

PRESIDIO SENTINEL

Volume 22, No. 3

Serving the Heart of San Diego

March | 2021

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Animal
Characters

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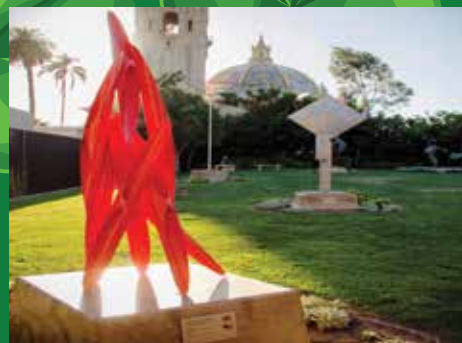


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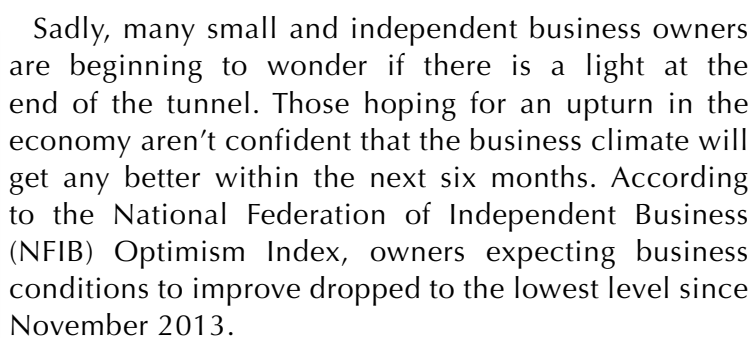


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Featured Events

By Patty Ducey-Brooks



In addition to finding qualified workers, small businesses must also contend with rising labor costs and compensation. The Raise the Wage Act of 2021 is legislation under consideration by Congress that would increase the federal minimum wage by \$15 per hour over five years. Eighty-nine percent report they would have lower earnings and 87 percent said they would need to increase prices to compensate for higher wages. Some say they will have to get along with fewer employees, meaning job losses.

West Washington at India Street were suddenly removed in a couple hours, without any notice to the businesses on India Street, the Uptown Community Parking District, or to Mission Hills BID.

When I met with the business owners after the parking spaces were eliminated, they were still in disbelief that this could happen. They refer to it as a “knee jerk” reaction from the mayor’s office for making this decision. Especially when they know that there is a more comprehensive plan from SANDAG that was approved by the businesses on India Street, the Uptown Community Parking District, Mission Hills BID, and Mission Hills Town Council.

When I spoke to the president of the Mission Hills Town Council, Steve Cline, he shared his frustration with this outcome, and said he had reached out to the mayor's office and Councilmember Stephen Whitburn. Neither has responded after several attempts to reach them.

On top of that, we have businesses on Washington Street that have been reaching out to Councilmember Whitburn's office, and the mayor's office with no response on environmental services issues. Human feces on public and private property have become a health hazard to restaurants and other businesses trying to keep their doors open and remain financially sound. Attempts to address this are getting no response from the offices of our elected officials.

These are trying times for small businesses. And, it would seem that our elected officials would do the right thing to help them. Instead, we are learning of more disinterest from our elected officials who seem to have decided that they don't need to serve their constituents now that they are in office.

Unfortunately, the truth hurts all of us small business owners.

Ambitious Bipartisan Effort Leads to “Keep California Working”

Thanks to bipartisan efforts, struggling small businesses and non-profits received a much-needed boost this past month. Senate Republicans are pleased that Senate Democrats joined them in passing an early action budget measure that will provide more than \$2 billion in immediate economic relief to job creators and non-profits that have been affected by the state’s confusing closing and re-opening guidelines. Members of the California Senate Republican Caucus are principal co-authors of Senate Bill 87.

SB 87 stemmed from the measure “Keep California Working Act” (SB 74) introduced by Republican Senator Andreas Borgeas (R-Fresno) in December 2020. Legislative Democrats agreed to include some of the proposals from SB 74 in the budget bill.

“The Keep California Working Act proved that when legislators put aside partisan differences, we can accomplish great things and deliver for the people of California,” said Senator Borgeas. “I would like to personally thank Senator Anna Caballero and Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris, members of our staff who worked on the bill, the supporting organizations, and the sixty-one other legislators who signed on to the Keep California Working Act.”

“Last year we set out to deliver relief funds to small businesses and nonprofits in an expedited fashion, and we were successful in influencing the Governor and legislative leadership to include our proposal in the budget within three short months – an atypical timeline by Sacramento standards,” added Senator Borgeas. “Now, I am counting on the Governor’s administration to get this money into the hands of small businesses and nonprofits in need.”

“Every legislator could tell a personal story about a business that has shuttered its doors permanently because of the state’s confusing



“Keep California Working Act” (SB 74) was introduced by Republican Senator Andreas Borgeas (R-Fresno) in December 2020.

guidelines. California has already lost more than 19,000 businesses or non-profits because of the state’s confusing guidelines and many more are in precarious situations. This won’t undo the damage caused by the shutdowns, but it will provide a definite boost in the arm for our job creators and non-profits,” said Senate Republican Leader Scott Wilk (R-Santa Clarita).

He added, “Thanks to Senator Borgeas for his leadership and tireless efforts to unite the business community and the legislature to ‘Keep California Working.’ A win for bipartisanship is a win for our small business community because good ideas shouldn’t have party lines.”

According to Senator Borgeas, “This was a lightening fast effort to get this bill included in the 2021 budget, which was the work of 63 of 120 legislatures, plus various organizations: 15 counties, the Farm Bureau, Rent Association, and 80-plus chamber of commerce across the state.”

The intent of Senate Bill 74 is to provide a one-time grant to small businesses with 100 or less employees and provide them with financial support due to income lost during the pandemic.

Borgeas offered, “The public sentiment is that we need to do something to move the needle. The need and demand from small businesses is for an equitable distribution of funds to allow them to keep operating.”

“Last year we set out to deliver relief funds to small businesses and nonprofits in an expedited fashion, and we were successful in influencing the Governor and legislative leadership to include our proposal in the budget within three short months – an atypical timeline by Sacramento standards,” added Senator Borgeas. “Now, I am counting on the Governor’s administration to get this money into the hands of small businesses and nonprofits in need.”



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“Enjoya” La Jolla Presents: Takeout Taste of The Village

Experience La Jolla’s amazing restaurant offerings while staying safe and dining at home, with La Jolla Village Merchants Association’s Takeout Taste of The Village, running from 4 to 7 p.m., Monday, March 22 through Thursday, March 25, with restaurant and menu inclusions varied each evening.

Takeout Taste of The Village is an elevated dining experience featuring four courses for each of four evenings during the first week of spring. Instead of the traditional taste concept, the menu will comprise a curated full meal for two people, including first course, second course, entrée and dessert with menus artfully designed to deliver a true taste of La Jolla dining.

Here are the guidelines of the event:

- Advance sale tickets for one day of the event (\$80) will be available at Takeout Taste Of The Village before menus are solidified.
- General admission tickets will be on sale in the coming weeks, as menus are announced.
- Advance Sale Ticket: \$80 / General Admission Ticket: \$85
- Choose evening of participation and purchase tickets online
- Check in on designated evening, pick up an insulated re-usable bag
- Facial covering is required
- Check in is located on the corner of Herschel and Prospect in La Jolla Village
- Walk or drive to each location and pick up to-go items
- Dine at home or an open-air dining location

Tickets are \$85 for up to two people. In order to keep crowd sizes small and avoid mass gathering on the sidewalks, there will be a maximum of 150 tickets sold for each evening. Ticketholders will be given a time window to check in.

20 percent of each ticket sold helps support the La Jolla restaurants, which have been struggling during the pandemic, while also showcasing the fantastic array of La Jolla eateries. Attendees will have the option of adding a gratuity to the restaurants as well, during the ticket purchase process. All COVID-19 protocols will be strictly adhered to both by participating restaurants and event management. Physical distancing, facial covering requirements and enhanced sanitation measures will be in place for guest safety.



Enjoy an elevated dining experience from the comfort of home with Takeout Taste of The Village.



Upon check in on the designated evening, participants will receive an insulated re-usable bag.

Emilio’s Ride Along Campaign Benefits Children Battling Cancer

The Emilio Nares Foundation (ENF) invites the San Diego community to participate in a month long Ride Along Campaign in March, benefitting children battling cancer and other life-threatening diseases. ENF is a nonprofit organization helping low-income families navigate their child’s journey with cancer. Over the last 18 years, ENF has traveled over one million miles and served over 4,000 children across Southern California. The Ride Along Campaign will consist of ongoing fundraising efforts to raise critical funds for the Ride with Emilio Program including a Corporate Ride Along event on Friday, March 26.

Emilio’s Ride Along provides children with cancer the chance to survive and receive the life-saving medical treatment they desperately need. This year, with a goal of raising \$100,000, ENF challenges the San Diego community to step up and help bridge the gap in funding due to COVID-19. These funds will primarily support ENF’s flagship program, Ride with Emilio. Despite these challenges of the past year, ENF has persevered and continued to provide services, safely, for these families in need.

“The Emilio Nares Foundation has been helping families dealing with the unimaginable, their child’s cancer diagnosis, for more than 18 years,” said Karen Terra, president and CEO of the Emilio Nares Foundation. “Even in the middle of a pandemic, our ENF team continues to provide vital rides to and from the hospital, ensuring that no child ever has to miss a cancer treatment due to lack of transportation. We are grateful for our donors and corporate partners who continue to help make this possible.”

ENF understands that not all children with cancer are able to get to their treatments. Transporting immune-compromised children safely is also a challenge, but ENF ensures the safety of each ride-a-long with proper precautions such as masks, face shields, disinfecting vehicles and transporting one family at a time. Emilio’s Ride Along Campaign safely brings the foundation one ride closer to ensuring that no child misses their cancer treatments due to lack of transportation.

As part of Emilio’s Ride Along Campaign, ENF is holding a Corporate Ride Along Day on Friday, March 26. On this day, members of the ENF

team will personally stop by each corporate partner’s office to thank their sponsors for their contribution to this amazing cause. At each stop, sponsors will add their logo to the foundation’s vans, providing a visual representation of the collaborative efforts of the community in helping ENF reaching their goal of raising \$100,000. This year’s event includes a Corporate Ride Along with several partners already joining in the fight including Geico, Livestrong, Bob’s Furniture, Local Media San Diego, and Pacific Life Foundation.

All proceeds raised from Emilio’s Ride Along Campaign will go directly to the transportation program serving children battling cancer. To date, the foundation has raised over a third of the critical funds they need to reach their goal, but they still need the continued support of the community.

To learn more about Emilio’s Ride Along, become a corporate partner or create your own fundraising page, visit EmiliosRideAlong.org.



Emilio’s Ride Along provides children with cancer the chance to survive and receive the life-saving medical treatment they desperately need.

California's Anti-Worker Law Shouldn't be Imposed Nationwide

By Patricia Bates

Independent contracting and freelancing work have been under assault in California for years because, among other things, it interferes with unionizing efforts. California passed a law in 2019 that significantly hurt worker freedom (Assembly Bill 5) and Congress could pass a similar law this year (PRO Act) that would devastate freelancers across the nation.

Let me provide some background on AB 5. Governor Newsom and legislative Democrats approved AB 5, which dealt a staggering blow to Californians who want to continue working as independent contractors. AB 5 enshrined into law a California Supreme Court decision (Dynamex) that created an entirely new test (ABC test) for determining whether an individual is an independent contractor or an employee.

The new test makes it very difficult, if not impossible, for many companies and workers to establish an independent contractor relationship. My Senate Republican colleagues and I strongly opposed AB 5 because of its negative effects on the economy and worker freedom. We introduced several amendments to help reduce AB 5's worst effects, but Democrats rejected them on partisan votes.

AB 5 denies many Californians the opportunity to decide when to work, where to work, how to work, how long to work, and what to work on. More than 58% of California's voters voiced their support for more worker freedom when they approved Proposition 22 last year, which exempts app-based rideshare and delivery services from AB 5.

The supporters of AB 5 argue that their law is necessary because of the Dynamex decision. This is not true. The Legislature could have implemented legislation introduced by Senate Republicans that intended



Patricia Bates (R-Laguna Niguel) represents the 36th Senate District in the California Legislature, which covers northern San Diego and southern Orange counties.

to reverse the court decision and establish a broader, more flexible test that would encourage independent contracting and freelancing. This path would have allowed greater worker choice.

Instead, Governor Newsom and legislative Democrats chose to double down on enforcing AB 5, while also tinkering around the edges by giving 109 industries and professions exemptions from the law. Others were not so fortunate in receiving an exemption, including many health care professionals, owner/operator truck drivers, mental health professionals, franchisors/franchisees, television freelance journalists, tattoo artists, and pharmacists.

Moreover, even with AB 5 carve outs, confusing and ambiguous hiring rules have some businesses refusing to hire independent contractors or freelancers, leading to fewer jobs.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) found that in 2018 a little more than 10% of workers engaged in independent work as their primary job. The Freelancers Union found

that 35% of workers – 57 million Americans – contribute an excess of \$1 trillion dollars to the economy each year.

It would be wrong to think freelancing and independent contracting are not desirable ways to earn a living. According to the 2018 BLS economic report, 79% of independent contractors prefer their work situation to traditional employment, and a 2017 survey revealed that most full-time workers who left their jobs made more money as a freelancer within a year.

Freelancers include artists and entrepreneurs pursuing their dreams, retired individuals on fixed incomes, single parents needing flexibility to juggle both family responsibilities and work, and college students who do gig work to afford classes and books. These workers choose this work situation because it works for them; they can be in control of their work-life balance. AB 5 limits their choices.

Therefore, California is a bad role model when it comes to worker freedom, yet Democrats in Washington, D.C. want to impose AB 5 nationwide by passing the PRO Act.

Among a slew of other economy- and opportunity-harming provisions, the PRO Act includes California's ABC test, exposing the PRO Act as far more union-friendly than worker-friendly.

The PRO Act could pass this year and one can only imagine the damage it will cause to our national economy.

Lawmakers – state and federal – should be laser-focused on creating job opportunities for all workers, not passing laws like the PRO Act that eliminate them. We should be in the business of giving workers the freedom to choose as to how they want to make a living.

PRESIDIO
SENTINEL

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The Presidio Sentinel is a monthly publication that is distributed by the first of each month to households in Mission Hills, Bankers Hill points in Mission Hills, Bankers Hill, Point Loma, Old Town, Little Italy, Downtown, Hillcrest, Kensington, University Heights, Mission Valley and Linda Vista

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Subscription rate is \$25 per year. Send checks, all letters, editorial, press releases and calendar of events to the following.

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Creating a More Compassionate World for Community Cats

By Gary Weitzman, DVM, president and CEO, San Diego Humane Society

In Morgan Cook’s December 20, 2020 report, “San Diego Humane Society urged to stop releasing adoptable cats back onto streets,” the author noted that some animal advocates disagree about the best care for community cats. The issues around community cats are complex, and we want to help those who share a passion for animals learn more about why our programs are evolving and what we hope to achieve.

“Community cats” are outdoor cats with no identifiable signs of ownership, and they are found all over the world. San Diego County is home to an estimated 300,000-500,000 community cats. If that sounds like a lot — it is. Caring for community cats, while working to stabilize and reduce their numbers, is one of the most complex issues facing animal shelters today. And it’s one that leading animal welfare organizations, veterinarians and researchers are finding progressive solutions to address. In early 2021, San Diego Humane Society will launch a comprehensive community cat program that was developed with a simple, clear goal in mind: to help cats. We are committed to creating the best, most compassionate outcome for every animal in San Diego County, exactly what we’ve been committed to doing for more than 140 years.

Community cats can be feral or friendly, young or old. They live in urban areas, parks, canyons, backyards and beach communities. New programs to provide the best care for these cats are complex and often misunderstood — but they are critically needed. Traditional sheltering practices have not been effective in caring for or reducing the numbers of community cats. Shelter environments are extremely stressful for cats—even for sociable cats—and prolonged housing in a shelter can lead to severe health challenges and significantly diminished quality of life.

San Diego Humane Society, along with other leading animal welfare organizations such as Alley Cat Allies, American Pets Alive, the ASPCA, Best Friends, HSUS, the Koret Shelter Medicine Program at the University of California, Davis, and Maddie’s Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida, are doing just that. Support for community cat programs spans multiple sectors, from shelter workers to veterinarians to advocacy groups. All agree that the most humane way to care for




Traditional sheltering practices have not been effective in caring for or reducing the numbers of community cats.

community cats is to develop programs that spay/neuter, vaccinate, and quickly return them to their outdoor homes. In addition to being what’s best for individual cats, this is the only approach proven to reduce the numbers of community cats over time.

This program will only apply to healthy cats who demonstrate they are doing well living outside. It does not apply to cats who are unhealthy, were relinquished or abandoned by their owners, or found in a dangerous place. In most cases it will also not apply to kittens under 6 months of age.

We encourage everyone who shares our passion for animals to visit sdhumane.org/communitycats to learn more, and join us in creating a brighter future for cats everywhere.

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Goliath

Goliath is a six-year old Rottweiler, though large in stature; he loves belly rubs and just hanging out with his human companions. He’s quickly become a staff and volunteer favorite, and his leash walking skills are what dreams are made of. Goliath has been avoidant of other dogs and would likely be happiest as the only dog in the home.

If you are looking for a large and well-behaved companion, look no further.

To schedule an appointment, visit sdhumane.org. All San Diego Humane Society shelters are open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday, by appointment only.

Marlo is a gorgeous, five year-old domestic short hair cat who will thrive in a quiet home with a family who will be dedicated to getting to know her through treat-filled, patient interactions. She will need time to settle into her new life and get to know her new human companions and surroundings. She bonds strongly to her people, and prefers not to be around many strangers. Marlo is sensitive to certain forms of touch and handling. Paying attention to her body language is going to be crucial to her happiness in her new home surrounding. With a little time and patience, we know she is going to make the most wonderful furry friend for some lucky person, or family.

To schedule an appointment, visit sdhumane.org. All San Diego Humane Society shelters are open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday, by appointment only.



Marlo

SPCA

Putting a Stop to Middle-Age Spread

By Blake Beckcom



Blake & Gwen Beckcom

As you approach the 40 to 50 age groups it can be an exciting time of change, opportunity, prosperity and positive personal growth. Yet, at the same time, life can get complicated and busy as your family grows. You may find less time for you, finding yourself getting more involved in everything. Before you know it, the growth that becomes the most present in your life is the spare tire that wraps around your mid-section.

Most commonly known as the middle-age spread, this unwelcome feature to your physique is a compilation of the choices you make throughout your life in regard to the food you eat, your daily activity levels and the quality of sleep you log each night. All three of these critical factors for living a healthy lifestyle are tightly intertwined. So, when even one is lacking, it creates a spiraling snowball effect that can leave you feeling tired and out of energy, as well as in an unhealthy situation with additional weight in your mid-section. To successfully fight the battle of the bulge, you have to arm yourself with an active lifestyle that extends past the gym. It means, making good whole food choices, and reserve enough time in your busy schedule for a restful night's sleep.

Stand Up for a Healthy Belly

When you're a child all you want to be is an adult. Then when you're finally an adult, all you do is reminisce about the good old days of your childhood. To tackle your mid-section spread, it can be beneficial to pull from the past and revert back to your childhood days of running, playing and moving throughout your day.

The fountain of youth is strength training and running, right? But, as we get older, we stop running for some reason...because that's not what adults do. Running is a fantastic exercise that is excellent for your health and your hormones. While strength training can give you the most return for the time/effort invested.

The best approach is that you perform most strength training exercises standing up whenever possible. Even if you aren't directly working the core, you still have to stabilize the trunk and mid-section muscles when you are in an upright position. It also is important to keep moving during your everyday life outside of your designated gym time.

If all you do is go to the gym an hour per day and the rest of the time you're sitting in the car, at work or on the couch, you're not going to be happy with your results. In addition to consistently working out regularly, daily non-exercise physical activity such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator, parking your car in the spot furthest away from the door, and taking regular recess breaks from your desk to walk or stretch, will help combat your middle-age spread and

sedentary adult-life tendencies.

Eat Good Food

While fad diets that target the abs and mid-section may seem like the best choice when you're trying to reduce your spare tire, feeding your belly without fueling your bulge actually can be a lot simpler than following a strict eating plan. The best foods nutritionally for your belly and your total body are ones that have a mother or come from the earth. When choosing foods that are good for busting your bulge, you may see better results following these guidelines:

- 90 percent of what you eat should be good food – it comes naturally from the earth (fruits, vegetables, etc.) and it has a mother (meats, eggs, fish, etc.).
- Everything that comes in a package or a container shouldn't be a part of your diet.
- Stay away from foods without expiration dates or with a long shelf life.
- Shop around the perimeter of the store where most fresh, preservative-free foods exist.
- Everything that comes from the middle of the store should be eaten sparingly.
- Shop more frequently, buy more locally and shop seasonally, when possible.

Collect Your Z's

Just like you have to make deposits into your bank account regularly to be financially vibrant, it is just as important to deposit regular hours of sleep each night into your body's wellness account to maintain the balance of your energy, hormones and internal clock. When you sleep poorly, you typically don't eat well and then you don't have enough energy to work out or move more throughout your day. Skimping on your sleep can start a negative chain reaction that leads to enlarged mid-sections, increased mental and physical stress, and unhealthy lifestyle choices.

Getting enough sleep, eating the right foods and exercising all feed the mind, body and hormone system in a positive way. But, lack of these things does the opposite.

Whether you consciously or unconsciously make the choice to disregard eating well, sleeping well and exercising regularly, the bottom line is that all areas in your life – your career, family, mental and physical health – will feel the repercussions when you put these essential ingredients to living a healthy lifestyle on the backburner. If you don't put in the time to take care of yourself properly and don't make your health a priority, then it will ultimately be impossible to stop the middle-age spread from expanding your waistline and negatively impacting your overall health. It all comes down to the personal choices you make every day, and over long periods of time that add up to this middle-age spread.

Fitness Together Mission Hills offers personal training with qualified professionals by regular appointment in private suites. Exercise and nutritional programs are custom designed to fit your needs and abilities. Call 619-794-0014 for more information or to schedule a free fitness diagnostic and private training session. See what others are saying about us on Yelp.

Revocable Living Trust – Essential California Estate Planning

By Rick Brooks



A potential client recently asked me if trusts were really necessary. All of their assets were titled in joint name, so why go through the hassle and expense of creating a trust?

Let's start with Probate. Probate fees start at four percent of the first \$100,000 and reach \$9,000 on the first million. Having your assets owned by a trust can largely avoid probate, so that alone is a huge financial incentive to use one. Probate is also a public court proceeding, so your trust can help keep your finances private by helping to avoid probate. Furthermore, if you have property in multiple jurisdictions (for example, in two states), a trust can really help cut the cost and

complexity of passing these assets to your heirs.

Most living trusts are written so that the person or people who contribute assets to the trust, called the "grantors," are also the ones who control the trust, called the "trustees." Thus, while a grantor may give up legal title to an asset, he or she may not actually give up control. A trust can hold title to assets like real estate, brokerage and bank accounts.

Joint ownership bypasses a will or trust and passes the asset so titled directly to one owner at the other's passing. For example, if a married couple owns their house as joint tenants with right of survivorship, the house will pass automatically to the surviving spouse at death without probate. But then at the second death, it could be subject to probate.

The surviving spouse is also at a tax disadvantage. When someone passes away and leaves property to another, the new owner gets to reset the cost basis to the value on the date of the original owner's death. What's important here is that if an asset is titled in joint ownership, each person owns half of the property already, so when one person dies, that person's portion gets the step-up in cost basis, but the other half-owner may not.

A Trust solves this problem by taking title to the asset in the name of the trust and holding it as community property under the umbrella of the trust, allowing

the entire asset to receive the step up in basis. This allows the trust to sell the asset with significantly less capital gains than if it were inherited through a joint title transfer.

A trust is also very useful during life. Wills and trusts may contain similar provisions for the handling and disposition of assets, but a will is only effective after the maker's death, so it is useless if the maker is incapacitated. A living trust takes effect when it is signed and assets are titled in the name of the trust. This is particularly important in the event of incapacity, when another trustee can take over and manage the trust's finances.

A trust can also help reduce estate taxes. Anyone dying in 2021 can leave up to a total of \$11,700,000 to any heirs (parents, siblings, children, friends, etc.) without estate tax. But a married person can leave his or her spouse an unlimited amount with no estate tax. While a couple's estate will generally pass to the surviving spouse at the first death, at the second death there is only the one limited exemption from estate taxes. Using a specially designed trust, a married couple can capture the \$11.7 million exemption at each death in addition to the unlimited marital exemption, thus protecting as much of the estate as possible from taxation. For people with significant assets, this kind of careful planning is important to ensure that your heirs, and not the Internal Revenue Service, receive your estate.

Finally, I need to mention that there are many kinds of trusts, each with a special purpose. Done properly, a trust can be a very useful estate management tool. They can also create huge problems if done poorly. These are important, complex documents, and should be prepared by an attorney who specializes in estate planning.

This column is prepared by Rick Brooks, CFA®, CFP®. Brooks is director/investment management with Blankinship & Foster, LLC, a wealth advisory firm specializing in financial planning and investment management for people preparing for retirement. Brooks can be reached at (858) 755-5166, or by email at rbrooks@bfadvisors.com. Brooks and his family live in Mission Hills.

50 Years Ago in Mission Hills

By Barbara Strona



I woke up this morning and realized that fifty years ago I was frantically looking for a place to live. My husband heard an ad on the radio. A company had just hired a large number of employees who needed to buy homes. As a lark, he listed our house for sale and were immediately in escrow on an acre somewhere south of Rancho Santa Fe: an acre with an unoled, unimproved, dirt road miles from the nearest market. Getting legal access and water were conditions of our escrow.

We had to find a rental quickly. No one wanted a young couple with two Hungarian puli dogs (30-pound sheepherding dogs with dreadlocks) and a calico cat. Luck was with us. A couple from out of state had just purchased a duplex in Mission Hills from another couple, Mr. and Mrs. Morgan. They had just finished painting the exterior a sort of putrid pink and were finishing painting the vacant two-bedroom/one-bath unit Spring Green. I hated the color. The new owners agreed to pay for white interior paint and new kitchen linoleum if we would do the labor and to let us have our pets provided that we didn't hold them responsible should a canyon creature cause their demise. Done and done.

March 1, 2071 our lease took effect, and with the help of one of my Point Loma High School students, we got our unit painted, the carpet torn up, and the kitchen floor re-covered with new linoleum. There was a single woman in the downstairs studio. We moved into our new rental with the help of friends.

Our rent was cheap and we were given avocados, lemons and oranges

from the three trees on the property. The owners gave us permission to fence the back of the property so we could keep our dogs from roaming the neighborhood.

We fell in love with Mission Hills. The day we moved in I went to KMar, the local market on Goldfinch that carried the best meats and freshest vegetables and fruit. Ron Kiefer, one of the owners, cashed my check without even looking at my driver's license. "Oh, you just moved here. Welcome," he said, taking my check and bagging my groceries.

I was floored. No one takes a stranger's check like that. (A footnote: years later, after Kiefer had moved the market to Fort Stockton, a neighbor's check bounced. Kiefer, knowing we were close friends of those neighbors and that we were taking care of their children while they were back east, said, "Tell Jim his check bounced, but it can wait till he gets home; I know where his kids are!" That was Mission Hills.)

One night after we had been living in the house for a week, I was preparing dinner. Three times in thirty minutes I remembered another ingredient I did not have; each time, I ran to the Ibis Market to buy the missing item. As I returned from the third trip, my husband came home.

"We have to cancel the escrow on that lot," I told him tearfully. There is no way I can be well-organized enough to live so far from the nearest market driving on an unimproved or improved road!"

Thus, began a search for a vacant lot in Mission Hills. I could not imagine living anywhere else.

We had to be on a canyon or have a view of some kind. The lot had to be quiet. We couldn't have a busy street. We looked at every vacant lot and at every decrepit house to tear down. Finally, we decided that



Barb and Carl Strona's pets included two Hungarian puli dogs, known for their dreadlocks.

we loved our location, and maybe the landlords would sell to us. They said, if we could wait until they'd owned it for six months and a day, they would love to sell it to us for a five-thousand-dollar profit. They also talked us into taking over their VA loan at what was then a ridiculously low rate of 8.5 percent.

Subtracting the monthly rent from our payment (PITI) meant we needed \$43.00 a month to live here. It was very convenient. We quit our jobs; Carl opened his own architectural firm with three partners, and together we worked on adopting a baby. We lived on the proceeds from the sale of our first house.

Our neighbors were lovely. Next door, on the corner were the Fosters and their four children. In the next house were the Guests with their two boys and a girl. Directly across the street were the Joneses: a widow and her son, Claude, who had grown up in the house. Mrs. Jones told me she and the original Mrs. Morgan had landscaped both yards making low retaining walls of rocks



A calico cat shared the residence of Barb and Carl Strona.

found on the properties and building terraces into the canyon. I assume they planted many of the trees, which are still living, the oleander at the street's end, and the jade plant as well.

I didn't know the family in the middle house across the street; they had two children and both worked. Their house sold and the wife of the new owners turned out to have gone to junior and senior high school with me in Los Angeles. The corner house's owners sold and took off in a bus with their kids and Samoyed. Bob and Becky Boyle bought it and camped there with their two children. It was missing a kitchen and had one toilet and a sink; the other bathroom had been gutted. They paid more than we paid, and we still feel lucky that we bought what and when we did, even though we planned to either sell it and buy something more suitable or remodel it. We did the latter, twice. Fifty years later we are still here.

Don't forget to watch Nan Serman on Sunday, March 28 as she offers a Zoom presentation titled, Growing, Cooking and Eating the Mediterranean Way. For more information and to register, visit www.missionhillsgardenclub.org.



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It Must Be Spring!

By Dixie Hall, President Mission Hills BID and Dixie Pops Owner



The weather gods heard our plea and responded with sunny skies and starry nights. Warmer days are with us and flowers are in bloom. Yes, it must be spring! With hopes of moving into the next Tier of these pandemic times and the re-opening of indoor spaces to higher capacities, there really is reason to believe that happier times are right around the corner.

New businesses have opened in Mission Hills, including Vaatika Salon at 1605 West Washington Street, and Casa Salon at 3991 Falcon Street. New restaurants are preparing to open, including What de Health Thai at 928 Fort Stockton Drive, and Fiori Pizza at their new 811 West Washington Street location, as well as the long-awaited La Puerta on Goldfinch at 4020 Goldfinch Street that is ready to open when mandates allow for functioning indoors. My own business DixiePops re-opened on February 19 at its new 301 West Washington Street location. We have added Shave Ice to our Ice Cream and Ice Pops. And, yes, we still offer free Pup Pops made especially for your best pal.

Sadly (and frustrating) on February 11 the twenty-two, non-metered parking spaces on lower West Washington Street near India Street, used by minimum wage earners at the International Restaurant Row businesses, were removed without warning and replaced by a painted bicycle lane and No Parking signage. Our Business Improvement District and Mission Hills Parking Advisory Committee, joined by the International Restaurant Row Parking Advisory Committee, whose businesses and parking spaces fall within the Mission Hills Business Improvement District, have worked

diligently with the regional transportation planning authority known as SANDAG and the succession of mayors and councilmembers to create a protected and safe multi-modal pathway up West Washington Street to the West University Avenue exit. We enthusiastically support a safe bike lane, along with a pedestrian pathway/sidewalk, and parking for up to twenty vehicles, which will serve as a safety buffer for the bike lane. These long awaited improvements, combined with a hillside retaining wall will create a wonderful asset for our community.

Unfortunately, due to an abundance of legally required processes, some resulting in multi-year time delays, this SANDAG project will not begin until 2023. Have you used the new bicycle lane? Please let us know at MissionHillsBID@gmail.com if you feel safe cycling in it. If you feel the parking should be or should not be returned, let us know this too.

Last month the Mission Hills BID kicked-off its "Ask An Expert" speaker series with a PPP Round 2: What You Need To Know presentation by attorney Bradley Lebow, partner at Dunn DeSantis Walt & Kendrick. It was an information filled session for those who received funding, as well as those looking to apply. And there was plenty of time for both advanced questions and live questions and answers.

Join us via Zoom at 4 p.m., Wednesday, March 17 as we continue the Ask An Expert speaker series "Homelessness Impacting Businesses" with a presentation by experts in the field of bringing outsiders inside; from street living to having a roof over their head. The San Diego Housing Commission, County of San Diego Homelessness Services and PATH (<https://epath.org/>), which is the acronym for People Assisting The Homeless will be represented.

PATH has been helpful to businesses in Mission Hills with both rapid response assistance and revisits to those living on our sidewalks and on our doorways, with the goal of developing a trusting relationship that will result in sobriety, work, and a home. Joining the BID as this month's Ask An Expert co-hosts are the Old Town San Diego Chamber/BID and the Presidio Sentinel. Please go to <http://missionhillsbid.com/meetings-and-agendas/#march> to register for this speaker series presentation and receive the link to join us on Zoom.

If you love the Mission Hills business neighborhood and have ideas and time to help promote it, the Mission Hills BID needs you. Don't be shy – you might also meet some new friends – I know I have. For the most up-to-date information and news on what's happening in Mission Hills visit our website at MissionHillsBID.com.



The Washington Street Bikeway project consists of separated bikeways and buffered bike lanes on West Washington Street.



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Mission Hills Garden Walk Set for May 8



Guests of the Mission Hills Garden Walk have enjoyed expansive walkways and unique landscaping.

The 23rd Annual Mission Hills Garden Club is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday May 8. Titled, Where Flowers Bloom, So Does Hope, will again be held on the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend. The theme, incorporating a phrase attributed to Lady Bird Johnson, is fitting to the beginning of emergence from the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Five of the nine gardens included in this year's walk have never been included in a garden walk, and several favorites from past years have been significantly updated, offering surprises and ideas for novice and experienced gardeners. While two of the gardens are on clearly visible large lots, others' expanses are hidden from street view.

Visitors will enjoy intimate spaces and unique plant specimens in all the gardens. Knowing that many school youth have been learning at home, this year's Garden Walk will include a scavenger hunt with a prize for all youth finding the treasures in the gardens.

Admission is free for children 10 and under, however strollers are not allowed in the gardens. The Garden Walk is designed to be a leisurely

two-mile stroll through Mission Hills, known for its variety of home and garden styles. To assure safety again this year, participants will select a time slot for starting the walk, with a limited number of individuals in any one garden at a time.

Guests should plan to wear facemasks and practice physical distancing. Participants will pick up their map at Mission Hills Nursery, 1525 Fort Stockton Drive on the day of the walk at their selected start time. Tickets can be purchased in advance (\$30) at www.missionhillsgardenclub.org. There is no guarantee tickets will be available the day of the walk.

The Mission Hills Garden Club, established in 1997, is a non-profit, community service organization dedicated to educate, engage, beautify, and give back. Proceeds from the annual garden walk support community improvement projects such as the Gecko Garden at Grant Elementary, restoration of Allen Canyon, Pioneer Park, and Presidio Park, and scholarships to students studying agriculture and related fields.

For more information, visit missionhillsgardenclub.org.



Water treatments and yard sculptures are commonly seen during the Mission Hills Garden Walk.

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Academy of Our Lady of Peace Student Named Virtual Poetry Out Loud County Champion

Kate Linggi, a senior at Academy of Our Lady of Peace in San Diego, took first place in the 2021 countywide Virtual Poetry Out Loud competition on February 10. Linggi will represent San Diego at the upcoming virtual state finals. Sarah Datta of Canyon Crest Academy placed Second at the event. Write Out Loud - an organization founded in 2007 with a commitment to inspire, challenge and entertain by reading short stories aloud for a live audience coordinates the national program locally. Linggi will continue on to the Virtual California Poetry Out Loud State Finals on March 11 and 12.

At the county competition, Linggi recited "What You Have To Get Over" by Dick Allen and "Envy" by Mary Lamb.

Write Out Loud Artistic Director, Veronica Murphy, shared "Continuing to oversee Poetry Out Loud during the pandemic has been a challenge that we knew was vital to overcome.

San Diego County students were definitely engaged with the virtual nature of the competition this year and we saw some fantastic recitations. Kate Linggi gave an exceptionally intelligent and nuanced performance - and will be a wonderful representative of San Diego at the State Finals."

The winner at the state level will move on to represent the Golden



For the competition, Kate Linggi recited "What You Have To Get Over" by Dick Allen and "Envy" by Mary Lamb.

State in the national finals in Washington, D.C. A total of \$50,000 in awards and school/organizational stipends will be given at the Poetry Out Loud National Finals, including a \$20,000 award for the National Champion, \$10,000 for 2nd place, \$5,000 for 3rd place, and \$1,000 for 4th through 12th places.

Beginning in 2005, this year's state competition will be the 16th production from the California Arts Council. An initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts, Poetry Out Loud encourages high school students to learn about poetry through memorization, performance, and competition. California's Poetry Out Loud is the largest event of its kind in the U.S., and has grown steadily since its inception.

The mission of the California Arts Council, a state agency, is to advance California through the arts and creativity. The Council is committed

to building public will and resources for the arts; fostering accessible arts initiatives that reflect contributions from all of California's diverse populations; serving as a thought leader and champion for the arts; and providing effective and relevant programs and services. Learn more at www.arts.ca.gov.

Dr. Stephen Wheeler Joins the Board of the San Diego Film Foundation

As The San Diego International Film Festival www.sdfilmfest.com prepares for the 20th Anniversary of the Festival this October, Tonya Mantooth, CEO/Artistic Director announced the addition of San Diego Arts Advocate, Dr. Stephen Wheeler to the Board of the Foundation.

According to Mantooth, "We are in a time of great transformation with the work we did last October to present the San Diego International Film Festival in our Virtual Village. It truly reimagined our organization from a primarily San Diego/Southern California based event to an international year round content provider focused on the power of cinematic storytelling. As our organization broadens its reach, we are thrilled to have such a powerhouse advocate for the arts and philanthropy as Stephen Wheeler join our Board. His passion for social justice and storytelling falls in line with our goals at the festival, and we look forward to having him on our leadership team."

Dr. Stephen Wheeler is a fourth generation Southern Californian, born and raised in Claremont, California. Dr. Wheeler recently stepped back from his private practice, which was based in Encinitas and focused on implant dentistry for nearly 40 years. Since retiring in December of 2018 Wheeler has focused on his belief that your sixties and seventies are the age of significance. Now is the time to give back, mentor those following in our footsteps, and leave a lasting legacy.

Wheeler shared "When we first became involved in the Film Festival to



Dr. Stephen and Lynne Wheeler are enjoying their new role of assisting The San Diego International Film Festival.

learn more about the film industry, I had no idea how this involvement would affect my outlook on the world. The focus of the festival to explore issues of global impact to increase empathy and understanding in an increasingly diverse and complex world has truly opened my eyes. The experience of watching movies has taken on a much more meaningful role now. I was deeply moved by many of the films I saw in the last three years. I found insights into PTSD, suicide, growing up in refugee camps, living in slums, suffering through war, and social injustice. I have traveled around the world and seen the slums in India and Africa, the devastation of war in Europe, and the remains of the concentration camps in Poland. These experiences have made these films even more impactful for me and I have come away realizing that they could change the world. This is why I am joining the Board of the San Diego International Film Festival. I would love to help change the world!"

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Suzy's Zoo Began Right Here in San Diego

By Ginny Ollis

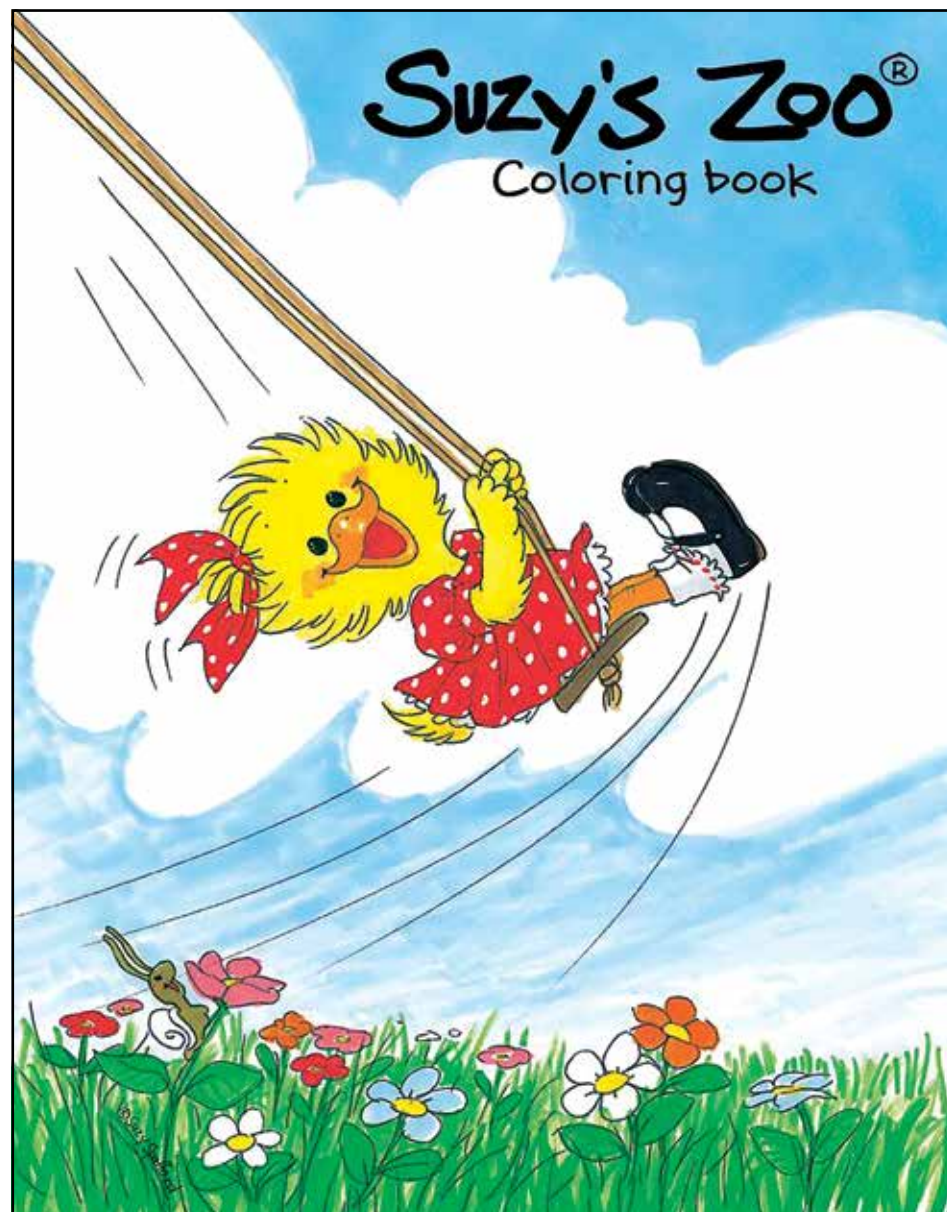
As a little girl, Suzy Spafford discovered new worlds and joyful ventures right at the end of her watercolor brush and pastel markers. At five-years of age she would spend hours merging shapes and colors and creating happy images. The summer after high school graduation, one of her favorite places became the huge art mart located at the 6th Avenue lawn at Balboa Park. She would display her work among dozens of other artists and even brought a table and chair so she could create on site.

A young boy and his little brother stopped by her table to watch her draw. They were fascinated with the shapes and creatures of her drawings. The older brother suggested to her that maybe she should put basketball shoes on the duck she was drawing. So, she did. That started something. His little brother asked could the next one be playing baseball. Another little boy asked for the next one to be playing drums. And so it began. People gave Suzy ideas of what to have the characters doing, many of which you will see today in Suzy's Zoo, thus confirming for Suzy the characters and personalities she wanted to create.

While she studied art and teaching skills at San Diego State University, she also began to further recognize the type of subjects and activities people wanted in her artwork. In year four, taking advantage of a weekend day at a La Jolla art mart, Bill and Jeanne stopped by. A successful businessman, Bill was intrigued by Suzy's story and the individualized personalities of her characters. He told Suzy that he thought her frog artwork with big eyes should be made into posters, displayed on the bedroom walls of every kid in America. To which Jeanne commented, "Actually, I would like them on note cards."

All these marketing and promotional suggestions resulted in Suzy flying to Piedmont, California the following weekend. That's where Bill and Suzy forged a partnership – she the artist and producer, he the financier and business director.

With Bill's financial support, Suzy was able to take her creations to a larger public. Bill knew a printer, and they started with 10,000 sheets each with eight designs; and Jeanne got her wish for note cards. The early marketing work quickly exploded. The turtle with horn rimmed glasses, the hat-wearing duck with basketball sneakers, and the frog with



Entertaining and engaging Suzy's Zoo color books are some of the creations of Suzy Spafford.

► Continued on page 12

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Suzy's Zoo Began Right Here in San Diego ▶ *Continued from page 11*

By Ginny Ollis

big eyes, led to Suzy's burgeoning "zoo," which was now in high demand, becoming a best seller across the U.S. and eventually internationally.

Bill started out as a 90 percent partner, and Suzy at 10 percent. After two years operating in Oakland, where Jeanne and her friend operated the tiny business out of a loft in Bill's factory, the couple decided they didn't want to oversee the operation of the business any more. It was too time consuming. Bill suggested Suzy and her then husband fly up, rent a U-Haul, load up the inventory, and bring it to San Diego to operate from her home base. At that point Suzy took over the business, and Bill graciously and automatically made Suzy's ownership 90 percent and his 10 percent.

The business soon took off. After a few years Suzy got advice from different accountants and attorneys to incorporate. Bill was opposed. However, when the third accountant suggested incorporation as the only fiscally responsible thing to do, Suzy felt she had to go against Bill's wishes. She and Bill remained in touch, but over time, they drifted apart. Suzy's business and her attention to operating it increased.

During this time, Suzy and her first husband had moved in different directions. Among the various CPAs to whom she had been referred to was Ray Lidstrom. Years later he became her always and perfect husband.

As the business expanded in subject material, product types, and languages, her characters proved to be appealing to people in many different countries. Then as she started working with a brilliant marketing company in Japan, she quickly became a Japanese rock star. Suzy had learned the business side of being a successful artist. Like Dr. Seuss, Suzy's Zoo books, toys, clothing, wall and house art, etc. became an international prime product.

Looking back on her past, Suzy is extremely grateful for her initial

mentor and partner, Bill, who gave her so much business guidance in the critical, early years. However, she also knows her success came from the cleverness and integrity of the characters in Suzy's world. If credit is due, she remembers the boys at Balboa Park who shared their ideas and stimulated her decision to change the personality of her characters.

With the dominant position she established in retail shops worldwide, Suzy needed to hire other illustrators. A significant challenge was to find artists who would adhere to her style, and not try to change to reflect their own ideas. Suzy, a creator by nature, understands this is hard for any aspiring artist to follow.

Television, books, and international sales, all in addition to her thriving retail (books, stuffed toys, cards, calendars, etc.), presented a whirlwind of outcomes, generated as much by her characters as by Suzy herself. In her position, she has become realistic to her role of maintaining the magic of her characters, and accepting the stress of so much success.

Ultimately, she moved the company into licensing for others to manage distribution. And then came the world shift created by technology, the pressure on her 8,000 gift shop retailers, the switch from children tuned to television to personal screens...there is constant change.

Having produced Suzy's world for over 50 years, today her focus is on preserving the legacy of her creations in the minds and hearts of her devoted followers (locally and around the world). As she looks back, she is reminded of how it all started, and the challenges of being an artist and entrepreneur.

For those with children (and those childlike as adults), Suzy's Zoo has two animated series: "Adventures in Duckport" is for ages three-to-seven. And, "A Day With Witzzy" is for ages one-to-four. Both are pay per view, not on commercial TV.

"Open Air" Concert in Sculpture Garden Celebrates the Transformational Power of Nature

When planning Art of Elan's 20/21 Transformations season, Executive/Artistic Director Kate Hatmaker was so inspired by The San Diego Museum of Art's May S. Marcy Sculpture Garden that she programmed their March concert "Open Air" to be performed outdoors among the art. No one could have predicted this last year's turn of events and while this concert will still be performed outdoors as planned, audiences will be required to livestream from the comfort of their homes on Tuesday, March 16 at 7pm. The video recording of the performance will be available for viewing indefinitely after the premiere. As all the performers will be outside in the garden, a potential rain delay date is set for March 22, 7 pm.

"We had hoped to present this program with a live audience, but as the pandemic continues, we realized it's not yet the right time to be bringing together a large group of people" explained Hatmaker.

Viewers will still be able to experience the beauty of the sculpture garden, featuring lush landscaping and picturesque views of the California Tower, as well as an abundance of great twentieth-century sculptural works including those of Rodin, Miro, Calder, Noguchi and more. This one-hour concert program encourages listeners to both preserve and embrace the open air as a transformational way of living. The special livestreamed performance will feature musicians from the Hausmann Quartet and San Diego Symphony and explores the lush sound worlds of John Luther Adams, Jonathan Bailey Holland, Terry Riley and Hannah Lash.

Cost is free for members; \$5 for students; and \$10 for general admission. Visit artofelan.org for tickets and more information.



The San Diego Museum of Art - May S. Marcy Sculpture Garden provides an ideal setting for music appreciation.

San Diegans Show Their Support for the SDPD



On Monday, February 22, the City Council met in a special session to consider defunding the San Diego Police Department (SDPD). Comments flooded in by written submission and via verbal submission from San Diegans who voiced their support for the SDPD. Of the 68 speakers that were heard by the Councilmembers, 38 spoke fervently in favor of keeping the SDPD funded. The comments were articulate, on point, and effective.

The Council voted 7 to 2 to keep the current FY 2021 budget intact, including funding for SDPD.

According to a spokesperson for the San Diego Police Foundation, the SDPD is grateful for this support, and they will continue to protect and serve San Diego.

San Diego Chief of Police, David Nisleit, is shown at the center surrounded by other members of the police department.

San Diego Police Foundation's Safety For All Series

In an era when any police interaction can become high-profile, many people wonder why our police do what they do. With this in mind, the San Diego Police Foundation has produced its new virtual series, Safety For All, which will take you "behind-the-scenes" with SDPD to see how our local police are recruited and trained to perform a wide range of duties from emergency response to crime solving. This eye-opening, unforgettable experience is provided as a community service so that, together, we can create a safer San Diego.



The topic of the first Zoom session is recruitment of SDPD personnel.

Registration is free and the first Zoom session will take place from 11:00 a.m. to noon, Wednesday, March 24. For more information, visit www.sdpolicyfoundation.org or call (619) 232-2130.

Since its founding in 1998, one of the San Diego Police Foundation's primary missions has been to promote and produce programs that enhance police/community relations. With Safety For All, the Foundation intends to bring that mission to the virtual medium in order to reach an even broader and more diverse audience.

With Safety For All, you will:

Experience what your local police officers actually do, how, and why.

Join a community of people, like you, who truly care.

Get involved in creating a positive police/community relationship, where safety for all can become a reality.

Live streaming, interactive sessions will feature actual SDPD personnel. These powerful experiences will take you inside the reality of law enforcement in a way that is both immersive and authentic. Topics will include:

- Recruiting Wanted: Nerves of steel and hearts of gold.
- Officer Training: How to do a very hard job very well.
- Emergency Response: What happens when you call 911?
- America's Finest: K9 Police canines on the case.
- Community Oriented Policing: A 40-year track record in San Diego.
- Homelessness: On the beat with the Neighborhood Policing Division.
- SafetyNet Smart Cyber Choices®: Keeping our kids safe online.

Miracle Babies to Host Free Diaper Drive-Through Distribution with SD Star Wars Society

Miracle Babies, a non-profit organization whose mission is to unite families with their critically ill newborns in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) by providing transportation and supportive services, will be hosting its next diaper drive-through distributions in March and April. Free diapers will be available on a first come, first registration basis to all San Diego families in need during this difficult time. Diapers will be loaded directly into the families' vehicle for a safe, no-contact experience.

The next distributions will be from 9 to 11 a.m., Saturday, March 13, and 9 to 11 a.m., Saturday, April 17. Both distributions will take place at the National City Public Library, located at 1401 National City Blvd, National City, CA 91950. The March distribution will feature a special appearance by both the San Diego Star Wars Society and the 501st Legion.

The diaper drive-throughs will provide registered parents with diapers and Miracle Babies will be holding its next two diaper distributions in the South Bay.

Miracle Babies will also be distributing PPE kits courtesy of Last Mile San Diego, and new infant toys from the San Diego Food Bank.

Registration for each individual distribution closes the day prior to each individual distribution at noon, or until supplies last. The March and April diaper distributions are sponsored by Frank Toyota. The March distribution is also sponsored by Univision Radio San Diego.

To register for an upcoming diaper distribution or donate visit: www.miraclebabies.org.



The March distribution will feature a special appearance by the San Diego Star Wars Society.



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Ronald McDonald House Charities® of San Diego Celebrates Opening of New Vertex Foundation Guest Services Office and Family Welcome Center

To support families with a hospitalized child, the Vertex Foundation funded a new Guest Services Office and Family Welcome Center at Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego as well as additional support for the organization's meals and overnight stays. The newly named Vertex Foundation Guest Services Office provides a private and comfortable space to meet with staff when they check in at the House as well as support services throughout their stay. The additional meal and lodging program support will provide funding for more than 25,000 meals, served free of charge, as well as more than 300 nights of lodging for those families staying at the House.

"In the midst of this unprecedented time, the Vertex Foundation has helped us remain focused on our work to keep families close to their hospitalized child," said Chuck Day, president and CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego. "We are grateful to receive their support to help enhance our accommodations and continue to allow our staff to create an emotional and physical sanctuary for families going through difficult times. By providing essential resources, like meals and lodging, we are able to help



Cutting the signatory ribbon are Sabine Hadida, Vertex vice president of Medicinal Chemistry, San Diego associate site head, and director, the Vertex Foundation; and Chuck Day, president and CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego.

strengthen families and bolster their psychological well-being, allowing them to focus on what matters most – their child's health."

This is part of a larger donation to Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC). Last year the Vertex Foundation announced a \$1 million donation to RMHC to support the construction of a Ronald McDonald House at the new children's hospital in Dublin, Ireland.

"I've been here in San Diego

for the last two decades and this Ronald McDonald House holds a special place in my heart because Vertex families and our local community have seen the benefits from these amazing services," said Sabine Hadida, vice president of medicinal chemistry and San Diego associate site head at Vertex and director of the Vertex Foundation.

The donation was celebrated by a virtual ribbon cutting and included speeches by Todd Gloria, Mayor of San Diego; Kelly Dolan,

president and CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities Global Organization; Sabine Hadida, Vertex vice president of medicinal chemistry, San Diego associate site head, and director of the Vertex Foundation; and Chuck Day, president and CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego.

The newly transformed Vertex Foundation Guest Services Office includes private meeting spaces, a play space for siblings of all ages, a place for a snack and a cup of tea, and a mini business center to help families stay connected to the hospital, to home and work. The Vertex Foundation Guest Services Office serves the very real needs of daily life for families staying at the House.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the House has continued to provide more than 250 takeaway meals daily to nourish weary moms, dads and siblings as they care for their critically ill or injured hospitalized child. In 2020, Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego served more than 85,000 freshly made, pre-packaged meals free of charge in pursuit of its mission to provide a "home away from home" to those caring for a hospitalized child.

St. Patrick's Day is Poppin' Up at The Irish Julep

Celebrate your favorite clover-filled holiday with cuisine of the homeland, drinks of Irish delight, the sounds of the rolling hills and loads of jigging at a St. Patrick's Day-themed restaurant. The Irish Julep hits Middletown, San Diego Friday, March 12 through Wednesday, March 17 featuring a pop-up restaurant, retail and entertainment experience crafted for safety, good times and a bit of shenanigans. The Irish Julep is a one-time pop-up restaurant that will be gone as fast as a mystical leprechaun. JULEP venue is

located at the base of Mission Hills, 1735 Hancock Street, San Diego CA 92101.

Gather your Lads & Lasses, bring your lucky facemask, wear your favorite wild green attire, and join this once-in-a-lifetime, Irish dining experience. Upon entering you will be transported to the Irish countryside, with moss-covered rocks, brightly colored flowers reminiscent of rolling Irish flower fields, and an oversized rainbow to capture a safely-distanced selfie. Just around the green corner you will dine amongst the floating

clouds in a field of clovers as event design company, To Be Designed will transform JULEP venue into an St. Paddy's Day wonderland.

At your table, enjoy exquisite Irish fare alongside themed craft cocktails (and mocktails) from the mixologists at Snake Oil Cocktail Co. and fountains of green beer. Local Irish rock bands bring a lively and authentic soundtrack to your dining experience while an emcee guides a revelry of interactive games you can enjoy right from your seat. You won't

leave empty-handed from The Irish Julep Retail Shop curated by To Be Designed (T.B.D.) featuring goodies of Gaelic galore.

With multiple seatings daily, this is the "end of the rainbow": "found the pot of gold" cultural celebration we have all been thirsting for. Seated dinner reservations are limited and begin at just \$85. All ages are welcome. Visit JulepVenue.com to make your reservation now.



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Questions and Answers about Covid-19 Vaccines

By Dr. Michelle McMurry-Heath

Many Americans have questions about Covid-19 vaccines - and rightfully so. There's lots of information out there, and researchers are learning new details about the virus daily.

But the science is very clear: Getting communities vaccinated is a crucial step to returning to "normal" life.

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about Covid-19 vaccines:

Should I get the vaccine with pre-existing conditions?

People with certain pre-existing conditions, including cancer, diabetes, obesity, and heart disease, are more likely to experience severe complications from contracting Covid-19. For this reason, they're strongly encouraged to get vaccinated.

In clinical trials, the Covid-19 vaccines showed similar safety and effectiveness in folks with some underlying medical conditions as in

patients without pre-existing conditions. Talk to your doctor in more detail about your specific concerns before getting vaccinated.

Are there side-effects to the vaccine?

Yes, it's possible to have side effects to the Covid-19 vaccine. Side effects vary depending on the individual and the vaccine. Many people may have mild side effects, including pain or redness at the site of the injection, fatigue, headache, muscle ache, fever, and chills. Most let up within a day.

Although rare, some people have reported allergic reactions to the vaccines. An extraordinarily tiny fraction of vaccine recipients have experienced anaphylaxis -- a severe allergic reaction that can impair people's breathing. However, you're about six times more likely to be struck by lightning than you are to experience anaphylaxis from a Covid-19 vaccine.

Speak with your doctor or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for more details.

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Michelle McMurry-Heath, a physician scientist, is president and CEO of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization.

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Will I still need to wear a mask and practice social distancing after I get vaccinated?

Yes. Research shows vaccines protect individuals from contracting and experiencing severe reactions to Covid-19. However, it's possible to spread the virus to people post-vaccination. Until we know for sure there is minimal risk of infecting others post-vaccination, you should continue to wear a mask and practice social distancing.

More questions?

Visit www.covidvaccinefacts.org to find a comprehensive list of answers related to vaccine technologies, clinical trials, the FDA-approval process, and more.



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