



NEWS

University Heights Community Association
March 2023



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Hats Off to Our Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of our vibrant community. For almost 40 years, these big-hearted people have delivered the UHCA News to your door, spruced up Old Trolley Barn Park and the Vermont Street Bridge, kept the streets of our beautiful community clean, volunteered for events, and kept an eye on crime stats to help with neighborhood safety. A few selfless individuals have even stepped up to be on the UHCA Board.

We owe so much to the more than 100 exceptional volunteers who devote their time, energy, and talent. Our March 2 regular community meeting will be a celebration of these dedicated volunteers—our friends and neighbors—who serve University Heights. Please join us in the Alice Birney Elementary auditorium for



an evening of festivities beginning at 6:45 p.m. with an awards ceremony beginning at 7 p.m. Merchandise, raffles, and tasty treats will be available.

And bring your smiles for selfies at our selfie station! We can't wait for all the fun while giving back to our magical community.

Gnarly Girl Pizza (2302 El Cajon Blvd.) goodies will be supplied courtesy of UHCA.

—Nan McGraw

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Alysha Christensen | Grace Cooper | Michele Dunne |
| Amy Koczorowski | Gregg Storwick | Michelle Abedi |
| Andy Cameron | Guido Hamacher | Mike Balingit |
| Andy & Mary Lange | Heather Wilcox | Mike Petit |
| Angela Jackson-Llamas & Dani Llamas | Helene Idels | MJ Barr & Jane Gilbert |
| Ann McNeilly | Jean Rannels | Monica Lanctot & Adam Graham |
| Anne Feingold | Jeannie Hine | Naida Hindert |
| Ariel Annon | Jennifer Bishop | Nancy Keys |
| Ashley Gill | Jeremiah Allen | Natalie Rice |
| Barbara Noyer | Jim Eagan | Pam Isaacs |
| Ben Bowdon | Jim Webb | Pat Ryan |
| Benny Cartwright | Joan Foster | Paul Eisenkramer |
| Beth Jaworski | Joe Sewell | Paul Sandbo |
| Bhairvee Shavdia | John & Jean Earl | Pepe Martinez |
| Breanna Cartwright | John Jorgensen | Phil Patterson |
| Brian Damiani | John Ross | Phyllis Charlton & Randi Dropkin |
| Carmel Gatchalian | Josephine Salerno | Randall Mann |
| Carol Baras | Josh Eckels | Raveh Abedi |
| Carol Morris | Katie Balderas | Rhett Butler |
| Colette Pisacano | Kelly Shaw | Rhiannon Sandoval |
| Dacil Ward | Kim Cooper | Richard Wood |
| Dan Taylor | Kristen Iverson | Rob Koczorowski |
| Dan Weiss | Kristie Edgmond | Rob MacDonald |
| Dawn Sassi & Bernard Damborn | Kristine Axelson | Rod Girvin |
| Debbie Chaddock | Kyle Brinker | Ron Widmer |
| Deborah Morrison | Laura & Sheep Riley | Roxanne Govari |
| DeJuan Benford & Robert Dowell | Lauren Doucette & Chris Sera & Luke Doucette | Ruben Lickei |
| Elisabeth Fidler | Liam Pettit | Ruth Matranga |
| Emily Novak | Lindy Rodwell | Sally Flournoy |
| Eric Rheinhart | Lisa Feldman | Sandra Hooley |
| Erin MacKinnon | Liz Flynn | Sheila Moss |
| Ernie Arellano | Lorna Harris | Stephen Whitburn |
| Frank Santana | Louisa Campagna | Sylvia & Tom Riis |
| Gale Osborn | Marc Johnson | T O'Rourke |
| Gary Rivera | Mark Brlej | Tamara Zyhylij |
| Gary Williams | Mark Koopman | Theresa Friederich & Wayne Takasugi |
| Gene Johnson & Edie Jacobsen | Mary Anne Stevens | Tim Sanders |
| Gerri "Gigi" Cohn | Mary Barger | Tom Dowdy |
| Gina Molise | MaryBeth Chruden | Tricia Wilson |
| | Matt Axelson | UHCDC |
| | Melynda Quintong-Cabato & Raul Cabato | |

PLANNING OUR COMMUNITY

Planning is a BIG DEAL. Future development of University Heights will impact you. You already see it happening. Have a voice. Attend North Park Planning Committee (NPPC) meetings if you live east of Park Boulevard or Uptown Planners meetings if you live west of Park Boulevard. Upcoming board elections in both planning groups will occur in March: Uptown Planners uptownplannersd.org, 6 pm, March 7 at the Joyce Beers Center in "The Hub" near Ralphs and Trader Joes (in person voting) and NPPC on March 21 at 6:30 pm. Both in person or electronic voting for NPPC: (www.northparkplanning.org for more info).

—Nan McGraw

NEXT UHCA MEETING

MAR. 2

6:45 PM

SALUTE TO VOLUNTEERS

BIRNEY AUDITORIUM

DETAILS AT WWW.UHSD.ORG/ATTEND-A-MEETING

LOOKING AHEAD

APR. 6

6:45 PM

DHARMA BUM TEMPLE: A PEACEFUL PLACE OPEN FOR ALL

At the heart of any community, is the people. Of course, there are the physical buildings, schools, shops, businesses, parks, restaurants and more. Yet it all comes down to having as many kind and compassionate people as possible who make all of this come to life for a healthy and safe community. At the Dharma Bum Temple, we believe the daily practice of loving-kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity has a profound impact on



humanity. Our intention is to provide an accepting and tolerant space where people from all races, gender identities, sexual orientations, abilities, religions and cultures can come together to build a peaceful community. We help people live with the practices of generosity, morality, patience, diligence, concentration and wisdom. It is our belief the cultivation and integration of these guiding principles lead one to a happy and healthy life.

I want to thank this beautiful neighborhood of University Heights for welcoming and supporting us since we have arrived. Nearly six years ago in April of 2017, we pulled off nothing short of a miracle and acquired what was the 1927 built Swedenborgian Church at 4144 Campus Avenue. We have done our best to care for this sacred space as it became the new home of the Dharma Bum Temple and Buddha for You Gifts & Books. Many may not realize it, but the building had never been registered historic, thus developers were set to purchase it, tear it down and build more condominiums. At the time, we were operating downtown in a small loft with a second location near SDSU for Buddha for You and meditation classes. When we discovered this building was for sale, we set our hearts on saving the building and making it our new home. In 108 days, 1,123 people came together to raise enough funds for a down payment and the rest as they say is history. The people of University Heights helped make this happen and we are forever grateful!

None of us could have ever imagined that just three years after moving into this neighborhood, the world would face a crushing pandemic that would bring so much pain and suffering. Like many other facilities, we were forced to close for sixteen months. The toughest part was knowing that this was a time people needed us the most. Very often you cannot prepare for obstacles, you just have to be ready to face them when they arise. Like the practice of Buddhism, we engage each moment with as much wisdom and compassion as possible. The obstacles we faced were opportunities to lead our community and show them how to continue on regardless of the external situation. At the same time, we needed to be aware of how the pandemic impacted the hearts and minds of so many people in our community. Many loved ones were lost causing tremendous pain, which just motivated and inspired us to work harder at carrying out our mission. We knew the community needed us to be strong and a support system for those who were struggling.

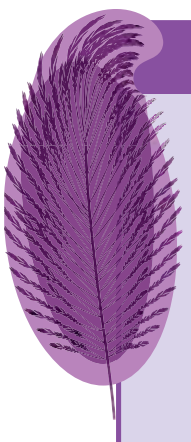
We are thrilled to be open again for in-person classes and all are welcome to come visit and attend, everything we do is free. We also have a beautiful schedule of online classes for those interested. We see 600-800 people a week thru our doors and every day we encounter people battling depression, addiction, anxiety and overall challenges with life. Our hope is that the ripple effect from what they learn is benefiting not only them, but their families, friends, coworkers, etc. We offer introduction to Buddhism and meditation classes, homeless outreach, prison outreach, family classes for parents, kids, toddlers and teens, visiting guest speakers such as Monks, Nuns & Buddhist scholars, silent retreats, morning meditation, Buddhist recovery programs for overcoming addictions, homeless hats: knit and sit making warm hats for the homeless, a co-ed Buddhist Fraternity at SDSU and more all for free!

Dharma Bum Temple continued on page 10

MARCH PLUME

We thank Marc, Angela, Ashley and Roxanne, outstanding volunteers for their service to our Board. They have all played instrumental roles in guiding our mission with their insights and unique expertise. What all four of them have in common is how they served the Association in their dedication to the community. We are grateful for their big hearts and the combined thousands of hours they gave to the University Heights Community Association. Thank you for being valued board members and contributing to the success of The University Heights Community Association.

—Susan Holts



MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS & RENEWALS

BUSINESS/CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP
 Fibre the Vanue and Salon, Marisa Martinez Real Estate, Clos Wineshop Masters, Cecilia's Fine Jewelry

GIFT
 Sheila E. Moss, Ed & Michelle Muscat

Thank You!

GOLDEN OSTRICH
 Jeffrey Johnston, MaryBeth Chruden & Bill Smith Jr., Grace Johnson, Louisa Campagna

HOUSEHOLD

Lee Wahlert & David Machado, Lee Sherwood, Michael Gorman & Patrick Patterson, Patricia Higgins-North, Rolf & Layla Hains, Herbert (Jim) Seagram, Carol Neidenberg, AnneMarie Sachs & Adam Hill, Diane Brockman & Muriel Davis, Peter & Gail Volkert, James & Lynne Manner, Tom Blich, Alicia Winquist, Maurice Nelson & Cody Silva



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.



JOIN TODAY AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE! OUR SUCCESS IS LARGELY DEPENDENT ON VOLUNTEER EFFORTS FROM AREA RESIDENTS LIKE YOU.

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

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

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@uhdsd.org



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

UHCA NEWS

EDITORIAL TEAM Susan Holts, Lisa Getz, Nan McGraw

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PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS Paul Farris, Patty Howland, Jane Gilbert

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR Email Susan Holts at ads@uhdsd.org

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.uhdsd.org/submissions for details.

UHCA BOARD

Lisa Getz
 Stu McGraw
 Sol Schumer
 Brent Orlesky
 Susan Holts



WEBSITE uhdsd.org



FACEBOOK @universityheightscommunityassociation



INSTAGRAM @universityheights_sdcommunity

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 uhdsd.org or contact your zone's coordinator or Nan McGraw.

- 1 Nan McGraw** nmcsan@aol.com
- 2 Pam Isaacs** pamisaacs1@gmail.com
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- 4 Heather Wilcox** zone4watchuhca@gmail.com
- 5 Tamara Zyhylij** tamara@tamaraestate.com
- 6 Nan McGraw** 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@uhdsd.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@uhdsd.org.



File a Police Report Online with SDPD

UH PHONE BOOK

Emergency • Police • Fire • Medical	9 1 1
Non-Emergency Suspicious Activity, Homeless Outreach Team, etc.	619-531-2000
SD City Services: Emergency & Non-Emergency Street lights, potholes, etc. Online: www.sandiego.gov/city-hall/departments	619-527-7500
Alert San Diego Reverse 911 notification to mobile phones for emergencies requiring evacuations	www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego/
2-1-1 San Diego Free Resources: CalFresh, Medi-Cal, Covered California, etc.	2 1 1 or 858-300-1211
Abandoned Vehicles	858-495-7856
Alice Birney Elementary Office	619-497-3500
Animals / Non-Emergency	619-767-2675
Brush and Weed Abatement	619-533-4444
Code Violations	619-236-5500
COVID-19 City of San Diego Daily Updates	www.sandiego.gov/coronavirus
Crime Stoppers Tip Line	888-580-TIPS (8477)
Department of Environmental Health Public Health/Rats/Rodents	858-694-2888
Downed Power Lines / SDG&E	800-411-7343
Emergency Water / Sewer Repair / Sink Holes	619-515-3525
Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) 5am-3pm M-F	619-446-1010
Narcotics Suspicious drug house / anonymous	619-531-2468

PATH (People Assisting The Homeless) path@epath.org	619-810-8600
Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP) Vacation home security check, welfare of home-bound, patrolling business districts, homeland security support	619-692-4945
National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline	9 8 8
SDPD Community Relations Officers: David Surwilo dsurwilo@pd.sandiego.gov	619-692-4858
SDPD Western Division 5215 Gaines Street	619-692-4800
Shopping Cart Pick-Up Service	800-252-4613
Stonewall Citizens Patrol info@stonewallcitizens.org	619-297-3166
UHCDC University Heights Community Development Corporation	619-692-4912
University Heights Public Library 4193 Park Blvd	619-260-0668
UH Zone Watch Coordinator Nan McGraw nmcsan@aol.com	9 1 1 https://getitdone.force.com 619-527-7500
Graffiti: In Progress Emergency: Report Online: Graffiti Hotline:	858-694-2888
SD Vector Control mosquitoes / ticks / rats Online: vector@sdcounty.ca.gov	

If all else fails, email Malik Thornton
 ThorntonM@sandiego.gov at Council member Stephen Whitburn's office.



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.



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>

UHCA MEETING NOTES

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

February 2 UHCA Community Meeting Summary

The February 2, 2023, University Heights Community Association (UHCA) meeting opened with the Crime Watch portion. San Diego Police Community Relations Officer David Surwilo answered questions from the audience.

UHCA President Marc Johnson welcomed the meeting attendees, then announced he is stepping down from the UHCA Board, due to increased work travel demands. He also announced the departure of three other Board members, Angela Jackson-Llamas, Ashley Gill, and Roxanne Govari.

The main segment of the meeting was a forum panel focused on Homelessness Solutions. The panel consisted of:

1. Abbey Reuter-Policy Associate and Lauren Macdonald-Community Representative for San Diego County District 4 Supervisor Nathan Fletcher (he provided an online message)
2. Ruth Bruland, Chief Program Officer of Father Joe's Villages
3. Stephen Whitburn, San Diego City District 3 Councilmember
4. Ansermio Estrada, District Director from Assembly Member Chris Ward's office
5. Dijana Beck, Director, Office of Homeless Solutions, County of San Diego
6. Hafsa Kaka, Director, Homelessness Strategies & Solutions, City of San Diego
7. Tyler Renner, Director of Media at PATH (People Assisting the Homeless)
8. Officer David Surwilo, SDPD Community Relations Officer

The most recent data on homelessness makes it clear that California has a massive problem, that despite significant spending and efforts, the situation continues to grow.

San Diego's Regional Task Force on Homeless (RTFH) recently reported that over 12 months, 13 people became homeless for every 10 who were housed.

If a homeless person refuses help, there is nothing further the police can do. They cannot refer them to a shelter, if there are no beds available.

Per the 2022 Point-in-Time Count of Homeless in San Diego, there are at least 8,427 individuals experiencing homelessness. That number consists of 4,106 unsheltered and 4,321 in shelters. This is up 10% from 2020.

Each panelist had an opportunity to voice their approach to solutions for our unhoused populations. Each agreed that the situation is at a critical point in our city.

Thanks to Deborah Morrison, Katharine Cline and Angela Jackson-Llamas for putting this panel together and to Marc Johnson for moderating the discussion.

In case you weren't at this meeting, videos are posted at www.uhsd.org/attend-a-meeting

RESOURCES

911 for emergencies

619-531-2000 SDPD Non-Emergency Line

Get It Done by using the App on your phone or www.sandiego.gov/get-it-done

Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) 619-446-1010 (5am-3pm M-F)

Homeless resources are available by dialing 211 or 858-300-1211

— Nan McGraw

OUR REPRESENTATIVES

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GAVIN NEWSOM

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<https://www.gov.ca.gov>

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PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

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VICE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

LISA GETZ

Why do things keep changing? You may think, why can't they just stay the way they were? Some changes are actually good! The arrival of Spring can bring positive changes like improving your health, resolution of a longtime issue and making new friends are some examples of positive change. Other changes like the construction of new housing in our neighborhood, increased traffic and the increased pace of life contribute to our sense of losing control and are not so welcome.

I think we have a choice in how we react to change. We can close ourselves off and try to minimize the impact of change in our lives or we can embrace change and get involved as a force for good.

I want to encourage you to get involved in something you care about. You will benefit your community and yourself as well.

Volunteering is a two-way street that benefits both the organization and the volunteer. It is an instrumental force in promoting positive and sustainable growth within communities, while increasing social connections, improving mental and physical health and improving employability for volunteers.

Volunteering is good for the soul. Every individual volunteer will find something exciting and rewarding about the opportunity to give back to their community through volunteering.

After talking to former volunteers, it's easy to see they have a rejuvenated sense of community, higher morale and a powerful sense of purpose.

If you have not yet renewed your UHCA membership for 2023, please do so now. We don't want to lose you!

— Lisa Getz



Give your home the protection it deserves.

Dorian E Brewer, Agent
Insurance Lic#: 0144860
2313 El Cajon Blvd
San Diego, CA 92104
Bus: 619-831-8172

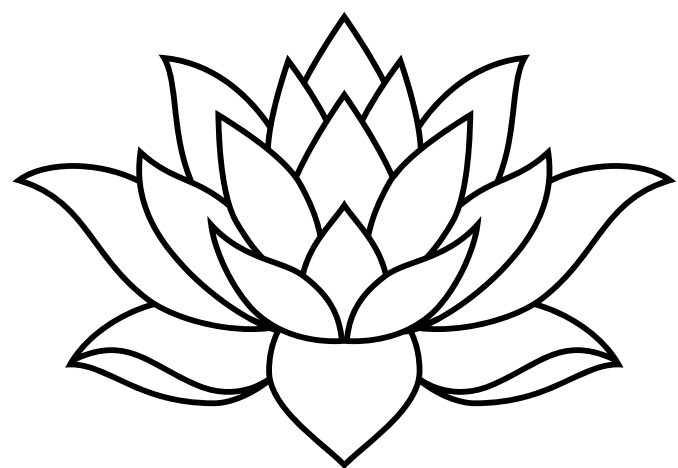
Your home is where you make some of your best memories, and that's worth protecting. I'm here to help.
LET'S TALK TODAY.



State Farm Fire and Casualty Company, State Farm General Insurance Company, Bloomington, IL
State Farm Florida Insurance Company, Winter Haven, FL
State Farm Lloyds, Richardson, TX

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LotusTaxSD@gmail.com

Nature in the Neighborhood

Sagebrush



Coastal Sage Scrub Vegetation

Coastal sage scrub (CSS) is a very SoCal kind of plant community, found only from Monterey south to Ensenada. It is sometimes called “soft chaparral” to distinguish it from the taller, woodier, evergreen vegetation found in the same kinds of places. You know you’re in coastal sage scrub when you walk through it without trouble and leave it smelling great. (You crash through chaparral and come out scratched!) That’s because typical CSS plants grow three to five feet tall and have soft leaves that often dry up in summer. Because their leaves (typically) are not thick and hard to bite, they often ward off hungry insects with a chemical defense: volatile oils that make a bug sick but rub off onto your pants when you brush by. The most common of these aromatic shrubs are California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), and the sages (*Salvia spp.*). You can sample the aroma of CSS plants by squeezing/rubbing a leaf and smelling your fingers – it’s a great way to learn these species.



Flat-top Buckwheat

Water is crucial to plant survival here. The community is called Coastal sage scrub because it occurs near the coast, where fog can wet the leaves and overcast skies limit the pull of water from leaves. This is why we do NOT live in a desert climate, despite low annual rainfall. When cool, cloudy days cease (aka summer), many leaves will either curl up or fall off. Flat-top Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) has needle-like leaves and California Sunflower (*Encelia californica*) has hairs on the bottom of the leaves; both these strategies help leaves lose less water and still take up CO2.



Cal Sunflower

A good place to get a feel for coastal sage scrub is the northern tip of Trolley Barn Park (past the play area), where CSS grows throughout the canyon extending towards Mission Valley – except for the invasive, non-native Eucalyptus, palms, cacti, and annual weeds (greener now, browner in summer). Peering through the wrought iron fence gives you a close-up view of individual CSS plants. Find the corner of Park Blvd and Adams Ave (read the sidewalks) then walk to the fence. Right in front, you should see an erect Goldenbush (*Isocoma menzeisii*),

with narrow, jagged leaves. To its left, find the light green, delicately divided leaves of Cal Sunflower. To the right, there’s one White Sage (*Salvia apiana*), with whorls of grayish leaves on erect stems. Farther right, there’s lots more Cal Sunflower, but you can spot a tall Broom Baccharis (*B. sarothroides*), with very narrow leaves, and a couple more Goldenbush. All these species, except White Sage, are rather weedy members of the Sunflower family – City Parks may have sowed too heavy a seed mix and these plants outcompeted the other species.

Missing here are two pillars of the CSS community: Black Sage (*S. mellifera*; naturally more common than White Sage near the coast) and Flat-top Buckwheat. For these, head over to The Point (n. of Golden Gate and Cleveland). Directly west of the shade trees, you can see (and touch and smell) a trio of Black Sage, Cal Sagebrush, and evergreen Lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*); the latter is found in both CSS and chaparral. Continuing to your left past the big Lemonadeberry you’ll see a pair of Flat-Top Buckwheat, as well as lots more Cal Sunflower and Cal Sagebrush.

Coastal sage scrub is home to lots of insect and seed-eating birds, but the most important may be California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*). Protecting this threatened species and the CSS habitat that supports it led to the development of San Diego’s current network of wildland preserves.

—Dave Flietner



Black Sage, Lemonadeberry, Cal Sagebrush



Goldenbush, Cal Sagebrush, White Sage

SUSTAINABLE UH

A Great Time to Opt Up



Not everyone has the means to run their homes and cars on 100% solar-generated electricity from a home system, but a majority of us in UH can help in the fight to reduce fossil fuel emissions by opting for 100% renewable sources of electricity through San Diego Community Power. Now is a great time for those who haven’t done so already to “Opt Up” to 100% renewable.

In September this column reported on SDGE’s plan to lower customers’ bills temporarily in order to woo them back from San Diego Community Power, and then to raise rates come winter. Rates indeed shot up, as many of us experienced. We’re told that SDGE has no control over the cost of natural gas or electricity, that they simply pass on the market prices for these commodities to rate payers. Consumer watchdogs have noted, however, that SDGE’s parent company, Sempra, has been selling natural gas in Western Europe where they can charge more since Russian sources of fuel have dried up. Selling off natural gas supplies in Europe creates scarcity here, thereby raising prices, according to the consumer advocacy groups.

Politics aside, SDGE is going to charge us what they want to for delivering gas and electricity to our homes. Cheers to everyone who has installed solar and lowered their financial obligations to the monopoly while also helping to reduce fossil fuel use.

The rest of us can also participate in the fight for cleaner air and reduced carbon emissions by replacing as many gas-powered appliances as possible with electric ones and powering those appliances with renewable energy by “opting up” to “Power100” with San Diego Community Power.

Those of us without the means to replace gas-powered furnaces with electric heat pump systems can often afford an electric space heater or two. If replacing a gas stove isn’t in the cards right now, toaster ovens and induction hot plates can replace many of the cooking functions we need. And washing clothes with cold water, when appropriate, will help keep gas-powered water heaters from burning more fossil fuel than absolutely necessary.

Combining small (and large) shifts away from natural gas with opting for 100% Renewable electricity sources is feasible for most of us. More good news: SDCP’s 100% renewable option doesn’t cost much more than the default plan (which provides electricity from a little over 50% renewable sources, the rest coming from traditional fossil fuel sources).

It comes as no surprise that SDGE customers who opted out of San Diego Community Power last fall aren’t allowed to switch back for another year. But the rest of us who stuck with the non-profit community choice aggregator of electricity can opt for 100% renewable via the organization’s website: sdcommunitypower.org.

Doing the right thing for our environment has really never been so easy.

—Judith Annicchiarico

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AL DENTE

A Fine Dining Restaurant in a Cozy, Casual Setting

In December of 2022, a new Italian restaurant opened up on Park Blvd in the location where Basilico la Pizzeria was located. Gone are the picnic benches and wood-fired oven. In its place are comfy leather seats, velvet barstools, and a menu rich with innovative Italian dishes.

The owners of Basilico decided the restaurant needed an upgrade. Recognizing that they had a fabulous, but underused chef on their staff in Antonio, they decided to do away with the pizzeria concept and turn the menu over to Antonio. In addition to completely transforming the menu, the owners brought in a new owner, Manuela Iauale, to oversee the transition to a more stylish décor while still maintaining the low-key vibe of a neighborhood restaurant.

Manuela hails from Naples and came to San Diego about 10 years ago to study marketing. She has an uncle in San Diego who is in the restaurant business and he introduced her to the close-knit Italian restaurant community. Manuela started waiting tables at Piacere Mio in South Park. Manuela quickly caught the restaurant bug. Her uncle then introduced her to Vincenzo, the owner of many Italian restaurants throughout the county. Vincenzo offered Manuela a managerial position at Farmer's Table in Little Italy. Through her work at Farmer's Table, Manuela met many of Vincenzo's partners – Giancarlo and Mario who opened up Basilico; and Marco and Nino, who run Rusticucina in Hillcrest. This close-knit group is like one big Italian family – all supporting each other and their restaurants. All of these men have helped the restaurant transform from Basilico la Pizzeria to Al Dente.

The upgrade from a pizzeria to a more upscale Italian restaurant is reflected in the menu. There are traditional Italian classics, such as Caesar salad, Linguine Vongole (spaghetti and clams in white wine, garlic and olive oil sauce) and Zuppa di Pesce (mixed seafood in marinara sauce); as well as more innovative items, such as oxtail ravioli, duck pappardelle, truffle gnocchi, and wild boar sausage with pasta. For the less adventurous, there are classic dishes of filet mignon, chicken, salmon, and a variety of vegetarian options. All of these meals can be enjoyed with a wide variety of wines from all over the world. You can even watch chef Antonio prepare your delicious meal as the kitchen is behind glass in the main dining area.

So the next time you have a craving for exceptional home-cooked Italian food, come to Al Dente. You will most likely be greeted by Manuela and you will be treated to a fantastic culinary experience right here in our neighborhood.

—Jane Gilbert



Bar area



Kitchen area

AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

You Either Enjoy a Party or You Don't!

Well, on November 30th close to 100 University Heights friends and neighbors came to our party and definitely enjoyed it!

Sean and the folks at Serpentine Cider located at 2311 El Cajon Blvd had us over. The food sponsored by Cecilia's Fine Jewelry, JA Cooley Museum and Original Skin and Body from Gnarly Girl Pizza and Big Front Door was devoured hastily and UnderDog food truck's vegan fare was certainly enjoyed. If you haven't tried Serpentine's pumpkin cider get ready for a treat! Even the "not pumpkin" fans totally enjoyed it.

Just in time for this season of giving these fine UH businesses donated thoughtful raffle gifts:

\$50 GC - Upgrade Chiropractic

\$25 GC - Eden plant nursery

4 tickets - Gay Men's Choir

1 lb. coffee - Mystic Mocha

\$25 GC - Shangri La Vintage

Hair care products - Fibre Salon

UHCA License plate frame - Original Skin and Body Care

Note cards - Paul Farris (local artist)

Vinyl tote, Ostrich Tee - UHCA

The crowd was a wonderful mix of fun lovers! People gathered together to celebrate the holiday season with gusto! At one point the roar of the party goers was deafening.

We look forward to seeing you all at UHCA's next mixer!

—Lisa Getz





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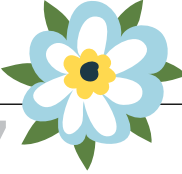



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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
March 2023 	 WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH	1 UHDC 6 pm uhcdc.org UHCA Beautification Meeting 6 pm April News Articles Due	2 UH Park & Rec Meeting 5:30 pm UHCA Meeting 6:45 pm www.uhsd.org/ attend-a-meeting Dr. Seuss Day	3 World Wildlife Day	4 Garden Club: Mighty Bin 6 pm 	
5 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm	6 National Oreo Day Purim Begins	7 SDUSD Board Meeting 5 pm sandiegounified.org Uptown Planners Board Elections 6 pm uptownplannersd.org	8 International Women's Day	9 	10 Balboa Park: Japanese Friendship Garden Cherry Blossom Festival, March 10,11,12 10am-7pm 	11 Garden Club: Monarch Garden 3 pm UH Library: Miss Helene's Storytime & Craft 3 pm
12 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm Daylight Saving Time Begins	13 	14 SDUSD Board Meeting 5 pm sandiegounified.org UH Library: Kamishibai Springtime Storytime 6 pm Hillcrest Town Council Meeting 6:30 pm	15 	16 National Panda Day	17 UH Pub Crawl 5 pm St. Patrick's Day 	18 UH Library Book Sale 9am-3pm
19 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm UH Library Book Sale 12-3 pm	20 Spring Begins International Day of Happiness 	21 SDUSD Board Meeting 5 pm sandiegounified.org UH Library: Miss Helene's Storytime & Craft 6 pm North Park Planning Committee Board Elections 6:30 pm	22 Ramadan Begins World Water Day	23 	24 	25 UH Library: Dance to EvOLvE 3 pm Safari Park Butterfly Jungle Begins
26 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm	27 	28 Apr. UHCA News Out	29 World Piano Day	30 National Take a Walk in the Park Day	31 	



1388 Kettner Blvd #1409 & 12888 Starwood Lane

"I could not have asked for a better team than Mary Anne Stevens and Anastasia Brewer (my point of contact). They sold our condo and this was our first time buying a home, and they were a pleasure to work with. The team is extremely knowledgeable about the SD market and helped guide us to find our new home which we love. Anastasia worked closely with us and was so friendly, patient, and worked very hard on our behalf. She answered every question we had, big or small, and was so proactive as well anticipating potential issues. We felt she looked out for us every step of the way, gave great advice, and had our best interests at heart. Buying a home is stressful and Mary Anne and Anastasia made it a manageable process and they certainly earned our trust along the way. I cannot recommend them enough!"

- Mike A. | December 2022

4317 Cleveland Avenue | San Diego, CA 92103

"Couldn't be happier with my experience!! I was referred to Mary Anne as an expert that was amazing. Even so, as a first time homebuyer, I was a bit nervous as I had already done my shopping and had a place in mind for a bid. I had no idea how much they would help me along the way. I was more than pleasantly surprised at how wonderful she and Anastasia were!! Negotiations, document review & questions, helping find vendors, loans, everything down to getting into my home and beyond! They were amazing. I've already referred them to my extended family for their next move!"

- Stacy T. | October 2022



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Pet of the Month Moose

Woof, my name is Moose. I love you all so much. Please play with me.

I was born in Tijuana. My early childhood was difficult but after a couple of foster homes, I was happily adopted by my Dads Rob and Pierre when I was about 5 months old and I never looked back. I love University Heights and absolutely everyone who lives in the neighborhood. I am lucky enough to live close to Golden Gate next to the Point: the best part is that one day, there was a squirrel in one of the big eucalyptus trees and one day, one day, I will catch it because I can jump really, really high.

But, where was I? Oh yes, I love going for walks with my Auntie Ellen who is really nice. She makes me sit a lot to take very cool pictures of the neighborhood. It can take forever but she gives treats so I don't mind. My Dads also take me on little runs: there is a nice house with fresh water on Maryland which is my favorite stop. Sometimes we go to the dog park and I run like a maniac for a while before calming down. Running super fast is really fun. I was called Bullet before I was adopted but my Dads are from Canada and thought that Moose would be a bit more friendly.

I am a bit of a foodie as well, and University Heights is the best neighborhood for dogs like me. I like to go to Kairoa where the staff is very nice to me. But the best part is when we go



Moose

to Madison and we bring back home the pork chop bone (it is a secret!). They really have delicious food there.

Anyway really want to meet you. All of you. I will do my best not to lick you but it is very hard to resist, because my neighbors are really awesome.

Lots of love and tag wagging!

— Moose

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!

Parrots!

This is proof that everyone loves University Heights! Not just people and dogs. These beauties flew in to feast on the red berries of a pyracantha bush, which is commonly known as firethorn. There were about a dozen of these visitors and they made quite the ruckus while they were here. They stayed for a bit and ate a ton of the red berries.



A neighbor mentioned that they may have come in from the colony that lives in Ocean Beach. The parrots weren't talking so we don't know for sure. It sure was a delight to see them!

—Susan Holts

NEW IN UH

Mama's Bakery & Deli

Mama's Bakery & Deli announced big plans to relocate via social media. Not to worry, their new digs will be located a short trip around the corner from their original restaurant in University Heights

The family-owned bakery and deli currently operate from a space on Alabama Street at El Cajon Boulevard. The business is in the process of setting up its new home at the base of the brand new One Mississippi Apartment building on El Cajon and Mississippi Street.

Owners Edward and Suher Haidar tell What Now San Diego they have submitted design plans to the city and are awaiting approval on the restaurant buildout.

The new restaurant site will allow them an opportunity to refresh their menu, adding some new options like Chicken Shawarma straight from the spit, gyros, kebabs, an expanded salad menu, plus more vegan and vegetarian options currently in development.

Their dessert menu will offer many of the same pastries and baklava, but will incorporate more Lebanese desserts. Haidar says they'll expand their drink menu and are in the process of applying for their beer and wine license. Over time, Mama's Bakery will offer additional catering services and special event menus.

—Jeannine Boisse, What Now San Diego

BIRNEY BUZZ

All a Buzz from the Hive Hunt

The Hive Hunt was back for its second year as a fan favorite fundraiser for Birney Elementary. The Hunt, sponsored by Friends of Alice Birney Elementary (FOABE), took place on the afternoon of January 28 and led participants in a fun-filled scavenger hunt throughout University Heights. Teams composed of students, alumni, and their families—raced around the neighborhood on foot and visited local businesses in order to complete different types of challenges using the Eventzee app.

Many participants kicked off their Hunts with a drawing contest with prize sponsors Mary Anne & Anastasia from Coldwell Banker Realty at Birney. Teams then spread out throughout the community, strategizing which clues to complete first. From a menu quiz at Big Front Door, a photo challenge at Full Circle Tattoo, to a “find the honeycomb” activity at University Heights’ newcomer Johnston’s, the Hive Hunt embraced the urban and dynamic landscape of our neighborhood.

Winners were announced at a celebration at Birney after the conclusion of the Hive Hunt and prizes were given in three categories: The Royals for top point earners, best costumes, and raffle prizes sponsored by local businesses. The Royals winning teams were awarded \$100 each and included: Goodin Hunting—Mahea L and family—for TK-1st grades; Bee Wong—Max W, Zack W, and family—for 2nd-3rd grades; Queen Bees—Naomi W, Maya W, and family—for 4th-5th grades; and Gradua Bees—Erin Z and family—for alumni and community members.



Queen Bees winners Naomi and Maya W show off their prize

Costume winners included Burt’s Bee’s for TK-1st grade—Grayson B, Hayden B, and family; a tie for 2nd-3rd grade between teams Zom-bees—the Hamilton family—and Going To Bee Fun—Reece G, Riley G, and family; and for 4th-5th grade, Golden Gline—Benjamin G, Jude G, and family. Winning costume teams were each presented with a plush bee and \$10 Stella Jean gift certificates.

Raffle prizes included gift certificates donated by Hive Hunt sponsors Eco Boat Rentals, Shangri La Vintage, Yipao, and Fit It In SD, llc.

Queen Bees Naomi W team member gave some sage advice for future Hive Hunters on her team’s winning strategy:



Hive Hunters out in the field

“Do things with the most points [and] stay in the same spot to do all the tasks there before moving on.” Her sister Maya emphasized it’s also vital to “go quickly.”

FOABE wants to thank all the Hive Hunt sponsors who helped make the event great: Mary Anne Stevens and Anastasia Brewer, John Mark Piano, Fibre the Venue and Salon, Fit It In SD llc, Diversionary Theatre, Yipao Coffee, Full Circle Tattoo, Park & Rec, Parkhouse Eatery, Mission Hills Nursery, Kairoa Brewing Company, UHCA, Smithton Architects, Johnston’s, Stella Jean’s, Pop Pie Co., Shangri La Vintage, Promethean One, Cecilia’s Fine Jewelry, Big Front Door, and Eco Boat Tours. Finally, special kudos goes to Vaychan Hallman, FOABE board member, the mastermind behind the Hive Hunt. All participants have Vaychan’s hard work and creativity to thank for such a fun day.

Birney Bees are looking forward to more events in the upcoming month. This includes the much anticipated Run for the Green, where all students will finally be able to participate in the event at the same time since COVID restrictions have been eased. Run for the Green will take place on March 17, and fundraising is currently underway. To donate or get involved, you can contact FOABE at info@friendsofalicebirney.org.

March is also Arts in Education month. As part of its “specials” classes, which are funded by FOABE, Birney is extremely lucky to have a robust arts program headed by Mr. Evans, who has been teaching at Birney for over four years. Mr. Evans has a degree in theater and in addition to teaching, is a professional actor in San Diego. In his arts classes, Mr. Evans teaches both performing and visual arts and weaves the IB curriculum throughout his lessons in creative ways.

Recently Mr. Evans’ students have been examining the works of visual artists and connecting it to their own art making. Specifically, 3rd graders studied Andy Goldworthy and other artists that specialize in using sustainable or found materials, then collected materials from Birney’s campus, and created their own temporary art pieces. Third grader Maya S appreciates Mr. Evans’ teaching style: “Mr. Evans goes step by step and he makes sure everyone understands before he moves on. He makes class fun and interesting. He’s also very patient.”

Regarding his students, Mr. Evans raves: “I love the inquisitive nature and creativity of the Alice Birney students! They come to specials every day ready to take risks and create something new!”

— Sarah Layne, Proud Birney Parent and UH Community Member

ROO NEWS

Roosevelt International Middle School Spring Arts Update

Roosevelt Middle School (RMS) is not only one of the two International Baccalaureate (IB) middle schools in the district; but it also boasts a robust arts program, featuring opportunities for students to express themselves through music, visual arts, drama, and more.



outside of the school program as well: a record six RMS students made it into the District’s Honors Ensemble, one is in Honors Choir, five play around town with the Young Lions Jazz Conservatory, and two students will be supernumeraries (extras) in the upcoming San Diego Opera Production, The Puccini Duo.

Roosevelt’s foundation-funded, volunteer-staffed After School Enrichment program offers students several options to explore visual arts, including Art Studio, Mural Club, and Creative Photography, a collaboration with Balboa Park’s Museum of Photographic Arts (MOPA). Photographs from last year’s class were featured in an exhibition at the museum until February, at which point they were removed to make way for a new crop.

Drama and theater arts are also supported by the After School Enrichment Program and its community partners such as Diversionary Theater, which runs Improv and Cosplay classes. Roosevelt’s in-house theater company, meanwhile, is gearing up for its spring production of The Addams Family, a musical comedy around the high jinks of America’s favorite mysterious and spooky family. Along with the cast-of-dozens, students will be running the stage crew, creating props, and working the sound and light boards.

To learn more about what’s happening at Roosevelt International Middle School, please visit the Friends of Roosevelt foundation’s website at friendsofroosevelt.org.

— Andy Hinds



The school’s award-winning music program, headed by Nathan Elias-Kocivar, includes a general music class as part of the academic day for sixth graders, plus after-school Band, Orchestra, and Jazz Band. He also teaches electronic music, which gives students a chance to produce their own original songs, using various programs as well as traditional instruments and voice. Some individual RMS musicians have recently distinguished themselves



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
6PM - 7PM

Learn More & Register

www.uhsd.org/events



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)

BETWEEN THE COVERS

March Activities at the Library

Hey there, it's been a while. It's your friendly library employee, Erin Wilson. As some of you who've been around the block a few times might recall, I've been at the University Heights Branch Library for 22 years! But I've been with the City of San Diego since 1988 – yowza!



I wanted to highlight a part of my library work that I enjoy immensely. I am so proud to say that I'm a member of the library's EDI Committee. EDI stands for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion. The committee works together to promote an environment where the EDI perspective is ingrained in every aspect of our work at San Diego Public Library. We promote a culture of inclusion and belonging at the Library through programs, our collection and any means in which we can share information about underrepresented communities.



One of the ways I like sharing information is through my monthly displays. Maybe you've seen them in the bookcase right next to the HOLDS shelves. If you have any comments or feedback, I'm open to both. My favorite display subjects involve music and local history. June is Black Music History Month and I tend to get a little bit CARRIED AWAY with that one.

Our committee is currently working on resource websites for all the upcoming heritage months and celebratory days. Please enjoy some pictures I've taken that tie in with the committee. Thank you and see you soon!

All City libraries will be CLOSED on Friday, March 31 for Cesar Chavez Day. To learn more about supporting your local library, visit www.friendsofuhlibrary.org.

—Erin Wilson, Library Assistant II
University Heights Branch Library
San Diego Public Library
www.sandiego.gov
619-692-4912

FRIENDS OF THE UH LIBRARY

The Friends of the UH Library Needs You!

Do you love reading books? Do you want to help our local library to provide a wide selection of exciting novels, informative non-fiction, and delightful kid's books to our community? Would you like to help the library continue to provide top-notch information services to your neighbors? Then consider volunteering for the Friends of the UH Library!



UH Library Before



UH Library After

Volunteers recruit new members, assist with book sales and fundraising, write articles for local media (like this one!), help plan and staff events, and much more. We are looking for people interested in helping at all levels – from the occasional volunteer shift at an event to serving on the Board. Please send us an email at info@friendsofuhlibrary.org if you would like more information or to sign up.

Book Sales

The Friends book sale is back at the UH Branch Library at 4193 Park Blvd. Upcoming dates are March 18th and 19th, and April 15th and 16th. Come early for the best selection!

Did you know that there is a Friends book sale every day inside the UH Library? We stock a whole bookcase full of popular novels, kid's books, and non-fiction standouts for you to shop at your leisure. Proceeds support the UH Library through the Friends' programs.

Membership

We can provide financial support to our branch because of membership dues and donations. Please join us in helping our library continue to be a great resource for our community by joining or renewing your membership to the Friends of the University Heights Library. You can download a membership form on our website or pick up a form at the branch. The Friends of the San Diego Public Library is a California Tax Exempt Non-Profit Corporation under IRS 501(c)(3). FEIN: 95-3313747. Your tax-deductible membership dues and donations may be matched by the City of San Diego.

For more info

Check out our website www.friendsofuhlibrary.org or contact us at info@friendsofuhlibrary.org

You can also subscribe to our newsletter for all the latest info.

Thank you for supporting our library.

—Janet Tait
Vice President, the Friends of the University Heights Library

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ON THE BOULEVARDS

Mini Signs

If you're plugged into local neighborhoods, then you've seen the signs: Those neon glowing gateways that welcome you into unforgettable pockets of San Diego like University Heights, North Park, Hillcrest, Normal Heights and many others.

Are they battery powered, plug-in, remote controlled... how do they work?



They are plug in, come with a remote control dimmer and are LED, not glass/gas NEON. So they are very cost and energy efficient, almost break proof, don't get hot, and deliver the same neon feel.

What has the reaction been to emulating city "welcome signs"?

It's been overwhelming and extremely welcoming. Business Associations, Local Magazines, Small Retailers, Social Media Partners, Locals, Visitors etc. enjoy working with us, because we've created a concept that properly promotes the community. Plus we are fun and easy to work with, always looking to give back/support a local event or cause. We are local SD artists, and we've created a win-win-win scenario, so it's difficult to not embrace those elements. I now get weekly emails from people asking if we will be doing this community or that community/have you seen our sign, now that's the real reward.

What is the most unique location someone has placed one of your signs?

Wow, we've seen them everywhere, people use them at campsites, on golf carts, boats, they look amazing in outdoor gazebos, poolside, home bars, man caves, as an art piece in homes, etc., etc. It's really endless, and once you plug one in, the illumination brings a very different creative feel to you and its location.

Where can neighborhood enthusiasts buy mini signs?

Today they can simply buy them online at Category6LED.com. We ship for FREE anywhere in the U.S. Or they can pick one up at Eden University Heights (4636 Park Blvd) or Original Skin and Body Care (4416 Park Blvd).

—Lisa Getz

Dharma Bum Temple continued from front page

We started the Dharma Bum Temple to introduce Buddhism and meditation into a country where Buddhism is still relatively new. We understand that most people in this country were not raised Buddhist. They grew up Christian, Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, Muslim, Pagan or some without any religion at all. The people who come to the Dharma Bum Temple are not Buddhist and they do not become Buddhist. We are not here to make people Buddhist; we are here to help people open up to beauty that lives within their hearts, so they can bring that back into the world. The practice of meditation and community service is the heart of our work and we do our best to make a positive impact.

I share this letter from a UH resident as an example of what we aspire to be or maybe already are in this lovely Neighborhood:

Dear Jeff,

Further to my question today, here's some thoughts about Dharma Bum Temple (DBT) as a destination rather than a bridge. I'm sure I can't be the only one who experiences the DBT as an end in itself rather than a means to some other end. The fact that the

regular classes are led by practitioners rather than taught by teachers or monks exemplifies everything that is refreshing and approachable about the DBT. It is a philosophy of equality, a profound acknowledgement that we are all beginners, even if we've been meditating for years. This is not a superficial aspect of the experience, but rather a direct expression of the spiritual and intellectual humility that surely lies at the core of Buddhist self-awareness. I find that it is easier to refrain from judging one's own practice when structure that sustains one's concentration is not itself hierarchical. I came to the DBT consumed by anxiety and self-doubt. It was incalculably helpful to me that the temple had 'bum' in the name, because I felt like a bum and it seemed deliberately designed to accommodate the most troubled and vulnerable aspects of human nature, to honor them, even. Everything distinctive about the way you have set it up is conducive to acceptance – of the self, of others, of the chaos of the world. Is that not the message of Buddhism? – University Heights Resident

For more information, see www.thedharmabums.org.

—Jeff Zlotnik



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.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT. UHCA DOES NOT ENDORSE ANY CANDIDATES FOR POLITICAL OFFICE

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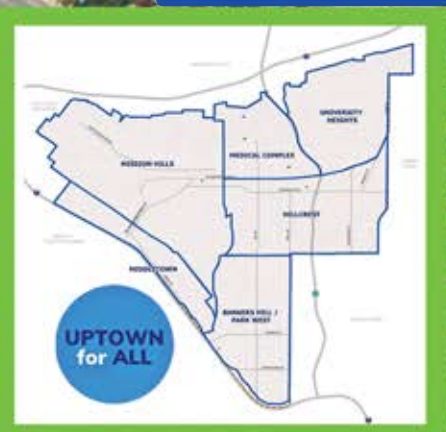
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- JASON FRYE
- DON LIDDELL
- CLIFFORD WEILER
- SUSAN BLACKWELL
- BLAKE PETERSON
- JIM WALSH

UPTOWN PLANNERS ELECTION DATES:

- Sat March 4 • 12-4 pm at Joyce Beers Center
- Mon March 6 • 5-8 pm at Mission Hills Library
- Tue March 7 • 3-7pm at Joyce Beers Center



IN DEVELOPMENT

Massive 8-Story Project in the Middle of 4300 Cleveland Block

There is no question that San Diego is facing an affordable housing crisis. The Mayor has enacted dramatic changes to how housing is developed with “Complete Communities” and “Housing Action Package 1.0 and 2.0” to try to streamline development, remove obstacles, reduce public input, and extend zoning regulation variances. One result of those efforts is a project currently underway in the *middle* of the 4300 block of Cleveland Avenue, which could drastically change that part of UH.

This project will replace an older single-family home with a new 8-story residential building with 49 units, according to the plans on file (PRJ-1074917). The new building will be one story taller than the Winslow project a few blocks away, and three more stories than the nearby Washington Crossing. To get a visual idea of what this *could* look like, I took an image of the Winslow, added a story, and cropped/sized to scale. This is not based on any architectural drawings, as none have been - *nor need to be* - shared under new City regulations:



Current 4350 Cleveland



Same view with an 8 story, 49 unit building



View from Maryland looking East



View looking South down Cleveland from Meade

UH has seen many ADUs or “granny flats” constructed since first approved in 2016. Under the City’s new development changes, larger multi-family projects are fast-tracked on what were single-family lots. UH is a prime area for these projects with our larger lot sizes, older home stock, and proximity to transit. In 2020, under previous zoning regulations, a 12-unit, 3-story redevelopment project was proposed for this same property:



C-12 project drawing from 2020 application, withdrawn in April 2022



That project was withdrawn in April 2022, and Fran Daly, a UH homeowner on neighboring Maryland Street, became concerned about what was happening on that site. She spoke with neighbors next to the property and discovered the new plans. “When we heard it was going to be 8 stories tall – I couldn’t believe it,” Daly said. “This is like having the UH Water Tower in the middle of the block!” [eds. note: the water tower is 127 feet tall, and this project is estimated to be 75 feet tall- 10 feet taller than Winslow and 30 feet taller than Washington Crossing].

FROM COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM WHITBURN



Hello University Heights Neighbors!

As we welcome in the New Year, we begin by identifying issues that we intend on addressing for our constituents! One issue the District 3 office is moving forward with pertains to our city’s current towing policy.

Towing is an essential service in maintaining uncluttered and accessible streets. Vehicles that may be blocking vital paths or roadways should be towed. Abandoned vehicles rusting away on our city streets should be towed. My biggest concern is that the city’s towing policy for violations like overdue vehicle registration and unpaid parking tickets is disproportionately affecting low-income residents who may be late on their payments because they are struggling to pay other bills. Losing your car to an impound company when you are experiencing financial hardship has terrible consequences.

Unfortunately, the impound is merely the tip of the iceberg. Once an individual’s vehicle is towed, owners are required to pay City fees, towing company charges, impound lot charges, outstanding fines and other charges which accumulate, worsening the economic burden. People unable to pay these rapidly mounting costs end up losing their vehicle due to financial insecurity. The analysis conducted by the Office of the City Auditor found that over the past six years, an astounding 32,000 cars towed by the city were not returned to their owners and were instead auctioned off to the highest bidder. It was also found that the current towing program is losing roughly \$1.5 million dollars annually.

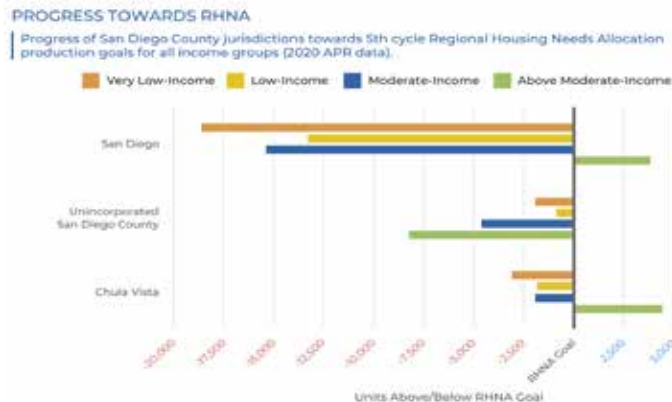
My office is working diligently to find alternatives to towing and auctioning people’s vehicles due to late registrations and unpaid parking tickets when their struggling to make ends meet. As always, I know that together we can find solutions to issues and concerns that arise. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our office. We can be contacted at stephenwhitburn@sandiego.gov or (619)236-6633. I look forward to continuing these conversations with you all soon!

— Stephen Whitburn, City Councilmember, District 3

Daly reached out to the City and confirmed that the new project was indeed happening as described. She was also informed by the Development Services Department, “as the proposed project is a Process One Construction Permit, as long as the project complies with the Municipal Code, it can be approved by City Staff without a public hearing and cannot be appealed as noted in San Diego Municipal Code 112.0502.”

Why the Crisis?

According to California Housing Partnership data, the City of San Diego is severely below the Regional Housing Needs Allocation goals, with 4,000 housing units more than the “above moderate-income” goal, and a shortage of nearly 50,000 units for moderate, low- and very low- income.



Most of the projects currently under development in UH are market-rate, mostly small (1-bedroom, studio, and “micro”) units. While these additional units may increase the overall stock of rental housing, there is no evidence that increasing the number of higher-end premium housing will increase the amount of affordable housing. Only small numbers of units are being designated for “affordable housing” and in some cases, those affordable units are being implemented in other buildings.

What can UH do?

The short answer is not much. The City has gone further than new state laws (SB9 and SB10) to expand what can be built in all areas of the City. Decisions that once were publicly discussed at planning groups like Uptown Planners and North Park Planning Committee are now being made at the City’s discretion without any need to share with or get input from residents. There is no easy fix to the need to address affordable housing, and it will require some change in neighborhoods - density in the right locations, with supportive elements where needed, and measuring the effectiveness.

With thousands of new residents coming to UH over the next few years filling over 1,100 units of housing under development, questions about infrastructure need to be raised. How will thousands of new residents get around? Will they be using bikes and public transportation, as many of the developments do not have adequate parking? How will they get to major employment centers with commute times of over 1.5 hours on buses? What impact will increased traffic have on our already struggling roads feeding 163, I-805, and I-15? And what about our already undersized library and parks?

The Mayor, as CEO of the City, has immense power to enact dramatic changes, and with the strong-Mayor system enacted in 2010, the City Council (including our representative) has typically voted for those changes over the loud protests from constituents, including those that spoke at the recent Land Use committee vote. Our community will need to organize, continue speaking up, and hold elected officials to account for decisions that will impact our neighborhood. 4350 Cleveland will not be the last project of this magnitude that will dramatically impact and alter UH.

Ultimately, however, it is property owners who will determine what our community looks like in the future. Property owners can still choose to sell their property to deserving buyers rather than to developers. Owners can also choose to remodel or expand their homes in a manner that is consistent with our community character. While there may not be much we can do to change City development policy at this point, we do have control over our own property and how it contributes or detracts from the broader community.

—Marc Johnson

100 Years of Spring in San Diego

If there’s one thing we can count on in a San Diego spring, it’s that the weather isn’t much different from one season to the next when compared to much of the rest of the U.S. In fact, journalists have pointed out our anti-climactic seasonal shift in San Diego for literally centuries.

Take a look at an article in The San Diego Union in 1938 and you’ll see the quote, “The advent of spring in this most favored of all climates, actually means little more than a date on the calendar...at any rate, spring arrived this morning, whether you’re aware of it or not.”



And so we find ourselves here again, enjoying the reliably temperate spring that our ancestral San Diegans did, and what remains consistent, as corroborated by our authors of the ‘30s, are the blooming wildflowers and the Canada geese heading back north. Though urban sprawl has displaced some of the 5000 to 8000 Canada geese that spend their winters in San Diego County, they still manage to find a temporary home on golf courses and reservoirs before making their way back north by March. As for the spring flowers, we can enjoy the same delights of the blooming wildflowers of hundreds of years ago by walking along our nearby Avenida Del Rio or, of course, the multitude of trails in Balboa Park.

The deep-rooted history of San Diego, and our own University Heights, is evident in the celebrations held, the archives revisited, and naturally, the nature abundant, as we continue to relish the climate we know we’re fortunate to live in. Or, as The San Diego Union put it in 1957, “Easterners may wonder where spring has been keeping itself. They will be interested to know that spring has been in Southern California. All the seasons stay here when they are on vacation.”

—Ariel Annon



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