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Neighbors Save Iconic 120-year-old Bunya tree.

NEWS

University Heights Community Association February 2024

OPINION

Why We Support San Diego's Elected Community Planning Groups

BY LARRY TURNER, KATE CALLEN, TERRY HOSKINS

For more than a half-century, San Diego's community planning groups (CPGs) have been acclaimed as a national model of local democracy. As the City's website states, CPGs elected by their communities have been "formal mechanisms [that] provide citizens with an opportunity for involvement."

This model of democracy is now under siege.

Mayor Todd Gloria, with the complicity of all nine City Councilmembers, is poised to remove elected CPG members and replace them with unelected members of his own choosing.

That is not democracy. That is autocracy, and it is exactly why we are running as challengers to Mayor Gloria, Council President Sean Elo-Rivera, and Councilmember Stephen Whitburn in the March 2024 primaries.

The rationale given by Gloria and his building industry allies for overturning CPG elections is that the groups lack

Cont. on page 5

Let's hear your voice... Vote in the Uptown Planners' General Election

The Uptown Planners serve in an advisory role to the City of San Diego on land-use and development issues in Bankers Hill, Hillcrest, Medical Center Complex, Middletown, Mission Hills, and University Heights.

When and where can you vote?
Saturday, March 2, 12 - 2 pm
Mission Hills/Hillcrest Library
Tuesday, March 5, 4 - 7 pm
Joyce Beers Community Center

Find everything you need to know at:
UptownPlannersSD.org



Cont. on page 5

The Future of The UH Library

BY STUART MCGRAW

Over the years, University Heights has been promised a new library at the historic Teacher's Training Annex. At the Nov 2nd, 2023, UH Community Meeting, representatives of the School District repeated that promise and assured the community that the School District is working with the SD Library.

That's when Jennifer Jenkins, Deputy Director of Customer Experience at the San Diego Public Library, spoke up from the audience and insisted that the School District has never reached out to the SD Library, leaving School District reps tongue-tied in front of a shocked audience of 60. In light of this perceived betrayal, many community members grew anxious about the future of the UH Library.

A few weeks later, the headline speaker at the Dec 2023 UH Holiday Party, Patrick Stewart, CEO of the Library Foundation SD, assured the community that the UH Library will not only stay in UH but also has an exciting future at its current location.

UHCA tried to set the record straight back in 2019 when several representatives of UHCA and the Friends of the UH Library met with senior officials of the San Diego Public Library who informed them that the City will never agree to build or fund a library on property that the City does not own. The Teachers Annex is located on property owned by the School Board (State of CA), not the City. Furthermore, any surplus land must be used for education purposes as defined by the CA Dept of Education Code and thus, disqualifying it as a location for a city branch library. It's a shame that we have been misled by our politicians for so many years.

The University Heights Library Task Force deserves our thanks for its tremendous efforts: Placement of the Teachers Training Annex on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999. An extensive

Cont. on page 5

BY FAWNEE EVNOCHIDES

The loud whine of chainsaws pierced the tranquility of Sunday morning, December 3rd, as a crew of tree cutters methodically sawed limbs from the enormous landmark Bunya Bunya *Araucaria bidwillii* tree at 1404 Meade Avenue, at the corner of Maryland Street.

University Heights neighbors were shocked to discover that the property investor/house flipper had ordered their crew not just to trim but to completely cut down and remove the rare and historic tree without any advance notice. This tree is a beloved University Heights landmark visible from miles away.

Neighbors converged on the corner to protest and the crew paused the cutting. After hours of discussion, representatives from the investment company, IbuySanDiego.com, agreed to allow the tree—now severely pruned and disfigured—to remain in place. Meade Avenue resident and certified Arborist Ed Upchurch says that the tree is likely in shock and that it would benefit from systemic injections of nutrients, but he is confident that it will survive. Upchurch, who trimmed the tree most recently in 2020, says that it has always been quite healthy and that these trees are no problem to maintain safely. He estimates the tree adds \$40,000 to \$50,000 in real estate value to the property. Commonly known as the Bunya Bunya pine or monkey-puzzle tree, *Araucaria bidwillii* is native to Australia and has a lifespan of up to 700 years. This specific tree is believed to have been planted with a seed from the nursery of Kate Sessions, the head landscape architect of Balboa Park.

Dan Huntley, a 30-year resident of Meade Avenue, who is also an expert on pine trees, was instrumental in discussions with the developer that resulted in saving the tree from destruction. He says that property owners need to be better educated about why it's important to preserve mature trees. In addition to increasing the real estate value for the property owner and the entire neighborhood, Huntley says the beauty of mature trees boosts mental health for everyone in the neighborhood. Also, trees cool neighborhoods down as well as providing other substantial environmental benefits. "The oxygen we breathe comes from plants and

NEXT UHCA MEETING

FEB 1

UHCA NATIVE PLANTS INITIATIVE

6:45 pm 4345 Campus Ave

With a goal of beautifying our neighborhood, apartment or house, connecting people to nature, and supporting wildlife, we are excited to announce the UHCA Native Plants initiative. Are you passionate about nature and sustainability? Come to the Feb meeting, meet Botanist Frank Santana and learn all about it. *See page 4*



VALENTINE'S FLOWER BAZAAR

Help support Birney Elementary & Share Your Love with a Stunning Valentines Bouquet. FEB 13 & 14, 4-7 pm Original Skin and Body Care, 4416 Park Blvd 4-7 pm Birney Elementary, 4345 Campus Ave

LOOKING AHEAD

MAR 7



Power San Diego will present their plan to replace SDGE with a nonprofit public power utility within the city, focusing on lowering energy rates, protecting rooftop solar, and prioritizing local energy generation and storage. wearepowersandiego.com

OUR VISION

UH is a rare community, a village within the larger city of San Diego. We take pride in our historic past. And for the future envision a new library, a secure and pedestrian-friendly community, considerate growth accompanied by well-planned infrastructure to sustain that development. Additionally, we foresee a remarkable transformation of the Board of Education property, featuring a substantial park to accommodate assured future growth. Our village aims to be renowned for its amicable and unique character, distinctive business community, commitment to canyon preservation, and active citizen participation.

MEMBERSHIP

Yearly Membership

- () Feather – give what you can \$_____
- () \$36 Plume (Household)
- () \$120 Golden Ostrich (Household)
- () \$100 Business Plume

Donor

\$_____ Donation for Keeping Up the Good Work (Donate as a member or non-member)

Name _____
 Business Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Email _____
 Referred by _____
 NEW RENEWAL

NEW MEMBERS & RENEWALS

GOLDEN OSTRICH

Patricia Ryan & Lloyd Alexander, John Sandbower & James Craig, Renee Gregorio & Jill Kruse, Carol Neidenberg, Sharon & Clayton Haven, Cathy Strittmatter & Andrew Guzzon.

HOUSEHOLD

Pamela Thomas Blich, Diann & Dan Nephew, Pierre Ouillet & Robert MacDonald, Katrina Oprisko, James & Lynn Manner, Mona & Benjamin Burke, James Ziegler, Andrea Sperling, Charlo1e Russell, April Bjornsen & Bill Murphy, Miriam Rothman & Russell Pierce.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ANDREW GUZZON AND CATHY STRITTMATTER FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATION



JOIN, RENEW, DONATE, OR VOLUNTEER TODAY ONLINE AT UHSD.ORG.

OR RETURN WITH CHECK BY MAIL: UHCA PO BOX 33032 SAN DIEGO, CA 92163

Volunteer Your Time on a UHCA Committee!

- Beautification & Planning
- Blockwalker/Deliver Papers on your Block
- Marketing / Merchandising
- UHCA News
- Program & Events
- Neighborhood/Zone Watch
- Membership
- More info @uhsd.org/volunteer

OUR MISSION

The University Heights Community Association (UHCA), founded in 1983, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, member-supported community association dedicated to improving the quality of life and the sense of community in San Diego's University Heights.

A portion of your membership is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more info, email membership@uhsd.org

UHCA NEWS

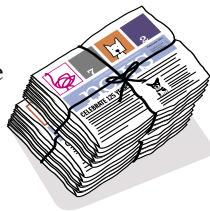
Published 10 times per year by the University Heights Community Association. We welcome articles, letters, and announcements about issues and events relating to University Heights. Submission deadline is the first of the month. Send submission of articles, announcements etc. to: news@uhsd.org See www.uhsd.org/submissions for details.

EDITORIAL TEAM Nan McGraw, Lisa Getz, Paul Farris, Stu McGraw

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS Judith Annicchiarico, Kate Callen, Paul Farris, Fawnee Evnochides, Lisa Getz, Terry Hoskins, Helene Idels, Pam Isaacs, Martin Kessler, Sarah Layne, Nan McGraw, Stu McGraw, Frank Santana, Larry Turner, Jon Von Erb, and Alexandra Webber.

ART DIRECTOR Paul Farris

PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS Judith Annicchiarico, Paul Farris, Lisa Getz



PRESIDENT Stuart McGraw
VICE PRESIDENT Lisa Getz
SECRETARY Nan McGraw
TREASURER Mark Brlej

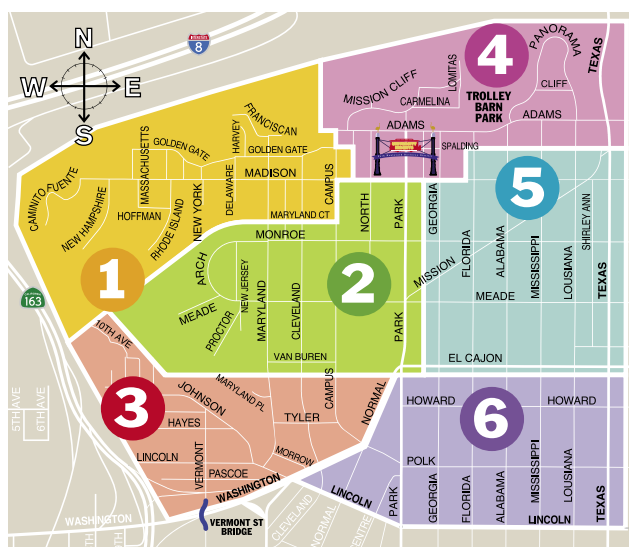


WEBSITE uhsd.org

FACEBOOK @universityheightscommunityassociation

INSTAGRAM @universityheights_sdcommunity

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BOUNDARIES AND ZONE WATCH



- 1 Nan McGraw** nmcsan@aol.com
- 2 Pam Isaacs** pamisaacs1@gmail.com
- 3 Mary Lange** mlangeuhcazone3coordinator@gmail.com
- 4 Heather Wilcox** zone4watchuhca@gmail.com
- 5 Tamara Zyhylij** tamara@tamarezrealestate.com
- 6 Nan McGraw** nmcsan@aol.com



Zone Watch Coordinators manage email lists of participants wishing to receive University Heights crime watch information and updates. Download more on the UH Zone Watch program at uhsd.org or contact your zone's coordinator or Nan McGraw.



CRIME WATCH SIGNS

There are 60 signs in UH. If you know of a location that could use a sign, or one needing replacing please email signs@uhsd.org.



SLOW DOWN SIGNS

Speeding in UH continues to be a problem. Shaving time off by speeding has small benefits and high risks. PLEASE SLOW DOWN!



FILE A POLICE REPORT ONLINE WITH SDPD

tinycurl.com/SDPD-Online-Report

UH PHONE BOOK

Emergency • Police • Fire • Medical 911
Non-Emergency Suspicious Activity, Homeless Outreach Team, etc. 619-531-2000
 Online: non-emergency problems: www.sandiego.gov/get-it-done
SD City Services Emergency & Non-Emergency 619-527-7500
 Street lights, pot holes, etc.
 Online: www.sandiego.gov/city-hall/departments
Alert San Diego readyсандiego.org/alertсандiego/
 Reverse 911 mobile phone evacuation emergency notifications
2-1-1 San Diego 211 or 858-300-1211
 Free Resources: CalFresh, Medi-Cal, Covered California, etc.
Alice Birney Elementary Office 619-497-3500
Brush and Weed Abatement 619-533-4444
Code Violations 619-236-5500
County Dept of Environmental Health Public Health / Rats / Rodents 858-694-2888
Crime Stoppers Tip Line 888-580-TIPS (8477)
Downed Power Lines / SDG&E 800-411-7343
Domestic Violence Hotline 24/7 888-385-4657
Emergency Water / Sewer Repair / Sink Holes 619-515-3525
Get-It-Done sandiego.gov/get-it-done
 Download this City of San Diego app for reporting all non-emergency problems: abandoned vehicles, code violations, graffiti, over watering, potholes, and dangerous sidewalk issues.
Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) 5am - 3pm M - F 619-446-1010

Narcotics Suspicious drug house / anonymous 619-531-2468
People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) path@epath.org 619-810-8600
Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP) 619-692-4945
 Vacation home / welfare of home-bound check / Homeland Security support
National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline 988
SDPD Community Relations Officers:
 Officer Michael Hayes mfhayes@pd.sandiego.gov
 Officer David Surwilo dsurwilo@pd.sandiego.gov
SDPD Western Division 5215 Gaines Street 619-692-4800
Shopping Cart Pick-Up Service 800-252-4613
UHCDC University Heights Community Development Corporation 619-297-3166
University Heights Public Library 4193 Park Blvd 619-692-4912
UH Zone Watch Coordinator Nan McGraw nmcsan@aol.com 619-260-0668
Graffiti In Progress Emergency: 911
 Report Online: sandiego.gov/get-it-done Graffiti Hotline: 619-527-7500
SD Vector Control mosquitoes / ticks / rats 858-694-2888
 Online: vector@sdcountry.ca.gov

If all else fails, email Malik Thornton
 ThorntonM@sandiego.gov with Councilmember Stephen Whitburn's office.



DISASTER CONTACTS

In a major disaster, have two out-of-area contacts handy. Landlines may not work in power outages. Keep cell phones charged. Call 211 for updated info.

Happening in the Heights

Fitness, music, and adventure without leaving your zip code.

Madison Live Jazz

Tuesday Nite Jazz Series
Every Tuesday nite 6:45 pm

Sunday Nite Latin Jazz
with Irving Flores & Kaylee Daugherty
6-8 pm 4622 Park Blvd.
madisononpark.com



Flavors of East Africa

Open Mic Night. Music. Stand-up. Poetry.
First and Third Mondays, 7 pm
2322 El Cajon Blvd
flavorsofeastfrica.com
@flavorsofeastfrica

Art Form San Diego

Creative Reuse Workshops (Grades 2-10) and Store.
2888 Adams Avenue
Wed, Thur, Fri, 12:30pm - 6:30pm
Sat, 11am-4pm
artformsandiego.org



Lestats on Park

4496 Park Blvd
Monthly Tarot Meetup
Feb 9, 6 pm
Meet and network with other local San Diegans who share your passion for the art of cartomancy.



Park and Rec

Happy Hour Mon - Fri, 4-6pm
Live DJs and nightly events
4612 Park Blvd @parkandrecsd

Make Park Games Again
Monday Night Football at Park & Rec!
Lawn Games all Day!



Diversionsary Theatre

On Stage:
Kaleidoscope
Jason Mraz Foundation's community concert event featuring eight San Diego nonprofit arts organizations.
California Center for the Arts, Escondido.
Feb 17 - 18

Diversionsary Theatre Clark Cabaret
Drinks and live entertainment.
Wed Sat 5pm to close, Sun 12 - 7pm.

Nightly Happy Hour
5 - 6:30 pm & 10 pm to close.

Friday Karaoke Night
Sign ups start at 9pm. Singing starts around 9:15 pm



Community Engagement Programs
Free and accessible workshops and programs support blossoming talent in people of all ages. www.diversionary.org

Serpentine Cider

2311 El Cajon Blvd

Writers and Ciders: Dark Romance.
Enjoy craft drinks while mingling with guest authors, having a discussion and a Q&A.



Further Afield

Museum Month 2024

50% off admission to more than 60 San Diego County museums, historic sites, gardens, zoo/aquariums and more. Starting February 1.

Free passes available at SD Libraries and www.sandiegomuseumcouncil.org



Send submissions for your event to: news@uhsd.org

Hsifang Temple

Family Fun Lunar New Year Events

Lion Dance Performances
Sunday, Feb 11, 2 pm

Sweet Mochi Rice Ball Making
Saturday, Feb 24, 2 pm

619 298 2800 4536 Park Blvd
hsifangtemple.org



Serpentine Cider

2311 El Cajon Blvd

Trivia Tuesday

6:30 - 8:30 pm

Paint Your Pet!

Thu, March 14,

6-9 pm

\$67 per person. Includes a glass of ciderrall supplies, and instruction. Sign up & info: lovejoycreations.com



Feb 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				<p>1 UH Rec Council Meeting 5:30pm Alice Birney Library UHCA Meeting 6:45 pm 4345 Campus Ave</p> <p> Curbside Organic Waste Recycling</p>	<p></p> <p>Groundhog Day</p>	<p>3 Dragon Puppet Craft with San Diego Chinese Historical Museum 10:30 am UH Branch Library</p>
<p>4 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9am - 2pm</p>	<p>5 </p>	<p>6 Uptown Planners General Election 6 pm Joyce Beers Center</p>	<p>7 UHCA Beautification Committee 6 pm uhcd.org for location UHDC Meeting 6 pm uhcdc.org Baby & Toddler Storytime 10am UH Branch Library</p> <p> Curbside Recycling Curbside Organic Waste Recycling</p>	<p>8 UH Rec Council Meeting 5:30pm Alice Birney Library</p> <p> Curbside Recycling Curbside Organic Waste Recycling</p>	<p>9 </p>	<p>10 Lunar New Year Children's Storytime & Craft with Miss Helene 10am UH Branch Library</p>
<p>11 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9am - 2pm</p>	<p>12 Abraham Lincoln's Birthday</p>	<p>13 Fat Tuesday Friends of UH Library 6pm Via Zoom friendsofuhlibrary.org Children's Storytime & Craft with Miss Helene 6pm UH Branch Library</p> <p> Curbside Organic Waste Recycling</p>	<p>14 Ash Wednesday Valentine's Day</p>			<p>17 Friends of the Library Book Sale 9am-3pm UH Branch Library</p>
<p>18 Farmers Market 9am - 2pm Friends of the Library Book Sale 12-3pm UH Library</p>	<p>19 Presidents Day Banks, City, County, Federal Offices, and Libraries Closed</p>	<p>20 North Park Planning Committee 6:30pm NP Christian Fellowship, 2901 North Park Way</p>	<p>21-25</p>	<p>22 George Washington's Birthday</p> <p> Curbside Recycling Curbside Organic Waste Recycling</p>		<p>24 Children's Storytime & Craft with Miss Helene 10:30 am UH Branch Library</p>
<p>25 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9am - 2pm</p>	<p>26 </p> <p>Children's Signing Storytime with Miss Jennifer UH Branch Library 12:30 pm</p>		<p>28 UHCA News Out</p>	<p>28 Children's Pajama Signing Storytime with Miss Jennifer UH Branch Library 5pm</p> <p> Curbside Organic Waste Recycling</p>		

UHCA Native Plant Initiative.

BY FRANK SANTANA

Plants in our everyday lives are known to elevate our mood and help us relax. However, some of the beautiful plants in our neighborhood are hiding a secret. For example, fountain grass appears to be an admirable landscape plant but it is actually an invasive species that readily escapes yards, colonizing our local canyons and hillsides. This creates an inhospitable habitat for the native organisms that support our local biodiversity. Eliminating invasive plants is a tough problem to solve, but we can begin to restore a more natural balance in our built environment via native plants. San Diego is the most biodiverse County in the United States and by planting natives in our community we can work together to support biodiversity while adding beauty.

With a goal of beautifying our neighborhood, connecting people to nature, and supporting wildlife we are excited to announce the UHCA Native Plants initiative



Monkey Flower / *Mimulus*



Paprika Yarrow / *Achillea millefolium*

and you can join in with volunteer time, financial support, or by planting natives at your apartment or house.

Our inaugural initiative involves planting natives on Meade Avenue near the entrance to Birney Elementary Joint Use Field. Join us on Saturday February 10th from 8am to Noon at the corner of Park and Meade Blvd for our first big planting.

During 2024 we will continue planting and maintaining the natives along Meade Boulevard adjacent to Birney Elementary School and we will be working on the project every second Saturday morning of the month so drop by if you would like to pitch in with weeding, watering, and planting. For an email notification about our native plant events send an email to NativePlants@uhsd.org and thanks for your support.

Finally, if you are in the position to support our UHCA Native Plants project financially, we are raising funds for the purchase of additional nursery plants. Each native plant costs \$15 and any donation amount is appreciated. Scan the QR code or email us to donate today. Thanks!

Frank Santana
UHCA Native Plants Lead



Top: California Lilac / *Ceanothus*
Middle: Monkey Flower / *Mimulus*
Bottom: Apricot Mallow / *Sphaeralcea ambigua*

Embracing Change in our neighborhood's business landscape.

BY LISA GETZ

In a concerning trend for the community, La Loupe Vintage at 4646 Park Blvd becomes the latest casualty as small businesses continue to relocate or shutter in our neighborhood. Following Twiggs' departure, the impact on our local charm is undeniable. These closures underscore the importance of rallying behind our remaining small businesses to preserve the unique character that defines our town. With each closure, a piece of the community fabric unravels. It's crucial for residents to actively support local establishments, fostering an environment where they can thrive. Together, we can ensure our small town vibe endures and these cherished businesses remain the heartbeat of our community.

OPINION

How San Diego plans to solve its shortage of public restrooms

The city plan to set minimum neighborhood standards and give developers incentives to include public toilets in their projects could impact the Trolley Barn Park.

The Union Tribune November 27 had a lengthy article regarding proposals our City Council is considering to address the dearth of public restrooms downtown but including plans to set minimum city standards for a number of required (where is it written to be a requirement?) public bathrooms in urban neighborhoods. One of our UH neighbors responded to the article with the following letter to the editor:

City officials (bureaucrats) are making an effort to require public restrooms be added in our existing neighborhoods. They apparently have no to plans to request citizen or police department input. Adding public restrooms to our neighborhoods will do more harm than good. San Diego should first learn how to keep restrooms clean, control illegal activities and prevent the constant vandalism in our existing facilities. The public restrooms in Balboa Park have been filthy and dangerous for decades. City officials stated that public restrooms typically cost around \$250,000 each. That appears grossly underestimated if we use the actual costs, including studies and cost overruns, of recent projects. They say that each restroom costs about \$30,000 a month to maintain. Is that a figure underestimated too? Can we trust our Mayor and City Council to stop this potential boondoggle?

This is published in the UHCA News with the permission of the letter writer, Jim Ziegler. The reason we are doing so is to inform you of the potential of our officials to again attempt to put a restroom in our Trolley Barn Park, possibly without our input. Our park was designated as a "Neighborhood Park". Therefore a restroom was not required.

Bunya Tree from page 1

trees. Trees do great things for a city environment: They clean the atmosphere and reduce excess CO2 in the atmosphere, which is the number one cause of climate change.”

Another neighbor, Susanne Friedrich, who has lived on Meade Avenue since 1988 and was part of the group effort to save the tree, says that when neighbors work together, they can help preserve the vital character of a historic neighborhood. “We want to encourage the future owners to get the tree designated as a heritage tree because it is one of the most beautiful examples of this rare tree in San Diego. When you look up at a tree, especially a beautiful tree like this that has been around forever, it just gives you a sense of awe. Trees are the things that don’t change when everything else does.”



Bunya Bunya pine before severe pruning.



Library from page 1

Training Annex on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999. An extensive architectural and engineering Feasibility Study of the building in 2004 and recognition by the City’s Engineering Department as the #1 priority. A 2009 Historical Survey of the Normal Street San Diego School District Campus and its collection of buildings. A Resolution attached to the School District’s November 2018 School Bond to fund the restoration of the Teachers Training Building Annex 1, original Alice Birney Kindergarten Annex 2, Paid Parking Building study, and green space to benefit the University Heights Community.

SUSTAINABLE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

Spread the Love, Not the Carbon.



BY JUDITH ANNICCHIARICO

Sharing some locally-produced chocolates and strolling to dinner at one of our fine neighborhood restaurants would be a great choice for V-day celebrations this month. One could jet off to Paris or Bali (or Vegas?), but the cost of those trips is even greater than it might initially seem.

Fossil fuel carbon emissions were higher in 2023 than in previous years, even though we, as a species, know that climate change is accelerating. Shipping and travel-related aviation (long-haul jet flights, unbridled lust for cheap goods via Amazon) has played a significant role in our (so far) losing battle against deadly climate consequences. But it doesn’t have to be this way. This Valentine’s Day, we could show our love for our home planet and all its inhabitants by reconsidering our needs for yearly long-distance air travel and more and more stuff shipped from abroad.



Chuao Chocolatier Headquarters and Boutique, Carlsbad

We all know how much there is to explore and enjoy in San Diego. Beyond our town, California’s enormous wealth of geologic and cultural gems can provide years’ worth of destinations for short or long vacations. Check out Atlas Obscura’s “1,428 Cool, Hidden, and Unusual Things to Do in California” for some great ideas. And consider taking the train as part of the journey – an adventure unto itself, with a lower carbon footprint than flying or driving a gasoline-powered car.

Putting the brakes on relentless purchases manufactured and shipped from abroad would also show our eco-love, not to mention supporting local and other American jobs. Thinking about what we need and will value a year from now vs. what we might simply want right this minute because it looks cool might be the best place to start. And then committing to buying



Coast Starlight | Amtrak Sightseer Lounge and Dining Cars



locally-produced and American-made goods could really help stem the rising carbon tide. Sites like “Made in the USA Matters” contain details on all sorts of goods produced here.



Sure, our friends’ vacation posts and glossy travel industry images of destinations far and wide are tempting. And we can often find some amazingly cheap flights to other continents that are hard to resist. Equally so, American-made goods are sometimes more expensive than cheaper stuff from half a globe away. But factoring in the cost of climate change – to ourselves and every other creature on this planet – makes sticking closer to home whenever possible a no-brainer, and a great way to show our love.

chuaochocolatier.com
atlasobscura.com/things-to-do/california
amtrak.com/california-train-routes
madeintheusamatters.com/american-made-products



AMERICAN ETHNIC GRUB



4574 PARK BLVD, SAN DIEGO, CA 92116 PARKHOUSESD.COM (619) 295-7275

Planning Groups from page 1

CPG elections is that the groups lack diversity. Some CPGs do need greater representation of renters, young people, and people of color. But diversity must be achieved by being inclusive, not by being exclusive.

We won’t have more diverse planning groups until we can persuade people from every demographic group to run for those seats. For years, all-volunteer CPG leaders have struggled to recruit underrepresented candidates. They have pleaded with City Hall for help in identifying and adopting “best practices” in diversity recruitment. The Mayor and the Council have ignored those pleas.

Disenfranchising people from serving in elected offices because they are the “wrong” age, ethnicity, and/or income

group is completely unacceptable. If we are elected, we will fully support the autonomy of CPGs and their crucial role in local democracy.

Today, we call on Gloria, Elo-Rivera, and Whitburn to uphold the electoral process. Current planning groups were chosen by your constituents in communities you serve. As elected officials yourselves who are running to keep your seats, it is in your own best interests to embrace the work done by your planning groups. Please join our good-faith effort to foster their inclusivity and expand their impact.

The authors are candidates in the City of San Diego’s March 5 primary elections: Turner for mayor, Callen for Council District 3, and Hoskins for Council District 9.

40 YEARS OF PLUMES TO THE PRESIDENTS OF UHCA



Thank you to all the presidents of UHCA for your years of extraordinary service to University Heights and the Community Association. Your friends and neighbors salute you.

1983-84	Janice and Eric DuVall	2004-05	Candace Bremond
1985-86	Chris Huddy	2005-06	Candace Bremond
1986-87	Steve Frates	2006-07	Greg Sorini
1987-88	Eric Naslund	2007-08	Greg Sorini
1988-89	Nan McGraw	2008-09	Greg Sorini
1989-90	David Rowley	2009-10	Greg Sorini
1990-91	Bryan Sampson	2010-11	Greg Sorini
1991-92	Peter Rose	2011-12	Greg Sorini
1992-93	Ronald Johnston	2012-13	Bernie Horan
1993-94	Ronald Johnston	2013-14	Bernie Horan
1994-95	Chris Milnes	2014-15	Bernie Horan
1995-96	Peter Rose	2015-16	Bernie Horan
1996-97	Peter Rose	2016-17	Carol Neidenberg
1997-98	Maureen Markey	2017-18	Carol Neidenberg
1998-99	Maureen Markey Mary Anne Stevens	2018-19	Carol Neidenberg
1999-2000	Bernie Horan	2019-20	Carol Neidenberg
2000-01	Bernie Horan	2020-21	Christine Hernandez
2001-02	Bernie Horan	2021-22	Marc Johnson
2002-03	Bernie Horan	2022-23	Lisa Getz
2003-04	Candace Bremond	2023-	Stu McGraw

Good Omen Coffee Company coming to University Heights.

FROM SANDIEGOVILLE

The owner of Ocean Beach Coffee & Plants is taking over the original Twiggs Coffee House space at 4590 Park Boulevard for a new cafe concept called Good Omen Coffee Company.

After more than 30 years in business, UH's beloved Twiggs Coffee abruptly shuttered its two area cafes last October. The Park Boulevard space, which was the original Twiggs location, has now been leased by Ben Barber-Carol, who owns and operates the two-year-old Ocean Beach Coffee and Plants.

"I'm actually super honored to be in setting up shop in this building," explained Barber-Carol. "I grew up down the street and Twiggs was there as long as I can remember. So I'll be doing my best to honor the long legacy this building has had as a coffee shop. I feel like the community is the biggest part of all of this and we have built up a great community at our shop in Ocean Beach. I'm looking forward to becoming part of the UH community."

Being Ocean Beach Coffee and Plants is a difficult name to transition to a new location outside of its home neighborhood, Barber-Carol's new cafe will be called Good Omen Coffee Company. Expected to open next month, Good Omen will have a menu featuring high quality coffee and espresso drinks, fresh pastries, breakfast sandwiches and avocado toasts. The space will also offer a hand-picked selection of house plants and succulents for sale, as well as a section for local artists to sell their work.



THANK YOU BEAUTIFICATION TEAM VOLUNTEERS

Over the course of 2023, 40 members of our community volunteered their time to beautifying University Heights with many people showing up across multiple Beautification Team (B-Team) events.

The B-Team's year kicks off with taking down the holiday lights on the Vermont Street Bridge and ends with putting them up! Thanks to Sol Schumer, this event always goes off without a hitch thanks to his stellar organization of the lights. We also have him to thank for making sure they stay lit while they are up. Before the lights go up, a separate event is held after Thanksgiving to power wash the bridge walkway and bridge itself.

Across four events over the course of this year, volunteers were busily maintaining the trees along Birney Elementary, laying down mulch and lining the parkways with decorative stone. Frank Santana led that effort and will continue in that role over 2024 with a native plant event taking place on February 10 so be sure to mark your calendars! He will also be hosting mini events to keep the area maintained and watered the second Tuesday of every month.

We also held cleanup events with volunteers removing graffiti and stickers along Park Boulevard in May and tidying up the corner of Alabama and El Cajon and the roundabout at Alabama and Meade Avenue in October.

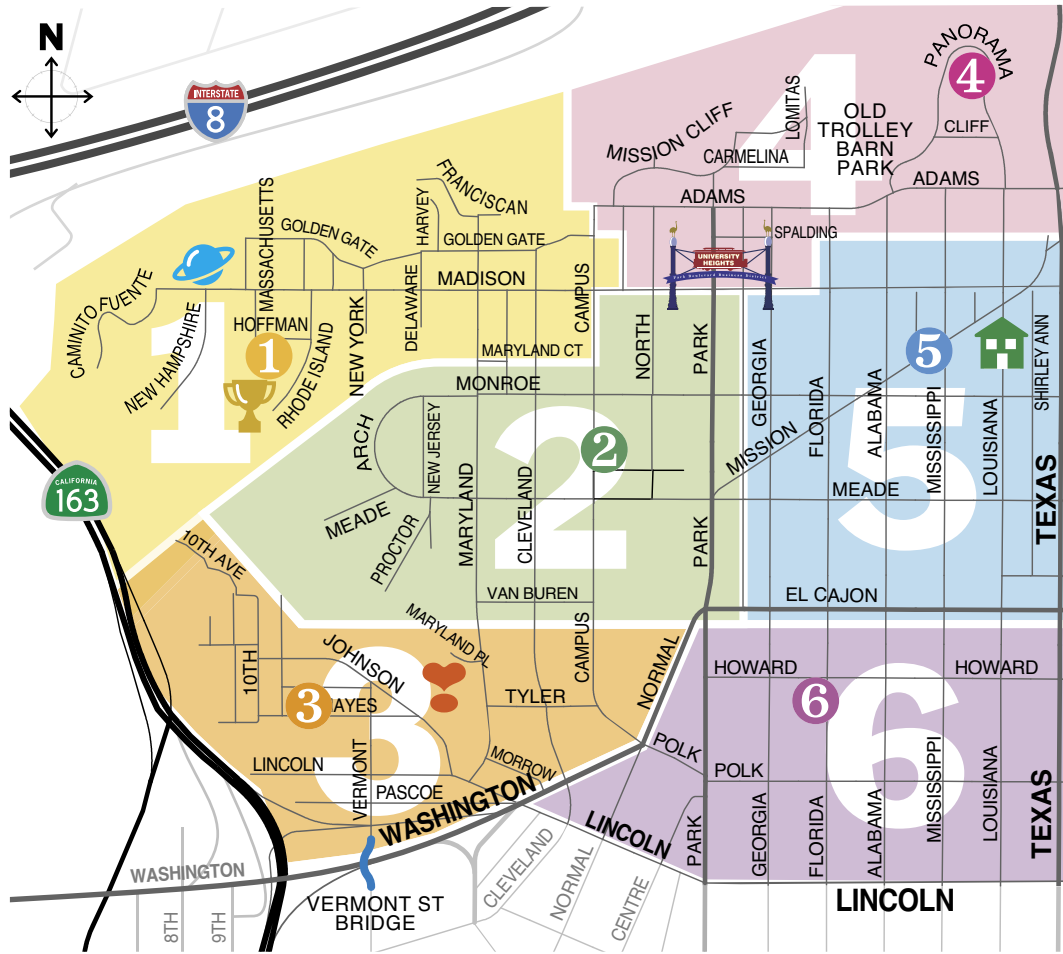
We are truly grateful to everyone for their gift of time and thank you for being

part of our effort to keep University Heights a clean, wonderful place to live! If you are looking for a meaningful way to give back to your community, sign up to become a B-Team volunteer by reaching out to Jennifer Bishop, the B-Team leader. You can send her a quick text to be added to the event email notification list at (619) 992-4060 or email her at beautification@uhsd.org.

2023 Beautification Team Volunteers

Jeremiah Allen
Dacia Andrade
Mary Barger
Krys Benyamen
Jennifer Bishop
Sabina Cartwright
Debbie Chaddock
MaryBeth Chruden
The Sharp "Cookie Plug" Family
Elisabeth Fidler
Lisa Getz
Zachary Garcia
Haley Goodwin
Tee Gross
Naida Hindert
Linda Hotchkiss
Rustam Kasad
John Kennedy
Dani Llamas
Adam Lund
Alissa Mathias
Bridget McConnel
Katie McCoy
Rob McDonald
Stu McGraw
Deborah Morrison
T O'rourke
Liam Pettit
Mike Pettit
Kesler Randall
Brenna Rheinart & Family
Lynne Russo
Pat Ryan
Paul Sandbo
Frank Santana
Sol Schumer
Heather Smedberg

2023 LIGHTS WINNERS IN THE HEIGHTS



Winners By Zone

- 1 921 Hoffman
- 2 4429 Campus
- 3 1028 Hayes
- 4 4773 Panorama
- 5 4560 Mississippi
- 6 4180 Florida

Best Block

4500 Block Louisiana

Visible from Outer Space Award

818 Madison

Too Much Isn't Enough Award

1211 Maryland P

First Place!

921 Hoffman



921 Hoffman / Zone 1



4429 Campus / Zone 2



1028 Hayes / Zone 3



4473 Panorama Drive / Zone 4



4180 Florida / Zone 6



4560 Mississippi / Zone 5



818 Madison



1211 Maryland Ct



4566 Louisiana / Best Block



4561 Louisiana / Best Block



4531 Louisiana / Best Block



4549 Louisiana / Best Block



4557 Delaware / Honorable Mention



4470 Arch St / Honorable Mention



WE RAISED OVER \$1,500
for Birney Elementary.



CAROLING HOLIDAY PARTY

Thank you to the Rockin Cranberries and BFD! This special event was a big hit.



160 PAIR DONATED
for Veterans Village!



Ugly Sweater Contest winner Mike



ROO NEWS



Balboa Park December Nights Parking Fundraiser Scores \$38,000



BY ALEXANDRA WEBBER

RMS raised \$38,000.00 (net proceeds) in 48 hours by 70 individual volunteers who coordinated the parking of 1,450 cars!

RMS opened its campus to park cars for a small portion of the many thousands of visitors that descended on Balboa Park December 1 and 2 to enjoy "Holiday Lights, late night museum hours, and yummy treats. The cars flowed off the Richmond Street exit from the 163 freeway, turned onto Upas Street, then again onto Park Boulevard, to first park their cars.

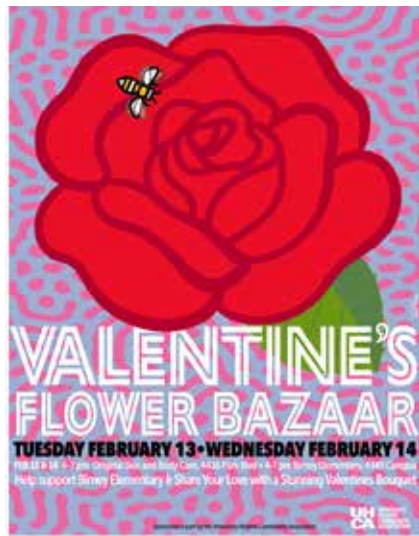
By 7 p.m. on Friday and Saturday nights, the cars were so numerous they could only crawl slowly. At times the Zoo parking lot was so full, the San Diego Police Officers shut off access to the San Diego Zoo parking lot.

RMS opens its gates at Upas Street and Zoo Drive. Drivers paid \$30 for the right to immediately exit the traffic madness, safely park their cars, and happily stride alongside and past the San Diego Zoo into Balboa Park.

THE UPS Store North Park donated money to pay for the expense of printing

the fliers given to each driver to disclose their tax-deductible donation and details about when the school gates closed.

RMS effusively announces its gratitude to Ms. Bridgette Tullis, Mr. Richard Harris, Mr. Kevin Carlin, Ms. Kari Ramirez and Mr. Mike Cain for their generous gift of time and leadership. A special thank you to RMS staff members Ms. Vallejo and Ms. Click for their participation too.



Original Skin and Body Care, UHCA and The Friends of Alice Birney Elementary are hosting a fundraiser

at 4416 Park Blvd. Help support our beloved Birney Elementary by purchasing beautiful Valentine flowers for your loved ones. Each bouquet not only brings joy but also contributes to educational initiatives. Share the love with handpicked arrangements that speak volumes. Don't miss this chance to make a difference while celebrating love. Visit us at Original Skin and Body Care on [date] and let the fragrance of kindness blossom. Your purchase supports education, making this Valentine's extra special. Together, let's make hearts bloom at Birney Elementary!

BIRNEY BUZZ

Winter Delights and Community Highlights: Birney Students' Showcase and the Cone Zone.

BY SARAH LAYNE



Cone Zone volunteers direct drivers and help students out of their cars so that student drop off goes smoothly.

Before heading out for winter break, Birney students participated in the Winter Assembly. Families were invited to see a showcase of what students have been learning in their Specials, with a focus on performing arts. TK did a performance art demonstration centered around the five senses and social emotional learning. Kindergartners sang winter songs and presented various dances of celebration.

First grade performed dances based on patterns from nature. Second and third graders demonstrated a collection of folk dances from around the world. Fourth grade dramatized several of Shel Silverstein's poems using various physical storytelling tools, such as dancing and pantomime. And finally, fifth grade presented a program of popular US dances, ranging from ballroom dances of the 1800's through "meme" dances reflecting popular culture today.

Mr. Evans, Birney's art teacher said, "While I was proud of every student and the work they did, 4th grade was a stand out for me. The project was student-led and it was exciting to see the creativity and how students succeeded in bringing Shel's poetry to life in an entirely new way."

With the return of students to Birney in January, the Cone Zone was back in action thanks to the work of parent vol-

unteers. The Cone Zone allows families who drive their Birney Bees to school to safely and quickly drop off their students. The Cone Zone is also important to the neighborhood because it helps reduce car congestion and improperly parked cars. Parent Arianna Lopez, who has a 4th grader at Birney says, "The Cone Zone makes Birney a good neighbor and exhibits IB learner traits in action—problem solving and caring for our community." Arianna personally volunteers twice a week and said that they always need more volunteers to help make the Cone Zone a success. It's an approximately one hour commitment per morning, and families can volunteer one or more times a week. If you are able to volunteer please email info@friendsofalicebirney.org.

Looking to the future, Birney's annual Hive Hunt will take place on February 10th from 1-4 pm. The neighborhood scavenger hunt and fundraiser is open to students, families, and community members. Details on how to register can be found at <https://friendsofalicebirney.org>. If your business is interested in participating as a sponsor, please contact info@friendsofalicebirney.org.

Sarah Layne, Proud Birney Parent and University Heights Community Member

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BETWEEN THE COVERS

FEBRUARY AT THE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BRANCH LIBRARY

Youth Services Librarian, Miss Helene



Happy 2024 to the University Heights community! We are already well into the new year and excited about celebrating library love during the month of February. We have scheduled several children's storytime and crafts programs at the University Heights Branch Library with themes of love for children of all ages. This even includes signing and pajama signing storytimes! We are also looking forward to hosting a special Lunar New Year themed program in partnership with the San Diego Chinese Historical Museum. This presentation, which is scheduled for Saturday, February 3rd at 10:30 a.m., and is designed for patrons of all ages and it will entail a dragon puppet craft in celebration of the Year of the Dragon.

Did anyone participate in the Winter Reading Challenge during the month of January? The theme was "Where We Come From" and we hope this gave people an opportunity to explore their own heritage and learn about other cultures. Be sure to have claimed your prizes in plenty of time if you did participate. For updates and specific program dates as well as further details please see this newspaper's calendar listing in addition to the library's online calendar of events (sand-



iego.librarymarket.com) and Facebook page (@universityheightslibrary). And, of course, you are welcome to call or stop in at the library and I will be happy to answer questions about children's programs.

We look forward to continually welcoming our local community members to the library. Please note, however, that all SDPL library locations will be closed on Monday, February 19th for the President's Day holiday.

Helene Idels, Youth Services Librarian
University Heights Library
San Diego Public Library
619-692-4912

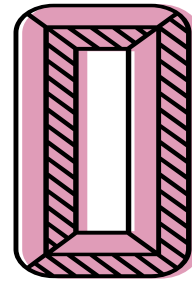


Library Hours
Monday - Tuesday 11:30 am - 8 pm
Wednesday - Saturday 9:30 am - 6 pm
Closed Sunday
Select Branches now open on Sundays
619-692-4912 / UHStaff@sandiego.gov.

FRIENDS OF THE UH LIBRARY

FEBRUARY IS LIBRARY LOVERS MONTH!

BY PAM ISAACS



Our beloved University Heights Library is here to stay and is thriving! It's 110-year anniversary will be this year in April. We will be celebrating!

The Friends of UH Library will host a fun Open-House on Saturday February 17 from 3-5 pm in the children's area. Please come to check out what's new, find a children's book to take home and let us know what it is you like about our library.

An exciting new activity at our library is Signing Storytime for babies and children. This is an opportunity for families to experience ASL. Signing Storytime will be presented 12:30 on Feb 26 and again at 5:30 for Pajama Storytime on Feb 28.

Were you one of those lucky people who got to try out Cookie Plug cookies in December? Now you know what the excitement was all about. And Cookie Plug donated up to 25% of pre-tax sales to our library.

The Friends of the University Heights Library, FOUHL, are definitely library lovers. We support programs at our branch, and make sure programs can



continue. February is a good month to renew, or sign up for, membership in our organization! Go to our website, Friends of University Heights Library. Click on membership. We are a California Tax-exempt, non-profit Corporation.

February Meeting Friends of the UH Library
February 13, 6 pm via Zoom link at: <https://06web.zoom.us/j/510063173>

Open House
February 17, 3-5 pm
University Heights Library
4193 Park Blvd, San Diego, CA
www.friendsofuhlibrary.org

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BETWEEN THE COVERS

Happy Groundhog Day University Heights! It might be slightly chilly this month so bundle up! This month I'd like to discuss a personal highlight of 2023, which was the reissuing of Clara Breed's book *Turning the Pages: San Diego Public Library History, 1882-1982*.

Clara Breed was a librarian at the San Diego Public Library and was known for her letters to Japanese American children sent to internment camps during World War II.

Turning the Pages, which chronicles the first hundred years of the library, has now been rereleased to include the years 1983 - 2022. It includes a new forward by California State Librarian Greg Lucas and a new closing chapter by San Diego Public

Library's Director, Misty Jones, and Special Collections Librarian, Matthew Nye. It also contains much about the University Heights branch, which has existed in one form or another since 1914. I was lucky to be able to contribute in a small way to the reissuing of this book and I'm excited to finally see it in print. Check it out at the local library!

Don't forget that all city libraries will be CLOSED on Monday, February 19 for President's Day. To learn more about supporting your local library, visit www.friendsofuhlibrary.org.

Martin Kessler, Library Assistant II
University Heights Branch Library
San Diego Public Library
www.sandiego.gov / 619-692-4912

PET OF THE MONTH **YITZY**

In the heart of University Heights, San Diego there's a furry resident who has captured the hearts of everyone in the neighborhood. Meet Yitchak "Syrup" Bowens-Schenk, affectionately known as Yitzy by his closest pals, Toast, Roo, Churro, Oreo and Sadie Mae.



Yitzy is our beloved Pet of the Month, and he's the epitome of sweetness and charm. His daily routine is a heartwarming sight for all who witness it. You can often find him strolling along Park Boulevard, his leash bouncing playfully as he explores every nook and cranny of his beloved neighborhood. And, if there's one thing Yitzy adores more than anything else, it's the new off-leash park, where he can let loose, run freely, and make new friends with a wag of his tail.

But Yitzy isn't just a friendly face in the community, he's also a symbol of unity and kindness. He would like to extend his heartfelt thanks to all the small businesses in University Heights for their incredible gesture of leaving out water for him and his furry friends on those hot San Diego days. It's a small act of kindness that means the world to Yitzy and his buddies.

With his boundless energy, loving spirit, and irresistible charm, Yitzy has brought joy and smiles to University Heights. He's not just a pet, he's a treasured member of our community, and we're proud to feature him as our Pet of the Month. So, if you see Yitzy and his friends around the neighborhood, don't forget to give them a wave and a pat on the head - you're sure to brighten their day, just as they've brightened ours!

You Touch Me

may the fingers of your love
be forever in caress
of my courage
you are my strength salvation
my forever Ms. Valentine
Be Mine This February 14th!

*Jon Von Erb
2/2024*

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Easy Reversible Rental Upgrades

BY PAUL FARRIS

What was originally meant to be an interim rental at the onset of Covid 19, ended up being my home for the past 3 years. Although I don't own it, I wanted to make the 1940s rear cottage look and feel like home without spending too much. This was a challenge as many leases contain provisions against making any changes, significant alterations, or even superficial improvements such as drilling holes in the walls to hang curtains. When thinking about upgrading or personalizing a rental space, remember to always check with your landlord first. Different landlords have different ideas about what renters should be able to do. You may have better luck showing your landlord pictures and discussing a plan. Magazines and Pinterest have great examples.

Fortunately there are a surprising number of things you can do to a rental to make it feel more your own that are also budget-friendly and won't break your lease or endanger your deposit. In my case I removed the heavily painted kitchen cupboard doors for sanding, stripped and polished 31 nickel hinges and upgraded the knobs and pulls. Normally I wouldn't strip 80 year old hinges layered in paint and gunk, but since this was done during the Covid lockdown, I had the time. The solid wood doors are better quality than most new cabinetry and look amazing with a proper sanding and priming, and coat of bright white paint.

The kitchen floor was tiled with depressing blue linoleum. By painting the lower cabinets a deep blue, and waxing the floor several times to a mirror finish, it all works. There was a perfect area at the end of the counter to add a bench for extra seating at my dining table. I made it from a laminate desk top I cut to fit. The leftover scrap became a vinyl padded back fastened to the wall. Adding 2 inch stainless steel blinds in the window gives the room a more finished custom look and works with the new stainless steel refrigerator.

Other Ideas to Consider...

Change the Shower Head

One simple change that made a big difference, is the shower head. Older apartments have the shower pipe too low on the wall for an overhead rain shower head. Buying a curved shower arm from Amazon solved the problem. When I move it goes with me.

Whiten Tile Grout

A simple fix that made the tile counters look like new is Homax Tile Guard® Grout Whitener. "for showers, counter tops, floors, and walls" \$10 at Ace Hardware.

Add Under Cabinet Lighting

LED under cabinet lighting that plugs into an outlet easily transforms any kitchen to look bigger, more modern and adds functional task light where you need it.

Swap Cabinet Knobs

Modern inexpensive cabinet knobs and hardware online at a fraction of big box stores. www.discounthomefurnishings.com

Add Some Privacy and Green

Since my bathroom is not vented, the window stays open when showering. The garage door and common walkway are right outside, so I put up a window box outside with dense jade adding privacy and greenery at the same time.

Add Mirrors

Carefully placed mirrors can open up a room and give the illusion of more space. I cut down a large mirror cracked during moving, repurposing it under a cabinet in the hallway, and above the sink and stove in the kitchen.



Left and Above: Kitchen After. Below: Before



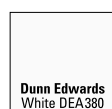
Above: Bathroom After.



Above: Bathroom Before.



Goose Neck Shower Arm \$20 on Amazon



Save skilled tasks for the Pros. It can be tempting to do all the labor yourself to save on costs, but there are some things landlords may allow but prefer left to a professional such as replacing faucets or installing a ceiling fan. If you're unsure, remember to talk to your landlord first.

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