

Newest UH Volunteer | Page 4



UH Artist Ansley Pye | Page 11

2021 LIGHTS IN THE HEIGHTS WINNER



Lights in the Heights 2021 | Page 12

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING? SAN DIEGO HOUSING FOUNDATION EXPLAINS

Broadly speaking, housing is considered affordable when a household pays no more than 30% of its gross income to pay for their rent or mortgage. Households paying more than 30% of their income for housing are considered “rent-burdened” or “cost-burdened.”



our economy depends on a large supply of lower-wage workers, but does not provide housing that is affordable to these households

People often assume that “affordable housing” refers to subsidized housing, but it’s important to note that most lower-income households live in what we call “Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing” or NOAH. This is housing that is provided at low rents, not because there are any subsidies or rent restrictions on the property, but because the homes simply can’t command a higher rent. They are typically older apartments and houses with few amenities.

In a “balanced” housing market, where new housing supply keeps up with demand, the market provides new homes that reflect current homebuilding costs as well as a constant supply of older homes that slowly slip into naturally affordability. But increased demand drives up rents, and these older homes (both apartments and houses) are bought up or rented by middle income households. The lower income households that used to live in these homes are pressed to double up, move further from their jobs, leave the region, or, all too often, end up homeless.

Because there is such a demand for rental housing, there is also a very profitable business in acquiring older, slightly distressed apartment buildings, making modest improvements in them, and then turning around and selling them for a substantial profit. This results in improvements to the housing stock, but it also has led to the loss of over 65,000 naturally extremely affordable housing units in the City of San Diego over the past 20 years and caused many thousands of lower wage workers, retired seniors, and neighbors living with disabilities to be deeply cost burdened and in many cases, lose their housing.

It is simply not financially feasible for the open market to build new units that are affordable to these lower income residents – it costs too much to build. At the same time, the region continues to create most of its new jobs in fields that pay low wages. This is where subsidized affordable housing becomes a necessity. Housing can be subsidized in a number of ways, but the largest number of rent-stabilized affordable units are created through a federal tax credit program known as the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, or LIHTC. This program provides tax incentives for investors to work with non-profit developers, municipalities, and other entities in a Public/Private

AFFORDABLE continued on page 2

UH Canyons Still a Dangerous Mess



Debris left at an encampment. Photo by Andy Lange

My wife and I live on the edge of a canyon overlooking the 163 as it comes up out of Mission Valley and heads into Balboa Park. Recently, we had two encampments spring up at the base of the canyon that were on the freeway side, and because of that, I submitted a Caltrans Customer Service Request to have them cleaned up.

Several weeks after my request was put in, and with no response by Caltrans, a neighbor, my wife, and I went down into the canyon and cleaned out one of the camps, but left the other one alone as it was occupied by someone in the throes of his meth addiction.

Less than a week after our cleanup, a new “tenant” moved in, so another neighbor and I went down to clean out this new encampment. As we arrived, we saw smoke coming out of the bushes. With thoughts of our neighborhood going up in flames, we called the fire department. Fortunately, by the time SDFD arrived, the fire was out, and even though the displaced person told the firemen the smoke was from a Coleman stove, there was a definite “burnt wood” smell in the air. One of the firemen told me that other than dealing with an actual fire, there wasn't anything they could do about the encampment.

How is it that a shrug of the shoulders and a “there's nothing we can do” becomes a legitimate response from First Responders who are paid tax dollars to administer city and state services and enforce city and state laws?

What constitutes an immediate threat to safety if not open flames in dry brush on a hillside with surrounding homes 100 feet away?

Firemen are trained to willingly run into burning buildings, but in this case, they can't even ask to see the purported stove? I didn't expect any type of actual enforcement. Did they think this was some ploy on our part for SDFD to get rid of the camp?

With the odor of smoke still hanging in the air, the firemen climbed into the cab of the truck and drove off.



Remnants of a campfire in canyon. Photo by Andy Lange

Several days after the relative inaction of the fire department, 3 members of UHCA's Beautification Team and I went down into the canyon, again, to clean out the camp. When we arrived, the camp's occupant was packing up and leaving. Along with the usual detritus that litters encampments, there was clear evidence of 5 separate areas within the encampment that were not “a fire from a Coleman stove,” as they told the fire department, but of actual fires.

On December 1st, more than 30 days after I put in my request, I got a response back from Caltrans that said it had been closed. Was it closed because private citizens had cleared the camp themselves, or was it closed just to get it off the books? The notification it stated, “Caltrans is proceeding with clearing encampments if there is an immediate threat to safety.” What constitutes an immediate threat to safety if not open

CANYON continued on page 5

NEXT UHCA MEETING

FEB. 3
6:45 PM

FOR SAFETY, MEETING VIA ZOOM

FEATURED SPEAKER: STEPHEN RUSSELL
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE SAN DIEGO HOUSING FEDERATION

UHSD.ORG/ATTEND-A-MEETING

LOOKING AHEAD

MAR. 7
6:45 PM

FOR SAFETY, MEETING VIA ZOOM

*CHECK OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA FOR POSSIBLE CHANGES

FEATURED SPEAKER TBD

WATCH SOCIAL MEDIA AND NEXT ISSUE

UHSD.ORG/ATTEND-A-MEETING

Birney Giving Tree 2021 Results



The University Heights community was very generous in participating in our Birney Giving Tree event at the end of last year, donating \$1,365 worth of gift cards, which were distributed to 46 students from 26 different families, adding some joy to their lives.

A big thank you to all those who donated gift cards, and to the locations who hosted the Birney Giving Tree drop-off boxes, to help the families in need at Alice Birney Elementary School.

- Sol Schumer



TRAFFIC CIRCLES FIXED

Our community's Meade Ave. traffic circles now read “University Heights” (instead of “North Park”). As originally reported in the November 2020 UHCA News, when the circles were installed along the Georgia-Meade bikeway, the two in University Heights on Meade at Alabama St. and Louisiana St. were incorrectly labeled with the name “North Park.”

Significant public outcry regarding this mistake, both on social media and at the UHCA monthly meeting, led former Councilmember Ward, current Councilmember Whitburn, Mayor Gloria's office, and SANDAG to organize a fix.

Thanks to the efforts of UHCA and our collective voices, SANDAG crews completed the work at the Louisiana St. circle and are currently finishing up the one at Alabama St.

- Marc Johnson

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

MARC JOHNSON

Welcome to 2022!

As we entered the holiday season, my family's tree was aglow as we started hosting some small get-togethers again. But Omicron reared its virulent spikes at us, and we (along with many of our friends and family), went back into the cautionary state that we've all been living under for the last two years. Such is life in a pandemic.

I know many folks who have struggled with illness, job changes, and never-ending schedule changes. But, through the challenges we've all endured, I remain optimistic. I believe we have hopefully made it through what appears to be the worst of this – I've seen people come through the pandemic stronger and thriving.

We have a lot going on in our community: new housing and developments are popping up all over our neighborhood, while restaurants and businesses are opening and expanding. We also have ongoing issues with encampments in the canyons, homelessness, zoning changes, and new updated master plans for both our parks and library. I hope UHCA is helping to keep you informed through this paper, on our social media, and through our meetings.

We won't be having our large in-person events until doing so is deemed safe, but that hasn't stopped our mighty Beautification Team from doing their awesome best to help keep UH beautiful, with the Birney Cleanup, ongoing efforts

of our trash angels, the Vermont Street Bridge decorations and upkeep, and of course the always popular Lights in the Heights (see full coverage in this issue).

We will be starting off the new year with our monthly community meetings via Zoom, where important topics covering Zone Watch, homelessness, housing, and developments will be covered, along with updates from our library and friends, school friends, and elected officials. The monthly meetings are the best way to find out the latest on what's happening in UH, and to raise your questions and issues, whether as part of the Crime Watch at 6:45pm or during the general meeting starting at 7pm. Representatives from our elected officials' offices are there to answer questions and hear concerns directly from you.

UHCA is the voice of our community, and together we've made a difference for nearly forty years. With your support and help, we continue in our mission of "improving the quality of life and sense of community in San Diego's University Heights."

I wish everyone a safe, healthy, happy, and prosperous 2022!

Marc



AFFORDABLE *continued from front page*

Partnership to produce new, rent-stabilized housing with affordability requirements that last for 55 years.

The bottom line is that our economy depends on a large supply of lower-wage workers, but does not provide housing that is affordable to these households. We are producing only between 900-1200 new rent-stabilized affordable units per year, while we are losing an average of 3,000 NOAH units. The overcrowding and homelessness that is evident in our communities is the inevitable result of our failure to provide a housing supply that matches the needs of our workforce.

- Stephen Russell

[Note: Mr. Russell will be the featured speaker at the UHCA Feb. meeting on Thursday, Feb. 3]



YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD JEWELER

CUSTOM DESIGN
JEWELRY & WATCH REPAIR
ESTATE JEWELRY
AND APPRAISALS

4669 PARK BLVD
SAN DIEGO, CA 92116

619 297-7300

MON-FRI 10-6 | SAT 10-5

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS & RENEWALS

BUSINESS GOLDEN OSTRICH

Fibre The Venue and Salon, Madison on Park

BUSINESS/CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

Eden University Heights, Cecilia's Fine Jewelry, Original Skin, Clos Wine Shop Masters

GOLDEN OSTRICH

Joshua Eckels, John & Jean Earl, Christopher & Tammy Barker, Michael & Kelli Chandler, Jim Dax & Jay Hill, Patricia Ryan & Lloyd Alexander, Clayton & Sharon Haven, Hyosuk Seo, Paul & Priscilla Heisel, Renee Gregorio & Jill Kruse, Brian Lexmond & Gregory Holzschuher, Jennifer Colosimo, Andrew Guzzon & Cathy Strittmatter

GIFT

Karen Keltner & Evelyn DeLaRosa, Brian Lexmond & Gregory Holzschuher

HOUSEHOLD

Lucas Morton, Tamara Zyhylij, Taylor Gray, William Thomsen, Karen Rosen & John Chan, Lee Wahlert & David Machado, Karen Keltner & Evelyn DeLaRosa, Benjamin & Mona Burke, Christopher Ward & Thomas Harpole, DOVEYDESIGN, Michael Gorman & Patrick Patterson, Monica Lanctot & Adam Graham, Patricia Higgins-North, Terri Tunnicliff & Peter Otto, Elaine Bisconti, Erin MacKinnon, Andy Cameron, Gerri Cohn, Edie Jacobsen & Genevieve Johnson, Linda Burke, Kevin & Marisa Martinez, Deborah Morrison, Melinda "Lindy" Rodwell, Bernard Damborn & Dawn Sassi Damborn, Tori & Kesler Randall, Thomas O'Rourke, Robert MacDonald, Silvia Ward, Joshua King, Russ Pierce & Mimi Rothman

JOIN TODAY AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

OUR SUCCESS IS LARGELY DEPENDENT ON VOLUNTEER EFFORTS FROM AREA RESIDENTS LIKE YOU.



OUR MISSION

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



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)
- \$75 Business Plume
- \$150 Business Golden Ostrich

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



JOIN, RENEW, DONATE, OR VOLUNTEER ONLINE AT UHSd.org.

UHCA NEWS

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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 for details.



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UHCA MEETING NOTES IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

December 2 UHCA Community Meeting Summary

The “Crime Watch” segment of the meeting began at 6:45pm. Nan McGraw noted evidence of fires in the canyon below Zone 3, above the 163, which is Caltrans property. Officer David Surwilo shared that we need to complain to Caltrans and get an email confirmation. He recommends to always start with something that can be documented. Then let Chris Ward, our State Assembly Representative, know about the situation. Ask his office to follow up with Caltrans as well. Articulate your concern. This is not a PATH issue. It is an illegal fire issue. Fires can burn up the hills into residential communities and is a real concern for University Heights. Officer Surwilo also shared some good tips regarding shopping during the Holidays. Although SDPD did increase police presence at the malls, you should never put purchased items in your car, even the trunk, and return to shopping. Your car may be broken into at this point. If you want to continue shopping, get into your car and drive to another part of the parking lot. Make it look like you just arrived. Additionally, UH residents were reminded to use the Get It Done App to report homeless camps. Reports will be forwarded to the appropriate department. Follow this up with an email to Stephen Whitburn’s office – our City Council Representative.



Marc Johnson opened the General Meeting at 7:00pm, thanking all our members for joining and renewing throughout the year - including our Business Members. The University Heights Community Association began in 1983 primarily to push back against developers and establish the Trolley Barn Park. That is our heritage. We are a non-profit, volunteer supported organization whose mission is to enhance our quality of life and sense of community. We organize events, publish the UHCA News, hold monthly meetings, coordinate neighborhood clean-ups, and provide volunteer opportunities. Our Zone Watch Program strengthens our communication with law enforcement. Our members empower the community and amplify its voice. Thank you to our Membership.

Lisa Getz, our latest Board Member, was introduced. Lisa has a long-time presence in our community and will be a definite asset as she assists us with Social Media and Business Outreach.

We have a number of volunteer positions open, including Lead Editor for the UHCA News – about 5 to 10 hours per month. A Newspaper Distribution Coordinator. Block walkers for newspaper distribution. Event Coordinators (we plan on holding events again in 2022) and Website Support (Squarespace experience would be of great benefit).

Sol Schumer reported on the Birney Giving Tree 2021. Residents were asked to purchase gift cards for families in need at the Alice Birney Elementary School by December 3rd. There were a number of drop off locations listed on our website. Thank you Sol for all your hard work spearheading this cause.

Sol also reported on the Beautification Team. Our November 13th Birney Elementary clean-up was a big success. Even Stephen Whitburn and members of his team pitched in. Thank you to everyone who participated. On November 28th Holiday decorations and lights were installed on the Vermont Street Bridge. The Lights in the Heights judging took place on December 19th. Winners are announced in the in this issue of the UHCA News. The Beautification Team is also working on a tree initiative with the goal of having blocks of streets planted at once.

Erin McKinnon reported on the Birney Big Give, a great cause for our neighborhood. The school offers a lot of wonderful programs which are supported through fundraising. Their

goal is \$35,000. UHCA is a sponsor. Please feel free to give at any time during the year.

Helene Idels from the University Heights Branch Library joined us. The new “Discover and Go” program is now here, offering free passes to participating museums. Wi-Fi Hot Spots are available for library card holders. Isabel Schechter from the Friends of the Library reports that the FOL does a lot for our branch including the purchase of books, leasing of popular books, and supporting many local projects. Security cameras were installed during 2021. The library has a wish list that requires funding through donations from businesses and individuals.

The Greater Hillcrest CBD (Central Business District) is moving forward without working with University Heights. A part of UH is projected to be included in their proposal. Only 30% of the vote is needed to enact. UH business owners are a small fraction of the vote. CCUH is working with Hillcrest to encourage a “No” vote.

The Dog Park at the Ed Center is moving forward. The 10,000 sq ft fenced off-leash area is planned to be designed and built in the Spring – open in the Summer of 2022. We are reminded to clean up after our dogs if using the Birney joint use field. Let’s do our part for our students.

Christopher Vallejo from Senator Toni Atkins’ office shared that \$81 million has been designated to affordable housing. Her office continues to assist constituents with the EDD, FTB, and State agencies.

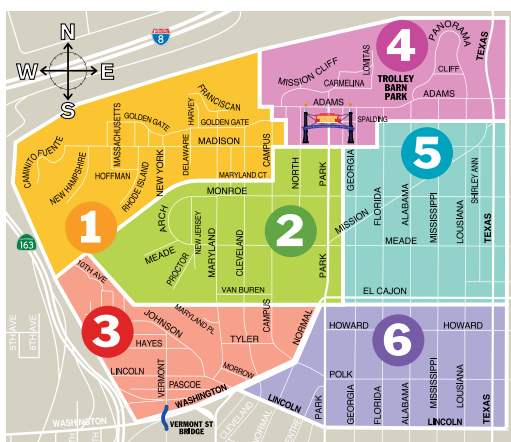
Rick-Arlo Yah Lira was introduced as Co-host and moderator for Stephen Whitburn and Chris Ward. This meeting marked Stephen Whitburn’s 1-year anniversary as our representative. He explained that our Community Association was fundamental in us receiving funds for the Dog Park. Whitburn is impressed with our Newspaper and that we are an engaged neighborhood. He continues to work on the homeless situation and says benefits will begin to be noticed. His office is reaching out to provide shelter services and looking for support from city colleges. Shelters are reaching capacity. More beds are needed and are being located. The city is opening unused properties. The County is providing a Shelter Tent. Behavioral Health Care is being introduced. A Mental Health Crisis Team is up and running, provided by the County. The State is now investing billions of dollars into the homeless situation with millions of it coming to San Diego. Different levels of government are working together on this crisis in alignment with one another’s efforts. Budget season is approaching. Mr. Whitburn is keeping a list of University Heights’ requests for project funding. Questions from the audience were fielded.

Chris Ward, our State Assembly Representative, said that housing and homeless continues to be an important issue. The Federal government is investing \$75 billion, which will be allocated to immediate priorities. There are approximately 120,000 homeless in California. Ward is hoping these investments will have a direct effect. Money is being set aside for affordable housing as well as to stop homelessness before it happens. Our climate crisis is another important issue. Funding is being provided to help communities protect themselves from wildfire threats, extreme heat issues, rising sea levels, water security, and other changes that impact our neighborhoods. Ward is supporting small businesses through relief grants, payroll protection loans, tax relief, and the Golden State Stimulus Program which will help almost two thirds of Californians. Project dollars support Health Care, Transportation, Broad Band Infrastructure, etc. Targeted investments include Balboa Park maintenance and restoration, Normal Street Promenade, Hillcrest Medical Center, and gun restriction training. Bills that Ward submitted and were approved include Native Species Protection, Eliminate Discrimination in Housing, expanded college savings programs (Scholarshare), and support for Equality California. Christopher Gris shared his contact information as Chris Ward’s support staff member (see “Our Representatives” in this issue for details). Questions from the audience were fielded.

Happy New Year to you all.

- Brent Orlesky, UHCA Secretary & Treasurer

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 or contact your zone’s coordinator or Nan McGraw.

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

UH PHONE BOOK

Emergency • Police • Fire • Medical	911	Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP)	619-692-4945
Non-Emergency Suspicious Activity, Homeless Outreach Team, etc.	619-531-2000	Vacation home security check, welfare of home-bound, patrolling business districts, homeland security support	
SD City Services: Emergency & Non-Emergency	619-527-7500	SDPD Community Relations Officers:	619-692-4858
Street lights, potholes, etc.		David Surwilo dsurwilo@pd.sandiego.gov	619-692-4800
Online: www.sandiego.gov/city-hall/departments		SDPD Western Division 5215 Gaines Street	800-252-4613
Alert San Diego Reverse 911 notification to mobile phones for emergencies requiring evacuations	www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego/	Shopping Cart Pick-Up Service	info@stonewallcitizens.org
2-1-1 San Diego	211 or 858-300-1211	Stonewall Citizens Patrol	888-724-7240
Free Resources: CalFresh, Medi-Cal, Covered California, etc.		Suicide Prevention	619-297-3166
Abandoned Vehicles	858-495-7856	UHCDC University Heights Community Development Corporation	619-692-4912
Alice Birney Elementary Office	619-497-3500	University Heights Public Library 4193 Park Blvd	619-260-0668
Animals / Non-Emergency	619-767-2675	UH Zone Watch Coordinator Nan McGraw nmcsan@aol.com	911
Brush and Weed Abatement	619-533-4444	Graffiti: In Progress Emergency:	https://getitdone.force.com
Code Violations	619-533-5500	Report Online:	619-527-7500
COVID-19 City of San Diego Daily Updates	www.sandiego.gov/coronavirus	Graffiti Hotline:	858-694-2888
Crime Stoppers Tip Line	888-580-TIPS (8477)	SD Vector Control mosquitoes / ticks / rats	
Department of Environmental Health Public Health / Rats / Rodents	858-694-2888	Online: vector@sdcounty.ca.gov	
Downed Power Lines / SDG&E	800-411-7343		
Emergency Water / Sewer Repair / Sink Holes	619-515-3525		
Narcotics Suspicious drug house / anonymous	619-531-2468		

Download this app for reporting non-emergency issues, like potholes, graffiti, code violations, overwatering, 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.

UHCA BEAUTIFICATION UPDATE

Meet Grace, University Heights' Newest Volunteer!

For the past five years, I have been a blockwalker, delivering the UHCA community newspaper to homes and businesses on Meade Avenue between Park Boulevard and Texas Street. As I was heading out to deliver the September 2021 issue, I was joined on my route by my best buddy and neighbor, 5-year-old Grace, a proud Birney Bee.



Thanks to our newest volunteer, Grace!

That day marked the beginning of Grace becoming a community volunteer. She enjoyed delivering the paper so much that she asked if she could join forces with me to become a junior blockwalker. Each month since then, Grace and I have gone up and down Meade Avenue with a big bag of newspapers. Grace personally placing a newspaper on each homeowner's step. She is quick to offer a smile or stay for a brief conversation and particularly enjoys the stops where there is a friendly dog for her to pet.

when I mentioned that I was going around the neighborhood to do my monthly trash pick up, Grace asked if she could come along and help. Wearing gloves and bringing her broom, Grace swept the sidewalks and picked up trash alongside me, cementing her role as a volunteer with the Beautification Team.

When I became the UHCA Beautification Team leader in October, I invited Grace and her parents to volunteer at the November 13 Birney Elementary clean up. Grace worked side by side with her parents the entire morning. In December,

If you would like to volunteer within our community, there are numerous opportunities available. Please see Page 2 of this newspaper for a list.

- Jennifer Lisa Bishop

CALL FOR WRITERS!



UHCA News is always looking for content that matters to UH residents. We strive to cover local UH news, and our best "reporters" are our neighbors. So if you have news to share, or an item that would be of interest to your UH neighbors, we want to help you share it to the community in these pages. You can pitch ideas, articles, or topics to the UHCA News team by sending them to uhcanews@uhsd.org. Be sure to check out our Editorial Guidelines at www.uhsd.org/submissions.

Nature in the Neighborhood

Winter Warbler of The Benign Southlands



Orange-crowned Warbler (*Oreothlypis celata*)
Photo credit: audubon.org

The coastal lowlands of San Diego County and environs are transitional in terms of latitude on the West Coast. Whereas our coastal mesas and canyons are well within the temperate zone, our southern location imparts a gentler winter climate than mountainous regions to the east and colder areas further north on the coast. For these reasons, the San Diego suburbs support a high variety of native plants in remnant natural areas (such as canyons), and the developed neighborhoods have been planted in a dazzling array of non-native plants by humans for over a century. Many of these exotic plants are from tropical regions and/or the Southern Hemisphere, and so they bloom throughout our winter. The green, blooming plants and mild temperatures in turn support more of an active winter insect fauna, all of which provide suitable conditions for small, insect-eating birds. Coastal weather is variable, though, which can render insect populations unreliable, so bird species that can utilize alternate food sources, such as fruit or plant nectar, possess a survival advantage during the colder months.

In November we profiled the Yellow-rumped Warbler, a winter visitor from the high mountains, but its relative, the Orange-crowned Warbler (*Oreothlypis celata*), occurs in and around our suburban environment throughout the year. Males of this diminutive, yellow-green bird rarely display the small patch of orange feathers atop their heads, so the name may seem like a misnomer. Furthermore, the retiring habits and soft call of the species may cause it to be overlooked by all but the most careful observers. The abundance of this species in the southern coastal lowlands actually increases in the winter, as our area receives southward migrants from colder areas to the north. Orange-crowns occupy a range of coastal habitats in search of tiny insects in plant foliage and are particularly fond of native oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*), but also readily supplement this diet with nectar from exotic blooming plants such as Cape Honeysuckle (*Tecomaria capensis*), Bottlebrush (*Callistemon*), Eucalyptus, and Kangaroo Paw (*Anigozanthos*).

The soft, slightly descending trill song is only occasionally heard from the rims of densely vegetated canyons where a few of these birds breed in spring and summer. In winter, the orange-crown betrays its presence with only a very soft, toneless, whispery "tsip" note that is detectable only to a trained ear. It is best to look for this species as a flash of pale yellow in dense vegetation, particularly flowering shrubs. The bird will also fly closer to investigate a human observer who utters the fuzzy white noise known to birders as "pishing." Orange-crowns will also readily join roving flocks of the more familiar and conspicuous Bushtits (*Psaltriparus minimus*). Look for a small, active bird with uniform plumage color and a dark line through the eye.

- John Lovio

IT'S YOUR BUSINESS

Valentine's Day Treats at Twiggs



2022 marks the 25th anniversary of Bernie and I owning Twiggs. Our bakery has specialized in wedding cakes and special occasion cakes and, of course, Valentine's Day is a special occasion for many. Most of the cakes we sell feed anywhere from 8 to over 100 people. But for Valentine's Day, everyone is looking for a cake for two with the possibility of a little leftover. I suppose it would be great for business to own a bakery in a Mormon town of plural marriages selling cakes to feed all the sister wives, but that's not University Heights. So we bake a few desserts that we make only around Valentine's Day, designed just for two.

Honestly, pre-Covid Valentine's Day was a modest sales period compared to Thanksgiving, the December holidays and, of course, wedding season (almost year round in San Diego). Since Covid, however, many more couples decided to have quiet dinners at home rather than dine out, which turned out to be a bit of a boon for us. For years we've sold our Red Velvet cake in a heart shape covered in a chocolate ganache. We generally put one of the simplistic sayings from a Sweet Tart candy heart on top, like "Be Mine," though the most popular is the Ralph Wiggims Valentine's card sentiment from the Simpsons: "I Choo Choo Choose You." We also offer a heart-shaped Passion Fruit Tart topped with fresh fruit that can have any inscription you choose on top. For kids (ok, and adults), we have heart-shaped brown sugar cookies for a small bite.

The cookies will be available at both Twiggs locations, while the cakes and tarts will be sold only at our 2804 Adams Avenue location. Thanks to everyone, be they Valentines or not, for supporting Twiggs through the past 25 years!

- Dan Stringfield



AMERICAN ETHNIC GRUB



EAT LOCAL
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CANYON *continued from front page*

flames in dry brush on a hillside with surrounding homes 100 feet away?

I understand that Caltrans isn't going to run out and deal with service requests as soon as they come in, nor is anyone from the city, should it be in their jurisdiction. But what can private citizens do in the meantime, without running afoul of Caltrans or the city, to feel like our neighborhood isn't going to go up in flames before a service request hits the top of some department's queue and a crew is sent out?

What can private citizens do ... to feel like our neighborhood isn't going to go up in flames before a service request hits the top of some department's queue and a crew is sent out?

Following is a timeline of my attempts to get help from city and state agencies after smoke was seen coming up out of the bushes one Sunday morning:

CityNet – It was mentioned during the November UHCA Zoom meeting that CityNet had recently signed a contract to deal with encampments specifically on Caltrans property. I received no response to my email sent Nov. 22nd.

HOT/Homeless Outreach Team – No response to my voicemail left on Nov. 24th.

Caltrans – No response to an email sent Nov. 29th. I had a contact within Caltrans I'd dealt with in the past. Although he wasn't specifically in a department that could offer direct assistance, I asked that he forward my email on to someone who could.

San Diego Fire & Rescue – Understood my concern, but just long enough to pass me on to another department – Environmental Services.

Environmental Services – Confirmed what I already knew: "... if it is along the side of the freeway, you would need to contact Caltrans."

San Diego Police Department – Officer David Surwilo suggested I contact State Assemblymember Chris Ward's office, since it's on State property, and Park & Rec because the encampment is in an "... open space area and adjacent to city lands." He also suggested I resubmit a report to Caltrans and focus on the fire danger.

Councilmember Stephen Whitburn's office – Benny Cartwright, Communications & Council Representative (Hillcrest), forwarded my concerns to Assm. Chris Ward's office on December 2nd.

San Diego Park & Rec – They couldn't offer any help as "... it's on Caltrans property."

Caltrans (again) – As suggested by Officer Surwilo, and because Caltrans had closed out my previous service request without any action, I filed another request on December 11th stating my concerns over the fire danger of the homeless man whose meth-induced rants can be heard echoing up the canyon walls. On January 6th, 2022, I got a notification from Caltrans stating "... the Customer Service Request has been addressed, and your ticket has been closed." However, the homeless camp was still there when I checked on the 7th. I filed a third service request on Jan. 8th.

State Assemblymember Chris Ward – I sent a follow-up email to Chris Ward's office on December 28th. (NOTE - I'm waiting for a response from both/either Benny Cartwright's and/or my email). Ironically, Assm. Ward's house borders this same canyon.



More evidence of fire left in canyon. Photo by Andy Lange

I have no doubt that Mayor Todd Gloria, Councilmembers, and others are working on tackling this problem and trying to come up with a workable solution. However, maybe one of the many items on their agenda should be educating all city employees on jurisdictional questions and how most

city departments and employees don't deal with issues on State property.

But why would I expect them to listen to me? I'm just a resident trying to prevent his neighborhood from going up in flames.

- Andy Lange is a UH resident and volunteer



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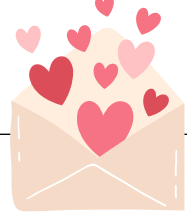
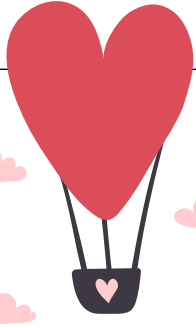





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February 2022



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
BLACK HISTORY MONTH		1 SDUSD Board Meeting 5 pm, sandiegounified.org Uptown Planners 6:00 pm uptownplannersd.org Chinese New Year (Tiger) March News Articles Due	2 UHDCDC 6:00 pm uhcdc.org UHCA Beautification Meeting 6:00 pm Groundhog Day	3 UH Park & Rec Meeting 5:30 pm uhcdc.org UHCA Meeting 6:45 pm Via Zoom www.uhsd.org/attend-a-meeting	4 Rosa Parks Day 	5	
6 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm	7	8 SDUSD Board Meeting 5 pm, sandiegounified.org Hillcrest Town Council 6:30 pm	9 	10  Curbside Recycling & Yard Waste Collection	11	12 Lincoln's Birthday 	
13 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm 	14 Library Lover's Day National Organ Donor Day Valentine's Day 	15 North Park Planning Committee 6:30 pm northparkplanning.org Susan B. Anthony's Birthday	16 No UH Library Task Force Meeting	17	18 	19	
20 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm Love Your Pet Day World Day of Social Justice	21 Presidents' Day  HAPPY PRESIDENT'S DAY	22 SDUSD Board Meeting 5 pm, sandiegounified.org March UHCA News Out	23	24 National Tortilla Chip Day  Curbside Recycling & Yard Waste Collection	25	26 	
27 Hillcrest Farmers Market 9 am - 2 pm	28 	 Happy Valentine's Day!					

Valentine's Day

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BIRNEY BUZZ



Fill in the blank: “You know your kids need to go back to school when ____.” For our family, it was when we were about to have dinner and they asked us what they were going to have for lunch. Or when one of our kids mispronounced a big word and we tried to explain that it was another exception to the rule, but we weren’t exactly sure what the rule was. Winter break was much needed, but it was time to get back to schedules and learning.

However, with all the news about Omicron, I know I’m not alone when I say that it’s scary—the thought of sending our kids to a potential outbreak. Then news about viral Tik Tok challenges to vandalize school property or cause disruption and harm compounded our worries. A new year usually brings a renewed optimism, but how do you do that when the news is bad and focused on schools?

Last year, one of our beloved Birney teachers, Ms. R, coined the phrase for her class, “Do your best and forget the rest.” I’m still learning to do that as an adult, but I think that is how you stay optimistic. So, to put it in real-life terms, we do what can to mitigate the bad possibilities and let our kids go learn. For us, that means being vaccinated, masking up, talking to our kids about safety, and developing a trust with the Birney staff. I also put myself where

my kids are, in their world. Their world at Birney is one where they are encouraged to be risk-takers and inquirers, and their main job is to learn. During an unplanned emergency drill in December, our daughter’s first grade teacher reassured her students to stay calm, to listen, and that they were safe with her. I believe they were and are as safe as they can be in order to grow as people.

So, I will do my best to be cautiously optimistic, and I hope you will do the same.

Although 2021 is behind us, we would be remiss to not say thank you to the University Heights and Birney communities for their continued support. We appreciate the neighborhood volunteers who cleaned up the Meade side of Birney one cold December morning. And Birney’s Big Give fundraising drive on December 9th raised \$34,800 for Birney’s IB programs due to the generous contributions of Birney families, staff, alumni, community members, and sponsors.

In 2022, we have the 1st (annual) scavenger hunt fundraiser scheduled for January 29th, so expect to see our students and their families, in their finest Birney apparel, roaming the neighborhood looking for clues. The 15th annual Run for the Green jog-a-thon fundraiser is scheduled to take place from March 14 to 18th. Our Birney farmstand occurs on the second or third Saturday of the month at Twiggs on Park. We welcome new sponsors and donors for all Birney events, so please contact us at info@friendsofalicebirney.org if you would like more information. Please visit us at friendsofalicebirney.org for more information on all our events!

- Vaychan Hallman, Proud Birney parent and Friends of Alice Birney Elementary (FOABE) Board Member

Want to make things happen? Yes UHCAN!

UHCAN, The University Heights Community Action Network, is a new tool being launched by the Community Coalition of University Heights. CCUH is a coalition of the University Heights Community Association, University Heights Community Development Corporation, and the University Heights Historical Society. Some of the issues that these organizations work together on include City Council budget priorities for UH, the Education Center redevelopment, City Council redistricting, and promoting/defending UH boundaries.

During the recent City Council redistricting process, CCUH representatives advocating for UH interests saw how other community groups organized their members to attend, speak, and write comments supporting their goals. CCUH was able to rally 30 residents to comment in favor of keeping UH in a single Council District, which ultimately succeeded.

There are times where we will need voices from our community, whether in person (or via Zoom) at a city council meeting, via emails, or responding to survey questions from San Diego City Council and department staff. To help facilitate quick action, CCUH is launching UHCAN to make sure our neighbors can band together and effectively make sure our community’s voice is heard.



How does UHCAN work?

UHCAN is an email list where people who are willing to help out will be notified when action is needed. UHCAN will provide background information, links, and help with suggested wording for comments or emails. UHCAN is governed by leaders from each of the member organizations, and the operating agreement is that all positions and actions will be unanimously agreed to by all three organizations, with the backing of each organization’s board.

What UHCAN is *not*...

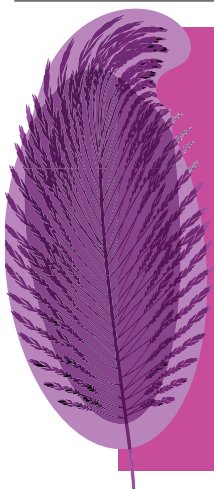
UHCAN is not a political action committee and will not be involved in any electoral politics, candidate endorsements, or other partisan activities. All issues and actions will be directly related to quality-of-life issues in University Heights.

What are you signing up for?

You will get action alerts from the CCUH email system when an issue is coming up for public comment. These emails will be clearly identified and will let you know what is being proposed and how to make your voice heard, with specific instructions (including suggested responses). There should be no more than 1-2 Action Alerts per month.

Signing up is easy. Just visit www.cc-uh.org, click on the “Stay Informed” button at the top right, complete the form, click the button labeled “Sign up for UHCAN to advocate for a better quality of life in UH,” and then hit “Subscribe.”

CCUH will provide updates at www.cc-uh.org, in UHCA News, and at UHCA meetings when there are activities happening. We look forward to helping make sure our city hears us! - Marc Johnson



PLUME

This month, UHCA awards a giant-sized plume to everyone who participated in the Birney Giving Tree. Thanks to your generosity, 26 families received a little extra something this holiday season, with over \$1300 in gift cards donated. We are especially grateful and proud of our businesses who helped collect the gift cards. We also express our deepest gratitude and appreciation for the tireless efforts of UHCA board member Sol Schumer who spearheaded the program this year. The Birney Giving Tree is one of the greatest examples of how our community comes together to help each other out, and we couldn’t be more proud to be a part of it!

New Year’s Toast

by Jane Muschenetz

Let all of us be happy!

Isn’t better to have a head full of delicious dreams
than drinking rancid, sour thoughts day after day?

Dreams aren’t dinner, but happiness
has never been about external things, like beauty,
it’s in the eye of the beholder

Impossible concoctions full of mirth
are just as real as our imagined fears...
Therefore, my dears
make meals of poetry and art

Stop fasting!
Measure with your heart
what truly matters, and raise a toast –
To hope! To love! To friendship everlasting!
(To all the things we cannot touch but move us most)

Pour out your glass of “what ifs” and “if onlys” –
regret’s a vintage that costs much to keep.
Uncork instead the wishes you’ve been hoarding
and drink deep!



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BETWEEN THE COVERS

MISS HELENE

February is "National Library Lover's Month," and we would love for our community to visit us at the University Heights Branch Library to say hello and see what's new. I would like to introduce myself. I'm Helene Idels, the library's new Youth Services Librarian. I have worked at several San Diego Public Library branches over the years and recently came over to University Heights in October 2021. I look forward to getting to know the community as we start to gradually bring back some of our library programs such as Storytime and Creative Crafts. I am often referred to as "Miss Helene, the Steampunk Librarian," so don't be surprised if you see me costumed in period or themed attire for my storytimes!

Do you know about our latest 2021-2022 "One Book One San Diego" reading selections for all ages? They include Being Heumann, When Stars Are Scattered, and All the Way to the Top - with all three focusing on disability rights and services. You can place a hold on these titles and pick them up when you come in to visit us at the library! SDPL will be offering OBOSD programs throughout the spring related to this topic. And, speaking of spring, be sure to stay tuned for details about our "Spring Into Steam" program coming soon. "Let's Grow" is this year's theme, and it will include opportunities to learn about botany, gardening, and sustainability.

You can find more information for SDPL programs and services at the library website: www.sandiego.gov/public-library. And we love for you to follow our University Heights Branch Library's Facebook page and online calendar of events for all the latest



happenings: at www.facebook.com/universityheightslibrary.

Please note that all City Libraries are CLOSED for President's Day on Monday, February 21st. Book drops will remain open for your convenience. Meanwhile, we wish you and yours a happy and healthy 2022 and a very Happy Valentine's Day!

- Helene Idels, Youth Services Librarian
University Heights Branch, San Diego Library
619-692-4912 - UHStaff@sandiego.gov

UH Branch Hours

Monday-Tuesday 11:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Wednesday-Saturday 9:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Closed Sunday

Meet Newest Cardholder!

A special welcome to Matisse de la Rosa, the newest library card holder at the UH Branch,



thanks to the "My First Library Card" program.

Stop by and help your little ones get their special first library card and a keepsake photo with Odi the Coyote!

Photo by Monica de la Rosa

Pet of the Month Tex



Tex was adopted from the San Diego Humane Society in October 2020, a true pandemic cat. He became my wife's office mate and work companion throughout the many months working from home. Tex was rescued from a hoarding situation and was considered one of the Humane Society's "behavior cats" because he was so timid and shy. With a suggested behavior plan in place that we put into action, Tex warmed up to his new environment quickly. He became bold quickly, courageously investigating unknown noises in an instant, and also became fast friends with our other kitty and our neighbor's sweet dog. Tex is 3 years old, and we couldn't imagine our home without him in it.

Tex loves curling up on the couch with us, playing with his toy pipe cleaners and toy mice, and waking us up at 4:30 in the morning because it is apparently essential that all of us are awake at the same time! He will proudly trot around the house, pipe cleaner or toy mouse in his mouth, and happily play by himself with the toy for a solid 15 minutes. He has very specific and particular places where he decides each toy needs to be. He will play fetch with his toys as well. Tex also loves sleeping in his soft dog-turned-cat-bed, and keeping himself warm and cozy at all times, kneading the softness of the bed ever so earnestly with his delightfully awkward paws.

Tex is a partial Snowshoe cat. That's why we got him for half off at the shelter - we joke! His Siamese comes out with his bright blue eyes, seal point coloring, crossed eyes at times, and a little kink in his too-long, white-tipped tail. Long wonky legs make him appear to be wearing cowboy boots, hence his name. He loves looking out the window to watch dogs being walked to Trolley Barn Park and our neighbor friend raccoons, skunks, and possums at night. He has the biggest personality for such a little animal and is the sweetest and most affectionate cat!
- Matt & Dana Koziol



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PERSPECTIVES

Home Is Wherever I'm with ADU

Everyone knows that we are in the middle of a housing crisis. Whether you intend to rent or buy a home, single family properties in job-rich, high-opportunity areas such as San Diego continue to be in short supply, and those that are available are unaffordable for the average single family household. So how do we even begin to address the complex issue of affordable housing?

By now, many people have heard of accessory dwelling units from friends or family who either have recently built one or are interested in building one in their backyard. ADUs, also known as granny flats, in-law suites, guest houses, or companion units, are a more sustainable and desirable housing option to build and live in compared to apartment complexes. A sustainable housing option is one that meets our own needs, both as a renter or homeowner in the community, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability is not just environmentalism, but also concern for social equity and economic development. Building more ADUs not only increases the affordable housing supply, but also offers a path toward financial stability and social equity, and still contributes to the appearance and charm of our neighborhood.

For the homeowner, an ADU can provide a healthy supplemental rental income. ADUs can also serve as a flexible housing option for multi-generational households which are becoming more commonplace. Being able to share independent living areas with family members and others can provide a comfortable, affordable, accessible, and practical housing option for families dealing with child care, special needs, or elderly members, while still maintaining privacy. Many UH homes have rear alley access via garage or carport on the backside of the property which would automatically give the ADU a completely separate entrance from the main unit. With this type of layout, it is common for the backyard to be divided into two separate backyards so each unit can have its own private space.

The city of San Diego requires any new proposed developments on properties with existing structures over 45 years old to go through historical planning review during the permit process to ensure the structure will not take away from the character of the neighborhood. ADUs are required to match existing height restrictions and scale of the main home so they are never obtrusive. The 2-story "garage with ADU above" is a popular design sprinkled throughout our UH alleys, and probably the only one recognizable to someone walking outside. There are far more one-story ADU variations that are virtually undetectable because of how well they have been designed to match the neighborhood aesthetic and compliment the main home.

Like with any city that grows, cars will always be an issue. It is not a matter of fighting cars out of our neighborhood. It is about rethinking how people should move about a city. Cars may no longer be the most economical means of transportation. Walking, biking, and taking public transit will only continue to become more efficient. This is a big step in the right direction. Using individual cars to drive anywhere is an added stress on the environment. If the main concern about ADUs is street parking congestion, we are prioritizing cars over affordable housing for people. To mitigate additional stress on infrastructure, the city of San Diego has several measures for local improvements currently in progress or planned for the immediate coming years. As you may have seen in your neighborhood already, roads are being upgraded, sewer lines are being repaired, new bike lanes are popping up, and the trolley expansion is underway. Visit SanDiego.gov to view an interactive map of the extensive work planned for our neighborhood.

University Heights is a place with great walkability where people in every stage of life can co-exist and work in a mid-urban neighborhood surrounded by diverse plant life with access to beautiful parks and canyon views. Building ADUs can help maintain this balance. UH is truly a hidden gem that many others should be able to afford to experience living in. And while ADUs are so versatile that they can be well-suited for a wide variety of neighborhoods, our UH seems to have a lot of features and characteristics that make ADUs a good fit for us.

For additional information and ADU resources, check out SanDiego.gov and search ADU.

- Alyssa Perez is a UH resident and licensed engineer specializing in designing ADUs

UH Community Garage Sale a Big Success

Covid-19 certainly put a damper on University Heights' ability to gather socially, so back in October, Stu McGraw and I decided that a community garage sale might just bring some energy back to our wonderful neighborhood after all of us had been cooped up for more than a year.

With just a little bit of planning and some elbow grease, we were able to bring our neighbors together for a fun, profitable day on December 4. By 10 am that day, Stu had handed out more than 100 maps with 38 participants' addresses. Bargain hunters came from all over town looking for great deals on cool garage sale finds. These treasure seekers were determined to get their hands on clothing, books, toys, household decorations, lawn and garden tools, sports equipment, and board games, as well as larger items like furniture and home appliances.

Afterwards, Stu and I drove around the neighborhood to ask people about their experiences. To say that everyone we spoke to was appreciative would be an understatement. There was definitely a party atmosphere out there!

Meeting all you enthusiastic sellers was the best reward ever. All of us hope that the "University Heights Community Garage Sale" will become an annual event.

-Lisa Getz



Left: Matt & Laura Zipse; Right: Marcia Sorini, Maureen Markey
Photos by Lisa Getz

San Diego's ADU Giveaway Must End

The City of San Diego's Accessory Dwelling Unit/"Granny Flat" ordinance immediately revealed itself as a giveaway to absentee landlords and corporate investors at the expense of residents in University Heights and San Diego's other older neighborhoods.

The City Council approved the current Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) regulations in October, 2020, at the height of the pandemic, without adequate input from concerned residents and community planning groups. Worse, city staff misrepresented the most controversial aspects of the ordinance, by falsely assuring council members that the ordinance would simply bring our city into "compliance" with existing state regulations that allow homeowners to build a separate "granny flat" and an additional, smaller living unit attached to their existing home (usually by remodeling the garage).

In fact, San Diego's ordinance goes far beyond what's required by state law. It encourages the construction of free-standing, multi-unit ADUs on residential properties in neighborhoods zoned, designed, and built to accommodate single-family homes. These multi-unit projects are essentially apartment buildings, and the current ordinance allows investors and absentee landlords to profit from these projects without paying their share of infrastructure costs or providing even a single unit of the very-low and low-income housing our city desperately needs.

Investors are taking advantage of these giveaways by outbidding first-time and move-up buyers, then clear-cutting the backyard to make room for two - or even three - multi-story rental units. They also convert the garage in the existing house into an ADU, and, of course, they rent the house itself. When they're finished, they've transformed an attractive neighborhood home into a six- or eight-unit apartment complex.

The perverse incentives for these destructive projects include:

- The ability to build an additional ADU for every so-called "affordable" unit. But the city's definition of "affordable" allows landlords to charge what are essentially market rate rents for those so-called "affordable" apartments. In Talmadge, a 470-square-foot, one bedroom, one-bath "affordable" unit will rent for \$2000 a month, a price the landlord's consultant was forced to publicly admit is "absurd, from the standpoint of affordability."
- Properties within a half-mile of high-frequency bus and trolley stops get a density bonus, and don't have to provide a single off-street parking space. But the city doesn't define that half-mile by walking distance. Instead, it uses an "as-the-crow-flies" calculation, as if residents can walk down a canyon, through a locked school-yard, or across a freeway to reach the designated transit stop. Actual walking distance in some of these areas is a mile, or much farther; in one Carmel Valley neighborhood bisected by the I-15, it's a more than three mile walk to the trolley station.
- There are no required side- or rear setbacks for these backyard units, which can be built right up to the neighbor's property line. A thirty-foot height limit allows a three-story structure with windows and balconies that look directly into neighbors' backyards and bedroom windows.
- Developers are destroying mature shade trees and other oxygen-rich and rainwater-absorbing backyard foliage to make room for these multi unit apartments. This environmentally-harmful policy directly contradicts the city's Climate Action Plan, and its supposed commitment to vastly expanding our urban tree canopy.
- The city also waived infrastructure fees for multi-unit ADUs. Profit driven developers don't pay their fair share for the streets, sidewalks, parks, libraries, and other public improvements so desperately needed in our established neighborhoods. The city of San Diego now has a multi-billion dollar deficit to repair, replace, and expand our aging infrastructure. And because developers must still pay those fees when they build apartments in areas actually zoned for multi-unit housing, there's less incentive to invest in those much-needed projects, which are actually closer to transit, shopping, schools, and parks.
- Neighbors who purchased homes in single-family neighborhoods with the logical expectation that their streets would remain residential are given no advance notice of these multi-unit projects. They have no opportunity to review, comment, and seek reasonable changes to the project's scope. There are no design standards for multi-unit ADUs, and no incentives for developers to match or complement the existing designs.

As a result of this monumental assault on sensible planning, a volunteer group sprang into action last April. To be clear: Neighbors for a Better San Diego (NFABSD), supports state regulations that allow homeowners to build a "granny flat" and junior granny flat on their property. But NFABSD strongly opposes the ill-conceived, destructive, and environmentally-damaging aspects of the city's ADU ordinance. The ordinance as written is an unabashed giveaway to corporate investors and absentee landlords who are motivated only by profit, at the expense of our communities, most of which are south of Interstate 8.

Learn more about this important issue at www.neighborsforabetersandiego.org.

- Geoff Hueter is a Talmadge resident and chairperson of Neighbors for a Better San Diego

HELP NEEDED!

UHCA News is looking for a Lead Editor volunteer.

This position will work with the experienced editorial team to pull each month's issue together

If you like working with people, have a sharp eye, have ideas for the paper, some editorial experience, and want to make a difference in University Heights, please reach out to us at uhcanews@uhsd.org. This role would require about 5-10 hours of time per month.

UHCA News is proud to provide neighbors with the opportunity to share their perspectives on issues that affect our community. Our editorial guidelines are available on our website at www.uhsd.org/submissions. Submissions must be factual, and should avoid derogatory, pejorative, and belligerent language / tone. While we welcome articles on controversial issues relevant to the neighborhood, we require a respectful approach. The newspaper's editorial team reserves the right to edit submissions for length and content. We will add details, if required, and cut or change phrasing to adjust clarity, tone, or focus, and as needed to fill the allotted space in our issues and meet our readers' needs.

FROM COUNCIL PRESIDENT PRO TEM WHITBURN



Hello, University Heights!

Happy New Year! It has been just over a year since I began working as your city council representative, and it has been an honor to serve you. I have reflected on the work we have done and what we have yet to accomplish. We are fortunate to have a mayor and city council who work together productively.

We're also fortunate to have communities like University Heights who are engaged and passionate about the neighborhood. In fact, community leaders from University Heights were among the first to reach out to our office when we got started. I'm proud of the work we have done together and look forward to making more progress in the coming year.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, city council meetings were virtual all of last year, and our first meetings of 2022 will be virtual as well. I look forward to when we can safely resume meeting in person. In the meantime, my team and I are committed to providing you with the best service and most information possible, be it through attending virtual events, responding to phone and email inquiries, and sharing important updates with you through this newspaper and other means.

Helping our communities begin recovering from the COVID-19 shutdowns was one of the first things our new council and mayor tackled. We implemented a number of measures like providing rent and utility bill relief to struggling San Diegans, suspending parking tickets during the shutdowns, and capping the amount third-party delivery apps could charge restaurants they service.

The early stages of the pandemic made clear that San Diegans embrace outdoor

dining. In light of that, many of the outdoor structures that restaurants built to serve their customers when indoor dining was restricted will remain permanently under the City's new Spaces as Places program. Now, businesses will be able to utilize outdoor spaces to expand their operations, giving San Diegans even more opportunity to enjoy our (usually) beautiful weather.

Homelessness has been a long-time problem in San Diego, and as I wrote in a previous edition of this newspaper, there are more unsheltered individuals than we've seen in the past. Over the past year, the City has created a new Department of Homeless Strategies and Solutions, expanded outreach to the unsheltered by social services providers, and added affordable housing. The County is ramping up efforts to address behavioral health issues within the homeless population, and the State is investing unprecedented resources to reduce the number of people on the streets. While this is not a problem that we will solve overnight, our government jurisdictions are finally working together and doing the right things to end the widespread homelessness we see today.

Lastly, as we all know, University Heights residents are passionate about their four-legged friends, and I am pleased that our council office secured funding to build a temporary dog park at the San Diego Unified School District headquarters site. Once complete, it will provide a space for residents to bring their dogs, get some exercise, and spend time with neighbors. Work on the project will begin this year, and it will be a great interim solution until we identify a permanent dog park site.

I look forward to continuing to work with you on these and many other issues you care about including the library, mobility issues, housing, and more. It's exciting to envision what we can do together in the coming years to make University Heights an even better place to live, work, and play.

As always, our office is here for you. Please feel free to reach us at any time by contacting our representative for University Heights, Marcela Miranda, at IMCaballero@sandiego.gov. Your District 3 team is at your service!

- Stephen Whitburn, City Councilmember, District 3

FROM STATE SENATOR PRESIDENT PRO TEM ATKINS



Happy New Year, everyone! Sometimes January is a month that feels like a Monday, but there is a lot of energy and enthusiasm in the air in 2022.

It's a new year, new laws are taking effect that help people into homes, jobs, and debt-free higher education. With the once-a-decade redistricting almost complete, many of my colleagues and I will welcome new communities and new constituents to represent. And in Sacramento we're moving into a new—and temporary—workspace while the East Wing of the Capitol, where so much good has been accomplished for the people of California, is replaced by a safer and more accessible building. Please know, wherever my office is, my door is always open to the people of the 39th Senate District!

January marks the 49th anniversary of Roe v Wade, and the very real fear is there won't be a 50th. I can tell you we are beyond motivated to protect Californians—and all who need abortion services and reproductive health care—from the vicious attacks being made on one of our most basic and personal rights.

Every January, as we celebrate the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I remember the January when he moved his family into a housing project in Chicago to draw attention to the lack of affordable housing. In many ways, it is shameful how far we still have to go on the paths to justice that MLK pursued—and that is also a reminder we need to constantly do better.

January brings new challenges—along with existing ones. And I want to thank everyone for masking up inside the last couple weeks to counter the alarming rise in COVID-19 cases. A couple more weeks, and hopefully, we will have again navigated a treacherous part of this pandemic together.

There's a lot to look forward to this month

and this year, and I will do my best to keep you up to date with all the latest information on bills, the budget (so far the outlook is very good!) district events, and breaking news. And, of course, the occasional photos of Mia and Joey!

The new year is starting with forward progress on two major infrastructure projects in San Diego.

Last month, I joined the San Diego Regional Airport Authority, California State Transportation Secretary David S. Kim, as well as regional and federal leaders, for the groundbreaking of the new Terminal 1, or "T1" as it's called, nearly a decade in the making.

T1 will eventually deliver 11 additional gates (for 30 in total), new food and retail concessions, an updated baggage handling system, a new parking garage and a new three-lane airport access road. The long-term construction project will also include some key sustainability measures, including additional solar panels and stormwater recycling.

The other major project now under construction is Phase One of the new UC San Diego Hospital in Hillcrest. This project, which will bring a brand new, state-of-the-art hospital and medical campus to our region, is an investment in the lives, health and well-being of all of our communities.

Our outdoor spaces – in San Diego and throughout the state of California – received a boost in the amount of \$548 million in grants as part of the 2021 State Budget in December. About \$25 million of that will be put to use in San Diego County and the City of San Diego to ensure that there is "access for all," ensuring equity in providing parks and outdoor spaces for everyone in our communities.

Team Toni attended the announcement of the historic funding last month, as well as participated in a roundtable with the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Department of Parks and Recreation and U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. I look forward to working together across all levels of government to ensure there is outdoor access for all.

Here's to a great 2022!

- California Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins represents UH as part of State Senate District 39. Additional information, news, and contact information can be located at <https://sd39.senate.ca.gov/>



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Want to help make UH better? UHCA is the voice of University Heights, and we need more neighbors to join us to help promote, beautify, lobby for, organize, and protect our special neighborhood. Have you considered how your talents, passion, drive, and energy could help make a difference in our community? We have open volunteer, board, and committee leadership positions. You can have fun meeting - and working with - neighbors and friends, while helping make a real difference. Contact us at volunteer@uhsd.org and let's make good things happen in UH... together!



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NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT

SPOTLIGHT ON: ARTIST IN OUR 'HOOD, ANSLEY PYE

AN AWESOME ARTIST WITH AN AMAZING STORY

Upon meeting Ansley, you are immediately struck by her warm smile and positive energy. Looking at her art work, you can see the pain and beauty she has experienced in her life.

Ansley was born and raised in San Diego. She graduated from Patrick Henry High School (where her A.P. art teacher advised her not to pursue a career in art!) and attended SDSU. However, at age 20, she wanted to experience the world and sold all of her possessions and bought a one-way ticket to Paris where she was accepted into the Sorbonne University. She fell in love with the city and its culture. Ansley graduated with a degree in linguistics, and a minor in archeology. After graduating, she traveled throughout Africa and the Middle East and eventually returned to her hometown of San Diego.



Finding it difficult to obtain a job in her chosen field, she fell into the real estate/mortgage business and opened up her own mortgage company. By her late 20s, she was financially successful, but emotionally unfulfilled. At the same time, she began experiencing bizarre symptoms of overwhelming fatigue, tingling, vertigo, vision impairment, pain, and numbness in various parts of her body.

Finally, at the age of 28, Ansley was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Unable to walk or move, she asked herself, "If I die now, what would I regret not doing?" She had clear visions in her head and knew that the answer to her question was "art." She taped a paint brush to her hands and started painting. The more she painted, the better she felt. She started off painting in watercolors. Art filled her heart, but not her bank account. Ansley struggled with her illness and inability to work. She experienced homelessness and found herself living at an abandoned warehouse in downtown San Diego. Realizing this was not the way she wanted to live, she moved to Austin, Texas to live with her mother.

In Austin, Ansley met a watercolorist named Carol Light who took her under her wing and mentored her in her art and in life. For three years, Ansley painted with Carol and absorbed her positive influence. Eventually, Ansley got her own art studio and painted every day, gravitating to painting in oils. Ansley loved the feel of oil paint and its movement on the canvas. She started to enjoy financial and critical success as an artist. Her paintings were shown in



galleries and were coveted by buyers around the country. Her M.S. symptoms would intermittently return and then would go into remission. But her painting brought her joy and gave her a new lease on life.

In 1998, Ansley gave birth to a baby girl (she named her Paris, after her favorite city). Ansley decided it would be best for her daughter to be raised in San Diego, and so she returned to her hometown. She became a prolific painter and her work was shown in numerous galleries throughout the county, as well as commissioned work throughout the country. She moved from a studio on Kettner Blvd. to Liberty Station where she ran the Pulse Gallery and was involved in the mentor program.



In 2018, Ansley moved to her current residence in University Heights, where she created her studio space in her garage. It is a cozy place with old paintings tucked away and new paintings displayed in various stages of progress. She has many large pieces that reflect her old style of painting fruits and flowers and leaves. She developed her own technique that involves numerous layers of color to give the painting a deep richness. She also found beauty in allowing "imperfections" through drips with various oil products to give her paintings a unique and original look. She now paints almost exclusively in an abstract style, focusing on color and texture (and using various "tools" to apply paint to the canvas as opposed to traditional brushes).

Despite not painting in watercolors anymore, Ansley does teach students one-on-one in her studio to paint in watercolors. In her spare time, Ansley likes to work in mosaics. Art literally pours out of her and into the world. Her artwork is rich and unique and brave, just like her.

If you would like to see Ansley's work, either online or in person, check out her website: <https://ansleypye.com>.

- Jane Gilbert

FROM CONGRESSWOMAN JACOBS



Happy New Year, University Heights!

I am honored to represent California's 53rd District in Congress and to fight for our community in Washington, D.C.. While the past year was difficult for so many of us – and this pandemic isn't behind us yet – I'm so proud of the resilience of our communities and what my office was able to accomplish on your behalf.

It has been quite a historic year in Congress! During my first year in office, I helped pass transformative pieces of legislation like the American Rescue Plan and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, along with securing significant funding for our district. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill is a once-in-a-generation investment in our nation, providing \$550 billion in new funds to repair highways and bridges, expand reliable internet access, and help our communities recover from the devastating impacts of climate change. California alone is set to receive more than \$44 billion over the next five years.

I was also proud to secure more than \$1 billion of American Rescue Plan funding for our local governments and institutions of higher learning to get schools open, keep

essential workers on payroll, and maintain essential services. And I was especially excited to have secured \$3 million in Community Project Funding to create additional child care spots in San Diego and address the region's child care crisis, while also improving our local libraries and making Balboa Park more accessible for everyone.

My office has worked hard to get money back to our community – returning \$1,266,176.16 to constituents through federal casework and returning \$192 million to more than 80,000 CA-53 families through the expanded Child Tax Credit. Even amidst the pandemic, my team and I made it a priority to remain engaged in our district, participating in more than 1,800 meetings and events, responding to more than 35,000 letters from constituents, and completing more than 1,000 cases with federal agencies on behalf of our constituents.

As a Freshman, I've been honored to serve our community on the prestigious House Armed Services and House Foreign Affairs Committees, in addition to being the only Freshman on the Select Committee on Economic Disparity and Fairness in Growth.

I look forward to continuing to work towards a stronger, safer, and more equitable future for our community and our country. My office is always here to listen and to help – if you need assistance with a federal agency or want to connect with my team, please contact our district office at 619-280-5353.

Here's to a happy and productive New Year on behalf of the community we all love!

- Congresswoman Sara Jacobs represents California District 53 in the U.S. Congress

Oh, Cherished Love

who should make up new love rhymes
on the eve of Saint Valentine's
who has wished them a million times
for surely those of naughty crimes

new loves come as the old ones depart,
Valentines is as sweet as can be tart
we dream of challenge and a brand new start
ride new love in a hopeful new cart

love starts up shining, bright as pure light
floats with Valentine Day's high kite
but we may end up weeping by the night
caution is wise and never out of sight

we pray for cuddles until they sting
wish for chocolates, more of everything
hold them tight for fear they might wing
for love can slip, fall from life's blissful swing

we live to love, we hope to wed,
and hope it lasts through life's big spread
we praise our brides, our groom's fair head
and dine on unity, until we're dead

but best of all, we keep Valentine's Day hot
romance must last after we tie the knot
we keep the rhymes coming, for those well caught
having snagged the one, love's perfect jackpot

Jon Von Erb 2/2022

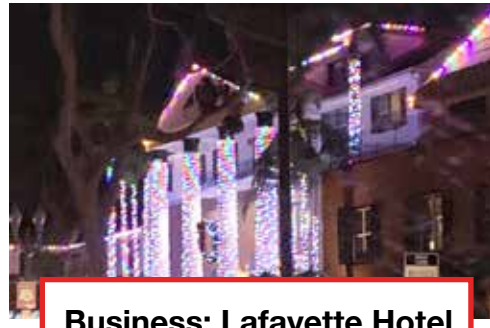
2021 LIGHTS IN THE HEIGHTS WINNERS

University Heights residents and businesses take decorating VERY seriously. While everyone was blown away by the amazing show our neighbors along Maryland put on for Halloween, Christmastime is when folks all over our neighborhood shine bright! This year we simplified the Lights in the Heights judging to a "Best Home" and "Honorable Mention" for each zone, plus an overall "Best Business."

Special thanks to the UHCA Beautification Team who organized this year's event and were the judges. Clearly this was not an easy task with so many awesome displays. If you want to get involved in planning and/or judging next year's Lights in the Heights, please let our Beautification Team know at beautification@uhsd.org.

Congratulations to all of our "Bests" and "Honorable Mentions" ... but everyone in UH is a "winner" because so many folks made the holiday season a little brighter and more beautiful.

-Jennifer Bishop, Chair
UHCA Beautification Team



Business: Lafayette Hotel

Honorable Mentions



Z2 4563-65 New Jersey St.



Z1 4592 New York Ave.



Z2 4429 Campus Ave.



Z3 4144 Vermont



Z3 1211 Maryland Pl.



Z4 4774 Panorama Dr.



Z5 4556 Louisiana St.



Z6 1915 Polk Ave.



Z4 4764 Panorama Dr.



Z5 1917 Madison Ave.

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

THANK YOU FOR MAKING 2021 A GREAT YEAR!
I'M EXCITED TO SEE WHAT 2022 HAS TO COME. CALL ME TO DAY FOR ANYTHING REAL ESTATE RELATED!



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