worn on, people who received free meals when they needed them most, are now coming back to pay it forward. "What's been happening" Elskamp tells me, "is people got their stimulus check or unemployment check. I've been seeing them come back to buy food for people who haven't gotten their checks yet... It's awesome to see everybody pull together."

by Ian Anderson

Three good reasons to order from Madison on Park

Madison, 4622 Park Boulevard, University Heights. I have to be honest: I did not expect to find myself ordering from Madison on Park during this shutdown. The University Heights restaurant has much going for it, but near the top of the list is the beautiful arched rooftop of its indoor/outdoor dining room. Add upscale dishes, excellent wine, and craft cocktails, and you get one of the most romantic dinner date settings in San Diego. We know this.

But there's no taking a date

to dine at Madison right now, or any romantic dinner venues. For those without established relationships prior to covid-19, dating takes place over video these days. At best, singles can hope for take-out shared outside, from a distance. Madison's architecture can't do anything to help that.

So what changed? Well, I heard how Madison is going about its business these days, with its dining room closed, and I think it's awesome.

First: 100 percent of its revenue is going to support its employees. Not just what it gets from take-out orders, but what it makes in gift card sales too. For the kitchen staff it keeps working, that means full salaries, despite the slowdown in business. For service staff that can't get in full shifts anymore, it means financial relief to help them weather the state's shelter-in-place order. Like many restaurants, Madison has set up a GoFundMe campaign, soliciting donations for further support of its workers, but in that too the



Take-out packaging, including a cocktail to go, with big ice cube packed separately.

restaurant's owners appear to be coming through for their team, pledging to quadruple match all donations.

This is coming from a free-lancing food writer who has been hit hard by the economic realities of a pandemic: if I'm going to spend money at a restaurant, to continue this column, I want that money to go as far as it can to help those in the struggling hospitality sector.

For me, that means sticking to locally owned small businesses, and it means supporting businesses that try to do right by their staff. By rule of thumb: if a business is one, it's more likely to be the other.

All that rationale is what led me to pick up Madison's famous, double cut pork chop. The panko and sesame seed crusted chop was served with two of my favorite vegetables, broccolini and asparagus for \$26. It added a harvest salad: baby spinach and brussels sprouts with bacon, gouda, corn, and roasted butternut squash with a balsamic vinaigrette (\$12). I phoned in

my order, and did get a chance to spend a couple minutes admiring the restaurant's dining room while picking it up.

And though I'm currently well stocked for beer and booze at home, I couldn't pass on the opportunity to pick up one of the house cocktails served with the big ice cube. Madison's perhaps best known for its negronis, but I did not go wrong picking the Old Fashioned, made with rye whiskey, pecan smoked maple syrup, and cherry bark vanilla bitters. The smooth yet strong beverage was served to go in two plastic cups: one with the mixed spirits, the other with the giant ice cube. It was ready to be poured at home, garnished with lemon rind held in place by an adorable miniature clothespin.

The whole set up still works out for a take-out dinner, romantic or otherwise. That said, if the romantic aspect works out well, Madison offers weekend brunch, to-go.

by Ian Anderson

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blurt the inside track

Dr. Demento got me started Carlsbad's Christopher Maddox aka the "Crisis Crooner" — Telematics Executive (whatever that means), husband, father, Elvis impersonator, civic booster, sculptor of online parody songs — watched the

Name"), and the one that shot him to, if not the top of the charts, at least "Hand Sanitize," with a singalong chorus borrowed from "Sweet Caroline." "I love to sing," Maddox explains. "I'm in that closet singing on my music apps



Christopher Maddox wants to be the San Diego Chicken of our time.

coronavirus creep through his Chinese business contacts; then along social media, and then, finally, hitting close to home.

"I was in the Albertsons parking lot as we were on a normal grocery run," he recalls. "My wife came back and said most of the aisles were cleared out. The toilet paper, Vitamin C, bread, bagels, etc. were all gone. Even the gross bagels with onions & stuff on them were gone!"

Still, Maddox resolved to maintain positivity through comedy. He went right home and composed "Hand Spray," to the tune of Sinatra's "My Way." And he hasn't stopped since.

This lead in rapid succession to "It Seems I Clean" ("I Dreamed A Dream") "I Walk The Dog 5 Times A Day" ("You Give Love A Bad

whether there is a crisis or not," he laughs. "I use the social karaoke app called Smul, and will go on there for hours.

"I'm not a doctor, so I wanted to use the skills I have to help. To get people to stop, breathe & laugh. Mental health help during a time of extreme focus on physical health."

His next move involved Cash'd Out, the Johnny Cash tribute band based out of San Diego. Maddox knew them through tribute band circles, since he's played Elvis for several years in his own Graceband project.

"I reached out to them because I had a great idea that fit: A theme song for out-of-work musicians called 'I'm for Hire,' to the tune of 'Ring of Fire.' They loved it & recorded it remotely on their phone, sent it to me

& I completed the project on iMovie."

Maddox credits his parody-song zeal to "Dr. Demento on KMET in my formative years. Of course Weird Al is the spiritual father of all this. He was smart and clever with lyrics, which I also try to be. He is the quality standard. But songs like 'Fish Heads,' 'They're Coming to Take Me Away, Ha-Haaa!,' 'The Lumberjack Song' all informed my sense of comedy, and they rattle around in my

brain when I do this."

He says he wants to be "The San Diego Chicken of our time." He looks forward to retiring the "Crisis Crooner" and plopping the Elvis wig back on, but until then, he emphasizes: Donate to the San Diego Food Bank, support the Belly Up's aid to struggling musicians, and don't forget to laugh.

"We have an Elvis garden gnome that we move each day for the kids to find as they walk around," he finishes. We try to find ways to do little things."

— Andrew Hamlin

Unscathed so far What's going on with our rap artists during lockdown?

Rosarito based record producer Z-Boi is self-quarantining and producing reggaeton music and rap-beats from his Shock Da World



Recordz studio located 18 miles south of the border.

"Regarding rappers [Fred Da Godson and Scarface], man it's sad," he said, "the black and brown are dying faster than any other group."

The two rappers caught the coronavirus in April. Bronx-rapper Fred Da Godson, died on April 23, and Geto Boys' Scarface said 'I Was Inches Away From Death' in an April 24 Billboard article.

On Fred Da Godson's last tweet on April 6, he posted a photo of himself wearing a breathing apparatus and captioned it: "I'm in here with this Covid-19 shit! Please keep me in y'all prayers!!! #GodIsGreat."

"May God rest his soul" said Mike, a local hip-hop DJ, "man, Fred Da Godson was so young (35). Then I saw the news about DJ Jazzy Jeff, Fresh Prince of Bel Air's (Will Smith) homie and DJ Webstar — they caught it too. This [is] some serious shit and I'm finna chill even when they lift our orders."

Rappers YNW Melly and Slim Thug tested positive for COVID-19 as well.

Since our countywide lockdown, it appears on social media that none of our local rappers caught the coronavirus.

Rossi was quarantined and got a tat of Tweety Bird on his forearm, and Rob Stone dropped a remix of his "Too Faded" cut featuring P-Lo and Snoop Dogg. Other hip-hop heads produced beats and rhymes from their home studios.

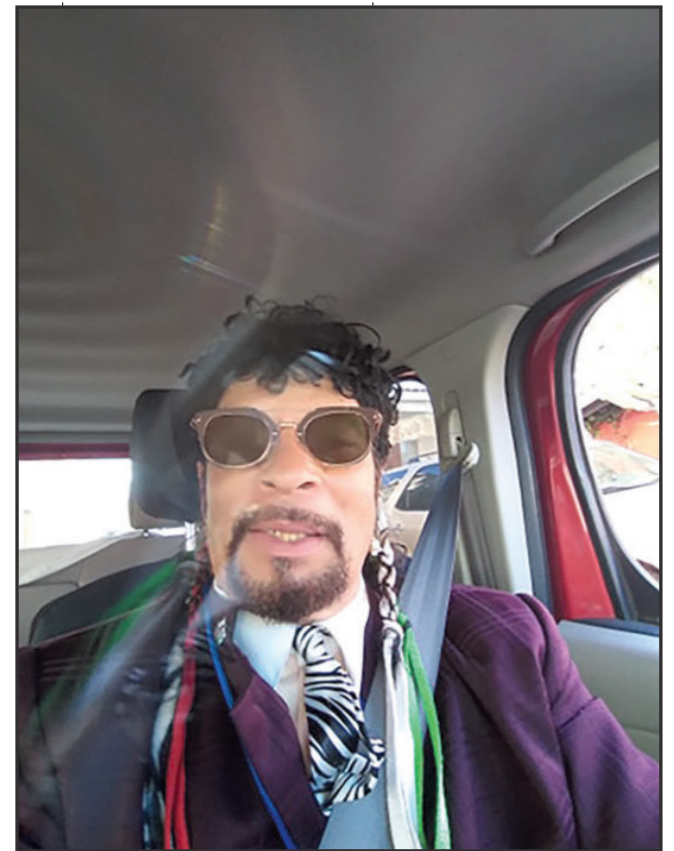
North County-rapper

Kiyoshi is providing rap-tutorials online, and took to Instagram and busted a few joints he recently wrote. One verse went like:

*"Cuz nowadays it's like the Truman show
Hope and pray to see the mainstream news cancelled
Yeah
I be sipping chai tea
Cookin' rhymes in a lab
Like they did COVID-19"*

challenge all the rappers, the trappers, the ballers, you know everybody out there you know I want y'all to do something good for your community I want you to help out your people and tag me if you do it."

Less than two weeks after Heartbreaka's video went live, Jay-Z and Meek Mill's criminal justice reform organization, The Reform



Z-Boi: "The black and brown are dying faster."

Heartbreaka from southeast San Diego posted an IG video on April 23.

"What you see is 1000 K-95 masks that we're donating," said the southeast rapper, singer and songwriter, "we're gonna be sending them out to the hospitals and the front liners... this is just a small gesture and I wish we could do more. But I wanna

Alliance, reportedly sent out 130,000 masks to correctional facilities around the U.S.

—Mike Madriaga

Find Blurt online at SDReader.com/blurt

CONTRIBUTORS

Robert Bush, Chad Deal, Dave Good, Andrew Hamlin, Dryw Keltz, Ken Leighton, Jay Allen Sanford

LOCAL *five*

JAY ALLEN SANFORD

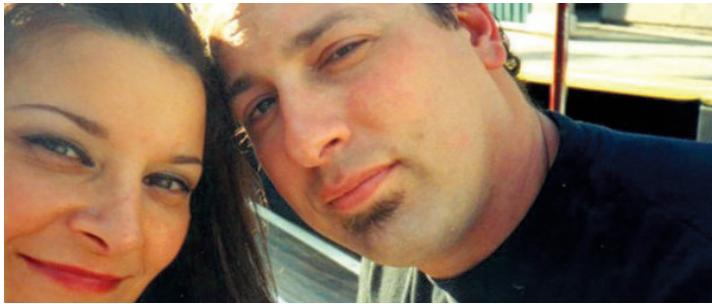
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GAYLE SKIDMORE

After stealing her father's guitar so she could learn to play at the age of 11, Gayle Skidmore moved to England to study at Oxford University. While overseas, she performed on a local TV channel, as well as busking street corners in Germany, Italy, Austria, and Switzerland. She returned to San Diego to study for a master's degree in theology with a concentration in Hebrew, but music was always foremost on her mind. Skidmore formed her own label, Raincoat Records, to release her debut five-song EP *Gayle*, issued in 2002. She played fourteen instruments on her

2010 album *Make Believe*, including the folk harp and the marimba, and composed all of the parts for her cellist and violinist. The record came with a coloring book, a tradition she's maintained on subsequent releases. Her new single "All My Life" (due May 29) was co-produced by Jeff Berkley (Berkley Hart) at Om Studio at Jason Mraz's Organics Avocado Ranch. The track features local guest vocals from Berkley, Veronica May, Isaac Cheong, Heather Nation, and Billy Galewood. She's currently working on a piano album recorded in the Netherlands at Wisseloord Studios.



BLACK MARKET III

Singer-guitarist Scottie Blinn and bassist Roxy Coverdale formed Black Market III as a working side project while Blinn was on a break from recording and touring with the Mississippi Mudsharks, a band who were nominated for San Diego Music Awards over a dozen times, winning three of them. Originally known as Black Market Baby, they established their soulful blues and Americana roots sound on a CD of originals and covers of artists like Tom Waits, Wayne Walker, and Leadbelly, released in spring 2012. They've recorded several more projects at Blinn's Grease

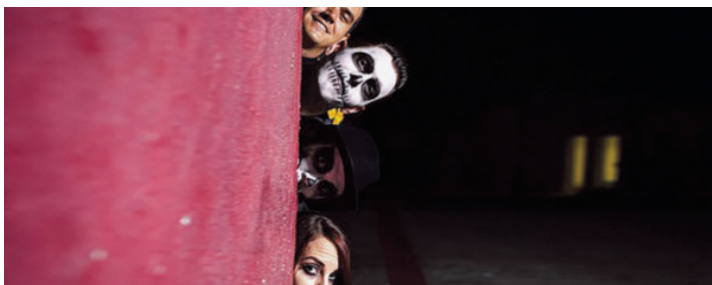
Punk Studio in Lakeside, and have landed multiple overseas tours. Their 2018 album *Dashboard Jesus* debuted at number 25 on the *Roots Music Report's* Top 50 Contemporary Blues Chart, with the singles "Daddy Rollin' Stone" reaching number 4. "When the Sun Goes Down" reached number 32 in *Living Blues Magazine*. While Blinn and company work on their second CD for Rip Cat Records, they've released *The Let It Be Project*, created in their mobile Grease Punk Studio and featuring musician contributions from around the world.



DEAF CLUB

Few locals keep busier than Justin Pearson, even during a pandemic lockdown. Aside from band projects like the Locust, Dead Cross, Planet B, and his growing Three One G record label, Pearson has a group called Deaf Club with Brian Amalfitano (ACxDC), Scott Osment (Weak Flesh), Jason Klein (Run With The Hunted), and Tommy Meehan (The Manx, Chum Out). Last year's *Contemporary Sickness* EP came with a music video for "Bright Side Of Death," built from fast-paced footage of the band performing in front of a strobe-lit wall of amps. A video for "Bounced Reality Check," directed by Dark Details (Planet B, Kool Keith), is a zombie apocalypse mini-movie. Another video, for "Boysfriends of Christ," features around a minute of jarring black

and white found footage. Late last year saw the debut of the video for "Days of Amusement Are Over," comprised of live footage from a record release show at the Factory DTLA. *Contemporary Sickness* will be re-released in a cassette remix edition featuring the original tracks, along with bonus remixes featuring GothBoiClique's YAWNS (with accompanying video), Bubblegum Octopus, 304angstroms, and DJ Embryonic Petit Sac. The limited edition of 200 neon green cassettes, released through Three One G and Sweatband Records, will be followed by a digital release. A vinyl edition sports cover art by graphic designer Jesse Draxler (Nine Inch Nails, Daughters, New York Times).



READY SET SURVIVE

High energy pop-punk trio Ready Set Survive features bassist-singer Sean Drake (Silent Lune, Zone of the Interior), singer-guitarist Troy Cook, and drummer Morgan Guest. Their love of anthemic rock that aspires to stadium sing-a-longs is evident in their list of influences, which include Green Day, AFI, Rise Against, A Day to Remember, Muse, and local heroes Unwritten Law. Since releasing their debut self-titled EP in 2017, they've appeared and performed on local television shows such as KUSI's *Good Morning San Diego*, as well

as a spotlight segment of NBC 7's *SoundDiego*. The band is working on a new EP called *Keys*, with three piano covers of their original tracks "Young and Dumb," "A Voice Inside," and "Black and Blue." According to Troy Cook, "These will be all home based recordings done during quarantine. It's been a fun learning process, and nice to get back to my keyboard roots for a bit." The project, due for release on June 15, was entirely tracked with an 88-key Yamaha keyboard and a \$99 Dynamic microphone.



THE HAVNAUTS

Formed in 2017, the Havnauts were founded when Shelbi Bennett (the Midnight Pine) began working on songs with Jenny Merullo (Black Sands, Heavy Guilt), a fellow teacher at the San Diego School of Rock. They were joined by Zak Kmak (Winchester Friendlies) for a few shows, and then added Josh Smith (Monkeys in Space) to their ranks. Early singles released online include "Woke Up Late" and "Ghosts," the latter also filmed as a video. Merullo has also drummed for French Kiss Koma and Shady Francos. The Havnauts EP *Go For It*, released in September 2018

and recorded at Earthling Studios in El Cajon by Mike Kamoo, won Best Local Recording at the San Diego Music Awards. A video for "Gained Weight" debuted last September, and their eight-song album *Real Good Now*, again recorded with Kamoo, was released on New Year's Day. The album recently spawned a characteristically pink-hued video for the track "Melody Albertson," with each member miming the bouncy track in their own individual homes and yards.

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

Online Internet Events:
Thursday, 1pm — Virtual Music Lounge: Kolonien.
Thursday, 4pm — Work From Home with Watkins Family Hour.
Thursday, 1pm — Yonder Mountain String Band: Yonder May.
Friday, 12pm — Casbah Live.
Friday, 3pm — Dropkick Murphys: Streaming Outta Fenway.
Friday, 10am — Insomnium: Winter's Gate Livestream Concert.
Friday, 12pm — Marty Stuart's Way Out West: A Country Music Odyssey.
Friday & Saturday, 4pm — Stay At Home Virtual Music Festival.
Saturday, 1pm — Escape the Virus with a Lights Out-ing.
Saturday, 12pm — Live From the Grammy Museum Archives.
Saturday, 4pm — Mike Pinto Acoustic Livestream.
Saturday, 5:30pm — Ron Pope Live From Home.
Sunday, 7pm — Gregory Page Almost Live Virtual Variety Show.
Sunday, 12pm — Rolling Stones Extra Licks.
Monday, 7pm — Happy Ron's World Wide Community Sing Alongs.
Tuesday, 6:30pm — Rosa's Cantina Taco Tuesday Livestream Concerts.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

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

Balboa Theatre:
Thursday, June 25 — Kraftwerk 3-D.
Belly Up Tavern:
Saturday, June 13 — Dead Man's Party.
Wednesday, June 17 — David Grisman's Dawg Trio. \$65-\$114.
Thursday, June 18 — David Grisman's Dawg Trio. \$65-\$114.
Wednesday, June 24 — Thao & the Get Down Stay Down.
Thursday, June 25 — Cracker.
Sunday, June 28 — Whitney Shay.
Saturday, July 4 — Paul Thorn. \$20-\$35.
Casbah:
Thursday, June 4 — Southern Culture on the Skids.
Thursday, June 11 — Geographer. \$13-\$15.
Friday, June 12 — Modern English and DJ Mario Orduno.

IMMORTAL BEAUTY

BY GARRETT HARRIS

San Diego summer: unseasonably silent

Summer classical music in San Diego has followed a glorious pattern for as long as most of us can remember. The incomparable Mainly Mozart Festival welcomes the summer in June. The San Diego Symphony Summer Bayside Nights take over starting in July and then the La Jolla Music Society SUMMERFEST balances out the pop-heavy Bayside concerts with almost daily classical concerts in August.

This summer will be different. In late March, Mainly Mozart postponed the June Festival. There is still a lingering hope to have a reduced festival in August, but that is dependent on California reaching "Level Four" of the reopening plan in time.

The San Diego Symphony

has officially postponed the inaugural season of The Shell until summer 2021. If you are unfamiliar with The Shell, it is the first permanent waterfront concert venue on the West Coast and it was scheduled to open for concertizing in July of 2020.

The Shell has the potential to be a revenue-generating machine for the San Diego Symphony similar to the LA Philharmonic's Hollywood Bowl or The Boston Symphony's Tanglewood. There is also an element of the Sydney Opera House at play with the waterfront location and architectural design.

Postponing the initial summer season is a clear setback for San Diego. "Not being able to fulfill the dreams of so many people and celebrate the inau-

gural season at The Shell as planned this summer is devastating," said Martha Gilmer, San Diego Symphony CEO. "As the construction of The Shell continues, its visible progress on our skyline provides us with a symbol of forward momentum and hope."

The Shell concerts will be attended by thousands of people at a time, and are therefore way down the reopening timeline.

The La Jolla Music Society has suspended ticket sales for SUMMERFEST. The organization is in the process of gathering feedback from ticket holders, artists, and the community. I'd say SUMMERFEST is in jeopardy even if the state reaches Level Four. My guess is



The prospect of attending a concert with thousands of other people may prove a tough Shell.

that audiences won't be comfortable gathering, even in the smaller confines of The Conrad.

Both the San Diego Symphony and La Jolla Music Society are going to have to bear the burden of additional fixed costs represented by their new venues. The Conrad, La Jolla Music Society's new venue, is just over a year old

and SUMMERFEST is their signature event. The loss of those concerts could be a serious problem.

San Diego's arts organizations are in real trouble. City, County, and State funding might evaporate due to lack of revenue and the redirection of funds to COVID-19 related efforts. Classical music has faced worse circumstances, but not often.

See more CLASSICAL MUSIC at SDReader.com/classical

\$22-\$25.
Tuesday, June 16 — San Cisco. \$18-\$20.
Wednesday, June 17 — Protomartyr.
Sunday, June 21 — The BellRays and Slim Cessna's Auto Club. \$15-\$18.
Friday, June 26 — The Good Life and the New Trust. \$16.

Ché Café:
Sunday, June 7 — Hala and Boyo.

Del Mar Fairgrounds:
Sunday, June 14 — Grupo Intocable.
Sunday, June 21 — La Adictiva.
Sunday, June 28 — Calibre 50.

House of Blues:
Saturday, June 27 — Ollie. \$12-\$14.

Kraken:
Sunday, June 14 — Sonic Tonic.
Friday, June 19 — 3 Car Garage.

La Fleur's Winery:
Saturday, June 20 — Shay Skylar. Free.

La Jolla Community Center:
Friday, June 26 — Lori Bell, Ron Satterfield, Tommy Aros. \$18-\$25.

Music Box:
Sunday, June 7 — Musiq Soulchild. \$48-\$50.
Friday, June 12 — The Routine.
Wednesday, June 17 — Peach Pit and Hailey Blais. \$15-\$20.
Thursday, June 18 — Marc E. Bassy and Gianni & Kyle.
Friday, June 19 — Sir Veterano, Murs, Fashawn. \$20-\$30.
Saturday, June 20 — Queen Nation and Graceband. \$22-\$42.
Sunday, June 21 — Back to the Garden. \$22-\$24.
Friday, June 26 — RJD2 and DGT.L CLR. \$25.
Friday, July 3 — Mark Farina and Chuck Love. \$22-\$25.

Observatory North Park:
Sunday, June 7 — The Fratellis.
Friday, June 12 — CHVRCHES.
Wednesday, July 1 — The Airborne Toxic Event.

Online Internet Events:
Friday, June 5 — Nuncheon Sessions: Lesibu Grand.
Friday, June 5 — Pray For Sleep: Behind Our Eyes.
Saturday, June 6 — Shining: Live at the Heavy Water Plant.
Sunday, June 7 — Rolling Stones Extra Licks.
Sunday, June 7 — Gregory Page Almost Live Virtual Variety Show.
Monday, June 8 — Happy Ron's World Wide Community Sing Alongs.
Tuesday, June 9 — Rosa's Cantina Taco Tuesday

Livestream Concerts.
Thursday, June 11 — Picture Show: A Tribute Celebrating John Prine.
Sunday, June 14 — Gregory Page Almost Live Virtual Variety Show.
Monday, June 15 — Happy Ron's World Wide Community Sing Alongs.
Wednesday, June 17 — Fireside Sessions with David Nail.
Wednesday, June 17 — Kaki King: DATA NOT FOUND.
Sunday, June 21 — Gregory Page Almost Live Virtual Variety Show.

Soda Bar:
Wednesday, June 17 — Parsonsfield. \$12-\$15.
Thursday, June 18 — Kevin Krauter.
Sunday, June 21 — Hazel English.
Thursday, June 25 — Heavy Heavy Low Low.
Saturday, June 27 — Hip-Hop & Poetry Night.

Wong's Dragon Room:
Saturday, June 6 — The 8 East Band. Free.



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Look out!

‘What’s with all the movies?’ was one of my father’s pet questions. “Don’t you ever read a book?” (This coming from a man who never cracked a spine in his life.) Years later, Dad’s counsel was revised to, “You watch too much television. Why don’t you go to a movie?” According to Jon Hyatt’s *Screened Out*, the fathers and mothers of today’s first “fully connected” generation are more

likely to cry, “Enough Instagram! Watch a movie on your phone.” In olden times, MTV helped to reduce the extent of our already limited concentration range down to 3 minutes. According to Hyatt, the mobile age we live in has driven the average attention span down to 8 seconds, and he cites social media as the main culprit. My own addiction to screens began long ago, when I first set eyes on two Hayley Mills in *The Parent Trap*. The hardest thing for me about quarantine is the absence of cinemas. Transitioning from the 60-foot screen in the big Grossmont theater to a telephone is like shooting dog water when the heroin runs out.

Screened Out opens on Super8 images of writer-director Hyatt’s childhood. Apart from the switch from film to video, what follows is little more than an extended home movie. Rather than experiment by eating breakfast, lunch, and dinner out of a McDonald’s bag, Hyatt made the personal sacrifice of swearing off all forms of digital interaction, save email and phone service.

Hanna-Barbera cartoons were designed without focal depth in mind. Everything plays out on a flat plane, with very little in the way of in-and-out movement. The modern approach to technology draws upon the exact opposite aesthetic. Immersive first person video games are engineered with a forward momentum guaranteed to suck the player ever further toward an unreachable horizon line. According to addictive app designer Nir Eyal, social media is an outgrowth of video gaming and advertising. As Hyatt points out, ours is a society engulfed in behavioral addiction. And unlike pinball or slot machines, the internet is an ever-evolving hit. The more content one posts to Twitter, the more “likes” s/he will get. The more “likes,” the greater the likelihood the psychological approbation will act like a shot of dopamine rushing through our system.

The one term that Hyatt perma-

nently placed in my cinematic lexicography was “stoppage cues.” Movies have a finite running time. They end, you leave. The internet is designed to act as a vacuum to the brain; once attached, it sucks the user further and further down a black hole of killing time. Once powerful studio publicity hacks have been replaced with “brain hackers,” an elite corps whose job it is to make our smartphone interac-

tion ever more addictive. There’s a lot to be learned here, but as a film, it makes a great research project. ★★

—Scott Marks

MOVIES

Video on Demand New Release Roundup

Banana Split — Sometimes the worst enemies make the best friends. April (screenwriter Hannah Marks) could just as easily have pretended she was not Nick’s (Dylan Sprouse) ex and deleted Clara’s (Liana Liberato, liberating a gift for light comedy) phone number when the two came face-to-face at a party. But it turns out April is in-tune with Clara, and enjoys spending time in her company more than she does with the class stud who still has a thing for her. They could ditch Nick and sleep together, but why run the risk of ruining a good friendship, not to mention the outcome of this winsome romantic comedy? Marks’ semi-autobiographical script, co-written by her *After Everything* director Joey Power, is caustic enough to earn an R rating without falling prey to gross-out humor or the cheap coincidence frequently found in teen comedies. Completed in 2018, it played the festival circuit and has at last been deemed fit for movie lovers. A complaint: at 88 minutes, one could easily have withstood another half-hour spent in the company of these characters. 2018. —S.M. ★★★

The High Note — The personal assistant (Dakota Johnson, relaxed and confident) to a megastar headliner (Tracee Ellis Ross, peerless-ish) at the crossroads of Vegas residency and cutting a live greatest hits album tries branching out by guiding the career of a promising singer (Kelvin Harrison Jr.). Considering the error margin potential inherent in the material, it’s surprising how freshly the situations unfold. Even the inevitable romance turns up structurally on time and unscathed. And allow me a moment to praise Ice Cube. From punching the



Screened Out invites you to add a third device for the Cinerama experience.

“Yuh” in “Hawaii-yuh” to (for once) being on the giving end of a backstage dressing down that he could probably have ad-libbed based on past experience, the actor is at his comic best. Like a pair of expert skiers, writer Flora Greeson and director Nisha Ganatra slalom around the stereotypes, but rather than end the film pursuant to its title, the filmmakers close in a manner befitting the climactic reveal in a cheesy twist-ending thriller. Fun while it lasts, anyway. 2020. —S.M. ★★

The Postcard Killings — A hunch-playing, coarse-grained, and otherwise universal model New York detective (Jeffrey Dean Morgan) travels to London to ID the bodies of his daughter and her husband, butchered on their honeymoon by a *couturier* killer. But wait. It’s not the stitchery of one body-parts-transposing ghoul, but two. A young couple that, by the good fortune of the five (!) screenwriters it took to adapt the eponymous novel, settled on a shared career in serial killing. Director Danis Tanovic has a hard time keeping pace with the aridity of invention. The headquarters-addressed stamped clues, the viscous flashes of gore, the Big Apple bull poised to outsmart any of his Bobby-brethren... Isn’t there anything fresh on the menu? Just this: the identities of the pair and their desultory motivation in the name of art is but a bubble of originality floating atop a tank weighted down with neon confetti gravel. What follows is a matter of Xeroxing. 2020. —S.M. ★

The Wretched — Thirty-five years ago, someone left an Etch-A-Sketch in the rain while the witch in the

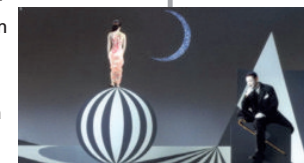
basement had the neighbor kid for dinner. Five days ago — and with his parent’s divorce looming large — Ben (John-Paul Howard) arrived in town to spend a little chastisement time with dad (Jamison Jones); breaking into a neighbor’s home in search of Vicodin resulted in a short cast from a long fall. Now, Ben’s still a second-story man, this time with a pair of field glasses. The alternative-fashioned MILF across the way asks her baby boy to hold mommy’s beer while she’s

dressing the very roadkill in which the monster lurks. Come the dawn, she’s bedecked in fashionable summer attire, the kid nowhere in sight. The monster is gentle enough to kill with a whisper, yet so steeped in fetid fragrance that flowers wilt in its presence. It’s one thing to shoplift from Hitchcock, but if the pace and structure of the film is any indication, I’m guessing the closest the Pierce Brothers came to *Rear Window* was *Disturbia*. 2019. —S.M. ★

MOVIES@HOME

CAPONE CRIES A LOT (1985)

Umiemon (Kenichi Hagiwara) is a *naniwa-bushi*, a warbler of “sob stories.” Convinced that his brand of narrative sing-song will blossom in the States, he and the missus (Yūko Tanaka), a sex worker with a bright future in brothel management, sail to San Francisco and arrange a meeting with Al Capone (Chuck Wilson), who, for reasons known only to himself, Umiemon thinks is the President. (Well, Capone was the President of the Night, if not the United States.) If a broken line narrative



Capone Cries A Lot: One of the more contemplative moments in this otherwise batty film.

is your opiate *du jour* — cutting off a song in mid-tune only to pick it up a few bars later, piercing virtually every scene with discomposing jump-cuts — meet your newest pusher, Seijun Suzuki (*Tokyo Drifter*, *Branded to Kill*). The hairstyles, sets, and costume design don’t come close to capturing the era; only in Suzuki’s deep space surreality can

a depression-era jazz band appear to share the same haberdasher as Kool and the Gang. An aggressively oddball, daz-zlingly detailed showpiece that, not surprisingly, never made it to American screens. If one can get past the racial naivete that’s meant to reprove prejudice but instead acts to reinforce it, this is one of the damndest things you’ll ever see.

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PERSONALS

BARBARA EVANS Hope you enjoy a good birthday and another healthy year to come. Brian B & Mernie A

BRIAN'S USHERS AT LJ PLAYHOUSE when the season resumes, hope to see you all in good health. Brian B & Mernie A

COLLEGE AREA SENIOR CENTER seniors, stay well and hope to see you when the center reopens. Brian & Bruce

ED & RUBY GINN Hope you are well and we'll see you at the cinema when films resume. Brian & Bruce

ELISSA IN SAN CARLOS Hope you stay well and continue in good health. Brian B

MERNIE A in Morena & Pat G in El Cajon, hope you continue in good health. Brian B

MIMI (ANGELINE) Hope you stay well and get lot's of gardening finished. Brian B

WALT & SANDY W Gary & Marsha R stay well and keep at it. Brian B

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SAM MORRIS I love you kimmy

MORE AMAZING THAN SHE KNOWS You have reignited a fire within me. Theres so much beauty inside your heart and soul. I am so thankful that you came into my life. It has to mean something. I do love you jamee mae. ballinhobo@gmail.com

WE NEED TO BE LIKE RACCOONS always masked & washing our hands! Oh and rearrange letters in Raccoon and you get Corona... Go figure! Cool.

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BEAUTIFULLY UNIQUE If I thought for just one moment that this would be my last breath.. I'd tell you I'll love you forever, even beyond death. If I thought for just one moment that your face would be the last I'd see.. I'd take a million pictures and save them just for me. ballinhobo@gmail.com

KATHERINE Z I saw your recent work with Great Green. outstanding as usual. you are an inspiration to us all!!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SUNISA SWEETIE! I love you more and more every day! Rod (Jod Tang)

FRIENDS OF JAMES HARPER (JIM) Please call Jim's family. Ann, Jennifer, Jamie. (619) 917-6975

NOTICES

BEAT OPIOID ADDICTION Beat opioid addiction painlessly using herbs and nutrition. I know. I've done it. And I've helped many others. Totally anonymous. (760) 532-9144 / g2fitness2001@yahoo.com

FREE CONTEST PROMOTING OUR FAVORITE

NEIGHBORHOODS Our Neighborhood News Team Challenge combines our classic Scavenger Hunt and our innovative Movie Making Teambuilding challenge. <https://wheretours.com/neighborhood-news-team-challenge/>

RICHARD J. DONOVAN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY: CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE We invite our local community to join us on May 22, from 1100-1200 hours via Skype for our bi-monthly citizen's advisory committee meeting. Please contact the institution's community resources manager for more information.

NOTICE This is a notice stating that Christopher S. Hastings is no longer responsible for any debt that Michelle D. Hastings might accrue.

ONLINE CALL OF DUTY 2V2 TOURNAMENT Free entry online Call of duty 2v2 tournament. Tournament will be live streamed on our twitch channel. Make sure to tag your call of duty playing buddies. SanDiegoEsportsLeague.com Travis@EpicVideoGameBus.com

POETRY READ (VIA ZOOM) The group is limited to reading poems of published authors. This is not a group for folks who want to read their own writing. Please select works of moderate length, five minutes max, so that everyone will have an opportunity to read. www.meetup.com/Poetry-Read/

CAMPO INDIAN RESERVATION the people who live around the reservation pray that your tribe makes the right choice and stop the wind turbine project thanks.

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, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing books to kids who don't have any and inspiring a love for reading everywhere. 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!

COWBOY THEATER Watch the 100 best B-Western movies on COX cable, North 18 and South 23. Free! 12 noon Mondays, 2PM Wednesdays, 9AM Fridays.

TACOTOPIA 2020: TACOS VS BURGERS Presented by Anheuser-Busch, this year only, we are celebrating the pure magic of both tacos and burgers! The San Diego Reader and Anheuser-Busch are pleased to invite you to the biggest clash

of the cuisine festival, know as 'Reader Tacotopia 2020: Tacos vs Burgers Presented by Anheuser-Busch'! 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 Anheuser-Busch beer 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

AVIATION THEATER is now on Youtube. San Diego pilots, airplanes, and aviation adventures.

ITREASURESANDIEGO.COM San Diego's ultimate treasure hunt! Original, unique, challenging, educational and fun. Seeking all treasure hunters!

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WIDOW OR WIDOWER? Interested in wholesome social activities? See our club: Widows or Widowers (WOW), San Diego www.wowsd.org or 858-278-3884

CLASSES / LESSONS



"I'VE NEVER SURFED BEFORE" LESSONS Every week on Saturday @La Jolla Shores parking lot & north bathrooms. Google maps: 8391 Camino Del Oro. Our tent is set up on the farthest north end of the main parking lot next to the bathrooms, look for the big green, yellow and red flag attached to the canopy.

FREE TAI CHI ZOOM CLASSES FROM A MASTER Classes are led by Master Simon Wong (Sifu) and senior instructors. Sifu is a master of Yang style Tai Chi, Omei Mountain 100 Day chi kung, the 7th generation master of Bamboo Forest Temple Mantis, founder of Yellow Dragon Fist Kung Fu, and holds a 9th-degree black sash with the AMA. www.meetup.com/tai-chi-meetup-london/

LEARN TO MEDITATE VIA ZOOM Soul Food is a meditation group and mosaic of diverse ages, races, gender and sexual orientations. People from every faith and spiritual tradition are welcome as are those who identify as atheist/agnostic. Join Zoom meeting <https://zoom.us/j/950358109>. Meeting ID: 950 358 109 (669) 900-6833

STAR WARS ROLEPLAYING VIA ZOOM People who want to play with my Age of Rebellion materials. Looking to make new friends and have imaginative fun with Star Wars fantasies. I am a new DM so we can all learn. www.meetup.com/Online-Zoom-Star-Wars-Role-Playing-Fun/

FINDING YOUR WAY IN TRYING TIMES On-line workshop Sun May 24, 3-4:30 on how to find your way forward in trying times. JaneCohenCounseling.com/events (760) 753-0733

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NATIONAL PERSONAL TRAINER CERTIFICATION COURSE Achieve your dreams this year by becoming a nationally certified personal trainer! USD is offering a 5-week program via W.I.T.S. \$749 (fee includes course materials, test and instructor time). The course starts 7/11, is held on Sat-Sun and runs for 5-weeks. Sign up today for \$0 deposit to reserve your spot (space is limited to only 10 participants)! (619) 260-7751 / serenaboyd@sandiego.edu

FOR ANYONE THAT WANTS TO LEARN SPANISH Our group offers two fundamental activities to learn Spanish - conversation and reading. We are a casual and friendly group, and all levels are always welcome. <https://www.meetup.com/diablospanish/>. We are going to try an online Zoom meeting..

FREE BLACK TIGER SILAT ZOOM CLASSES Indonesian martial art (lineage dates to 1610 AD) exercise class for those interested and prospective students for physical classes. Imagine a yoga class that is effectively a tiger based combat system. www.meetup.com/Black-Tiger-Silat-Free-Zoom-classes/

GIRLS LEARNING TO GAME It's a group for women, non-binary, and trans people who would like to get better at gaming or try it for the first time - it's great for creative problem-solving, tackling challenges,

embracing failure, and having fun while meeting new people. <https://www.meetup.com/girlslearningtogo/>

LEARN HIP-HOP FROM MADRID VIA ZOOM My name is Lisa and I'm a dancer from Belgium who's been living in Madrid since 2015. I danced street dance / hip-hop and contemporary for ten years. <https://www.meetup.com/Madrid-Hip-Hop-Meetup/>

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ONLINE FIGURE DRAWING SESSIONS W/ MODEL-TITANIA I will be your model lightly clothed while performing dynamic gesture poses from my home into yours! We will start with 1-2 minute gestures then move on to 5 minute poses, 10 minute poses, and end with one or two 20 minute poses. www.meetup.com/Online-Figure-Drawing/tkumehmojo@gmail.com

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PLAY PIANO the way you want to! Pop, classical, jazz, blues, improvise. FREE lesson/interview. Over 40 years' experience teaching and performing. E-mail: Lee@LeeGalloway.com or call: 619-281-8118. See www.LeeGalloway.com.

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SDSU ROOMMATES WANTED I am currently looking for a single room for the 2019-2020 school year. I want to be walking distance from SDSU, in PB, or even Mission Valley. Please text me at (916) 949-2568, or message me here or instagram @miichhi

NEAR SDSU 1/2 BEDROOM ROOMMATES You can choose your roommates so you know who you are living with. We are less than a mile from SDSU and offer a free shuttle service. If interested please contact us at

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CARLSBAD ROOMMATE WANTED \$875 larger bedroom w a private bathroom and ocean view. You will share house with only 1 person - month-to-month rental. Looking for a compatible roommate: employed full time, responsible/independent, no smoking please. (760) 434-4114

LOOKING FOR 3RD ROOMMATE IN OUR HILLCREST HOUSE Female preferred. We live in Hillcrest right by Trader Joes, so walking distance to everything. We have 1 medium sized bedroom available for \$750 plus utilities approx. (water \$50 every other month, TV \$20, SDGE ranges from \$30-80, Internet \$20. Please send a photo/social media and a little info about yourself. Ymountain13@gmail.com

ROOMIE IN NORTH PARK AND HILLCREST. My husband and I are currently looking for a new roommate. 1 master bedroom in a 2 Bd/ 2Ba condo for rent within North park/Hillcrest area, one guaranteed garage parking spot. Patio, washer, and dryer on property. Rent: \$1000/month. Utilities: 1/3 total amount per month(usually 10-20 mo). Water paid for by HOA. hteir@gmail.com

SEEKING ROOMMATE(S) My name is Ryan. I'm a 26 year old, female, teacher looking for the perfect place for me and my fur babies to call home. No more than \$1,200/month. I "live" for hiking, reading, and hanging out at the beach. DM, text, or call if you think we could make a good addition to your home! (520) 440-3029

ROOM WANTED 61 yr. old young single no family, Virgo, healthy, never married, non-smoker, non-drinker, clean SoCal native low income male, high school/college graduate. Seeking any somber tiny room please in house Solana Beach, Cardiff, Leucadia, Encinitas, Carlsbad, San Clemente, Dale Hauskins (858) 401-2973

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GOLDEN HILL, \$1825. 1BD+1BA 600sqft unit near Balboa Park and Downtown. Updated kitchen and bath. Walk-in closet. Easy freeway access. Move-in special: 1/2 off first month with one-year lease. 1301 28th Street. Agent: 619-298-7724. www.allpointsrealestate.com

MISSION HILLS, \$1350. STUDIO+1BA Stove, refrigerator, hardwood floors. Some utilities included. No pets. 630 W. Washington. Agent: 619-298-7724.

MISSION HILLS, \$2495. 2BD+2BA. Skylights, secure underground parking, laundry on site. No pets. Move-in special: 1/2 off first month with one-year lease. 5780 Friars Road. Agent: 619-298-7724. www.allpointsrealestate.com

NORTH PARK, \$2150. 2BD+2BA near Morley Field. 1000sqft. On-site laundry. No pets. Move-in special: 1/2 off first month with one-year lease. 3711 Arnold Ave. Agent: 619-298-7724. www.allpointsrealestate.com

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GOLDEN HILL, \$1825. 1BD+1BA 600sqft unit near Balboa Park and Downtown. Updated kitchen and bath. Walk-in closet. Easy freeway access. Move-in special: 1/2 off first month with one-year lease. 1301 28th Street. Agent: 619-298-7724. www.allpointsrealestate.com

MISSION HILLS, \$1350. STUDIO+1BA Stove, refrigerator, hardwood floors. Some utilities included. No pets. 630 W.

Washington. Agent: 619-298-7724.

MISSION HILLS, \$2495. 2BD+2BA. Skylights, secure underground parking, laundry on site. No pets. Move-in special: 1/2 off first month with one-year lease. 5780 Friars Road. Agent: 619-298-7724. www.allpointsrealestate.com

NORMAL HEIGHTS, \$1250. Cozy studio near Adams, downstairs corner unit, wood-like flooring, on-site laundry, water, trash and gas included. Great location with easy freeway access. No pets. 3351 Madison Avenue. Agent: 619-298-7724.

NORTH PARK, \$2150. 2BD+2BA near Morley Field. 1000sqft. On-site laundry. No pets. Move-in special: 1/2 off first month with one-year lease. 3711 Arnold Ave. Agent: 619-298-7724. www.allpointsrealestate.com

PACIFIC BEACH, \$2795 3BD+2BA 2-story apartment. Plank flooring. Stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, washer/dryer, parking. No pets. 1119 Oliver Avenue #5. Add Realty, 619-232-6811.

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TALMADGE, \$1395. 1BD+1BA 600 sq ft, wood like flooring throughout. Upstairs unit. Fireplace. Private balcony. Water and trash included. No pets. Move-in special: 1/2 off first month with one-year lease. 4416 47th St. Agent: 619-298-7724. www.allpointsrealestate.com

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CONDO FOR RENT Remodeled condo in North Park senior building. New appliances, laundry on site, parking many extras. Available now. Small dog accepted. (858) 627-9133 / casadyansd@gmail.com

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DOWNTOWN, \$250-495. Artist work spaces: Office or work spaces and retail available. 636 C Street, 92101. Inquire inside (C Street Inn front desk) or call 619-234-4165 or 619-269-9076. www.jspropertymanagement.com.



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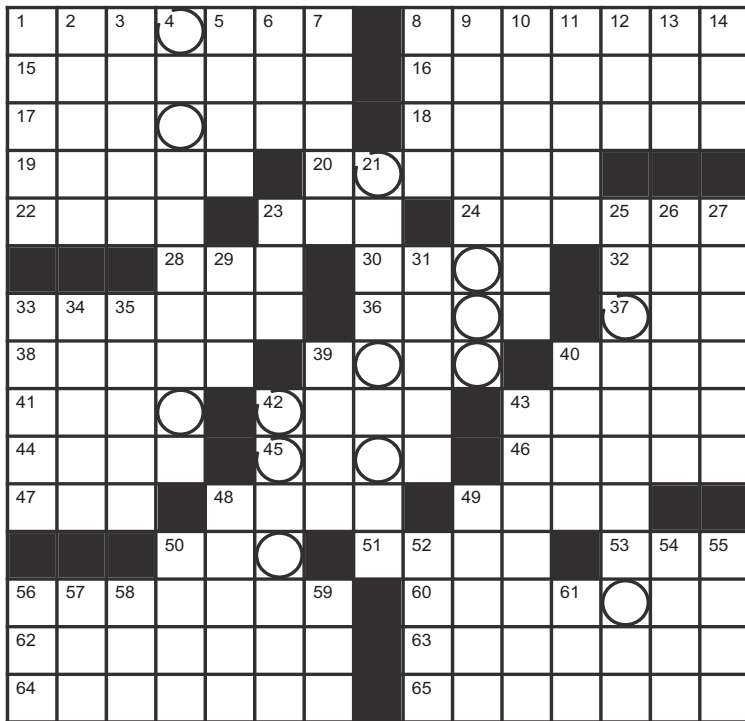
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CROSSWORD



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Across

1. Like Barack Obama's presidency
8. Some concert pieces
15. British tradition
16. Hype
17. Call for pizza, say
18. Creator and star of "The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl"
19. Volleyball great Gabrielle
20. Carves in stone
22. "This comes _____ surprise"
23. Shade of gray
24. Pull a cork from
28. Alphabetic trio
30. Defib experts
32. Suffix with schnozz
33. Camera operators, gaffers, etc.
36. Crossword feature
37. 1960s radical
38. Morocco's capital
39. Lobster's feeler
40. Takes badly?
41. Cassini of fashion
42. Docile
43. American _____
44. Target of a skin care strip
45. Flamenco cries
46. Lewis and Long

47. Med. drama locales
 48. Person logging on
 49. Boston athlete, briefly
 50. MSNBC rival
 51. Tooth trouble
 53. Little chuckle
 56. Layer
 60. Scuba mouthpiece attachment
 62. Oceanographer's focus
 63. Woodworker, at times
 64. 1960s radical
 65. Brightly colored bird
- Down**
1. Birch of "Ghost World"
 2. Tangle around a surge protector
 3. Nash who wrote "Parsley / Is gharshley"
 4. Embolden oneself
 5. French 101 verb
 6. Big retailer in outdoor gear
 7. What male lions have that lionesses lack
 8. _____ and Span (cleaner brand)
 9. "I've had enough of your big talk"
 10. What gibberish makes
 11. Stockpile
 12. The Blue Jays, on

- scoreboards
13. _____ snail's pace
 14. "Told ya!"
 21. Be appealing on screen
 23. "So-o-o cute!"
 25. Preparing mischief
 26. Type of network
 27. Be taken for
 29. One doing cat scans?
 31. Misses in Marseille: Abbr.
 33. Figure of speech
 34. Joan of Arc quality
 35. Good buddies on the road
 39. Susceptible to sunburn
 40. Julia of Hollywood
 42. Unsatisfactory
 43. Ed with the 2017 #1 hit "Shape of You"
 48. Loosen, as neckwear
 49. Rivera of the original "Chicago"
 50. Phone
 52. Wear after an accident
 54. Sword for an Olympian
 55. Frau's spouse
 56. Fig. in the form XXX-XX-XXXX
 57. Golf peg
 58. Crunchy, as carrots
 59. Congregated
 61. Actress Zadora

SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE:

M	O	I	R	A	T	R	A	C	E	A	P	A		
A	R	C	E	R	E	A	D	E	R	P	O	R		
G	O	E	S	F	R	A	Z	I	E	R	P	I	T	
	C	H	I		E	E	L		M	A	N	S		
P	L	A	I	T	E	D		T	O	E	A	R	T	H
C	A	V	S		A	O	C		L	I	E	T	O	
T	H	E	H	A	T	C	H		A	I	M	L	O	W
			V	I	K	I	N	G	S					
T	O	B	O	O	T		T	O	N	A	B	B	E	Y
O	C	U	L	I		S	I	E		I	O	W	A	
W	A	R	D	D	O	G		T	W	O	T	O	E	D
A	N	N	E		R	A	W		F	E	B			
G	A	S		D	O	W	N	I	N	F	R	O	N	T
E	D		I	N	K	B	L	O	T		O	A	R	
S	A	P		L	O	Y	A	L	T	O		S	T	Y

RULES OF THE GAME

- 1) Submit your completed puzzle to the *Reader* each week for our ongoing contest. Your submission will only be counted when you successfully complete a puzzle AND get it to us by 7:00 a.m. Monday.
 - 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.
- And now for the really small print:
- 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.
 - 4) One entry per person per week or you will be disqualified.
 - 5) Employees of the *Reader* and their immediate families are not eligible.

THIS WEEK'S WINNER:

Winners will be contacted for prize redemption.

Greg Bergeron, Tierrasanta, 13.

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

SUDOKU

HARD:

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

RULES OF THE GAME

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 - 4) One entry per person per week or you will be disqualified.
 - 5) Employees of the *Reader* and their immediate families are not eligible.

THIS WEEK'S WINNER:

Winners will be contacted for prize redemption.

Rex Shepherd, San Diego, 4.

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

Win a Reader hat or t-shirt

SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S SUDOKU PUZZLE:

HARD:

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

Signs of the Times

— In South America, some families of people who have died of COVID-19 have had to wait days for a coffin, either because of the short supply or they were unable to afford one, the Associated Press reported on May 8. In response, ABC Displays, a Colombian advertising company, has developed a cardboard hospital bed with metal railings that can be converted into a coffin. The beds can hold a weight of 330 pounds and will cost about \$85 each, company manager Rodolfo Gomez said. He plans to donate 10 beds and hopes to receive orders for more from emergency clinics that might run short on beds.

— Add to the list of things not to leave in plain sight in your car: toilet paper. Police in Eugene, Oregon, stated that on March 15, a thief shattered the entire back window of an SUV in order to get his mitts on two 30-roll cases of toilet paper, along with other valuables, the *Blaze* reported. "Anytime vehicles are left unattended for extended periods of time, local thieves view it as a favorable opportunity," police reminded Oregonians.

Bright Ideas

— Restaurants have adapted to local lockdowns with curbside and drive-thru services, so it's no surprise that other businesses are following suit. Minx Gentlemen's Club in Virginia Beach, Virginia, is offering drive-thru pole dances and other entertainment in a makeshift outdoor space, according to

The Sun. Dancers were showered with bills or grabbed their tips using a trash picker to reach into vehicles as patrons enjoyed the performances from the safety of their cars. Meanwhile, in Las Vegas, Little Darlings is offering completely nude drive-up strip teasers. "Guests can drive up to the front door, and we're going to have dancers separated by the 6-foot separation rule, and (customers) can enjoy a totally nude show right from the seat of their car," a Little Darlings spokesperson told KSNV.

Recent Alarming Headline

— In Clocolan, Free State Province, South Africa, where the now-seven-week-long lockdown includes a ban on buying or selling alcoholic beverages, thieves broke into the Rest in Peace funeral parlor and made off with four gallons of exhumation liquid, the *Daily Mail* reported on May 12. The fluid, used to preserve body parts that have been exhumed, is 97% alcohol, police spokesperson Brigadier Motansi Makhele said, and the burglars had to break through roller blinds and into a locked steel cabinet to get to the liquid. A forensic officer predicted: "If the thieves drink that liquid without watering it right down, then they will drop dead themselves!"

Questionable Judgment

— Curtis L. Fish, 48, arrested and charged with kidnapping and raping a woman on New Year's Day in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was released when the COVID-19 crisis erupted in jails, according to *Penn-*

Live.com. On May 12, police responding to reports that Fish tried to break into the Crossroads Tavern in Hilltown Township attempted to Taser Fish, but he fled to his home nearby, where he set off and aimed fireworks at a SWAT team before his house suddenly caught fire. "Fireworks outside and fireworks inside," said tavern owner Mike Mrozinski. "So I believe that's what lit the house on fire." A body thought to be Fish was found inside. Mrozinski said Fish, whom he had known for 16 years, was "not the same guy I had known him to be" before the rape charges.

Paying the Price

— Restaurants in West Plains, Missouri, endured a social media storm in early May after a customer posted a photo of a receipt that included a "Covid 19 Surcharge." But the restaurants pushed back, according to *KY3*. "It's not a tax. It's basically just a small percentage to cover all of our extra expenses," said Bootleggers BBQ owner Brian Staack. Kiko Japanese Steakhouse manager Sarah Sherwood said prices on most items have doubled, and Ozark Cafe co-owner Heather Hughes confirmed: "Every day there's something else (food suppliers) can't get or the prices have gone up exorbitantly." The restaurateurs say it's easier to add the 5% surcharge than constantly change the menus, and they've been upfront with customers, using signs and notes in their menus. While the initial response was surprise, Sherwood says the community has "really come together to support the local businesses."

Oops

— Vicar Simon Beach, 61, of St. Budeaux Parish Church in Plymouth, England, was uncomfortable enough as he launched into his first virtual church service on March 22, calling it "surreal." But as he leaned into the camera to deliver the final portion of his sermon, he looked to his left and calmly deadpanned, "Oh dear, I've just caught fire." Beach had leaned a bit too close to one of several nearby candles and ignited his sleeve. "I just felt my arm getting a bit hot," he told *Metro News*. The flame damaged his sweater and shirt, but did not burn his skin. Beach was teased a bit by fellow vicars, who razed him for being "on fire for Jesus." "People have laughed and laughed, really," Beach said.

Not Men From Outer Space

— People in Washington's Puget Sound were startled on the evening of May 6 by a brilliant streak of light across the sky followed three minutes later by a loud explosion. "Huge boom that shook the house. It was the loudest boom I've ever heard," one witness in Brier reported, according to KOMO. The American Meteor Society investigated the many reports it fielded and determined the noise came from an exploding meteor entering Earth's atmosphere. The meteor may have been part of the annual Eta Aquarid meteor shower, which occurs when Earth moves through the remnants of Halley's comet.

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location,” she said. “We know we’re in a long-term declining trend for student populations per the state of California.” Platt says all school districts need to adjust to the fact that newly abandoned retail property would make great classroom space. “Leadership should be cautious in constructing expensive new buildings on valuable raw land in North County when we’re seeing a whole volume of square footage coming on-line in retail dead zones. And they are conveniently located along transportation corridors.” Besides, she says, education itself is changing. “We’re not learning like we used to. We are continuing to learn, but we don’t need to drive to a campus. Palomar has to compete with *MasterClass.com*, *Khan Academy.org*, *Lynda.com* and a myriad of other online and niche learning experiences.”

The 18 modular buildings of Palomar North are situated east of I-15 and about a mile north of Highway 76 on Horse Ranch Creek Road. The site includes 80 acres, 54 of which are available for development. Immediately across the street is the massive Horse Creek Ridge development. When finished, it will offer 741 new foothill homes in the \$450,000-\$600,000 range. Nearby is the separate Promenade at Horse Creek Road development, which will yield more homes in the \$600,000 range. “Every time you build a new school you trigger new development around it,” said Platt. “New schools and new development go hand in hand. They call it ‘school sprawl.’ That’s why re-purposing existing retail buildings makes a lot of sense. Instead of breaking new ground on raw land, you just change how existing buildings function instead of letting them sit vacant for ten years.”

Palomar’s acting president Kahn was chided for not having population projections from SANDAG or a similar agency. Miyamoto said she wanted “data, data, data” at future meetings so the board can decide how to best spend the rest of the Measure M bond money. “I don’t believe this evening’s presentation will get us to where we need to be.” Trustee Nina Deerfield agreed: “I need more data, numbers and facts. I want to know how many students go where.” The item was tentatively set to be revisited at the June 9 board meeting.

Kahn became Palomar’s acting superintendent/president in December, when Joi Lin Blake resigned. No reason was given, but Blake was criticized for spending \$1 million of bond money on her office suite. A state report released in November 2019 stated that Palomar could go broke within two years. Blake’s official resignation takes effect June 30.

KEN LEIGHTON



From Playa Hermosa Surf & Skate Shop in Ensenada.

BAJA Mexican moving violations Are surfers starting to sympathize with skaters?

On May 16, 22 surfers were arrested and detained for surfing at Cantiles Dorados in Rosarito, about 28 miles south of the border. Tijuana’s El Imparcial news outlet from Tijuana posted a photo of four “young” male surfers detained in the back

“They’re not busting people because of exercising (surfing); it’s to avoid the conglomeration of more people.”

of a municipal police pickup; another photo depicted a police officer snapping a photo of a surfer wearing a wetsuit while surrounded by three soldiers wearing face-masks. “The 22 [surfers] were rounded up before the judge and held in [jail] cells,”



It seems that sometimes, surfing is a crime.

complying with the instructions of the agents, as it is prohibited to carry out any activity on the beach.”

On May 17, I spoke to AI from Playa Hermosa Surf & Skate Shop in Ensenada. “One of my friends was there,” AI said. “The surfers paid 800 pesos per person, and those who wanted to defend their rights in front of a judge were arrested.

They are the ones who were hauled away in the pickups; they each ended up paying 3500 pesos.” Playa Hermosa Surf & Skate Shop sells T-shirts that read “Surfing Is Not a Crime.” Many of the surf shop patrons disagree with Mexico’s phase



Rama Morales’ sand mandala photographed by Diego Knight.

said the news report, “because they were surfing in the area, at kilometer 43 of the Rosarito Libre highway.” Francisco Arellano Ortiz, the head of the Secretariat of Citizen Security of Rosarito, mentioned that “these people were detained for not

three (April 21-May 30) orders to combat the spread of COVID-19.” “What must be protected is the healthy distance,” Manuel said. “Since when do 20 surfers climb on a single board? The virus cannot survive in the water, and by us exercising, our

body’s defenses are stronger. The police are not making money with their corrupt acts that generate income, because people do not leave their houses. So they’re looking for money.”

Dan, another surfer disagreed “They’re not busting people because of exercising (surfing); it’s to avoid the conglomeration of more people.”

On May 10, the Rosarito en la Noticia news outlet reported that an ultralight aircraft was confiscated from its pilot by city officials on the El Bebé beach in Rosarito. Days before, a male “riding an ATV” was arrested on a Rosarito beach where others were cited. Oddly, that same day, another beachgoer, Rama Morales, was *not* busted as he carved large sand mandalas in the beach to celebrate Mother’s Day, nor was Infonort reporter Diego Knight as he strolled the beach flying his drone. In April, Knight interviewed Morales and photographed his “300-foot-plus” sand mandalas at La Paloma beach — about 13 miles north of where the 22 surfers were hemmed up. “It took me about 3-4 hours to make this,” Morales said then. “I come to do sand art almost every day. That right there is a [depiction of a] nautilus watch and a shell protecting us from COVID-19.”

MIKE MADRAGA

NATIONAL CITY A growing concern Olivewood Gardens producing more produce in pandemic

“My husband is a meat guy,” said Melissa, “and this month, we went for nine days without eating meat.” Melissa and her two young boys were waiting at the Olivewood Gardens produce stand on a Thursday morning in May. “We had chicken, but my husband’s like, ‘I need meat,’” Melissa, on the other hand, has lost 60 pounds over the last four years on a vegetable-heavy diet. She had brought a crate of lemons from their backyard tree to share with everyone

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

at the produce stand.

The line stretched for more than a block through the historic neighborhood of National City where Olivewood has its mini farm and learning center. The Thursday morning produce stand is a regular event that has exploded in popularity since the onset of COVID-19. Through word of mouth, demand has increased more than tenfold — from 40 families per month to 450. Behind closed gates, workers were hurrying to bag fresh fruits and veggies, harvested on site earlier that day. The staff of six gardeners “just added another acre of capacity,” said executive director



PHOTO CREDIT: M.A. BEYSTER

Handling a helping harvest at Olivewood.

shifted priority from using the food they grow for their educational programs to bagging it up and giving it away. They shifted land use, too. “Where we were growing flowers, now we’re growing food,” said Nation. In normal

everyone got a bag of peas,” Nation said.

That day, Melissa and her family would take home a selection of oranges, pomelos, carrots, cucumbers, zucchini, loquats, cilantro, scallions, and Swiss chard.

Coming later in the season: peaches, apricots, pineapple guava, tomatoes, squash, and eggplant. Earlier this year, they had tomatillos, pole beans, and peppers. Since March they’ve given away 1,900 pounds of produce. And mixed in with the fresh stuff are some dry goods that Olivewood purchases from Sprouts Eastlake/Chula Vista (with donations). Waterwise Gardener

PHOTO CREDIT: M.A. BEYSTER



Tomato seedlings for people to take and grow at home.

Jen Nation. “We’re adding another greenhouse so we can increase the amount of seeds we can sprout and transplant.” When interest spiked, Olivewood staff

times, Olivewood grows food for National School District. When schools closed they had a huge crop of sugar snap peas intended for the cafeteria salad bar. “For weeks

and Healthy Day Partners pitched in to provide seedlings for people to take and grow at home. This week: in-season tomato plants.

LEORAH GAVIDOR

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NEWS TICKER

continued from page 9

Valley,” said Fremont Councilman Raj Salwan, reported by the *East Bay Citizen* to be a Democratic stalwart. According to the *Mercury News*, Salwan owns a Tesla and said he “loves his car, ‘but no one is above the law.’ I’m not advocating for arresting Elon,” Salwan added. “But I’m sure there are ways to cease (Tesla’s) operations, especially considering we are only a few days away from re-opening of manufacturing.”

Meanwhile, Gonzalez has been getting political cash from a company in another car-related field. On March 27, her so-called ballot measure committee, called *Our Voice, Our Vote*, received \$15,000 from the Motor Vehicle Software Corporation dba ViTu, of Agoura Hills, which sells electronic vehicle registration software. Other contributions: on February 20, Blue Shield of California came up with \$18,800, adding to the

\$6200 it gave on March 19, 2019. Committee expenses included fundraising costs of \$2,920 for a “portion of Lodging for 18 Guests” at the posh Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa on May 17 of last year.

Matt Potter

Green energy has that green energy

Power agency ready to pay for popularity

While a host of local public bodies are vowing to slash programs and lay off staff in the face of the financial onslaught that is the COVID-19 pandemic, the newly hatched San Diego Community Power agency is quietly recruiting public relations talent. As part of its “marketing and public communications strategy,” the would-be power provider seeking to rival San Diego Gas & Electric as a local energy distributor, “requests services related to press/media relations and public affairs,” according to a request for propos-



Borden's burden—funding an effort to take on SDG&E.

als issued April 30. “Web and graphic design,” along with “branding and messaging within the community and various on-line platforms,” are part of an ambitious PR drive by the joint powers authority — including Imperial Beach, Encinitas, La Mesa, Chula Vista, and San Diego — formed by the five cities last September. Lobbying is part of the agenda, judging from an implementation plan approved by the California Public Utilities Commission on March 30. “Communications will be directed at key policymakers at the state and local level, community business and opinion leaders, and the media,” that docu-

ment says.

The agency “is the first in California to explicitly state that it will reach 100 percent renewable energy availability and usage by no later than 2035 and beyond, in advance of current State targets,” according to a request for proposals for the PR services issued April 30. Responses are due May 29, per the solicitation. “It is assumed that non-power start-up costs of approximately \$5 million will be funded through an unsecured line of credit with a third-party lender and repaid from the working capital financing and/or program revenues,” according to an March implementation plan. “The working capital financing will be primarily secured via a short-term loan.”

The report adds that River City Bank of Sacramento will provide the loan and credit line. Scott Borden, an investor and political donor, is furnishing \$5 million in interest-bearing

collateral to secure the deal, per a May 5 *Voice of San Diego* account. Borden is part owner of the Uptown Tavern in Hillcrest and an avocado farm, according to a report by the *San Diego Business Journal* in March 2019. “We really do have an emergency here,” regarding climate change. “Getting to 100 percent renewable energy as fast as possible is important to me and my business and important to all of us,” he told the publication. A major player in San Diego politics, in 2018 Borden, identified as a member/manager of ETC Adventures LLC, kicked in \$50,000 to a group calling itself *San Diegans Against Hate Opposing Lorie Zapf* for City Council. Democrat Jen Campbell defeated Republican Zapf that November. The same fall Borden gave \$2500 to the campaign of Imperial Beach city councilwoman Paloma Aguirre, records show.

Matt Potter

Under the radar

continued from page 3

Fletcher disclosed a trip with Gonzalez to Puerto Rico in December of last year hosted by the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators. The amount of \$2495 was a gift “to Spouse who is an elected” and spoke at the event. There was “no additional cost for sharing room,” according to the filing. The biggest conjugal free travel tab of 2019 belonged to termed-out Republican **Greg Cox**, who racked up \$25,620 in “travel/lodging expenses for attendance at meetings” of the National Association of Counties in 2019. The same group also picked up \$3623 in travel costs for Cox’s wife Cheryl to board meetings during the year, the filing says.

— Matt Potter
(@sdmattpotter)

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continued from page 13
plants, “Reverse Zonies.” He, his wife Pat, and their two children moved to the east side of Phoenix in July.

“We got our place in a gated community for \$1300 a month,” he said. “It’s a three-bedroom and two-bathroom home with a two-car garage, not to be confused with a condo or townhome.”

In 2015-2016, Ramon and his family lived in North Park; they then moved east to City Heights.

“We saved about \$200 per month moving across the Orange Avenue/805 overpass,” he said. “Then in 2019, they raised our rent to \$1950.”

Ramon works from home as an online antique dealer. Pat worked with in the San Diego Unified School District; she now works in the Maricopa Unified School District.



Over the last year, Mike Madriaga has been driving east to Phoenix to view their \$200,000-\$350,000 homes for sale.

“How’s the pay in Phoenix compared to San Diego?” I asked Pat.

“I got lucky, it’s almost the same,” she responded. “Many of the other San Diego moms I met online that moved to Phoenix took a 10 to 20 percent pay cut. There’s about

ten families that I know of that moved from San Diego to Arizona around the same time we did.”

Ramon says his business of buying from Arizona estate sales and selling online is on the upswing. “There’s a huge retirement communi-

ty here, and it feels like there’s triple the amount of estate sales compared to back home,” he said. “And because there’s more supply, the prices are cheaper. Another thing is, storage here is more than 50 percent cheaper, and gas for my car is cheaper. By cutting overhead and selling my ‘oldies but goodies’ for higher profits, I’ll be good here.”

(As of May 18, the average price of a gallon of gasoline in San Diego was \$2.88. In Phoenix, it was \$2.12. And according to the Greater Phoenix Economic Council site, a group that “over the past 30 years, [has] helped more than 800 businesses expand or relocate to greater Phoenix” — cost of office rental space in Phoenix runs about \$25.61 per square foot, which is about \$11 cheaper than our county’s median rate.)

The couple saves about \$600 on rent now, but their other bills are a different story.

“Our first electric bill was \$350 for that first month,” Ramon said.

“But \$100 of that was our setup fee,” Pat added.

“On the other bills, we aren’t saving as much as I thought we would,” Ramon said.

Ramon broke down the majority of their monthly bills for me. “So here in Arizona, we spend about \$1300 on rent; \$250 on electric in the hotter months, which is about six months of the year and the thermostat set to 70 degrees; \$150 for the utilities including gas, water and trash; \$110 internet/cable; and \$250 for our auto insurance, which is double our insurance in San Diego.”

“So you are paying about \$175 more for electricity, \$100 more for util-

ities, and \$125 more for auto insurance — compared to back home?” I asked.

“Yes. During some months, (January-March) our electricity dropped to \$80, which is the same as back home, but our utilities went up another \$25 because of the heater,” Ramon responded. “On average I spend about \$300 extra per month in bills here.”

“But babe, look at all of the space we get here,” Pat said. “Our kids have a big living room, their own rooms, and we have high ceilings, a backyard, and a two-car garage.”

“But because we have more space,” Ramon added, “it costs us more money to cool it down or heat it up.”

The heat in Arizona isn’t the only weather phenomenon to which San Diego transplants must adjust.



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“We have monsoons and sandstorms here,” Ramon added. “When I was parking at our Walmart Neighborhood Market in September, it was like a giant storm with wind and sand. It hit us and left within two minutes; it was bizarre.”

Another San Diego transplant said their swimming pool water was ruined when a sandstorm passed through their neighborhood. “That sand will also mess up your car finish,” Ramon added. “Maybe that’s why our auto insurance is higher here.”

Gail, the grandmother from Linda Vista, said she lost her Lyft and Uber gigs when she relocated, because her \$150 monthly auto insurance increased. “I contacted Geico, because you have to let them know if you’ve moved within ten days,” she said. “I let them know

and they did their little calculations, and it came up with a deposit for my new insurance of \$598, and my monthly would have been \$355 a month to drive for the rideshare companies in Arizona.”

“When I was driving Uber and Lyft back in San Diego, I loved it,” Gail said. “I could go out and talk to people and share the wonders of San Diego, give some advice, pray for people and have people pray for me.”

Carlson concurred. “I have a big SUV and I pay about \$110 a month here,” she said, “in San Diego it was \$86.”

Ramon said his Arizona auto insurance agent opined that the premiums are higher because of the influx of people moving into the state. “Which didn’t make any sense — wouldn’t that lower the prices?” Ramon wondered. “I think



David Walker is a 34-year-old 7-Eleven employee. He grew up in south San Diego, then transplanted to Phoenix; then Yuma; and back to San Diego.

it’s because of the shitty drivers.”

While everybody I interviewed said that their auto insurance increased when they moved to Arizona, others online who are considering relocating say it’s cheaper if you do a price comparison online.

I spoke to David Walker in November. Walker is a 34-year-old 7-Eleven employee. He grew up

in south San Diego, then transplanted to Phoenix; then Yuma; and back to San Diego in October.

“The freeways are way different out there in Arizona; they’re on your ass like real close,” Walker said. “I had a Suburban when I lived out there, and I put a light bar on the back of my bumper so when people were tailgating, I’d click that switch on.”

I noticed about five drivers in Arizona with bumper stickers that read something like, “The closer you get, the slower I’ll drive.” I agree with Walker. The driving style in the Maricopa County streets is different. I noticed longer stretches of road between stop lights with 45-mile-per-hour speed limits, and most drive 15-20 mph over that. Some of the stop lights have functional cameras, so it’s common to hear ve-

hicles skid to a stop. And because I’d gotten used to the faster-paced driving in Arizona, when we returned to San Diego, I’d catch myself speeding on my University and Adams Avenue routes where the speed limits drop to 25 mph.

San Diegans tend to give Zonies a bad rap regarding driving in our city, but now I understand where they’re coming from. Many of the streets that connect the cities on the east side of Phoenix remind me of the long, high-speed stretches coming into Eastlake from I-805, or Miramar between I-805 and I-15.

Ramon agrees; he said he’s gotten the bird for driving too slowly or taking turns cautiously. “These guys here drive like they’re in the Baja 1000,” he said.

I recall seeing UTVs driving alongside us on

city streets, and motocross and street bikers cruising around without helmets. “It seems us Californians are called scaredy cats,” Ramon added, “and I worded it nicely for our readers back home.”

I think that the heat has something to do with the driving style over there. When I drove around Chandler in June, and the temperature was about 117 degrees, I could feel the heat penetrating through my minivan’s roof and onto the back of my neck. Despite our air conditioning blowing at full blast, I couldn’t wait to get back into our air-conditioned hotel room.

As much as we complain about Zonie drivers, they think we’re the bad drivers. When I went into a CVS by Phoenix in August and provided my “619” phone number to the cashier for my membership discount, she said:

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“Ohhh, you’re from San Diego...you and your ‘California stops.”

I shrugged my shoulders, and she continued, “You know, those rolling stops.” I responded, “Whatever — don’t get me started on the Arizona drivers driving on our boardwalk.” We both laughed. I then said, “Some of you don’t like us Californians.” She responded “Well, you guys are the ones driving up our rents and home prices.”

At that point, I understood the hostility aimed towards me as I drove our minivan on their 60, 10 and 101 freeways: it was my California license plates.

Walker, the 7-Eleven employee who moved back to south San Diego in October, still hasn’t found a pad. “How are you adapting to the higher cost of living back

home, bro?” I asked him.

“I’m homeless,” he responded. “I sleep in my truck because I can’t afford rent here. Sometimes I stay at a homegirl’s pad in Santee. Like, I’ll be heading to her place today. That’s why I went out there to Phoenix, I had a two-bedroom apartment, and I was paying like \$600 a month.”

Walker is something of a homeless hero. Back in November 2019, his emergency first aid saved Mario Rojas’s life after a gunman entered the Church’s Chicken next door to his 7-Eleven and opened fire, killing Maribel Ibañez and injuring Humberto Ruiz and Rojas.

“One thing in Arizona is guns are legal, and you can carry your gun on you,” Walker said. “There’s like a respect thing there, and you don’t know who’s carrying. The people, or

almost all of the ones I met, are humble.”

In August, when we were looking at houses in southern Phoenix, we attended Mass downtown. I noticed an armed policeman by the door saying prayers with us in unison. The next day, we went to the library to hop on their internet to map out our house-hunting excursion before driving to San Diego. We were greeted by a sign that read, “Check in your guns at the front desk.”

“There’s a bigger respect factor here for sure,” Ramon added, “I mean the drivers are crazy, but I think twice about honking, or flipping someone off.”

Besides the claimed higher cost of auto insurance, another unforeseen expenditure in Arizona, one that we don’t share as often living in San Diego, is pest control.

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"I literally didn't want to move here because the minute I found out that Arizona has scorpions I freaked out," Carlson said. "Me and my kids didn't go to sleep; we were terrified. Our first year living here, I hired pest control every single month."

"How much do you pay a month for scorpion treatment?" I asked.

"I pay \$55 every single month," Carlson responded. "The first year, we found a couple of scorpions and they got inside the house. So far, nobody's gotten stung. The locals carry black flashlights and go scorpion hunting inside and outside of their homes."

On May 17, 2020, we visited a 2010 square foot home in Chandler that was priced at \$345,000. It had three bedrooms and two baths and was built on a 9021 square foot lot in 2004.

Another house we viewed in the same city had scorpion traps in the closets. "We put those out for precautions," said the real estate agent hosting the open house. "All of our houses have those."

Carlson referred to the city of Chandler as the "techie side in East Valley" which is about 20 minutes southeast of Phoenix. But she lives in West Valley, on the opposite side of Phoenix. "They call it the California Wave 2.0," she said. "That's the jargon in Phoenix regarding the many transplants from California. The average home in the West Valley, a three-bedroom and two-bath, goes for about \$250,000. And in terms of renting, you can get a four-bedroom for about \$1300."

Like Ramon's antique business, big business has followed suit here.

"There are fewer restrictions here for businesses," Ramon said. "They want us to make money."

"They call Arizona the wild west because we don't have so many regulations," Carlson continued, "and your hands are not tied up with all the laws, and property tax here is lower as well."

The Greater Phoenix Economic Council states that corporate income tax is 4.9 percent as opposed to our 8.84 percent; their top individual income tax rate is 4.54 percent while ours is 13.3 percent; and "Arizona offers a minimalist regulatory approach, no corporate franchise tax and is constitutionally recognized as a right-to-work state." Hence, corporations from California are moving to Arizona.

"Here on the west side," Carlson added, "we have lots of jobs where there

are warehouses;. We've got Amazon, Microsoft, and Boeing facilities, and they greenlighted Nike to be here."

If a family is considering relocating to Phoenix, parents have to think about the options for their kids. During July 4th, I attended a gathering in downtown Mesa and was drenched by firemen spraying water into the sky; the children and their guardians loved it. Many of the parks that we hung out at were frequented only after dinner time during the hot months, and many of the parks have water installations or splash pads. Bowling alleys and malls always seemed packed with kids and teens.

"For me, I'm not super into going out to clubs," Moran said, "so I do prefer a little more quiet myself. If I do decide I want to hang out, I can just

go closer to campus, we have a really good music scene here, just like San Diego. And for artists, downtown Phoenix has a good scene. Everyone here is into sports and roots for the same local teams; it's not like San Diego where everybody rooted for someone else."

Carlson takes her kids to Topgolf, a multilevel, climate-controlled driving range with individual bays, packed with music, food, bars and multiple giant screens playing sports throughout the massive venue, comparable in size to our Horton Plaza.

"Since we moved here, our quality of life has improved," Pat said. "We can go out and spend money having fun. Everywhere we go, there's families and retired folks. There's also hiking trails and national parks that are less than an hour from down-

town Phoenix."

"We really miss the beach," Ramon said. "So we come home to San Diego every two months."

I asked Ramon how much it would cost for San Diegans to haul their stuff to the Phoenix area. "A 27-foot U-Haul cost us about \$1100, and they only rent a flat rate with a certain mileage [allotted]," he responded. "Just have your cousin in the military come in with you because U-Haul gives discounts to the military. Gas will be about \$400-\$500, and it's best to fill up in Yuma, where it's \$1-\$1.25 cheaper per gallon than San Diego. If you travel during the hot months, bring lots of water and a spray bottle filled with ice cubes and water to spray your car seats, seat belts, and steering wheel, so they don't singe you."

— Mike Madriaga

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BRASS KNUCKLES \$20 (1G VAPES)	ROVE \$20 (1G VAPES)	STIIZY \$20 (1G VAPES)
H.H. VAPES \$25 (1G VAPES)	HOUSE PRE-ROLLS \$5	KIEF 2G \$10
STONEY PATCH \$10 (500MG GUMMIES)		

Winter GARDEN GREENS

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

\$10/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	BRASS MONKEY 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
STIIZY Pods \$25 (0.5G)	Plug and Play \$35 (1G VAPES)
Dabwood Vapes \$15	& H.H. Vapes \$20 (1G)
Exotic Carts \$15	Uplifted Vapes \$35
Jeff Sessions \$25 (1G Vapes)	Diamond Sticks \$20
Eternal Vapes \$20 (1G)	
Presidential Pre-Rolls \$10	Hurricane Pre-Rolls \$10
Twisted Moonrock Pre-Rolls \$10	Golani Pre-Rolls \$10
7G \$50 (Select Strains)	Diamond Sauce \$65/g
710 Shatter \$20/g	
Wow Rice Krispie Treats \$10 (500MG)	Blackout Brownies \$30 (100MG)
Moonrocks \$10/g	Hash \$15/g
House Nug Shatter \$15/g	Kief \$5/g
Wax \$10/g	
Stndrd Gummies \$10 (200MG) \$20 (400MG)	Sour Belts \$35 (1000MG Candy)
Caviar Candy \$35 (1000MG)	The Syrup \$35 (1000MG)
Cbd Tincture \$40 (1000MG)	

Lakeside's Best Dispensary! Open 24/7!

FREE 3.5 GRAMS OF NUGS + FREE 100MG EDIBLE! First-time patients only w/min. \$10 donation. Must mention ad.	TEXT "EXOTIC" TO 737-37 TO RECEIVE OUR DAILY DEALS!
BEST JAR IN THE HOUSE \$9/GRAM	Kushy Punch TKO \$15 or 2 for \$25
ZODIAC, COOKIES, RUNTZ & OFF WHITE 5 for \$100 Mix & Match with many more options!	
TOP-SHELF \$4/g or 3g \$10 Any patient, no limit!	PRIVATE RESERVE \$8/GRAM Any patient, no limit!
CALI EXTRACTS DIAMONDS \$35	BABYLON'S GARDEN EDIBLES \$35 (1000mg) • \$10 (100mg)
WAX \$5 Select strain.	SHATTER 12g \$100 Select strain.
CRUMBLE 7g \$100 Select strain.	GOLD ROAR SHATTER \$15/g
10 GRAMS OF SHATTER \$100	
7 GRAMS \$50 Choose from 25 different strains!	Volcanic Crumble \$20/g
Exclusive Shake 3 oz \$100	1/4-POUND starting at \$300
ROAR YELLOW SHATTER \$10/GRAM	
Alpine Carts \$40	MOONROCK \$15/gram Limited time only! Limit per patient.
BRASS KNUCKLES \$20	BRASS CARTRIDGES \$7
Black Label Brownie \$30 (100mg)	
SHATTER & CRUMBLE \$20 Select strains.	3 for \$100 (1G VAPES)
GODAM! Joints 2 for \$25	BAKEWOODS Starting at \$30
KNOCKOUT PRE-ROLLS \$20	
KANEH CO Starting at \$15	3 RICE KRISPIE TREATS \$10
H.H. VAPES \$20	4 JOINTS \$10
STIIZY Pods \$40 (1G)	

BEST CBD SELECTION!

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

Exotic Greens 12038 Woodside Ave.
Lakeside, CA 92040

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DR. ARMIN HAGE

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619-319-9640

UniversityDentalSanDiego.com

Smile Designers San Diego (Sports Arena)

3365 Rosecrans St, San Diego, 92110

619-404-0061

SmileDesignerSanDiego.com

*Treatment plans vary case by case, restrictions may apply. Call office for details. Offers cannot be combined. Offers for cash patients only. For insurance patients, insurance fees apply. Offers good through 6-29-20 ** No-Needle system cannot be used on all cases. Use of conventional anesthesia may still be required.

***Not all patients qualify for same day implants. Questions can not be answered over phone. Implant consult appointment is required. CT x-ray and bone graft not included.



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