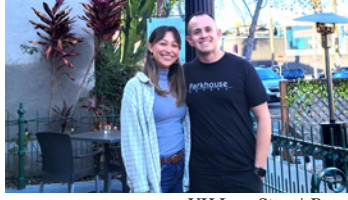




# NEWS

University Heights Community Association February 2023



UH Love Story | Page 5



Johnston's opening | Page 9



J.A. Cooley Museum | Page 10

## Feb. 2 UHCA Community Meeting: Homeless Solutions Forum

As residents of University Heights, we have all seen growing numbers of unhoused people on our streets. Katharine Cline, Angela Jackson-Llamas, and I have put together a panel comprised of local homeless resource representatives and elected officials (or their representatives) to have a conversation with our community discussing solutions to this ever-growing and complex problem. Issues regarding homelessness cover a broad spectrum; our focus will be on the approximate 35% of unhoused people who are either chronic substance abusers and/or mentally ill. We feel those are the most vulnerable and most difficult to reach individuals, and they pose the greatest danger to themselves and our community.

Most of us are already aware of these issues, so the problems will not be the topic of this conversation. We want to focus our attention on SOLUTIONS and welcome suggestions, offers of your time for volunteer opportunities, etc. The City and County recently received a significant amount of funding to help address the

homeless issue, and although some progress is being made, we cannot stand by and complain about the lack of results without standing up as a community and offering support for finding answers. This grassroots community involvement could help greatly reduce homeless-related incidents in our neighborhoods and get those who are suffering the help they so need and deserve.

Please attend the February 2, 2023, UHCA community meeting at Birney Elementary at 6:45 p.m., so that we may come together once again as a community to discuss solutions that will make a difference and make our neighborhoods safe for all. We will also simulcast on Zoom at [www.uhsd.org/MonthlyMeeting](http://www.uhsd.org/MonthlyMeeting); however, to really engage in this conversation, it will be best to attend in person. Anyone who feels the same passion for our neighborhood and compassion for those in need is asked to contact us to become more involved by emailing [info@uhsd.org](mailto:info@uhsd.org).

—Deborah Morrison

## HOW TO BUILD RESILIENCE TO DEPRESSION

As we've attempted to settle into post-pandemic life, the mental health crisis continues to rage. According to a review by Boston University School of Public Health, rates of depression in the United States have risen from 9%, pre-pandemic, to 33% in 2021.

With depression affecting one in three people, odds are you know someone or you are someone who is suffering with depression. Here are a few principles that have been shown to help build resilience to and aid recovery from depression:

**Aliveness instead of happiness.** Andrew Solomon wrote, "The opposite of depression is not happiness, but vitality...." Depression is a sense of internal deadening. Cultivating a sense of aliveness means building our ability to be present with the full spectrum of emotion. You can get started with this practice by thinking of the last time you felt fully alive and engaged in a moment. Maybe it was getting into the wintry ocean or being in deep conversation with a close friend. Now think about a time when you chose to numb a feeling, maybe with food, alcohol, TV, or staying overly busy. For many of us, the numbing behavior is our default and aliveness must be practiced.

**Pay attention.** However one chooses to do this (meditation, prayer, journaling, daily reflection, etc.), the act of noticing and processing the events of our day leads to an increased sense of well-being. Regularly seeing a talk-therapist is a guided practice in paying attention. Whether you decide to seek a professional guide or start something on your own, paying attention to the experience of your life is key.

**Be curious.** Curiosity, as a mindset and skill, might be the most useful tool in mental health recovery. If depression is deadening, curiosity provides an opening through which light can enter. There is a lot of pressure in our current culture to optimize every aspect of our day. But, instead of self-flagellating over missing a day of exercise or numbing with one of our vices, the practice of curiosity allows us to notice our shortcomings with compassion. Curiosity doesn't condemn, it asks why and how, and looks into our internal life with wonder.

—Michelle Whipple is a psychiatric physician assistant helping folks in San Diego County. You can read more of her writings on mental health, motherhood, creativity and spirituality at <https://thatiwouldbefree.com/>.

## MEASURE B PASSED – NOW WHAT?

By a very narrow margin, San Diegans chose to repeal the 1919 People's Ordinance for "no fee" trash pickup. This means that the City of San Diego can now amend the existing municipal code to change how they recover costs for solid waste management services. For single-family homes as well as multifamily complexes with up to 4-units, that most likely means monthly bills. Ending no-fee trash pickup is anticipated to generate an estimated \$80 million a year in new revenue for San Diego that could be spent on libraries, parks, firefighting and other city services. Supporters of this measure had said that it would end a system that allowed a benefit for certain residents, while those living in apartments or condos had to pay for private haulers. Opponents said homeowners already paid for trash pickup through property taxes and thus would be charged twice for the same service.

NEXT UHCA MEETING

**FEB. 2**  
**6:45 PM**  
**HOMELESSNESS SOLUTIONS PANEL**  
**BIRNEY AUDITORIUM**

WILL BE SIMULCAST ON ZOOM  
DETAILS AT [WWW.UHSD.ORG/ATTEND-A-MEETING](http://WWW.UHSD.ORG/ATTEND-A-MEETING)

LOOKING AHEAD

**MAR. 2**  
**6:45 PM**

Residents will not likely see the extra charge for a couple years. Sean Elo-Rivera says, "The amount charged will be based on what's referred to as a cost of service study. That study is a legal requirement prior to any fee going into place, and that cost service study will be based on the wants and needs of the community with respect to trash."

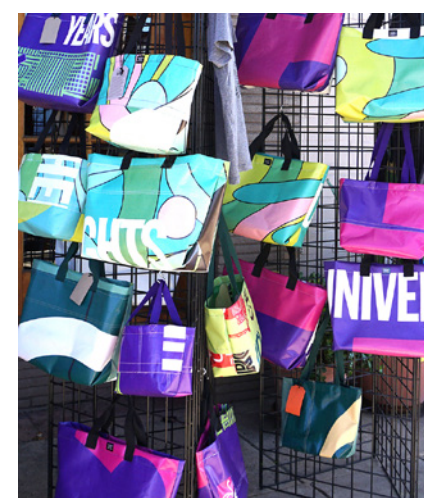
—Angela Jackson-Llamas

## Banners Get a Second Life

The large, colorful banners you see along parts of Park Boulevard, El Cajon Boulevard, Normal Street, and Washington Street are the result of the work of UHCA, which was granted a "banner district" in 2014. Our banners are rotated every two months and were designed by UH artist Paul Farris to commemorate events and promote our neighborhood. But have you ever wondered what happens to those banners when they reach the end of their useful life?



UHCA, in partnership with Mary Alice Kessler, who operates WheresMyBag, makes sure that the old vinyl banners do not end up in the waste stream or even in the recycle bin. Instead, they are UP-cycled into beautiful, unique, and usable tote bags.



Vinyl is durable and waterproof, making it perfect material for a tote. After our banners have ended their first life, Mary Alice carefully cleans, cuts, and sews them into attractive and highly functional tote bags, which UHCA sells as part of our ever-growing collection of UH merchandise.

Purchasing an up-cycled tote bag not only helps reduce waste, but also helps reduce material and energy use by giving the materials a second life. Your tote bag purchase also helps UHCA fund the banner program, shows your UH pride, and gives you something entirely unique since no two bags are alike. They're a guaranteed conversation starter!

Tote bags are available in multiple sizes. You can see them at UHCA events or by contacting our merchandise coordinator at [merchandise@uhsd.org](mailto:merchandise@uhsd.org).

Learn more about up-cycled tote bags, how they are made, and where to find other up-cycled products at [www.wheresmybag.biz](http://www.wheresmybag.biz) or [www.etsy.com/shop/wheresmybag](http://www.etsy.com/shop/wheresmybag).

—Marc Johnson

## FEBRUARY PLUME



UH News is proud to award a giant plume of gratitude to Lisa Getz and the die-hard team who help design, arrange, move, inventory, and sell our incredible UHCA merchandise. Purchases help fund UHCA, and the new owners of the branded products get to show off their UH pride. These cool items would not be possible without the merchandise team's efforts.



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME?

UHCA Memberships fund our programs like ZoneWatch, Beautification, UH News, meetings, social media, and more! Renew when you get your reminder email or go to our membership page at [www.uhsd.org/membership](http://www.uhsd.org/membership).

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

MARC JOHNSON

Welcome 2023! As my husband and I wrote in our annual "Season's Greetings" newsletter, we are looking forward to a new "more normal" year ahead. I think we all are. We have lived through a turbulent couple of years thanks to the global pandemic, and while 2022 was a year of "coming out" from under the worst of it, this year will be the first where things will begin to truly feel "normal" again.

I have been so proud of our community and UHCA in particular for the work that we did over these last few years: we implemented a "neighbors helping neighbors" program at the start of the lockdowns, moved to Zoom meetings, kept producing and delivering UH News, and the Beautification team did amazing work helping keep UH – well – beautiful. We started doing events again, including introducing new hugely popular happy hour/get-togethers. We also held Cookies with the Cops events to bring attention to issues that are important to our neighborhood, and we used our collective voice to work with and challenge our City Councilmember to help us when we needed it.

University Heights is at a precipice. In the coming years, we will have thousands of new residents coming from Winslow University Heights development (398 units), CedarSt (190 units), and the redevelopment of the Education Center (potentially 500 units), plus more projects, infill developments and ADUs. Our current infrastructure, especially parks, transportation, and library, is already inadequate for our current residents, and adding nearly 30% more people will bring challenges we haven't yet even begun to think about. I have personally – and UHCA has through our collective voice – been pushing the City for much needed infrastructure investment, both for our immediate needs and ahead of the surge coming. That work needs to continue if we are to maintain the quality of life that lured many of us to this amazing neighborhood.

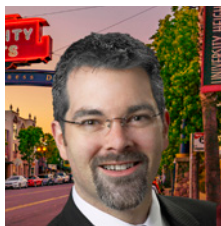
We all need to stay aware of these changes, participate in our community organizations, and make sure our voices are heard.

My "day job" involves worldwide responsibility, and with this year being "more normal," so will be my job, which means I'll be spending more time on airplanes and on other continents than I have over the last 2 years. Presiding over UHCA has been an honor, and I thank you for giving me your trust in shepherding this organization through some trying times. But this is a full-time job in and of itself, and due to my work schedule, I will be leaving as President after the February community meeting.

I have been a member since 2013, and have become more involved since 2019, writing for the paper and later serving as a board member, UH News publisher, Vice President, and President. I'm proud of the work this organization has done, and proud of everyone who has given their time and energy, from occasional volunteers to our persevering board members. I will remain very involved in the community with the Park & Recreation Advisory Group and in other ways that I can help advocate for UH. I hope to see folks out and about on dog walks, at events, and together when we need to raise our collective voice to "improve the quality of life and sense of community in San Diego's University Heights."

This month's meeting is about homelessness solutions: an important topic not only in the greater San Diego area, but in our community as well. Our talented Secretary has put together a great panel to talk not only about the problem, but also about solutions from our city, from organizations, and from us, individually. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting, in person at Birney on Thursday, February 2, or via the simulcast on Zoom.

*Marc*

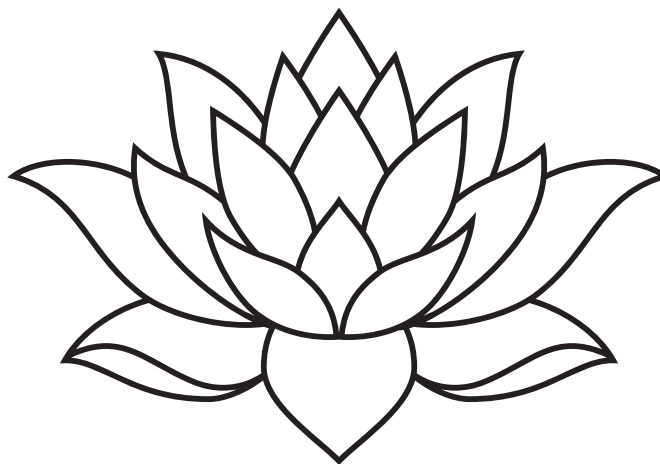


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## MEMBERSHIP

### NEW MEMBERS & RENEWALS

**BUSINESS/CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP**  
Madison Avenue Consulting (Cheers), Original Skin

**GIFT**  
Elaine & Charles Davis, Andrew Guzzon & Cathy Strittmatter, John & Jean Earl

Thank You!

**GOLDEN OSTRICH**  
Theresa Friederich & Wayne Takasugi, Jim Dax & Jay Hill, Peter & Patti Roehrs, Joshua Eckels, David & Susan Holts, Patricia Ryan & Lloyd Alexander, Renee Gregorio & Jill Kruse, Andrew Guzzon & Cathy Strittmatter, Sharon Haven, Jennifer Colosimo, Monica Lanctot & Adam Graham, John & Jean Earl

### HOUSEHOLD

Rene Smith, Jennifer Vanden Eynden, Elaine & Charles Davis, Andrew & Mary Lange, Jennifer Bishop, Jessica Cole, Karen Rosen & John Chan, Kristin Harms, Benjamin & Mona Burke, Sol Schumer, Taylor Gray, Rene Cortes & Sereana Zaiser, Jeanette Showalter, Mike & Carol Shear, April Bjornsen & Bill Murphy, Brian Geraghty, Sarah Rueger, Mike friend of Lisa, Tori & Kesler Randall, Pamela Isaacs



### OUR MISSION

The University Heights Community Association (UHCA), founded in 1984, 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.



Clip & Return to: UHCA PO BOX 33032 San Diego, CA 92163



### Yearly Membership

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Referred by \_\_\_\_\_

- NEW     RENEWAL

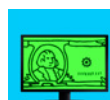
### Donor

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

### Volunteer Your Time on a UHCA Committee!

- Beautification & Planning** Keep UH beautiful.
- Blockwalker** Help deliver *UHCA News* to neighborhood residences and businesses.
- Marketing & Merchandising** Promote UHCA via marketing/advertising, visual arts, photography, and product merchandising.
- Membership** Help meet record goals for membership and meeting attendance.
- Neighborhood/Zone Watch** Join your neighbors to keep UH safe.
- UHCA News** Write articles, take photos, or sell ads; these are just a few of the many ways to contribute your talent, creativity, and energy to the *UHCA News*.
- Program & Events** Plan and oversee the various events and general meetings.

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



**JOIN, RENEW, DONATE, OR VOLUNTEER ONLINE AT [UHSd.org](http://UHSd.org).**

## UHCA NEWS

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**GRAPHIC LAYOUT** Patty Howland

**PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS** Paul Farris, Marc Johnson, Patty Howland, Jane Gilbert

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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. The deadline for submission is the first of the month. Please see [www.uhsd.org/submissions](http://www.uhsd.org/submissions) for details.



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**INSTAGRAM** [@universityheights\\_sdcommunity](https://www.instagram.com/universityheights_sdcommunity)

# UHCA MEETING NOTES IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

## December 1 UHCA Community Meeting Summary

The December 1 UHCA Community Meeting was held at 6:45 p.m. in person at Birney Auditorium and via Zoom with approx. 50 attendees. The full meeting is available for replay at [www.uhsd.org/attend-a-meeting](http://www.uhsd.org/attend-a-meeting).

### Crime Watch

Pam Isaacs reported car break ins and thefts in Zone 2. No reports for the other zones were available and no SDPD officer was present.

### Announcements

Marc Johnson opened the General Meeting, very excited to be back in person. He gave a big thank you to all volunteers and Board Members who help make UH a better place. Marc noted that UHCA events have been amazing recently and the mixer at Serpentine Cider had an excellent turnout. He reminded everyone that we are always in need of volunteers for events, news, beautification, and more.

### Beautification

Marc reported a record-breaking attendance at the bridge clean up thanks to Jennifer Bishop and the Beautification team. Lights and decorations were scheduled to go up Sunday, December 4.

### Events

Katie Balderas reported that Birney Giving Tree gift cards would be collected and distributed to needy families. Stu McGraw reported another UH Community Yard Sale planned for December 3. The Winter gardening talk Dec. 4 at Eden was sold out. There is a fruit tree care and private nursery tour on Saturday, January 21 at City Farmers Nursery, a Spring Garden Swap at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, February 25 at Trolley Barn Park, Lights in the Heights judging was schedule for Dec. 18 at 4:00 p.m. with the winners to be chosen by popular vote. A Lights in the Heights bike tour was scheduled to meet at TBP on Sunday, December 18 at 7:00 p.m. Riders were recommended to come in festive attire with their bicycles decorated. Caroling in the Heights was scheduled for December 17 beginning at the Vermont St. Bridge at 5p.m., then on to Mystic Mocha at 5:45 p.m. and The Point (Rhode Island St. at Golden Gate Dr.) at 6:30 p.m.

### Library Forum – Future of UH Library – Community Conversation

The master plan process has taken place over 3 years. Phase One was assessment, and now Phase Two is due diligence and community feedback. The Library is trying to determine their next 30-year vision, planning for the future in a strategic and intentional manner. The master plan process and survey included 8000 participants with a great deal of feedback on the framework. The primary attributes people are looking for in a library include that it should be equitable, experimental, effective, and everywhere.

The UH library is working hard to meet the needs of the community but is having a tough time. The space is inequitable based on our population size, and it's not a suitable space. The library asked questions of the audience during the meeting, such as What do you love about this library? (“Staff” was a resounding answer!), and What would you

improve? (“Add community room,” “more children’s programming”). Library staff was asked if they would support a tear-down of the existing building in the same spot, and the response was that all options are being explored including partnering with other agencies, developers, and more. A reuse of SDUSD Annex 1 was also suggested, and that has been considered. It was noted that there are structural and other issues that may prohibit the development of an appropriate library for this community. Also, there are plans in the works for a potential affordable housing development for district employees on the site (measure D). There are also various funding ideas being considered such as “DIF fee” allocations and possible bond measures. The library was asked why they can't just renovate the current building, and reasons included that an ADA overhaul would be extremely costly and the building has a lot of deferred maintenance. Reusing the existing building is not ideal. Attendees recommended sustainability measures such as LEED platinum, solar, and green build and that the library should incorporate plenty of community space for people to come together for programs, classes, music, culture, etc. Overall, the discussion was very productive, and the library was thankful.

### Updates from Elected Officials

No elected officials were present to provide community updates.

— Angela Jackson-Llamas

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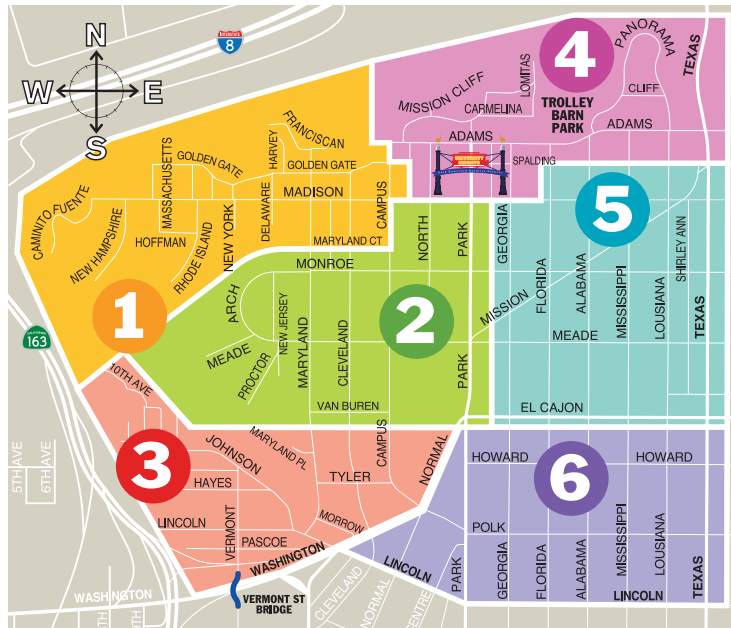
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## UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BOUNDARIES AND ZONE WATCH



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](http://uhsd.org) or contact your zone's coordinator or Nan McGraw.

- 1** Nan McGraw [nmcsan@aol.com](mailto:nmcsan@aol.com)
- 2** Pam Isaacs [pamisaacs1@gmail.com](mailto:pamisaacs1@gmail.com)
- 3** Mary Lange [mlangeuhcazone3coordinator@gmail.com](mailto:mlangeuhcazone3coordinator@gmail.com)
- 4** Heather Wilcox [zone4watchuhca@gmail.com](mailto:zone4watchuhca@gmail.com)
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- 6** Nan McGraw [nmcsan@aol.com](mailto:nmcsan@aol.com)



### CRIME WATCH SIGNS

UHCA installed 60 new signs in 2016. If you know of an old sign that needs replacing or a location needing a sign, email [signs@uhsd.org](mailto:signs@uhsd.org).



### SLOW DOWN SIGNS

Speeding on neighborhood streets in UH continues to be a problem. Shaving time off trips by speeding has small benefits and high risks. **PLEASE SLOW DOWN!** Please email [signs@uhsd.org](mailto:signs@uhsd.org).



**File a Police Report Online with SDPD**

## UH PHONE BOOK

<b>Emergency • Police • Fire • Medical</b>	9 1 1	<b>PATH (People Assisting The Homeless)</b> <a href="mailto:path@epath.org">path@epath.org</a>	619-810-8600
<b>Non-Emergency</b> Suspicious Activity, Homeless Outreach Team, etc.	619-531-2000	<b>Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP)</b>	619-692-4945
<b>SD City Services: Emergency &amp; Non-Emergency</b> Street lights, potholes, etc. Online: <a href="http://www.sandiego.gov/city-hall/departments">www.sandiego.gov/city-hall/departments</a>	619-527-7500	Vacation home security check, welfare of home-bound, patrolling business districts, homeland security support	
<b>Alert San Diego</b> Reverse 911 notification to mobile phones for emergencies requiring evacuations	<a href="http://www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego/">www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego/</a>	<b>National Suicide &amp; Crisis Lifeline</b>	9 8 8
<b>2-1-1 San Diego</b> Free Resources: CalFresh, Medi-Cal, Covered California, etc.	2 1 1 or 858-300-1211	<b>SDPD Community Relations Officers:</b> David Surwilo <a href="mailto:dsurwilo@pd.sandiego.gov">dsurwilo@pd.sandiego.gov</a>	619-692-4858
<b>Abandoned Vehicles</b>	858-495-7856	<b>SDPD Western Division</b> 5215 Gaines Street	619-692-4800
<b>Alice Birney Elementary Office</b>	619-497-3500	<b>Shopping Cart Pick-Up Service</b>	800-252-4613
<b>Animals / Non-Emergency</b>	619-767-2675	<b>Stonewall Citizens Patrol</b>	<a href="mailto:info@stonewallcitizens.org">info@stonewallcitizens.org</a>
<b>Brush and Weed Abatement</b>	619-533-4444	<b>UHCDC</b> University Heights Community Development Corporation	619-297-3166
<b>Code Violations</b>	619-236-5500	<b>University Heights Public Library</b> 4193 Park Blvd	619-692-4912
<b>COVID-19</b> City of San Diego Daily Updates	<a href="http://www.sandiego.gov/coronavirus">www.sandiego.gov/coronavirus</a>	<b>UH Zone Watch Coordinator</b> Nan McGraw <a href="mailto:nmcsan@aol.com">nmcsan@aol.com</a>	619-260-0668
<b>Crime Stoppers Tip Line</b>	888-580-TIPS (8477)	<b>Graffiti:</b> In Progress Emergency: Report Online: <a href="https://getitdone.force.com">https://getitdone.force.com</a>	9 1 1
<b>Department of Environmental Health</b> Public Health / Rats / Rodents	858-694-2888	Graffiti Hotline:	619-527-7500
<b>Downed Power Lines / SDG&amp;E</b>	800-411-7343	<b>SD Vector Control</b> mosquitoes / ticks / rats Online: <a href="mailto:vector@sdcounty.ca.gov">vector@sdcounty.ca.gov</a>	858-694-2888
<b>Emergency Water / Sewer Repair / Sink Holes</b>	619-515-3525	<b>If all else fails, email Malik Thornton</b> <a href="mailto:ThorntonM@sandiego.gov">ThorntonM@sandiego.gov</a> at Council member Stephen Whitburn's office.	
<b>Narcotics</b> Suspicious drug house / anonymous	619-531-2468		

Download this app for reporting non-emergency issues, like potholes, graffiti, code violations, over-watering, sidewalk problems, etc. to the City of San Diego <https://getitdone.force.com>

**DISASTER CONTACTS**  
In case of a major disaster, have two out-of-area contacts handy. When the power is out, landline phones may not work. Make sure your cell phone is charged. Call 211 for updated information.

# Nature in the Neighborhood

## Little Bird King



Ruby-crowned Kinglet

In past articles we have profiled several individual bird species that regularly grace our suburban neighborhoods and surrounding canyons at various times of year. The latest in this series is the diminutive Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*), which is one of the hallmark wintering bird species of the benign coastal lowlands of California.

The Ruby-crowned Kinglet arrives in San Diego around the end of October and is usually migrating back to northern breeding grounds before the end of March. One of four species in the same genus that occur throughout the higher latitudes of the northern hemisphere (known as Firecrests in Europe), the Ruby-crown weighs in at about 6 grams and is among the tiniest songbirds to occur in our area. Its small size emphasizes one of the ironies of nature when one considers the fact that it breeds in high elevation forests, which are prone to cold and wet conditions even in summer, certainly posing a metabolic challenge to such a tiny creature.

Some individuals seem reluctant to depart their beloved forests late in the year; I have often marveled at watching these birds forage in snow-encrusted trees under freezing conditions during early winter in the Cuyamaca mountains. This feat is all the more amazing since the Kinglet's preferred food consists of tiny insects, which must certainly be at lowest availability during this season.

Readers may wonder why such a tiny bird deserves such a regal appellation. In keeping with its embodiment of contrasts, the males of this otherwise drab, olive and gray species can display a brilliant red crown streak that is most often concealed by drab feathers. While the crown is rarely shown during the winter months, this blazing mark can be revealed by movement of tiny muscles below the skin when the birds are courting mates or competing with potential rivals. It seems fitting that the combination of showy crowns and robust physiology qualifies the Ruby-crowned Kinglet as avian royalty.

The Ruby-crown occurs in a broad range of vegetation types in winter, including suburban yards, but may be overlooked due to its small size and typically drab appearance that can blend with the green of leaves. The bird is, however, quite active, so often reveals itself by rapid, tumbling movements through vegetation in pursuit of prey, which it captures with its pointed spike of a bill. Another clue to its presence is a rapid, dry, high-pitched ticking sound that has been likened to the sound of a tiny typewriter. Discovery of this bird is one of the rewards given to the more diligent of bird-watchers.

—John Lovio

### SUSTAINABLE UH

## Green Bins Will Make a Real Difference

We've all seen the news that green bins are coming soon, scheduled to arrive at the curbs in front of UH single family homes in March or April. Neighboring communities whose regular trash day is Wednesday have already started receiving their bins, providing an opportunity to preview what an extra container or two per household looks like on trash day. Clean air enthusiasts are very excited that our city is complying with California state law and providing these bins. Diverting green waste from landfills and turning it into usable compost is one of the best ways to make a real dent in greenhouse gas emissions, and we all have a part to play.



The city is asking us to put our new bins out each week for pick-up (unless they're empty) rather than waiting until they're filled with yard trimmings, kitchen waste, untreated wood scraps, and food-soiled paper products. That requirement makes a lot of sense, obviously, since this waste will have a tendency to attract unwelcome critters, not to mention aromas rotting food waste might emit.

Keeping our bins clean will be made easier if we follow city recommendations to layer green waste materials thoughtfully, with a layer of yard trimmings on the bottom of the bin before we toss in kitchen scraps. We'll be allowed to use paper bags for kitchen waste as needed (although it will be great, when possible, to dump our egg shells, banana peels, coffee grounds, etc. directly into the bins on top of leaves and grass trimmings). Sprinkling baking soda over the top of our green waste, and

keeping our bins well hosed out, as needed, will also help keep them clean and fresh.

These new chores will likely annoy a few people and seem like too much work for a few others, and Recycling Specialist Derek Lam says San Diego doesn't expect full compliance city-wide, at least not right away. But given the average education level in UH, not to mention our community spirit, it's more than likely that we'll all figure out a way to add green bin compliance to our daily and weekly routines.

And that's a great thing because 39% of the refuse San Diegans currently send to our landfills is organic waste that proceeds to rot among other trash, producing enormous quantities of methane, a key greenhouse gas responsible for the negative effects of climate change. Diverting this waste to composting facilities allows the city to treat the organic materials in a way that avoids producing methane and, after 60 days, turns our yard and kitchen scraps into compost available to nourish and grow the plants that we all depend on to sustain life.

Folks who live west of Park Boulevard and have already enjoyed having yard waste collected by the city will now be required to use the new green bins – no more personally provided containers allowed. City code inspectors may come through our neighborhood at some point checking to make sure that no materials that should never go to green recycling have ended up in our bins. Refuse like “compostable plastic” utensils, Styrofoam or plastic-film-lined food take-out containers, pet waste, and cooking oils, for instance, will wreck the composting process if they're included in organic waste piles. All of these rules, and others, will be explained in the official guidebooks we'll receive inside our “free” kitchen waste pails. Additional info is also available at [www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/sb1383](http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/recycling/sb1383).

By the way, since we obviously can't use plastic bags for our green waste, keeping the green bin lids closed tight will be extra important. Mr. Lam, with the city, says the bin-lifting/dumping mechanism on the new green waste trucks has an extra stabilizing arm, making collection a less violent process and therefore less likely to crack the plastic of our new bins. Perhaps one day our black and blue bins will receive the same gentler treatment. An environmentalist can dream!

It's not often that we're provided with such an easy way to make such a big difference. Let's make the most of it.

—Judith Annicchiarico

### BETWEEN THE COVERS

## February Activities at the Library

February is the month of LOVE™ and Library Lovers' Month, with Valentine's Day just around the corner. Here at the University Heights Library we will be celebrating this important holiday in a number of exciting ways.

On February 11 we have Beginner's SketchUp: Designing 3-D Graphics. Teens from grades 9-12 will have a chance to learn how to design 3-D models using SketchUp Make 3D Modeling. Nothing says “I love you” like three dimensions. Registration for this activity started January 4, 2023 and will go to February 4, 2023 at 11:59 p.m.

Then, on February 13, we have Literature Comes to Life - Valentine's Story: The Princess and the Bowling Ball. Children will be able to wear costumes and perform as characters in the story in this fun Valentine's Day-themed program.



On February 14 Miss Helene's February LOVE Storytime and Craft will be an opportunity to partake in a love-themed storytime, followed by a Valentine's Day activity on this very special day.

On Saturday, February 18, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and Sunday, February



19, from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., please join the Friends of the San Diego Public Library (FSDPL) for their monthly book sale.

On February 25, Dance To EvOLvE Presents "Love Bugs!", a Valentine's Day-themed dance program for Valentines of all ages. Come and show us your moves.

All City libraries will be CLOSED on Monday, February 20 for President's Day. To learn more about supporting your local library, visit [www.friendsofuhlibrary.org](http://www.friendsofuhlibrary.org).

—Martin Kessler, Library Assistant II  
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# A UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS LOVE STORY

At the Parkhouse Eatery, they cook up more than good food. Maya Flemmons and Javier Villarreal met while working at the Parkhouse and fell in love. Javier is the son of the Parkhouse head chef, Gilberto, and basically grew up at the restaurant. He started flipping pancakes in the kitchen with his dad when he was 13 years old. In 2010, he was bussing tables, and by 2012, he was a waiter. He was promoted to supervisor in 2018. In June of 2019, Maya was hired as hostess.



Maya Flemmons and Javier Villarreal

In August of 2019, Maya bought a bed at IKEA, and she needed help putting it together. She asked Javier, a self-professed tinkerer and lover of Legos. He was happy to do it. They quickly discovered they enjoyed each other's company and started hanging out outside of work. Javier liked making Maya laugh, and Maya liked Javier's thoughtfulness. They discovered many things they had in common, including a strong work ethic, a similar sense of humor, and the same birthday, May 23.

By October of 2019, Javier asked Maya if she would be his girlfriend. Maya said yes. Maya was living in National City with her father in the house she grew up in, while Javier lived in Normal Heights. In a brave and bold move, in December of 2020, Javier moved in with Maya and her dad. During the pandemic when the restaurant struggled, Maya started working at Urgent Care in Hillcrest, but she and Javier continued to carpool to work together. As they navigated their relationship through the pandemic, they realized that if they could make it through that, they could make it through anything together. They even became successful "dog parents" during the pandemic when they adopted Eva, a Rottweiler puppy.

On October 20, 2022, the 3-year anniversary of when they became an exclusive couple, Javier proposed to Maya. Javier and Maya had discussed getting married a few months earlier and looked at rings. About 2 months prior to the proposal, Javier had a ring made and planned a vacation for them in Mexico. The first stop was Puerto Vallarta and then on to Mexico City where Javier's uncle and some cousins lived. Javier had hoped to do the actual proposal at the top of the Pyramid of the Sun, but it was still closed due to Covid. As he and Maya walked around admiring the pyramids and other ruins, Javier looked for a place to propose. Finally, after finding the perfect spot with the Pyramid of the Sun in the background, Javier batted back his nerves and asked Maya to marry him. His uncle and cousin photographed and videotaped the proposal.

Maya and Javier consider the Parkhouse to be their second home and the people who work there, their second family. Despite currently working at a doctor's office in Clairemont, Maya will still pitch in and work nights or weekends at the Parkhouse whenever needed. And if she is not working, she will hang out at the Parkhouse and eat, drink, and chat with everyone. Javier is a jack-of-all-trades at the Parkhouse and is able and willing to do anything, from waiting/bussing tables, to managing employees, ordering supplies, or, of course, cooking in the kitchen.

Maya and Javier believe that a good sense of humor and a willingness to compromise have been the keys to their success as a couple. They are planning on getting married in October of 2024, the 5-year anniversary of their relationship's beginning. They envision their wedding to be an outdoor event, and they hope to have everyone from the Parkhouse there to celebrate with them.

—Jane Gilbert

## WHAT ARE YOU READING?

**Little Weirds**  
by Jenny Slate



I don't read poetry very often. I have nothing against it! I wholeheartedly acknowledge that there are many poets who've redirected the modern flow of language itself with their outrageously popular and thoughtful prose. But, too often reading poetry feels like I've broken into someone's house and am rifling through their diary. I'm embarrassed to just be reading something so personal. And all this fuss despite the fact that not only did they write and publish it, but I bought it and brought it home. At any rate, I decided to give Jenny Slate's Little Weirds an honest try.

Slate's 2019 collection of essays and poems marks her debut as a published author, though she has been active as an actress and comedian since the early 2000s. If you were around eleven years old and chronically online (like myself) in 2010, you might be familiar with her as the voice and co-writer of Marcel the Shell with Shoes on, a series of stop-motion short films posted to YouTube. Others may be familiar with Slate from her time as a cast member on Saturday Night Live, or other various stints on television, but I'm most attached to the little shell she plays and the various ways he deals with being about the size of a gumball.

Around eighty percent of Slate's poetry is an intimate discussion of how to overcome loneliness after a devastating heartbreak; how to consider yourself and your own private experiences and indulgences as valid companions that can nurture your spirit; how to be comfortable with the notion that you will be alone with yourself and your thoughts far longer than you will be united with someone else.

The other twenty percent is jokes about body hair and wrinkles and dog paws that slap you right as you're waking up, among other little absurdities that make up life.

I can respect the dichotomy.

—J. Llamas

## UH BEAUTIFICATION

# The B-Team Reached New Heights in 2022!

The University Heights Beautification Team resumed its activities full force over the course of 2022, making up for precious time lost during the pandemic. I led the B-Team in planning, coordinating, and executing a number of major projects, including the following:

- **Park Boulevard Graffiti Cleanup:** In March, 13 volunteers worked in the hot sun to remove graffiti, hundreds of stickers, and trash all along Park Boulevard, from Meade to Adams Avenue.
- **Birney Elementary Tree Care Project:** In May, 11 volunteers weeded, fertilized, mulched, and watered all the trees along both the North and West side of Birney Elementary. Frank Santana and Guido Hamacher led the effort this year to make sure the trees were watered regularly. As a result, the trees are thriving again and were in full bloom this spring and summer.
- **Vermont Street Bridge Cleanup:** In August and again in November, a record 38 volunteers across both cleanups gave their energy and efforts to sweeping and power washing the bridge, removing graffiti and trash, and washing the entire railing. Special thanks to Barbara Noyer for giving the team access to her water supply for the power washer.
- **Fall Community Cleanup:** In October, starting at Trolley Barn Park, 15 volunteers spread out through the University Heights community to pick up trash and remove graffiti.
- **Vermont Street Bridge Holiday Decorating:** In December, 13 volunteers strung lights and hung decorations along the bridge, lighting it up and making it festive for the holidays. The decorations are created by Paul Farris who also supervised hanging them. We returned in January to remove them.

In addition to these projects, a team of volunteers maintains the entrance to the 163 freeway. Every Tuesday you can find them in their bright yellow University Heights volunteer shirts. Another team of volunteers, the Trash Angels, empties the trash every week at the entrance to the Vermont Street Bridge.

Over the course of this past year, it is estimated that our community benefited from more than 400 hours of volunteer time given to keeping our community beautiful. The total value to our community is more than \$12,000!

If you have a goal of giving back to your community in 2023, the B-Team would welcome your participation. We currently have openings on our committee that plans and coordinates events. We meet the first Wednesday of each month from 6-7 p.m. You can also sign up to be added to our volunteer list and receive notifications of future clean ups and other projects. Please contact me at [beautification@uhsd.org](mailto:beautification@uhsd.org) for more information and to be added to our volunteer list.

—Jennifer Bishop, B-Team Leader



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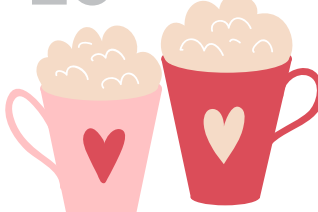

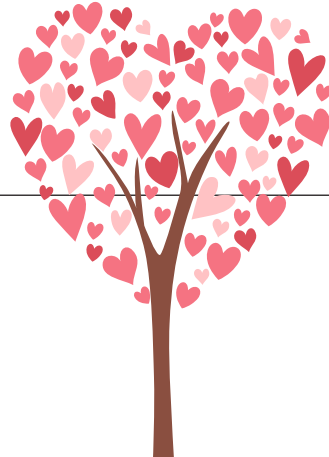


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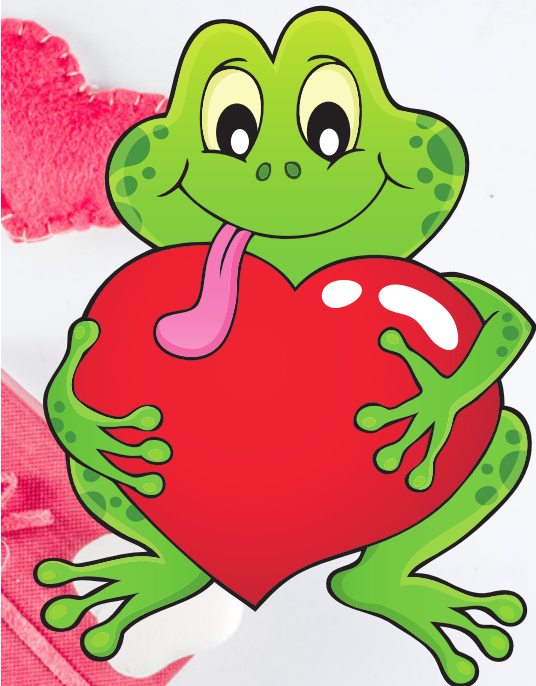


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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
<b>February 2023</b> 		<b>BLACK HISTORY MONTH</b>		<b>1</b> UHDC 6 pm <a href="http://uhcdc.org">uhcdc.org</a> UHCA Beautification Meeting 6 pm	<b>2</b> UH Park & Rec Meeting 5:30 pm UHCA Meeting 6:45 pm <a href="http://www.uhsd.org/attend-a-meeting">www.uhsd.org/attend-a-meeting</a>	<b>3</b> 	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm	<b>6</b> UH Parking Meeting @ UH Library 5-7 pm	<b>7</b> Uptown Planners Meeting 6 pm <a href="http://uptownplannersd.org">uptownplannersd.org</a>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	
<b>12</b> Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm	<b>13</b> 	<b>14</b> Valentine's Day SDUSD Board Meeting 5 pm <a href="http://sandiegounified.org">sandiegounified.org</a> Hillcrest Town Council Meeting 6:30 pm	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	
<b>19</b> Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm	<b>20</b>  PRESIDENT'S DAY	<b>21</b> North Park Planning Committee 6:30 pm	<b>22</b> 	<b>23</b> Curbside Recycling & Yard Waste Collection	<b>24</b> 	<b>25</b> UH Garden Club Spring Seed Swap Trolley Barn Park 9 am	
<b>26</b> Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm	<b>27</b> 	<b>28</b> SDUSD Board Meeting 5 pm <a href="http://sandiegounified.org">sandiegounified.org</a>					




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# BIRNEY BUZZ

## Birney Bees Spread their Wings this Winter

Birney students engaged in exciting real-world learning over the last couple of months.

Field trips before winter break included 2nd grade classes visiting the San Diego Natural History Museum to reinforce their IB unit about how the Earth's processes change the shape of our land. Second grader Jude G. said his favorite part was "the Dinosaur of Antarctica Movie because it showed how Antarctica used to look."



Fourth grade classes visited San Diego City Hall in connection with their study of federal, state, and local levels of government. Students visited Councilmember Stephen Whitburn's office and listened to a presentation by the City Clerk. Councilmember Whitburn later Tweeted, "These students had so many smart and meaningful questions. I am sure we will be voting for a few of these students one day." Fourth grader Madeline S. said, "I learned there are a lot of people working to operate the City of San Diego. They have to juggle a lot of responsibilities. They also try to listen to everyone's ideas to improve our community."

Birney's Student Council elections also took place before the winter break. Ms. Amanda, Birney Principal said that Student Council is "about giving students voice, agency and an opportunity to participate." Fourth and fifth grade



2nd grade students learn about the Earth's processes at The SD Natural History Museum. Photos courtesy of Lori Rapczynski.

students can run for President, Vice-President, Secretary, Playground Commissioner, Fire Marshal, and Safety Marshal, as well as General Student Council positions which include planning and leading school spirit days and other school-wide activities and advising the Wellness Council.

The elected students this year were as follows: President Chloe H., Vice President Vera V., Secretary Ryan S., Playground Commissioner Dillon W., Fire Marshall Devon S., and Safety Marshall Quinn S. Third, fourth, and fifth grade classes also choose class representatives who attend Student Council and report back to their classes.

Students, families, and community members alike are looking forward to Birney's 2nd Annual Hive Hunt on January 28, which is hosted by Friends of Alice Birney Elementary (FOABE). According to Vaychan Hallman, the event organizer, "Last year's inaugural event was such a hit that we are bringing it back to the community. During the scavenger hunt, teams compete against each other, racing around University Heights to complete a series of challenges using the Eventzee App on their phones. The winning team in each grade category (non-Birney teams will be in their own category) wins prize money, with a presentation check at the awards ceremony. We are expecting over 400 participants this year!"

Sadie M. and Moira M., who were a part of the winning team last year along with their mom Erin and dad Dave, said, "The Hive Hunt was one of our favorite memories from last year! We loved being a part of the community and it was super fun seeing everyone in costumes!"

As always, if you'd like to get involved or donate to Birney, please contact FOABE and the PTA at [info@friendsofalicebirney.org](mailto:info@friendsofalicebirney.org) and [info@birneypta.com](mailto:info@birneypta.com).

— Sarah Layne, Proud Birney Parent and UH Community Member

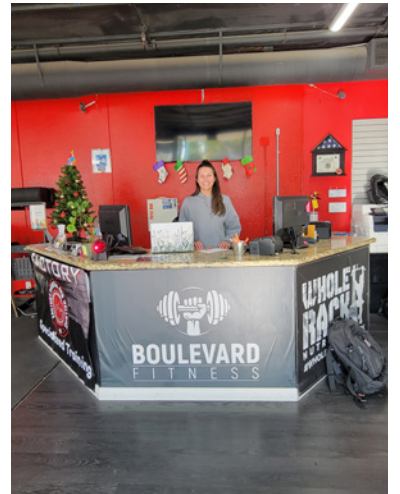
## IT'S YOUR BUSINESS

### Boulevard Fitness

Located at 2110 El Cajon Blvd (between Mississippi and Alabama Streets), Boulevard Fitness has over 10,000 square feet of cardio equipment, free weights, and workout machines.

In 2014, Shawn Gilbert took over as General Manager of Boulevard Fitness and helped grow its membership. Shawn had noticed that the gym was used mostly by men, and there were not a lot of users in the middle of the day. Through community outreach and social media marketing, Shawn estimates that currently the breakdown is now 60% men and 40% women, with many members coming from the police, firefighter, and military communities.

Originally from Boston, Shawn and his wife moved to San Diego in 2010. Formerly a competitive body builder, Shawn earned a degree in kinesiology and has worked at and managed gyms most of his life. In 2020, Shawn used his and his wife's savings, a bank loan, and investment funds from his workout buddy, Mark Kountz, to purchase Boulevard Fitness.



Front desk with Sierra Sherbet, Assistant Manager

The team upgraded the gym, adding more workout machines and making the second floor a quieter workout area, while also creating a separate space for people to practice boxing and MMA fighting. Particularly unique to Boulevard Fitness is the outdoor space with floor-to-ceiling pull-down metal "walls" that can be completely opened to reveal a large space with ropes, tires, and other types of creative work-out equipment. The outdoor area has a roof covering it, protecting people from the elements without sacrificing the feeling of working out in the fresh air.



Cardio machine area

As a member of the University Heights/North Park communities, Shawn is a firm believer in giving back to the community at large. Some of the organizations that Boulevard Fitness helped in 2022 and plan to help again in 2023 include Joanne's Furry Friends Cat Rescue. The gym hosted an event where patrons could adopt a cat on-site with all the fees paid by Boulevard Fitness. Boulevard Fitness has also hosted a fundraising event for Frosted Paws to raise money for senior pets, sponsored a Miracle League Baseball Team (a non-profit that assists children with special needs to compete in baseball leagues in the spring and fall), sponsored a team for Valkyrie Fighting (an all-female MMA organization), collected donations and provided food to benefit "Roll to Success" (a non-profit dedicated to empowering the disabled community through adaptive athletics), and supported the Wounded Warrior Project.

The gym is open 7 days a week and closes only on major holidays. There are three membership options: (1) \$22 every month via EFT (electronic funds transfer) after a one-time cost of \$75; (2) \$300 for 12 months; or (3) a \$15 drop-in fee. Personal training sessions are extra, as are massage treatments. So, if you are looking for a place that can help you get healthier, while at the same time supporting a local business that strives to be a good member of the community, then Boulevard Fitness may be the perfect fit for you.

— Information provided by Boulevard Fitness

## March Workshop

### Starting from Scratch - Developing Healthy Soil + Seed Starting

Join us for a growing your own food series presented by Lauren Doucette, founder of The University Heights Garden Club.

Saturday, March 4th  
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# SPRING SWAP

Saturday, February 25th | 9:00 - 11:00 AM

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IN DEVELOPMENT

# Johnston's Opening on Park



Front of Johnston's

Construction on the soon-to-open (and long-awaited) Johnston's at 4628 Park Blvd., at the location of the former Small Bar, has been moving quickly towards completion as this edition goes to press.

John Pani, founder of the hospitality investment and management firm ELE Collective, which also owns nearby Park & Rec, discovered the "Johnston's Variety Dept. Store" sign on the building during construction, and he immediately embraced the idea of connecting the new venue to the history of the building.

"University Heights is one of San Diego's oldest communities. It would have been unconscionable to just let that history disappear. This store has an important story to tell, and now, it'll continue to live on in the heart of uptown for all to enjoy," said Pani, a father of three who resides in Kensington.

"The sign gives people a glimpse of what the century-old family-run establishment looked like in the 1920s. It's our ode to the Johnstons' contributions to the University Heights community, and as a small business ourselves, we hope to continue the tradition and make a lasting impact."

The interior 1,500-square-foot dining room and bar will feature a design inspired by the former Mission Cliff Gardens. A 2,000-square-foot patio garden in the rear is slated to open closer to the summer.

The new restaurant's menu will include warm and welcoming dishes like a buttermilk fried chicken sandwich, confit garlic hummus, and housemade za'atar naan. Shaped in part by global influences, the menu will also feature a selection of yakitori cooked over a binchotan Japanese charcoal grill. A spectacle of skewers rotating in rapid succession will include salt & pepper chicken thighs, black garlic ribeye, maitake mushroom with fennel pollen, and more.

Johnston's will offer dinner service daily and weekend brunch. The cocktail clout of its sister establishment, Park & Rec, will be employed in an extensive cocktail menu alongside happy hour specials and boozy brunch bevies, including a Small Bar Bloody Mary in a nod to the property's previous inhabitant, an iconic San Diego watering hole.

—Marc Johnson

# Another Dining Option Coming Soon!

The space formerly occupied by Florabella, behind Summer's Liquors at Park at Madison, is being transformed into a new eatery featuring Neapolitan style, wood-fired pizza as well as other Italian-inspired appetizers and entrees, plus a bar.

The concept is being developed by the team from the hugely successful (and nearby) Madison on Park, who are partnering with catering and event specialist Cucina Migrante.

Construction on the 3,500 indoor-outdoor space has already started, and opening could be as early as this summer.

—Marc Johnson

# Pet of the Month Steffi

Steffi was found as a stray in LA in July 2019. She had been hit by a car and had a fracture in one of her front legs and wounds to the other. She was taken to the South Central LA Shelter on whose website a volunteer from San Diego-based Greyhound Adoption Center (GAC) spotted her, and a team from GAC was able to bring her here for medical care. Steffi had surgery and wore brightly colored casts on both legs for many months as her injuries healed. She then had to go through many months of rehab to be able to walk normally. She was quite popular at the rescue as she was very vocal (some might say loud) and friendly.



Steffi

strengthened her injured leg even more, and she loved her new life in UH with her big sister greyhound Zoe.

In January last year, though, Steffi fractured her left front leg while running around the park with one of her dog friends. It turned out that the fracture was due to osteosarcoma, a common canine bone cancer. She underwent surgery to remove her leg and then had chemotherapy. She is still undergoing treatment to keep her cancer from spreading and is very popular at the vet's office.

Her friends and neighbors love Steffi's strong spirit and always enjoy seeing her. Steffi herself loves stuffy toys, chicken, lounging upside down, and hopping around UH.

— Meredith Barnes



Dreaming of chicken

In July 2020, Steffi's "dad" and I began volunteering at the greyhound rescue. Steffi was one of the dogs who got individual walks, so we came to know her quite well, and a few months later we officially adopted her. We were able to take her to water rehab, which

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If you have ideas for stories, a knack for editing, and want to get more involved with keeping our community better informed, we have a great way for you to exercise those creative muscles! UH News is looking for writers and editors and needs a few extra hands! This is a great way to volunteer and work with an awesome, fun, creative team.

email [uhcanews@uhsd.org](mailto:uhcanews@uhsd.org)!

## Making 2023 Our New-Directional Year

Meet Mr. January Resolutions, a fine upstanding fellow, so much like ourselves in many ways and thinking good all year, the picture of moderation and health. Yet, hidden inside he becomes Mr. Over Extravagant, over-doing and a bit wild, careless during the holidays.

Always ready to break free of uncommon behaviors, "To hell with this Christmas season debauchery, I'll pile on the gym, fierce, saying no to any sweets, carbs; my mantra will be, I hate food, food hates me!" I'll count it out on the treadmill, meter it while running, shout it with the grunts of sit-ups, pray it before bed.

Walking in a dream Mr. 2023 spoke of aging, heart-rate, diseases and the blessings of a slower existence. asking, "Why start the new year with promises that last a few weeks at most? Did YOU begin the tradition of never-ending pressures, struggles mounting to disappointment? This year let's congratulate ourselves for swimming through all we have to deal with in this Twentieth Century pool.

If we promise to show kindness it will bring us smiles in return. More understandings of the trials we face on this Stair-Stepper of our lives will relax us, give up pause to be thankful, rest more and appreciate not only ourselves but others as well. Let's pledge to stop, drink in what the earth and our fellow man has gifted us. Smell the roses!

Let's make acceptance our gym, drop the weights and pass on the over-strained side of everyday humanity. Moderation with food and drink is always a good idea but, what's it all worth if we can't allow ourselves a treat, a few sips of wine? Realizing we'll never be perfect, let's embrace our imperfections as part of mankind's makeup. Seeking and finding the beauty in the world will allow us to find and share peace of mind and body.

Upon waking, Mr. J. Resolutions took notice, his fine memory serving him to reflect on what Mr. 2023 spoke of as a smiled broke not only on his face but in his thinking. "Yes," he said aloud, "Let us strip away a layer of perceived perfection and reveal the flawed, yet wondrous undertones of our humanity."

And we can as well, dear readers, let's give it a try, smile and share today!

Jon Von Erb  
12/2022



Sporting specially made rehab socks

[As this issue was in production, Steffi's cancer irrevocably damaged her lungs. She passed peacefully, at home, surrounded by family. Steffi will be missed by everyone who knew her. Thank you to her "parents" and all humans who adopt previously abused and misused pets, giving them a chance to enjoy life and feel loved. —Eds]

Do you know a pet we should feature? We'd love to highlight all of our furry (and not so furry) UH neighbors! Send info & photo to [uhcanews@uhsd.org](mailto:uhcanews@uhsd.org)!

# J.A. Cooley Museum – 10,000 Square Feet of Dreams, Stories, and Local History

This February marks the 26th anniversary of the opening of the J.A. Cooley Museum on Park Blvd. Jim Cooley purchased the building in 1996 when it was in foreclosure. He and his wife, Carmen, were already the owners of the business across the street, Frank the Train Man. Jim and Frank Cox had been best friends for years. When Frank took ill in 1982, he sold his business to Jim. Back then, Frank the Train Man was located across the street in the building next to the Board of Education (currently home to an accounting office). In 1996, when Jim bought the building at 4233 Park Blvd, he moved Frank the Train Man in, and in February of 1997, he opened up his private museum next door.



Carmen Cooley Graham and her mother Carmen Cooley in front of the museum.

Jim's daughter, Carmen Cooley Graham, currently runs the museum. She has been a part of it since its inception in 1997. She describes the house she grew up in as a de facto museum itself until her father opened up the J.A. Cooley Museum and moved most of the treasures that once filled the family's home to the museum. When Jim passed away in 2019, Carmen's mother decided to keep the museum going as a "gift" to the San Diego community.

The Cooleys have lived in the North Park/Normal Heights/University Heights area for over 100 years. They were one of the original developers of the Kensington neighborhood. Preserving the history of his neighborhoods in San Diego was important to Jim. He had been a collector of cars with a connection to San Diego for years. He also started to collect a variety of objects he valued and thought of as a looking glass into the past. Jim's commitment to his community including wanting to give his friends and neighbors the opportunity to see his collections and enjoy a little of San Diego history, led him to open the J. A. Cooley Museum.



1899 Mobile Steamer

The museum has 37 separate collections including clocks, typewriters (one from 1870 that has only two keys), cameras (3500 on display), coffee grinders, spittoons, woodworking tools, license plates, leather postcards, and a large

collection of phonographs. An undated photo in the museum shows a Piggly Wiggly store (where the Eye of Buddha was until it recently closed) and a Five & Dime store (where the J.A. Cooley Museum and Frank the Train Man currently are). Carmen shares her father's desire to preserve these cultural artifacts from previous generations in order to teach younger generations. For example, spittoons are displayed to show that at one time, every home and business had a spittoon since most men



Carmen and Carmen inside the museum in front of 1914 Ford Model T and 1910 Hunt

chewed tobacco. In California in the 1950s, license plates were issued every year (rather than just a new sticker); hence the large number of old license plates on display. In the middle of the museum is a telephone booth with a rotary phone that Carmen uses as her office phone. She enjoys watching young kids try to figure out how to use it!



The office phone for the museum



1895 Sleigh with cameras and coffee grinders on the shelves

The main attraction of the museum is the vehicle collection. There are 30 vehicles on display representing decades of local transportation. There is a 100-year-old sleigh from Alpine. There is a 1910 Hunt car – the only one ever made in San



Displays of: spittoons, clocks, license plates, and typewriters



1905 Cadillac Model F



1885 Benz

Diego and owned by the Babcock family who developed the Hotel Del Coronado. Each vehicle has its own story. Some are still in the original condition, and some are restored. There is a 1908 Maxwell driven by one of the first female race car drivers, Alice Huxley, who drove the car across the country. There is an 1885 Benz, one of the first cars ever made and one of only 5 or 6 of the model remaining. Also included is one of the first ever self-driving cars, a 1994 Buick XP 2000 Prototype car that was tested in San Diego. Also included: a 1905 Cadillac Model F that belonged to Helen Copley's mother.

Like her father, Carmen believes in preserving the community's history and standing up for the neighborhood. Carmen is a fierce advocate for the small businesses in our neighborhood and also believes in giving back to the community by hosting museum tours for school children throughout the year.

The J.A. Cooley Museum is a private, non-profit business. It is open to visit 7 days a week from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. There is a \$10 admission fee for adults and a \$2 charge for children. It is well worth your time to stop in and visit this local treasure.

— Jane Gilbert

UHC  
CA  
University Heights Community Association

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

# ST. PATRICK'S DAY

## PUB CRAWL

SPECIAL DRINKS & GIVEAWAYS

**5:00 - 9:00 PM**  
**UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS**

VISIT UHSD.ORG FOR A MAP OF PARTICIPATING LOCATIONS




# LIGHTS IN THE HEIGHTS 2022

*Congratulations to the Winning Homes!*



**Best Santa Feature (tie):** 4560 Mississippi Avenue & 4779 Panorama Drive



**Best Neighborhood Block:** Panorama Drive



**Most Spirited:** 4419 North Ave.

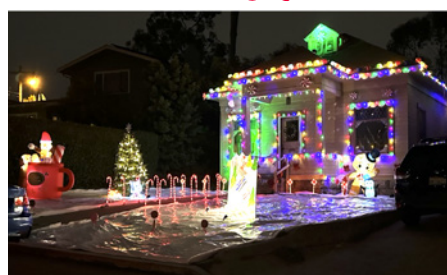


**Funkiest Lights:** 1838 Mission Cliff Drive



**Best Small Space/Apartment:** 4586 Shirley Ann Place

## Honorable Mentions



4545 Rhode Island Street



1211 Maryland Place



1643 Madison Avenue



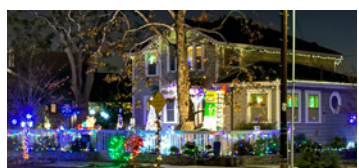
4549 Louisiana Avenue



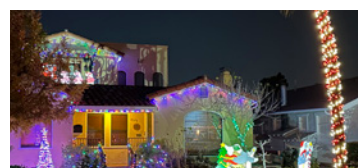
1917 Madison Avenue



4144 Vermont Avenue



4576 & 4592 New York Avenue



This year, Lights in the Heights switched things up a bit and made awards open to a community vote! Twenty homes were submitted for the event, and a group of over sixty folks cycled around the neighborhood to view the brilliant work our neighbors put into making UH shine brightly for the holidays.

Voting was done online, and winners were named in each category. And because there were so many wonderfully decorated homes, we were compelled to add an additional category for "honorable mentions."

Thanks to everyone who put in the time and effort to show off your holiday spirit!

—Lauren Doucette & the UH News Team



## Caroling in the Heights Was Back!

After a few years of silence, the music and cheer were back in UH at three locations this holiday season on December 17 when Janet Hammer's Santa's Sweethearts regaled us with song at The Vermont Street Bridge, Mystic Mocha, and The Point at Golden Gate at Rhode Island.

The Sweethearts trio, who emulate the Andrew Sisters' boogie-woogie style harmony so popular in the 40's, 50's, and beyond, were generously sponsored by Stu McGraw Real Estate. Over two hundred residents across the three stops enjoyed treats and hot chocolate provided by our friends at Twigg's and Mystic Mocha as the Sweethearts rendered old holiday favorites with a boogie-woogie twist.

Special thanks go out to the entire events team and friends, including Lisa Getz, Nan McGraw, Paul Farris, Stu McGraw, Lauren Doucette, Marc Johnson, and the many volunteers who helped with set-up, decoration, and clean-up.

—UH News Team



Sweethearts at Mystic Mocha



Marc, Nan, and Lauren at Mystic Mocha



Treats at Vermont Street Bridge



Sweethearts at the Point



People at Vermont Street Bridge



Sweethearts at Vermont Street Bridge



Crowd at the Point

## UH Generosity in Action

# Birney GIVING TREE



UHCA once again sponsored the Birney Giving Tree to provide families of Birney students a little extra help and cheer this holiday season.

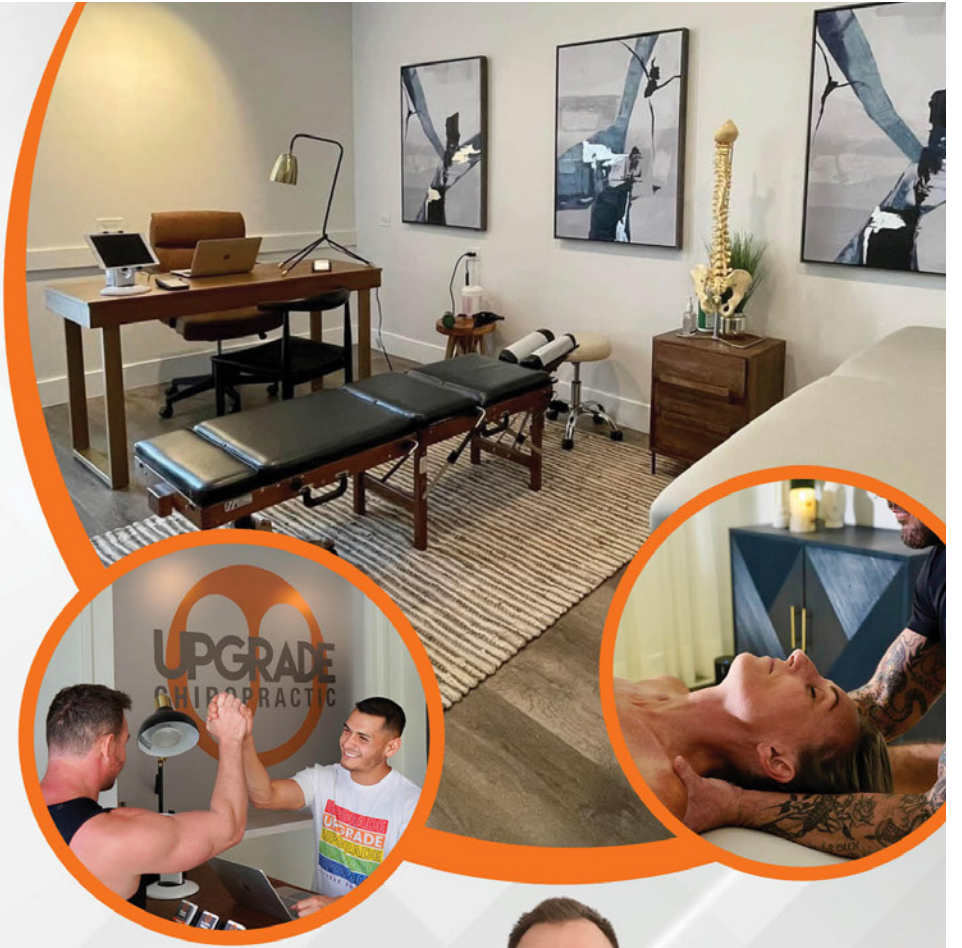
Our residents stepped up BIG, as usual, and showed that UH has a generous heart. Kelly Tawater from Birney said they "were able to distribute \$1,200 worth of gift cards to 47 students from 30 different families!" Every family submitted as a potential recipient received cards.

Special thanks to Birney parent and UHCA member Katie Balderas for spearheading the program this year, and to UH businesses and organizations for hosting drop-boxes: Pemberley Realty, UH Library, BFD, Mystic Mocha, JA Cooley Museum, and Cecilia's Fine Jewelry.

—UH News Team



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# 2022 WAS A FANTASTIC YEAR!

Thank you to all of our clients, neighbors & friends!



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*Don't make a move without us!*

