

PRESIDIO SENTINEL

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Serving the Heart of San Diego

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District 3 Citizens Express Frustration During Zoom Meeting with Councilman Whitburn

By Patty Ducey-Brooks



After several attempts to talk to someone from Councilman Stephen Whitburn's office, I elected to participate in a Zoom meeting with him that was initiated by his office. I thought, "Maybe I can talk to him directly since calls and emails to his office are going unanswered."

By the way, I should mention, the reason I reached out to him was because of the recent fire in Presidio Park caused by the homeless. I was contacting him on behalf of the Old Town Chamber of Commerce and Presidio Hills' residents whose homes back up to the park.

As I was one of upward of two-dozen people who asked to speak during the Zoom meeting, it was encouraging to hear what residents of District 3 shared and asked of Whitburn.

Topics included non-permitted vendors in Balboa Park; homeless encampments in Balboa Park and surrounding communities; 4th and 5th Avenue bike paths that are dangerous to pedestrians, vehicular traffic, and bicyclists; the NAVWAR site; the downtown Petco Park high rise that he approved; ministerial abuse by developers; 6th Avenue playground bathroom's illegal drug activity and sexual acts; and city planning group concerns.

What I had been told by various people from District 3 prior to this Zoom meeting is that Whitburn is known for acknowledging the problems that are brought before him. However, there is no follow up by staff and no action taken.

So, what was worrisome early in the discussion was when Whitburn became defensive when someone commented on a staff members lack of response to phone calls and emails. And I may offer, that same person didn't return my calls and emails.

He also showed lack of understanding about long-standing concerns of District 3 residents and businesses, including the NAVWAR project with SANDAG and developers. He did not know why people got involved, such as access to the airport, beaches, and Old Town; environmental concerns of the Coastal Commission; and traffic and congestion concerns. Instead, he referred to Mission Hills residents losing their views, which I found quite appalling.

Add to that, when I asked him if he knew about Save San Diego's Character, which is over 5,000 people strong, he was totally off course.



The 6th Avenue Playground at Balboa Park is now filled with people who are allowed to set up camp on site. Photo is courtesy of Michael Reyes.

He asked me, "Is this the Talmadge group addressing ADU issues?" I countered by stating that this is a group started in Mission Hills, joined by Old Town residents and businesses and Point Loma residents, and now includes people from all over the city and county in opposition of the development initially planned by the Navy, SANDAG and City officials on the NAVWAR site in Old Town San Diego.

He appeared stunned and embarrassed, then deflected the issue to talk about University Heights and bathrooms at the Trolley Park.

On a positive note, Whitburn did offer some good information on the non-permitted vendors currently taking up residence in Balboa Park. He stated that a new street vending ordinance prohibits vending year-round in the Prado and other "historic" areas of the park, and that there is money in the city budget to enforce that ban.

Additionally, I learned from Sarah Hernholm during the Zoom meeting what a large group of people are doing in Banker's Hill to address the issues at the 6th Avenue playground. Unfortunately, the

► Continued on page 2

California State Auditor Releases Scathing Report on Regional Housing Needs Assessment



Acting California State Auditor Michael S. Tilden has spent his career untangling problems and finding innovative solutions to public policy issues that are important to all Californians.

On March 17, Michael S. Tilden, the Acting California State Auditor, issued a blistering critique of the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and its Regional Housing Needs Assessments (RHNA). The Auditor found problems in the HCD methodology that may have inflated RHNA requirements by hundreds of thousands of housing units. The Auditor concludes that “The Department of Housing and Community Development must improve its processes to ensure that communities can adequately plan for housing.”

In his letter to the Governor and legislative leaders, the Auditor also states, “Overall, our audit determined that HCD does not ensure that its needs assessments are accurate and adequately supported. ...This insufficient oversight and lack of support for its considerations risks eroding public confidence that HCD is informing local

governments of the appropriate amount of housing they will need.”

The California Alliance of Local Electeds (CALE), a statewide organization of local elected officials, called for the comprehensive review and supports the State Auditor’s findings. Says Susan Candell, a CALE member and councilmember from the city of Lafayette, “CALE advocated for this audit, and it’s critical that HCD and the legislature follow-up on the Auditor’s recommendations. Our constituents deserve a fair and accurate process.”

State Senator Steve Glazer (D-Orinda), a member of the Joint Committee on Legislative Audit and a former mayor of the city of Orinda, states “It is these types of mistakes that undermine community trust and confidence in housing requirements. We need more affordable housing, and we have to do better.”

Since 1969, California has required that all local governments create plans to meet the housing needs of their communities, a process called the regional housing needs assessment (RHNA). Each eight-year RHNA cycle starts with population and household projections from the demographic unit at the Department of Finance (DOF). These projections are then handed off to HCD for their estimates of the number of housing units required to meet California’s needs. The RHNA process was modified in 2018 by Senate Bill 828 (Wiener), which created several ad hoc adjustments that have led to the problems cited in the State Auditor’s report.

Auditor findings on vacancy rates are consistent with Embarcadero Institute analysis. Unfortunately, the audit reviewed the RHNA plans from only eight counties, which together contain less than eight percent of California’s population. Due to pending lawsuits the audit did not consider the RHNA plans of the two largest planning organizations, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG).

These two regions contain almost two-thirds (65.5 percent) of the state’s population. This omission makes it difficult to grasp the

scale of the problems created by HCD’s errors. However, the Embarcadero Institute, a Northern California think tank, estimated that HCD’s incorrect vacancy rates created an overcount of 200,000 housing units. Conceptual inconsistencies between DOF’s household projections and HCD’s housing unit projections created an additional overcount estimated at 700,000 housing units.

Thus the RHNA requirement of 2.1 million new housing units may be contaminated by an overcount of 900,000 units. The Auditor’s report does not attempt to reconcile these differences because HCD’s procedures are not clearly documented. Instead, it has insisted that both DOF and HCD clarify and publish their methods and assumptions.

The Auditor’s report made strong recommendations and created a timeline for their completion. Several tasks must be undertaken between June 2022 and February 2023 including performing multiple reviews of data, establishing formal review procedures, reviewing the appropriateness of comparison regions, and conducting an analysis of healthy vacancy rates and their historical trends.

The Department of Finance is tasked with reviewing its population projections based on 2020 census data and conducting a comprehensive review of assumptions about household formation rates. Says CALE’s Julie Testa, councilmember from the City of Pleasanton, “Unless HCD and DOF complete this work and correct their mistakes, there is no justification for punishing cities for failing to meet erroneous RHNA goals.

The Legislature should suspend implementation of RNHA until the public is satisfied these problems have been resolved.” About CALE The California Alliance of Local Electeds (CALE) brings together current and former local elected officials, community activists and other concerned residents. CALE believes that California’s 482 municipalities are too geographically and culturally distinct to be subjected to one-size-fits-all rules from the state capitol. CALE believes that communities thrive when local democracy thrives.

District 3 Citizens Express Frustration During Zoom Meeting with Councilman Whitburn ▸ Continued from page 2

By Patty Ducey-Brooks

homeless have been using this site for illegal drug activity, sexual acts and for their personal hygiene.

Sadly, families and children no longer have a safe and clean place to play and go to the bathroom. Currently children who come to the 6th Avenue playground are at risk of seeing nudity, masturbation, drug use, excess trash, open alcohol containers, human feces on equipment, and more.

As Hernholm offered, “If we don’t clean up the playground and the bathrooms it’s not a matter of if something is going to happen to a child, but when.”

The bathrooms are often out of use due to destruction of property by those living in the park. They are also being permanently occupied by those who are classified as “unsheltered.”

Following the Zoom meeting I visited this website and signed the petition and encourage others to do the same: <https://www.change.org/p/make-6th-ave-playground-safe-clean-for-kids>.

Hernholm also shared with me that Whitburn’s staff have been unresponsive to these concerns and have offered no viable solutions.

Unfortunately, I can’t state that Councilman Whitburn’s Zoom meeting served a purpose, other than enlightening those of us who participated, so we can join each other’s causes.

Speaking of causes, the same group that Hernholm introduced me to that is attempting to clean up Balboa Park is also doing a trash removal event at the park on Saturday, May 21. More information will be available at the website noted above.

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The Mayor’s Planning Department Knowingly Using Outdated 2013 SANDAG Projections for Current Community Plan “Updates”

The Mayor’s Planning Department Knowingly Using Outdated 2013 SANDAG Projections for Current Community Plan “Updates”

Last December, SANDAG adopted Series 14 projections for population and housing growth through 2050. These projections take into account the latest California Department of Finance population projections. Despite the availability of these updated projections, the Planning Department continues to plan based on outdated, inflated data. This leads to unnecessary, harmful impacts.

For the City as a whole, the new SANDAG Series 14 data projects 132,000 less people living in San Diego in 2050 versus Series 13

numbers. That is 19 percent population growth versus 28 percent population growth previously expected.

SANDAG Series 14 projections are available by community planning area, where the differences versus Series 13 can be huge. The College Area is a great example.

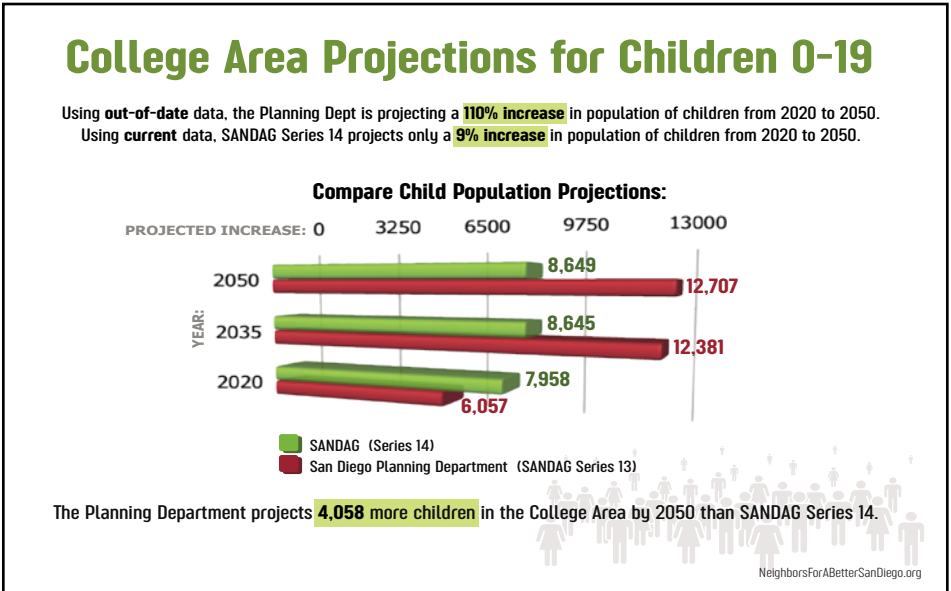
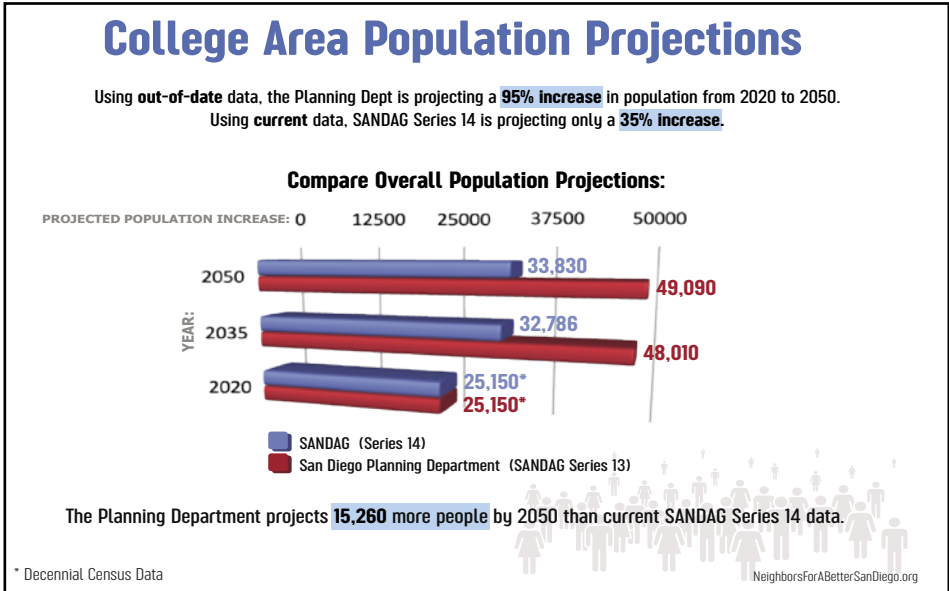
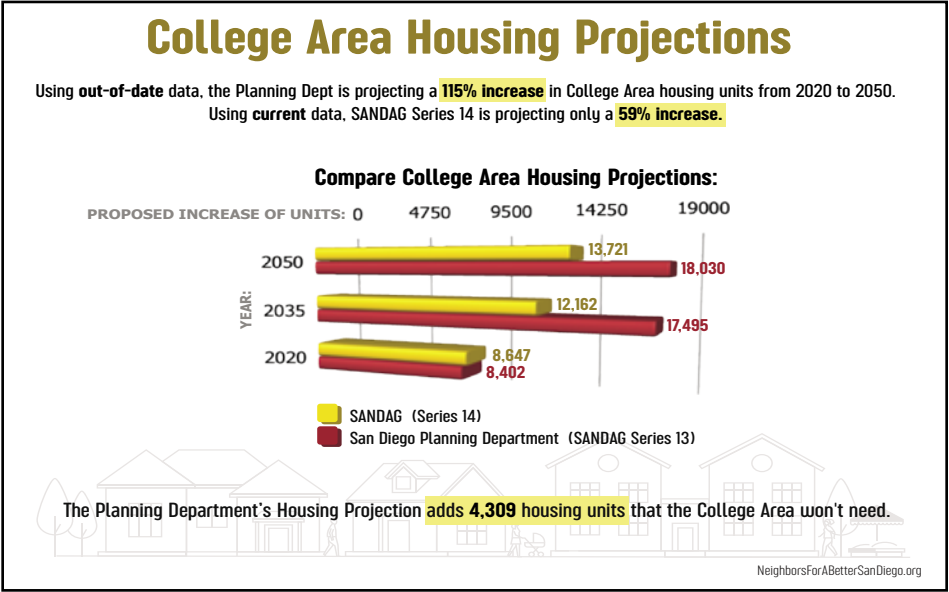
The Planning Department is using a SANDAG Series 13 projection of 49,000 people in 2050, while Series 14 data projects 34,000 people – 15,000 or 31 percent fewer.

For housing, the outdated Series 13 projections call for 18,000 total units, while the Series 14 data calls for under 14,000 units – a decrease of 4,000 housing units or 24 percent, which even alleviates a substantial amount of overcrowding. To make matters worse, the Planning Department has proposed two plans for the College Area which include 10,000 and 20,000 new housing units while the Series 14 data project the community will only need an additional 5000 housing units in 2050 on top of the 8,700 units they had in 2020. The Planning Department is producing plans based on inflated, outdated projections and overreaching even those goals.

The demographic projections are also significantly different. The outdated Series 13 projections expected almost 13,000 children 0-19 in 2050, a 110 percent increase over 2020, whereas the current Series 14 projections are for 8600 children, only a 9 percent increase over 2020.

Would you budget for 2022 based on 2013 information? Of course not. A data-driven government would use the most recent information available. The Mayor’s Planning Department must “update” community plans based on the most accurate projections available!

Dana Givot, Concerned Resident of the City of San Diego



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20 Years Later, “Enron by the Sea” Still Awash in Duplicity

By Kate Callen

When a 2002 whistleblower’s report unleashed the city’s massive pension fund scandal, and San Diego was branded “Enron by the Sea,” humiliated city leaders vowed to clean up their accounting practices and operate in full view.

Two decades later, a new generation of city leaders is devising new ways of fudging data to evade scrutiny. This time around, City Hall is playing shell games to ramp up housing density and remove street parking in the face of strong public opposition.

The 20th anniversary of the pension fund debacle seems an apt occasion to review San Diego’s recent history of municipal sleights-of-hand. Here are new examples of twisting the facts to cover political tracks:

Using Old Data (Housing): The region’s much-lamented “housing crisis” has attained gospel status. It’s common knowledge that hordes of people moving to San Diego and hardly anyone leaving equals thousands of residents needing shelter. Numbers don’t lie.

No, but they can expire, as Neighbors for a Better San Diego (NFBSD) discovered by conducting its own review of population data used by the city to significantly upzone the College Area.

The city’s “updated” plans are based on SANDAG projections from October 2013. With a little digging, NFBSD found July 2021 SANDAG data showing that by 2050, the College Area should anticipate 4,000 fewer housing units than projected and only one-third of the projected population growth.

Scale up those numbers to cover

the entire city, and the housing “crisis” seems far less critical.

Using Old Data (Traffic): It’s a rare San Diego neighborhood that isn’t seeing stacks of small dwelling units on single-family parcels. At a moment when more residents are driving more cars on urban streets, City Hall is shrinking traffic lanes to give more road space to sparse numbers of bicyclists.

This has included baffling and highly dangerous configurations like the “advisory bike lane” on Mira Mesa’s busy Gold Coast Drive. The design requires motorists traveling in opposite directions to share a single center lane and yield to cyclists.

When furious residents demanded an accounting, the city took a second look at the project and — oops! — found that it was based on old data from a 2015 study with traffic estimates far below current usage patterns.

Data? What Data? (Bike Lanes): Throughout North Park’s three-year battle over the 30th Street bike lanes, residents and small business owners have asked a question that remains unanswered: Where are the projected bike lane usage data that justify spending millions of dollars and removing hundreds of street parking spaces?

The City’s 2013 Bicycle Master Plan was sold as a climate action measure to reduce gas emissions by increasing bicycle commuting. Both the 2010 and 2020 U.S. Census reports show that for over a decade, only two percent of San Diego commuters have been biking to work.

So the City’s long-held goal of six percent remains elusive. But why six percent? And has

anyone calculated how much a six-percent shift from cars to bikes would decrease rush-hour traffic and reduce pollution?

This spring, Save 30th Street Parking, a group opposing the bike lanes, decided to perform their own usage analysis. They reviewed 20 hours of security video of peak commuting times at 30th and Upas. Their logs posted an average of 16 riders per hour.

The City responded by installing an electronic bike lane counter at 30th and University that has been counting thousands of riders. Save 30th has responded by videotaping how the device “counts” riders when the bike lanes are visibly empty.

Here in San Diego, when government resorts to deception to achieve questionable political ends, citizens must have the tenacity to challenge misinformation.

Just ask Diann Shipione.

Shipione was the lone pension board trustee who warned the public in 2002 that City Hall was putting less money into the retirement fund and taking more money out of it. City leaders smeared her, nearly arrested her, and eventually pushed her off the board.

Two federal investigations proved her right. Today, Shipione’s Wikipedia entry lists a dozen awards and citations for exemplary public service.

She persevered, and she prevailed. In San Diego, if you want local government to be accountable and transparent, you have to be ready to dig up the facts and play the long game.

Callen is a North Park neighborhood activist.

PRESIDIO SENTINEL

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Dear People of Mission Hills,

We are being represented by a Mayor and District 3 Council member, supposedly serving us, who are not. A large number of people have tried to reach Councilman Stephen Whitburn and his council representatives with no results or return calls for over two weeks or more.

We have heard the Mayor give us one answer and an opposite the next day.

The greatest values of Mission Hills –its history, its architecture, its sense of community, as well as its ideal location, are at risk. And that is a threat to you too. We need to have a voice and

someone to listen. We may not agree with each other, but we deserve the chance to also express that diversity.

Mission Hills is the “home” we cherish, and like our own personal investments, it deserves protection.

Our Mission Hills Town Council needs to deliver strength of leadership, and the voice of the community it represents (our voice). When it speaks with a united voice, we the neighborhood will pay closer attention and give it our strength and support.

Ginny Ollis, founding member of the Mission Hills Town Council

Happy Mother's Day!

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Percy the Porcupine Puppet Made Her San Diego Zoo Debut



Percy is a replica of a prehensile-tailed porcupine.

Percy the Porcupine puppet delighted guests when she made her San Diego Zoo debut, in celebration of Earth Day. She is an awe-inspiring prehensile-tailed porcupine that is 17 feet high. Percy was first unveiled in Los Angeles last month, before making her way to San Diego. Her first-ever appearance at the San Diego Zoo created unique moments of wonder for guests of all ages, aimed at further igniting their passion for wildlife and inspiring new wildlife allies.

Born from the minds at Jim Henson's Creature Shop, the development of Percy started with the creation of a digital model of a prehensile-tailed porcupine. The puppet's quills were hand-carved and individually attached to the body, and the eyelids were engineered to blink with a

large rope pull mechanism, along with movement of the mouth and jaw. It took over 1,200 hours of labor to bring the puppet and her rainforest home to life.

Percy was inspired by Icana, a real-life prehensile-tailed porcupine at the San Diego Zoo. Icana can be found in her lush, two-story rainforest canopy habitat in the newly opened Wildlife Explorers Basecamp. Here, explorers come face-to-face with some of the most incredible species on Earth while experiencing the world from wildlife's perspective—including traversing the treetops with squirrel monkeys, marveling at the artistry of orb weaver spiders and smelling the sweetness of a larger-than-life beehive.

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Butter is a beautiful, three-year old, domestic short hair who has been working on gaining confidence. This sweet little muffin was extremely shy and fearful when she first came into our care, but she's made great progress and is comfortable exploring, playing, and hanging out once she gets to know you. Butter gets along well with the other cat-friendly felines, too. She would benefit from a quiet home where her new family can be patient while she gets acclimated to her new environment. Just imagine the wonderful bond you can build with Butter by giving her love and attention.

Butter is currently residing at the San Diego Campus of the San Diego Humane Society, located at 5500 Gaines Street. For more information, call (619) 299-7012, or visit www.sdhumane.org.

Are you looking for a running buddy? Maybe a dog you can hit the trails with or go for an adventure off the beaten path? This is your boy! Kamasi is an energetic, four-year old, German Shepherd/Labrador retriever mix who loves to try new things. He may not always remember his manners, but with dedicated owners, he could really shine. Kamasi prefers to not be around dogs or cats and would really like to avoid them if possible. Kamasi would do best in a home with older, sturdier kids. He loves to be the center of attention and will happily hop into your lap for some rubs. This boy also enjoys treats which should make focusing all that energy into a training session that much easier. Come visit Kamasi and learn more about him.

Kamasi is currently residing at the San Diego Campus of the San Diego Humane Society, located at 5500 Gaines Street. For more information, call (619) 299-7012, or visit www.sdhumane.org.

Kamasi

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Inflation – Here to Stay?

By Rick Brooks



Like most investors, I've been surprised by both the magnitude and persistence of the inflation spike we've seen over the past several months. The forecasts continue to suggest that inflation should moderate somewhat by year-end and into 2023, but that doesn't take the sticker shock out of the prices we're paying today at the store and especially the gas pump.

The COVID pandemic badly scrambled supply chains that were already under stress from four years of rising trade tensions and tariffs. The third world countries where much of our goods are produced were hit hard by COVID, interrupting production as factory workers got sick and local efforts to slow the spread of the disease disrupted schedules and shipping. In addition, shipping containers were sent all over the world with supplies to help fight the pandemic. Finally, here at home, dock workers and truckers were hit hard by COVID so there were fewer people available to unload the ships that were allowed into port and get those goods to their destinations.

At the same time, the massive efforts by Congress to support the economy during the pandemic put money in people's bank accounts that wasn't being spent on things like eating out or travelling, so most peoples' spending turned to manufactured goods and projects like home renovation. This economic support, low interest rates and a lot of pent-up demand has meant that American consumers have been on a spending spree for the past year or so.

An excess of demand on top of a constrained supply of goods has resulted in rising prices for the goods that are making it to market. While consumers have recovered their appetite for spending, workers have been slower to return to the labor force. Estimates vary, but there are roughly 1 million fewer workers in the labor pool today than in late 2019 when the pandemic began. Companies cannot find enough workers to fill the job openings in a red-hot economy and are paying the workers they do have more to keep them. Wage inflation like this is harder for companies to pass through to end consumers, but it does impact how they set prices in the future.

Just as it looked like things might be starting to improve, the Omicron wave hit hard in China and Russia invaded Ukraine,

sending food and energy prices skyrocketing. This has contributed to additional increases in energy costs, even though the U.S. has been less impacted than other countries more dependent on oil and gas imports. Global food prices have also been impacted as Russia and Ukraine are two of the largest exporters of wheat.

Recent readings on inflation have been stunning, hitting heights not seen since the 1970s. In March, prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index rose by 8.5 percent from the prior year, though some hints in the report suggest we might finally be seeing a peak in the rate of change of prices. Most economic forecasters believe that prices gains will moderate, settling down to around 2.5-4 percent in 2023. That's higher than we're used to, but lower than recent readings.

In the meantime, economists debate just how temporary the inflation will be. On the one hand, getting back to something like a status quo would suggest a return to the modest inflation (around 2 percent) we've seen over the past two decades. A counterargument suggests that aging populations in the U.S., Europe and China, coupled with immigration restrictions and nationalist policies, could result in significant labor shortages and keep inflation on the higher end of that range for some time to come.

Persistently higher inflation could result in investors demanding higher interest rates than they have in the past, raising the cost of borrowing across the economy. In addition, expensive growth stocks that benefit from low inflation and low interest rates may lag other stocks that are less sensitive to perfect economic conditions.

So, while Inflation may be a transitory problem, it is a force to be reckoned with. Left unchecked, it can cause real damage. Central banks will work to tamp it down without stalling the economy in the process. All eyes will be on the Fed as they respond to the inflation surge. Buckle up, folks, we're all in for the ride.

This column is prepared by Rick Brooks, CFA®, CFP®. Brooks is director/investment management with Blankinship & Foster, LLC, a financial coach specializing in financial health for physicians and people in or 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.

Homelessness Program Accountability Measure Clears 2nd Hurdle

Senate Republican Leader Scott Wilk announced that his legislation to add clarity and accountability to California's efforts to address homelessness has earned bipartisan support and recently passed 4 to 0 out of the Senate Committee on Human Services.

"I am pleased to see this measure receive bipartisan support. There seems to be a growing consensus that throwing billions of dollars at California's homelessness crisis is not the solution," Wilk said. "The Newsom administrations' efforts have lacked accountability and transparency, which is one of the reasons the problem continues to grow. My bill will bring more accountability to our efforts and help state agencies direct funding to programs that actually work."

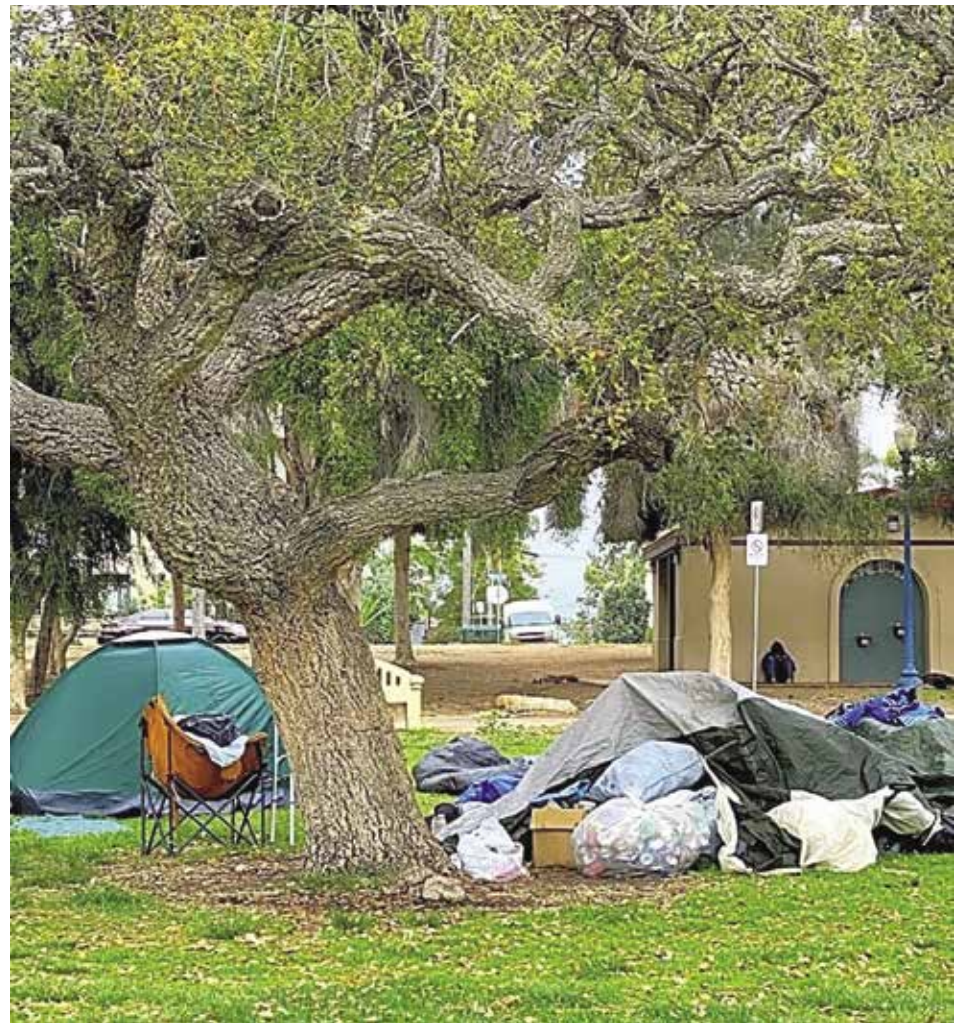
Senate Bill 13553 would require local governments to report information on homeless populations and all expenditures on homelessness programs from local, state, and federal funding sources, by January 1, 2025. It would require population information to be provided on age, gender, use of services, shelter status, foster youth status, veteran status, criminal justice history, how they came to being homeless, where they resided prior to being homeless, and length of time of being homeless, among others. The California Interagency Council will collect the above information, conduct a data-driven assessment, report to the Legislature and post it to an online dashboard.

This bill was inspired by the findings and recommendations of two state auditor reports from last year.

--State audit report 2020-611 found that the state "does not report outcome measures that describe whether its actions were effective in reducing the number of individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless."

--State audit report 2020-112 recommends that the Legislature require the state to "collect and track funding data on all federal and state-funded homelessness programs, including the amount of funding available and expended each year, the types of activities funded, and types of entities that received the funds."

SB 1353 is the first bill in the Senate and Assembly Republicans combined homelessness solutions in a package titled ACT on



Homelessness. (A) stands for Accountability, (C) for Compassion, and (T) for Treatment.

SB 1353 will next be referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee for a hearing next month, which will consider its fiscal impact on the state.

Companion Plants for Succulents

By Barb Strona



In March, the Mission Hills Garden Club learned that many plants thrive amidst succulents. Linda Bresler, a certified landscape designer, is truly an artist using living plants as her canvas. In her talk, she gave us a host of types of plants with which to paint our yards.

We learned that from early childhood, Bresler loved plants and dirt. Nevertheless, Bresler began with a career teaching English and Reading Improvement after attending the University of Pennsylvania for both her B.A. and master's degrees. However, she has been a landscape designer for over thirty years. After living in Poway for twenty years, she and her husband moved to Escondido where she tends her garden of several acres. She says, "From personal experience, I choose the hardiest, most waterwise, low-maintenance plants that look beautiful year-round for my landscape designs."

Bresler's teaching talents came through as she showed slides of gardens she has designed and plants we might like to use. She also gave us a list of plants she likes for their ease of tending and their attractiveness throughout most of the year.

Bresler became interested in landscape as art partly because she hated flowers to die after they were picked. As a result, her designs focus on the landscape itself, whereas the average landscape architect focuses more on the hardscape. This means she concentrates on the actual plants as seen from various locations. Will they be framed by a window? By a doorway? By the entrance through a gate? What will one see if one is in a sitting area? Bresler takes more than the view into consideration. She is aware of textures produced by leaves, branches, and flowers as well as their colors, shapes, sizes, and physical requirements.

Showing us several examples of how she makes her choices, we saw that her photographs portray not just the frame of the landscape, but additionally they reveal the colors, textures, shapes, and sizes that influence the result. She pays attention to what blooms when. Since she is frugal with water and reluctant to fertilize, she searches for plants that have color most of the year, and she makes certain that other plants will bloom in the flowerless interim or have interesting leaves when blooms are spent.

We received a double-sided paper listing colorful drought-tolerant plants of varying shapes and sizes so that we could plan our own gardens. I must say, I lack her vision, talent, and knowledge. Furthermore I failed to follow one important piece of Bresler's advice: Google the plants on her list to remember how they look and what they need. Do have a plan for their location.

Since I am impatient and impulsive, armed with my list, I set out to find plants with long lasting blooms. I found one beautiful yellow plant and some blue fescue. I am happy with where the yellow plant is, but I'd like another to go on my balcony because it "makes a statement," which my garden has yet to do. I don't remember what it is called. My garden looks as if someone chose a particular location for ease of digging. Guess what? That is how my garden grows.

Bresler does not advocate buying fancy topsoil. Add sand to your soil to help drainage; perlite to hold water. In addition, mulch adds nutrients to the plants as it decomposes. Mulches are a good for maintaining soil temperature and moisture. For steep hillsides, Bresler likes "Gorilla Hair" which helps to hold the soil and plants.

Bresler showed us several before and after photos. It is obvious that each garden was carefully thought out. We saw slides of homes surrounded by dirt or uninteresting bushes and weeds. Then we saw photos of the gardens seen from various angles including closeups of beautiful plants and flowers. One of her favorites is the miniature 'Clivia' which has either orange or yellow long-lasting blooms and glossy green leaves that remain healthy with little attention.

Peaches and Cream Grevillea is another favorite which blooms nearly 365 days a year with neither fertilizer nor phosphorus. "Hummers love it," she says. A few other plants that have nearly 365 days' bloom are Grevillea Superb J, Gold Star Yellow Bells shrub, Firecracker or Coral Fountain Plant, and Sierra Starr Fairy Duster. Amistad Sage is another long-blooming plant. You could also look for Sweet Pea Shrub, which thrives in some shade. Blue Bells Emu Bush is a low-growing bush with year-round flowers. The Elijah blue fescue is beautiful planted under roses and is invasive, nor is Heavenly Bamboo as it is not bamboo at all and is beautiful and delicate looking all year. You can also find a miniature Jacaranda, Bonsai Blue Dwarf, which tops out between 10 to 12 feet.

It was refreshing to see what Bresler can do to beautify one's surroundings with judicious and carefully thought-out designs. Hiring Bresler would be far easier than memorizing all these plants, figuring out where to plant them, and then getting soil ready to house them. An



Linda Bresler is frugal with water and reluctant to fertilize, and she searches for plants that have color most of the year. Photo is courtesy of Linda Bresler.

added advantage is that Bresler can find plants that will be beautiful yet thrive in our heavy, clay-like soil. You can find more about her on her website: www.livingdesignsbylinda.com.

Don't forget the garden walk, Home Grown, on Saturday, May 7, the day before Mother's Day. Tickets have sold out, but there may be a few openings at Mission Hills Nursery, 1525 Fort Stockton. If there are tickets left, they may be available after 11:30 a.m. that day. If you join the Mission Hills Garden Club, you will receive advance notice on club activities and programs. June will have a Botanical Garden Cocktail Workshop.



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Heroes Come in Many Forms

By Dixie Hall, President Mission Hills BID and Owner of DixiePops



May in Mission Hills is a busy time. Cinco de Mayo celebrations will be in full swing at restaurants and bars throughout Mission Hills. Mission Hills Garden Walk takes place on Saturday, May 7 with Mother's Day on Sunday, May 8. Bring all those documents you've been meaning to get rid of to One Mission Realty's annual morning shredding event on Saturday, May 14 at 928 Fort Stockton Drive. Don't forget to pick up your Maureen + Antoinette garage sale map at the COMPAS office located at 1621 West Lewis Street which is also on Saturday, May 14. Finishing off the month is Memorial Day on Monday, May 30.

Just in time for backyard grilling, we welcome a new to Mission Hills carnivore's destination at 902 West University. The Meatery focuses on ultra-premium hard to source meats such as Japanese, Australian and Olive fed Wagyu beef that will satisfy your palate and create an appreciation for the best, says owner Nicolas Fiorentino. Welcome Nick!

The Mission Hills Business Improvement District (BID) is a proud sponsor of this year's perfectly themed 24th Annual Mission Hills Garden Walk. You may have seen the "Home Grown" signs planted throughout our residential neighborhoods. We are excited that tickets for the Home Grown Garden Walk sold out early and proud that so many of our BID members supported this year's Garden Walk including Backbone Floral, DixiePops, Falcon Liquor, Firefly Wellness Day Spa, Fort Oak, Harley Gray Kitchen & Bar, Heartwork Coffee Bar, Howlistic, Ibis Market, Jo's Diner, Lewis Fay Collective, Mail Station, Maureen+ Antionette, Meshuggah Shack, Mission Fit, Mission Hills Financial, Mission Hills Liquor & Deli, Mission Hills Music, Mission Hills Nursery, Mission Nails and Spa, Powers Plumbing, Saffron & Sage, State Farm, Taboo Studio, Radiance Yoga, Thorn Brewing Company, Trust Restaurant Group, Vaatika Salon, Venissimo Cheese, and more.

Mother's Day weekend is a perfect time to honor mom. In Mission Hills, remember it is never too early to make Mother's Day reservations for brunch or lunch or dinner. If you have difficulty choosing, reserve

for all three meals. There are plenty of delicious mealtime options in our wonderful neighborhood and mothers who deserve to enjoy them. And our neighborhood's retail shops offer one of a kind and specialty gift items sure to please every mom. How about keeping it all in the neighborhood this Mother's Day?

In last month's column I mentioned the BID's annual Colors on Canvas 2022 hand painted banner art contest and our generous sponsors and awesome art teachers who make this community building event possible. Hopefully you have enjoyed seeing them as you drive around Mission Hills. To Patterson Engineering, Inc, we continue to be grateful for bringing the idea to the BID and we honor Marianne Kalem for being the inspiration for the contest. To our executive director Susan McNeil Schreyer thank you for overseeing every aspects of this contest. Thank you to Mayor Todd Gloria for stopping by to acknowledge the young artists and serve them pizza. To Councilmember Stephen Whitburn our thank you for joining in the presentation of awards to the young artists. To Kohta Zasier from the Mayor's office and Miki Holmes from Assemblymember Christopher Ward's office, we thank you for being Colors on Canvas partners again this year. To our fourteen judges, thank you for your commitment of time and your interest in children's art in Mission Hills. And lastly thanks to the businesses (Cake, Backbone Floral, Lazy Acres, Pizza e Barra, Thorn Brewing, Paint Box Art Studio and DixiePops) who provided food, drinks and prizes. And, to Rosanna Barr of Rosanna Photography, a huge thank you for creating a photo memory of the Colors on Canvas celebration. We were overwhelmed by the student artists' creations this year and the number of students and families and friends who joined us to honor the contest participants exceeded expectation.

In case you were unable to join us on April 27 or wish to relive the evening please visit <https://missionhillsbid.com/events-happenings-in-the-hills/#colors-on-canvas>.

On May 30 we observe Memorial Day in honor of our armed forces fallen heroes who paid the ultimate price in service to our country. Let's remember their sacrifices for the freedom we enjoy.

Looking forward to June, planning is underway for the citywide Great San Diego Scavenger Hunt in which businesses in the Mission Hills BID will be participating. Please visit the BID's website <https://missionhillsbid.com> to learn how you may participate in this June 18 scavenger hunt.

If you enjoyed hearing about the work we are doing and all the neighborhood happenings, please consider becoming a BID volunteer. The BID's committee structure is a great way to impact neighborhood decision making in the areas of Promotions, Economic Development, Design and Parking. To learn more, get involved, and support the Mission Hills Business Improvement District, please visit our website at MissionHillsBID.com or email our executive director Susan McNeil Schreyer at MissionHillsBID@gmail.com.

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Ocean Beach Singer-Songwriter Makes It in Nashville



Stacey Antonel grew up in Ocean Beach, listening to pop and R&B hits and studying classical piano until she was 18. Photo courtesy of Lindsey Patkos.

Nashville-based retro Americana singer-songwriter Stacy Antonel is set to release her debut album, “Always the Outsider,” independently on June 17, 2022. An idiosyncratic artist with a background in classical piano, Antonel makes clever Americana that feels both vintage and hyper-modern at the same time. Rooted in classic country but influenced by jazz, pop, and R&B, her throwback “country jazz” style conjures the ‘20s-’30s musical era when jazz and country weren’t such disparate genres. “Always the Outsider” features compelling, narrative storylines (taking a page from Willie Nelson’s songbook), agile vocal melodies, and unexpected thematic twists.

After recording as Ginger Cowgirl previously, Antonel decided to start releasing music under her own name, and “Always the Outsider” is the result. “My musical impulses are extremely diverse, and I want to feel free to follow them without being pigeonholed by the country implications of a name like Ginger Cowgirl,” she explains.

In 2021, Antonel teamed up with guitarist Paul Sgroi (who won 2nd place in the 2021 National Flat Pick Guitar Championship) to work on “Always the Outsider.” Recorded mostly at Singing Serpent Studios in San Diego with producer Ben Moore (Hot Snakes, Diamanda Galas, Burt Bacharach), the album blends elements of mid-century country music with unconventional subject matter and virtuosic instrumentation – including tracks with Doug Pettibone (Lucinda Williams) on pedal steel and acoustic guitar, and Joe Reed (Merle Haggard) on bass.

Antonel plans three singles prior to the album release. The gentle, vintage, pedal steel-laden swing-and-sway of single one, “Planetary Heartache,” proved the perfect kick-off. The song was released on March 25th and premiered earlier that week at Glide Magazine, who praised the song’s “twangy comfort” and wrote that the real attention-grabber is that “Antonel isn’t trying to sound like anyone else and this isn’t simply another attempt at making music of another era. Instead, she conjures up a classic sound that feels distinctly fresh and modern while also breaking your heart with the emotion she exudes...”

The second single, “Kicking and Screaming,” a spaghetti western-esque traipse through dusty byways, will be released on April 22nd, and the song will premiere at “Americana Highways” several days prior. Single three, the title track “Always the Outsider,” with its tender, twangy shuffle sounding like a classic radio staple, comes out May 20th.

Antonel grew up in Ocean Beach, listening to pop and R&B hits and studying classical piano until she was 18. She cites an eclectic

range of artists as her earliest musical inspirations: Tori Amos for her peculiar phrasing and distinct songwriting, and Otis Redding for his rich, emotive vocal delivery. After graduating from UC Berkeley, she moved to Buenos Aires, where she answered a Craigslist ad for a singer who sounded like June Carter Cash, and she contributed vocals to several jingles for MTV and Jeep that aired throughout Latin America. She sang in a friend’s electro-cumbia band for a while before returning to California, where she started singing professionally at weddings, bars, and local venues.

But it wasn’t until discovering country music that she felt at home. “I often felt like a fish out of water in San Diego,” she recalls. “One day I randomly bought a bunch of 99-cent country records and fell in love with the genre; the concision of the writing, the wit, how it doesn’t take itself too seriously even while dealing with deep subject matter.”

In 2013, Antonel won \$10,000 in a televised local singing contest, “3 Minutes to Stardom,” and quit her job to focus on music.

She formed a country band later that year, performing covers of classic country hits as Ginger Cowgirl, and in 2017 moved to Nashville to record her debut EP at the city’s Historic RCA Studio C. Ginger Cowgirl released its debut self-titled EP in 2019, featuring five original songs and one cover (a blend of Patsy Cline’s and Gnarlz Barkley’s “Crazy”). The EP was praised as an “Americana tour de force” with “razor sharp lyrical wit” and a “refreshing mix of old school and modern spin.” In late 2019, Antonel toured California and the Southeast, and in early 2020 toured the UK and Germany before the world shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the road a familiar siren call, Antonel plans to tour in support of “Always the Outsider.” Confirmed local tour dates include:

- June 11 - Museum of Making Musici n Carlsbad, CA
- June 25 - Soda Bar in San Diego, CA
- July 27 - Balboa Park in San Diego, CA
- July 31 - Grand Ole BBQ in El Cajon, CA



RSVP

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The San Diego Police Department’s Western Division is seeking additional members for its Retired Senior Patrol Volunteer (RSVP) Team to serve the communities of Mission Hills, Hillcrest, Point Loma, Linda Vista, Ocean Beach, Old Town, Midway, Morena, Harbor-Airport, Liberty Station, and Roseville.

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- Participate in community events
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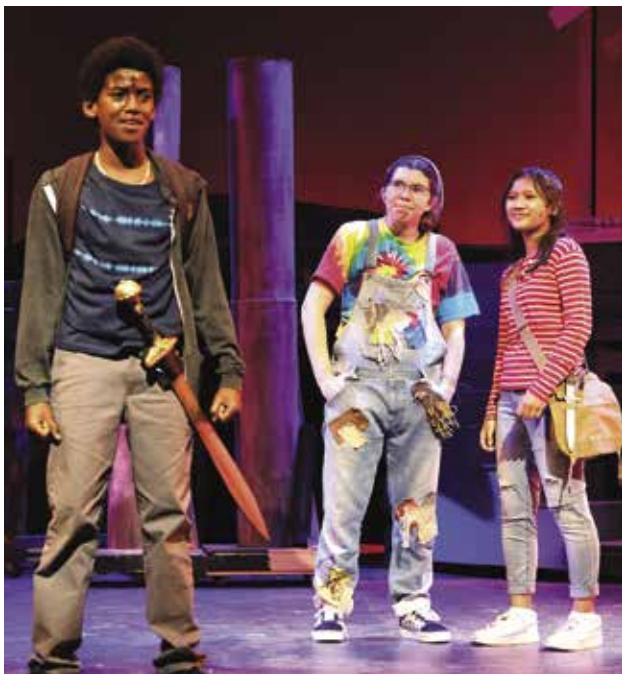
Volunteers must be at least 50 years of age, in good health, semi or fully retired, and possess a valid California driver’s license. There are flexible schedules with a minimum of 3 days per month service.

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San Diego Junior Theatre Presents “The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical”



The cast of “Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical” bring their skills and talents to the stage.

San Diego Junior Theatre, the nation’s longest-running youth theatre program, presents “The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical,” the fourth show of its 74th Season,

which will run from Friday, April 29 through Sunday, May 15, with an ASL-interpreted performance at 2 p.m., Saturday, May 14.

The Greek gods are real and they’re ruining Percy Jackson’s life. As a son of Poseidon, Percy has newly discovered powers he can’t control. With monsters on his trail, he is on an epic quest to find Zeus’s lightning bolt to prevent a war between the gods. Normal is a myth when you’re a demigod!

Based on the best-selling novel by Rick Riordan, “The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical” is an action-packed theatrical adventure that will rock your world.

The “Lightning Thief” will be directed by first-time Junior Theatre director, Jason Blitman. A recent transplant from New York, Blitman’s professional highlights include work with Theatre Works USA and The Public Theatre, as well as involvement on an early reading of the “Untitled Pasek Paul Levenson Project” which came to be known as Dear Evan Hansen.

Blitman offered, “The Lightning Thief” has been a part of my life for over six years and I look forward to bringing my deep

appreciation and understanding of the story to this production. The show is about young people taking their life in their own hands and perseverance against the greatest odds. There is no time like right now for the incredible students of Junior Theatre to stand up and take ownership of their world.”

Helping to bring Blitman’s vision to life is former West End music director and composer, Ian Brandon, whose recent credits include “The Wizard Of Oz” (Moonlight), “Hair” (The Old Globe), “A Christmas Carol,” (Lamb’s Players Theatre), and “Lit” (California Center For The Arts, Escondido).

Face coverings are required of all patrons while inside the Casa del Prado Theatre. Patrons are asked to check <https://juniorthatre.com/covid-19-safety/> for full details and any policy updates prior to attending a performance.

All Junior Theatre productions are performed in Balboa Park’s historic Casa del Prado Theatre, at the corner of Old Globe Way and Village Place. For tickets and more information, visit www.juniorthatre.com or call the box office at 619-239-8355.

Cygnnet Theatre Presents “Mud Row”

Cygnnet Theatre is pleased to announce the cast and creative team for its upcoming production of “Mud Row” by Tony-nominated playwright (“Ain’t Too Proud: The Life and Times of the Temptations”) and MacArthur Genius recipient Dominique Morisseau. Receiving its second-ever production since it’s world premiere at People’s Light in 2019, this beautiful and dynamic play is directed by Delicia Turner Sonnenberg and runs Wednesday, May 18 to Sunday, June 19.

Two generations of sisters navigate class, race, love and family on “Mud Row,” an area in the East End of West Chester, Pennsylvania. Elsie hopes to move up in the world by marrying into “the talented tenth,” while her sister Frances joins the fight for civil rights. Decades later, estranged sisters Regine and Toshi are forced to reckon with their shared heritage and each other, when Regine inherits granny Elsie’s house. Tony Award-nominee Dominique Morisseau deftly shifts between past and present to paint a living portrait of family legacy. “Mud Row” was the winner of the 2018 Edgerton Foundation New Play Award.

At the helm of this production is Delicia Turner Sonnenberg. She is a founder and the former artistic director of MOXIE Theatre and currently a resident artist at the Old Globe Theatre. Her most recent directing

credit includes “Trouble in Mind” at The Old Globe and she last worked at Cygnnet Theatre directing “The Piano Lesson.” Turner Sonnenberg is no stranger to the work of Dominique Morriseau, having directed “Skeleton Crew” at The Old Globe in 2017.

When asked about why she was drawn to this script she said, “The plays I am most attracted to as a director are the ones where there is an intimate human story told against a broad backdrop. In the case of ‘Mud Row,’ it is an intimate story about sisterhood and family told against the broad backdrop of American history - racial and social change in both the 1960’s and now. I’m drawn to this play because it is smart, funny, sexy, moving and ultimately cathartic.”

The cast features six actors with all but one making their Cygnnet debut. Returning to Cygnnet is Joy Yvonne Jones (“Pride and Prejudice”) as Frances. Appearing for the first time on Cygnnet’s stage are Andréa Agosto as Elsie, Rachel Cognata as Toshi, Leo Ebanks as Tyriek, Marti Gobel as Regine and Rondrell McCormick as Davin.

The design team includes scenic design by Brian Redfern, lighting design by Caroline Andrew, sound design by Melanie Chen Cole, costume design by Regan A. McKay, wig & makeup design by Chanel Mahoney and properties design by Teresa Jove. The stage manager is Chandra R.M. Anthenill.



“Mud Row” creative team members include MacArthur Genius recipient Dominique Morisseau.

Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased in person at the box office located at 4040 Twiggs Street in San Diego Old Town Historic State Park, by calling 619-337-1525 or by visiting www.cygnnettheatre.com.

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Historic San Diego Civic Youth Ballet Appoints New Executive Director

The Board of Directors at the San Diego Civic Youth Ballet has named Kim Thomas to serve as the new executive director of the historic youth arts organization, which recently celebrated their milestone 75th Anniversary Season in 2020, having opened their doors at the Casa del Prado in Balboa Park in 1945.

With extensive background in nonprofit leadership and a deep-rooted, life-long connection with dance, she officially begins her position at the ballet starting on Monday, April 18. "I am deeply honored that the San Diego Civic Youth Ballet has chosen me for this important role, and I look forward to working closely with the talented board and staff," Thomas said. "I'm excited by the depth of the existing community engagement and outreach. Our work ensures that youth have access to quality dance instruction at our studios in Balboa Park, as well as in our extensive public school partnerships."

Thomas has worked in health and social services for the past 20 years and holds a Master's in Nonprofit Leadership and Management from the University of San Diego, and a Bachelor's in Sociology from San Diego State University. Before joining SDCYB, she was with the American Academy of Pediatrics, San Diego chapter, where she launched and provided strategic leadership to the First 5 First Steps Family Support Program, an affiliate of Healthy Families America. Thomas is the recipient of the 2016 State Leader Service Excellence Award by Healthy Families America, given in recognition of her commitment that all children reach their full potential, along with her strong organizational leadership and interpersonal

skills in fostering trusting relationships with over 100 staff and partners.

"Kim is the perfect leader for this moment," remarked Rosemary Linden, Chair of the SDCYB board of directors. "SDCYB is not only a ballet school, it's a part of Balboa Park and San Diego history. Because of that, the stewardship of this organization is a responsibility that all of us on the board of directors take very seriously. We could not be more excited to welcome Kim to SDCYB - and as we continue to face the many challenges of the ongoing pandemic, we are confident that Kim's brand of leadership will just what this organization needs in order to continue to thrive."

Coming onboard during the ever-evolving pandemic is not lost on Thomas, who said, "Clearly, the past two years have been challenging for performing arts organizations, but SDCYB is skilled at turning adversity into creative inspiration. I know that our dancers and artistic team will continue to bring the finest dance performances, education, and community engagement programs all throughout San Diego."

Dance has been a constant in Thomas' life, and at an early age, she studied ballet and jazz through the El Cajon Recreation Department. As an adult, she explored ballroom and social dances and returned to her beloved art form, ballet. She was with the School of Performing Arts in Santee for ten years and enjoyed preparing for annual dance recitals and working with young children as a pre-ballet instructor. This position reflects a shift for Thomas, who shared, "I'm transitioning professionally into the performing arts field and



Before joining San Diego Civic Youth Ballet, Kim Thomas was with the American Academy of Pediatrics, San Diego chapter,

combining my love for dance, my commitment to ensuring all children have a bright future, and my enthusiasm for nonprofit leadership. I'm excited to make this transition and the opportunity to spread the joy that comes from dance."

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Volunteers Who Change Foster Kids Lives

By Patty Ducey-Brooks

May is Foster Care Awareness Month and local Little Italy resident, Judi Sinopoli, has become very active in bringing happiness to siblings separated in the foster system. Promises2Kids, a local nonprofit organization, provides support to over 3,000 current and former foster youth in San Diego County with the tools, opportunities, and guidance they need to address the circumstances that brought them into foster care.

Sinopoli was introduced to the organization in 2016 and instantly signed up to become a volunteer for foster youth. She didn't know anything about foster youth prior and was touched by the organization's Camp Connect program, which reunites siblings who have been separated in the foster system through a fun and immersive camp. Sinopoli has volunteered at several camps and various Promises2Kids' events throughout the years.

She offered that during her time volunteering for Camp Connect that she has worked with hundreds of children who have needed the kind and caring effort of volunteers who share in their lives.

Knowing the abuse and neglect these children have experienced, they build emotional walls which takes time to remove. They fear sharing because of the hurt they



Judi Sinopoli is pictured with other Promises2Kids volunteers. She is in the first row, very far right.

have experienced.

Sinopoli said that Promise2Kids needs over a hundred volunteers for their three-day camp, which takes place in August. She shared that in giving of her time to the foster youth, she has received immense joy and enjoyment seeing the faces of the children playing and having a good time with their siblings and the volunteers.

"You become a part of their

family by assisting them as they overcome the difficulties of their past, and grow into healthy, happy and successful adults," offered Sinopoli.

She also commented that this isn't a short-term commitment. That's because these children need to know that the volunteers who come into their lives are there to help them to develop trust and emotional strength.

Since 1981, Promises2Kids has

responded to the needs of foster children and provided support to children removed from their home due to abuse and neglect. Promises2Kids, whose mission is to create a brighter future for foster children, supports these children through four programs: Polinsky Children's Center, Camp Connect, Guardian Scholars and Foster Funds. To learn more about the volunteer opportunities, visit www.promises2kids.org.

Two-Day Event draws thousands to Celebrate American Indian Heritage in San Diego

The San Diego American Indian Health Center (SDAIHC) will host the 34th annual Balboa Park Pow Wow from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, May 14 and 15 at the corner of Park Boulevard and President's The Pow Wow is a celebration and showcase of Native American culture and traditions. Native singers, drummers, and dancers in their beautiful regalia from throughout the Southwest will gather in Balboa Park to practice their traditions and you're invited to come and celebrate with us. Pow Wow's are a spiritual experience for American Indians and an opportunity to preserve and pass on the customs and traditions which keep our Native heritage alive.

Randy Edmonds will serve as the event emcee, and each day, the Pow Wow will showcase traditional activities such as Kumeyaay Bird Singing, Gourd Dancing, Inter-Tribal Dancing, and Honoring of community leaders.

At the event this year we will be honoring Paul Cuero, Jr, former Chairman of the Campo Kumeyaay Nation, on Saturday at 3 p.m., for his service to the Kumeyaay Nation,



Pow Wow's are a spiritual experience for American Indians and an opportunity to preserve and pass on the customs and traditions.

the Native community on a state and national levels and his commitment to youth and preserving Kumeyaay traditions.

Randy Edmonds, a member of the Kiowa/Caddo Tribes of Oklahoma will be honored on Sunday at 3 p.m. for his lifelong service to the

Native community. Mr. Edmonds has been a leader and instrumental in bringing much needed services in both Los Angeles and San Diego areas. He is a spiritual leader and advisor and is always "there" for those who need him. He is also the winner of an Emmy for voicing John

Legend's animated feature "Crow: The Legend"!

This event is made possible with the help of the Pow Wow Committee: Ana Jacome, Abel Jacome, Tina Morales, Shurene Premo, Larry Edmonds, Laura Viramontes, Mariah Lewis, and Paula Brim.

Too Little Too Late

By Janet O'Dea

In Mission Hills, one of our neighbors just tore down a building at the "Gateway to Mission Hills" on the corner of West Washington Street and Goldfinch next to the fire station. A representative responded to questions on the HistoricMissionHills Facebook page about the apartments going in after the project was permitted or too little too late.

In 2004, Mission Hills underwent a similar situation when the One Mission project was seeking permits, except that process required community input and approval by the city council. Due to magical events, including a council member who voted "wrong," the developer was eventually guided to work with the community. The project was redesigned, won awards, and is considered a success.

Now, we are embarking on a very risky experiment without community involvement in the permit approval process and a hands-off approach by the city, however, our neighborhood is ultimately affected by this. This is also what transpired with Fort Oak across from St. Vincent's.

Removal of community input goes back to 2016, when the city - not the community planners, made changes to the Uptown Community Plan. Community members had provided updated locations to add housing, height, and density in targeted locations that would interfere less with the existing built-out environment. But the city took over. After years of groundwork by community members, the city regurgitated the 1988 plan instead which allows careless height and density zones.

The switch was spearheaded by a group determined to up-zone Uptown and the city went along with it. That change, in addition to several other new laws, eliminated input and oversight of projects, allowing developers to skip community planning in exchange for a tiny percentage of affordable



Local residents are sharing concerns with no parking and 200 and 300 square foot units on a new development next to the fire station in Mission Hills.

units or buildings near transit. No more traffic studies. Environmental impact studies or addressing quality of life issues. Developers are on their own to plan projects and will any consider the community's established identity and needs ever again? Without any oversight, it does not appear to be working out, even if the developer lives in our neighborhood.

The permitted seven - story apartments will have 54 micro-units (200 square feet), retail on the ground floor, and a top floor deck, 5 units will be affordable. No parking will be provided.

Wouldn't someone concerned about the sense of place obtain feedback and attempt to address community concerns before breaking ground? Apparently only if it is required and it is no longer required. Here are some initial concerns:

- The micro-unit size is small even for standard micro-unit sizing-about the size of a parking space. This creates a lot of density. Once you add the basics (kitchen and bath) the actual living area is reduced. Will the future use of these

apartments turn into short-term rentals without actually adding to housing needs?

- What about the functional needs and response time of the fire department? Residents without cars will likely rely upon numerous deliveries. How will traffic snarls impact emergency response for the fire department when time is of the essence? Will the fire truck trash pick-up be difficult especially when unpredictable delivery vehicles are present at the same time? Retailers need parking and will have delivery needs too.

- Without dedicated parking, retailers' needs won't be met. It will put more cars parked along streets in front of neighboring businesses or further into the residential neighborhood because the developer did not want the expense of parking added to the project.

- The developer is not paying impact fees under a new program called Complete Communities. That means there are no funds for mitigation for parks or any improvements to address impacts that are created by the project

Not very neighborly.

Wouldn't the community planning process ensure these items are considered and serve the community better? So far, recent projects show us that community involvement is needed since the community actually contends with the long-term impacts of infill development. The permit process is better with oversight and the loss of the community plan combined with new laws amounts to taxation without representation.

Other neighborhoods are suffering under these measures too. Our hue and cry to return input into the permitting process may be our only hope. Will our community be willing to raise these issues to the city representatives so we can participate in the process again? Time to speak up.

Contact:
Mayor's office:
 Phone: 619-236-6330 Email: mayortoddgloria@sandiego.gov
Council District 3
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 Phone: 619-236-6633 Email: StephenWhitburn@sandiego.gov

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Home Start to Celebrate 50th Anniversary on Saturday, May 14



Guests of the 2019 Home Start gala enjoy the festivities of the event. Left to right are JR Raines, Tracy Fong, Lynette Hurd and Juanita Atitsogbuie.

Home Start, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to child abuse prevention and providing evidence-based family strengthening services, will celebrate its 50th anniversary at its annual Blue Ribbon Gala this year. The event is titled "IMAGINE Families Living Life in Peace" and will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m., Saturday, May 14 at The US Grant Hotel, located at 326 Broadway in downtown San Diego.

This annual signature event raises funds for the organization's crucial programs and assistance services

to help children and parents affected by tragedies including homelessness, domestic violence, hunger, abuse, and neglect.

Guests will enjoy a three-course dinner, live entertainment, inspiring stories of lives changed, and appearances from special guests. Attendees may choose to dress in 70's attire, and they will also experience special activities and surprises from that era. There will be many chances to bid on unique travel packages and specialty items during the live and silent auctions.

To celebrate this milestone, the evening will especially highlight the impact Home Start has made during the past five decades, reflecting on the lives changed through Home Start's programs. It will bring awareness to Home Start's mission of strengthening families and communities across San Diego.

"We are thrilled to be celebrating 5 decades of providing services to San Diego children and families. This will be an evening to remember that will raise crucial funds for our life-changing

programs," shares Laura Tancredi-Baese, Home Start Chief Executive Officer.

The Presenting Sponsor for this year's event is the Rodeki Foundation, and the Gold Sponsors are U.S. Bank, Guild Mortgage, and MUFG Union Bank. For more information about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Mark Lagace, Director of Philanthropy, at mlagace@home-start.org.

**To purchase tickets, please visit
www.homestart50th.org.**

Professional Interior Designers Offer In-Home Design Consultations

During ASID's 'Spring Spruce Up" During May and June

If your home needs a professional spruce up, the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) San Diego Chapter has a solution. During the months of May and June members of the prestigious organization will conduct in-home design consultations during

the ASID “Spring Spruce Up” fundraiser. The affordable fee of \$99 per hour (minimum one hour/maximum two hours) is a donation to the local ASID chapter; the designer volunteers his/her time.

"Spruce Up gives consumers who may have never worked with a professional interior designer an easy, affordable, and stress-free introduction," said Arnaz Khambatta, Allied ASID, of Good Deeds Design, the event chair.

Remodeling is good for the soul and the pocketbook, added Khambatta. "Besides the aesthetic satisfaction, good interior design pays off in added comfort, functionality and increased home value."

ASID can provide experts in all areas of design, including space planning, staging, color selection, kitchen design, aging in place, art and furniture placement, outdoor rooms, historic preservation, media rooms, multigenerational living, universal design, window



ASID designers are individually selected to meet each client's specific needs.

treatments and commercial design. Designers are individually selected to meet each client's specific needs.

For information on the program

and to arrange for a designer to come to your home, call 858-566-3345 or email administrator@casd.asid.org. All appointments are prepaid.

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Just in Time for Foster Youth Hosts Series of Empower Parties

Just in Time for Foster Youth (JIT), a nonprofit organization dedicated to engaging a caring community to help transition age foster youth achieve self-sufficiency and well-being, will be hosting Empower party celebrations through the end of June for its dedicated community of supporters. JIT has scheduled a series of small, outdoor events hosted by sponsors as well as a series of virtual Zoom parties. Each will offer an intimate setting to engage in the JIT mission while raising awareness and resources for transition age foster youth in San Diego County.

The theme for this year's events



Left to right are Genevieve Chesnut-Hill, Susanne Livingston and Alisha Patino who attended a previous "Empower" party.

is Empower State of Mind: The Past, Present, and Promise. Each Empower party will include a program featuring an inspirational youth story and a Spoken Word presentation by former and current JIT participants as well as a moving video highlighting JIT's lasting impact. The JIT youth will be an integral part of each party by sharing their personal experiences and engaging with guests.

"Our Empower Party experience allows us to share the very best of our unique JIT community with some of our most committed and generous supporters," says Don Wells, chief empowerment officer at Just in Time for Foster Youth. "They've continued to invest in our mission in extraordinary ways during these uncertain times and we're eager to connect with them once again to say thank you, as we prepare for JIT's 20th Anniversary Celebration."

This year's Presenting Sponsors include Capital Growth Inc., Gretchen & Bill Morgan, RWM Home Loans, The John M. Sachs Family, Louarn & Alan Sorkin, Tina & David Thomas and US Bank. Gold sponsors are Grace Chui-Miller, Jeanette Day, Marty Goodman, Joe Jordan, MG Properties, Robin & Larry Rusinko, Mark Schmidt, Solana Beach Presbyterian Church Home Ministry, Ellen & Bob Svatos, Sharon & David Wax, Diane Cox & Don Wells, Julie & Dale Yahnke.

To learn more about Walk the Talk plus explore sponsorship and underwriting opportunities, please visit <https://jitfosteryouth.org/wtt2022>

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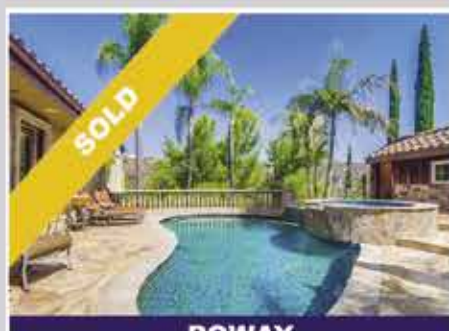
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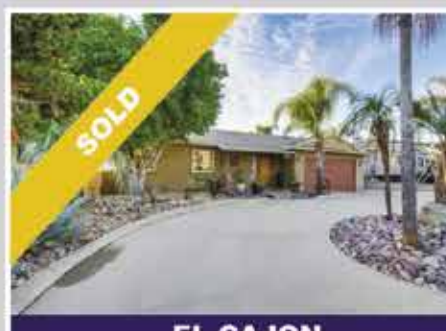
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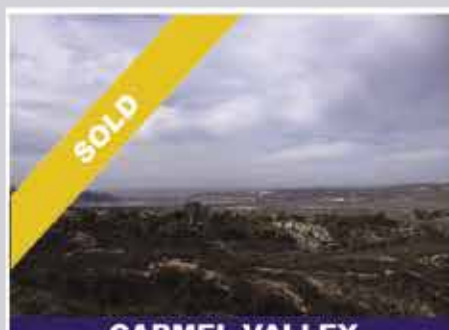
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