



Sandpiper

DEL MAR'S COMMUNITY JOURNAL

Volume 26 Number 5 June 2022

ED'S LAGOON LINK

by Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

We are surrounded by plants, birds, and other animals in our San Dieguito Lagoon and your key to understanding what's what is this information-packed San Dieguito Lagoon website: sandiequitolagoon.org. Many contributed to the creation of the Lagoon Committee in the 1970s, starting with Nancy Weare, Alice Goodkind and others, who, appalled at the condition of the lagoon, decided to do something about it and did. (The ongoing mitigation restoration overseen by a consortium of agencies began in 2006.)

Many also contributed to the website's development but Ed Mirsky's perseverance has insured this valuable resource's continuance. Now, with a two-year grant from the Del Mar Foundation, access is assured.

The backstory from Ed: "In 2016 Terry Kopanski, then Chair of the Del Mar Lagoon Committee, felt the history and accomplishments of the Committee should be preserved. He asked me to develop a bird guide for the website. Later, Terry gave me an article by Nancy Weare outlining the formation of the DM Lagoon Committee and an article by Jacqueline Winterer outlining the history of the Lagoon. I asked Larry Brooks of the Del Mar Historical Society, and John Weare, active in preserving Crest Canyon, to further help with the history. I then contacted fellow birders, Steve Brad, who posts on Sea To Sierra Birds; Tom Grey, a retired Law Professor at Stanford whose hobby is bird photography at Tom Grey's Bird Pictures; and Ginni Kitchen, a San Dieguito Trail Patrol Volunteer if I could use their pictures

and they all agreed.

"I researched how estuaries operate so I could better understand the restoration going on. To consolidate all this valuable local knowledge I recruited my nephew Hal Mirsky, a systems engineer, who in 2019 agreed to volunteer his time to build the website and programs to allow me to write the text and enter pictures of birds. I added plants, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles. Many pictures of mammals and reptiles are from photographers from iNaturalist willing to share.

During the COVID surge my wife Phyllis and I took walks at the San Dieguito Lagoon, the San Elijo Lagoon, the Los Penasquitos Lagoon, and Torrey Pines Reserve where I photographed the plants and flowers to add to the website. I use a "what's here" approach for easy species identification. For the bird section I answer the questions What's near shore? What's in the lagoon? What's in the river valley? What's in the highland? What's flying in the sky above? And a search for "what birds are seen during... choose a month" based on the San Dieguito Lagoon monthly bird count list. For the plant section I use What's in the wetlands? What's in Coastal Sage Scrub and Chaparral? What are these shrubs? What's this tree? What's this invasive nonnative? I put in a link to Calscape, the website of the California Native Plant Society, to provide additional information on drought-tolerant native gardens."

For information about the Lagoon, the history of the Lagoon Committee and what it is in and around the lagoon that you are looking at or wondering about: sandiequitolagoon.org. ▣



Long-billed curlew.
Photos by John Weare.



Cliff swallow.



Great egret.



Snowy egret.

JUNE PRIMARY ENDORSEMENTS

Although City Council elections will not occur until November, there are important races affecting Del Mar on the June 7 Primary Ballot. The Sandpiper has studied the various races and calls out the following of special importance for endorsement. Each of these candidates stands with Del Mar interests on issues vital to our community: climate action, responsible gun safety, protecting a woman's right to choose, fiscal responsibility, supporting local land use control, addressing nuclear waste at San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS), addressing housing needs in a manner sensitive to local concerns, and a lot more that matters to Del Mar.

Study your ballot materials; give more credit to voting records and actual accomplishments than to simplistic positions and claims; and don't assume campaign mailers are accurate (especially "dark money" mailers that aren't from candidates). The following races are of special importance to Del Mar and we hope you will join us in voting for the following candidates:

Catherine Blakespear for State Senate District 38. This recently modified District will include the City of Del

Mar. Blakespear is currently Mayor of Encinitas and chair of SANDAG. Her law office is in Del Mar and she has long family ties with our community. She has proven ability in local government and can be counted on to be an effective advocate for issues important to Del Mar. She successfully championed a zero emission Climate Action Plan for Encinitas as well as 100% renewable power, passed a safe gun storage ordinance, and received a 100% rating from Planned Parenthood.

Alex Padilla for U.S Senate. This Senate race is on the ballot twice and you need to vote twice—once for a new full term and once for Kamala Harris's unexpired term, which Padilla was appointed to fill. The U.S. Senate hangs in the balance. We need the right people in office who will fight for a woman's right to choose, to protect democracy in Ukraine and the U.S., for campaign finance reform, and for sensible gun safety measures. Padilla can be counted on.

Mike Levin, US Congress, 49th District. Levin has been an incredible champion for Del Mar issues since he flipped the 49th in 2018. He brought us millions in federal funds to address our railroad and collapsing bluff issues, he is leading the effort to address SONGS nuclear waste, and he is a strong advocate for sustainability and clean energy, for sensible gun safety. He has sponsored numerous bills that have passed on a bipartisan basis to benefit our veterans.

Tasha Boerner Horvath, State Assembly District 77. Note that Assemblymember Chris Ward currently represents Del Mar, but Del Mar is moving into Boerner Horvath's District as of the Nov. 2022 election due to redistricting. She distinguished herself as a member of the Encinitas City Council. As an Assemblymember she has championed beach safety and sea level rise issues, local control, environmental sustainability and other issues vital to Del Mar.

We are fortunate to have these competent and dedicated candidates willing to represent us.

Please be sure to vote!



Sandpiper
DEL MAR'S COMMUNITY JOURNAL

The Sandpiper is published by the Del Mar Community Alliance, a 501(C)(4) non-profit. Its purpose is to advocate the Del Mar Community Plan, to foster informed public and government decision-making regarding issues affecting the community of the City of Del Mar, and to encourage a social and political climate favorable to the protection of the community character of the City of Del Mar and its environs.

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In Brief

Virtual Advisories

In-person meetings of the City Council and advisory committees are delayed until September, depending on public health updates. Limited in-person service at city offices are now available. See city website.

Rental Relief

Council agreed unanimously to extend the rental assistance program to four families for one more year. The Council majority asked staff to investigate how to delete the commitment to continue this program made in the 5th and 6th elements of the Community Plan. See commentary in the May issue of the Sandpiper.

SCHOOL TANGLE

by Kelly Harless | Solana Beach

Dozens of San Dieguito Union High School District (SDUHSD) parents and community members cheered as the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) approved a new district map on April 25, 2022. SDCOE took control of the boundary drawing process after SDUHSD submitted a blatantly gerrymandered map that drew outrage from many and resulted in a lawsuit filed by members of the Latino and Asian American communities.

SDCOE's map remedies the partisan boundaries outlined by the SDUHSD's Board of Trustees, balances population changes reflected in the 2020 census, maintains important communities of interest and puts a high school in each area—all important considerations in drafting a well-drawn school district map that is consistent with the California Voting Rights Act.

What the final map does not alleviate, however, is the ongoing feud within the SDUHSD Board of Trustees and the palpable hostility between the Board, parent groups, teachers and community members as opposing interests and priorities collide. The resignation of Trustee Melissa Mossy amid the rancor leaves the Board split evenly 2:2, putting Michael Allman and Maureen Muir at odds with Trustees Katrina Young and Julie Bronstein. The stakes are high with Allman and Muir pushing a position granting the Board more authority to screen and censor materials on campus, reject COVID safeguards, restrict programs that promote diversity, equity and inclusion, weaken teachers' voices, and reduce student/parent input.

Adding to the chaos, the Board voted on April 20, 2022 to place Superintendent Cheryl James-Ward on administrative leave following her controversial comments linking the academic success of Asian American students to family wealth. The fate of Dr. James-Ward is uncertain, partly because of the divided Board of Trustees; but more so because Allman cast his vote to suspend James-Ward only weeks after she filed a formal complaint accusing him of harassment and intimidation. Whether or not Allman intends to address ethical concerns by recusing himself from future votes regarding James-Ward's employment, as he inarguably should, remains unclear. Should he do so, the Board faces yet another dilemma on James-Ward's status as three votes are required to carry any action. How long, then, before a permanent superintendent is installed, and how will this instability affect our students?

A similar impasse occurred when it came to filling Mossy's vacated position. The Board deadlocked 2:2 on whether to appoint a trustee or hold a special election to fill her seat through the end of 2022. As the school year wraps up and the Board, minus a superintendent and an Area 3 trustee, moves forward with preparations for fall semester, one dreads the ensuing paralysis over budget allocations, facility improvements, new vaccination guidelines and programming. □

CARE COURT SHELTER

by Dwight Worden | Seaview Avenue

Nobody likes to see homeless people on the streets, camping in our parks and on the beach, congregating at our transit facilities, or panhandling. Addressing the problems, and causes, of homelessness is challenging to say the least. Under current law a City like Del Mar cannot deny a person the right to sleep or camp on public property unless the City has enough shelter beds for these folks. Del Mar does not. Law enforcement, in most cases, cannot hold someone in custody who is unsheltered longer than 72 hours. What we see as a result is a revolving door of unsheltered folks picked up by law enforcement, released in 72 hours, with the cycle repeating over and over. I have seen reports of one person picked up and released more than 100 times in a single year! We need something better.

The governor is proposing a new program called Care Court that could be a game changer. Under this proposal, people on the street can be referred (by first responders, family members, and others) to a new division of the civil court system where they will receive a 90-day evaluation by trained mental health, social service, and housing experts under the supervision of a civil judge and court staff trained to provide needed assistance. Those referred to Care Court will be evaluated and receive the services they need, from housing assistance, to mental health counselling, social services, alcohol and drug treatment, and more.

The State is proposing to fund all aspects the program with the current state budget surplus to get it going, including funds for local governments and the courts to staff up for the new system. The state is also proposing to provide funding in the years to follow. If the Care Court does nothing more than divert the endless numbers of unsheltered currently showing up in our emergency rooms its cost savings will be substantial.

With Care Court for the first time we will have something to address homelessness in a compassionate way that gets at the heart of the problem. The Care Court will provide options other than leaving these folks on the street or repeated encounters with law enforcement. The Care Court will be an intermediary focused on assistance, counselling, and housing. For those who can't be helped there will be pathways to traditional law enforcement or to conservatorship, but the focus will be on getting folks into constructive circumstances, off the streets, and back to being contributing members of society.

The reasons why people and families find themselves living on the street are myriad, including here in Del Mar. Will Care Court fix the problem 100%? Probably not, but it can make a real difference in getting the unsheltered off the streets, and doing so with compassion.

You can read about the Care Court Program here: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2022/04/07/governor-newsom-statement-on-introduction-of-care-court-legislation/> □

STUDENT STRESS

by Jasmine Criqui | Torrey Pines High School Senior

Live in the sunshine, swim the sea,
Drink the wild air's salubrity
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Del Mar Foundation is taking Emerson's poetic advice to heart this month, offering stellar opportunities for Del Mar residents to gather outdoors to enjoy music, art and enough sunshine to offset whatever June Gloom may come our way:

June 2: The current season of First Thursdays closes with a vivid fusion of original jazz and classical music by Danny Green Trio Plus Strings. And we're taking subscriptions now for the next season, which begins on Sept. 1, so sign up now to enjoy this signature DMF series! Details: www.delmarfoundation.org.



June 3: Join us in front of the Library at 11:30 am as we unveil bronze plaques identifying Del Mar's first public artwork, acquired in 1999. We'll gather at the top of the stairs by this beautiful bronze and redwood sculpture, *A River in Time* by James Hubbell, to celebrate the artist, the sculpture, and the anonymous donor whose gift through the Del Mar Foundation made this acquisition possible.

June 28: The Return of Summer Twilight Concerts! When DMF was founded 40 years ago, one of the first decisions made in 1982 was to inaugurate a summer twilight concert series the next summer, bringing founding director (and mayor) Lou Terrell's vision to fruition. After a Covid-19 pause, we're delighted to bring this signature event back to Powerhouse Park this summer, with the first concert on June 28 featuring the Sully Band at 7pm, with Zel's Opening Act at 6pm. Bring your picnic, drink the wild air, and enjoy an iconic Del Mar sunset with us!

For all our events: www.delmarfoundation.org

At Torrey Pines High School, the PALs (Peer Assistant Listeners/Leaders, depending on whom you ask) class is a group of students whose goal is to promote student wellness and connection.

Jeffrey Owen, who currently teaches the class, says a main focus of PALs this year has been destigmatizing therapy and other mental health services.

"Let's talk about different types of therapy, how to reach out for therapy, how to get it available to teens. Because if there's any time we need it, it's now," Owen said.

PALs recently collaborated with FalconVision, TPHS's student broadcast program, to promote a video of multiple teachers and students opening up about their experiences with therapy. Mirabel, a senior at TPHS, was one of the students who took part in the video. A PAL herself, she says it's important to encourage people to ask for help when they need it. And according to her, that doesn't just apply to those feeling the effects of the pandemic.

"It's kind of unfortunate that people take [teen mental health] more seriously because they can attribute it to a large, worldwide crisis," Mirabel said. "I think it's sort of been bubbling under the surface for so long for a lot of people."

According to data on San Dieguito Union High School District from the California Healthy Kids Survey, an anonymous state-subsidized survey of California students, her theory isn't far off. In 2018-19, 14% of 9th graders and 17% of 11th graders answered yes to the question "During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?" In 2020-21, those numbers actually declined to 13% and 15%.

However, in that same time frame, the percent of 9th and 11th graders answering yes to "During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that you stopped doing some usual activities" jumped from 28% and 34% to 31% and 37%.

While the results do differ pre and post COVID, it's not as striking a discrepancy as you might expect. What's more significant, and worrying, is the number of high school students indicated by the above data to be suffering from major depressive episodes, regardless of the pandemic's influence.

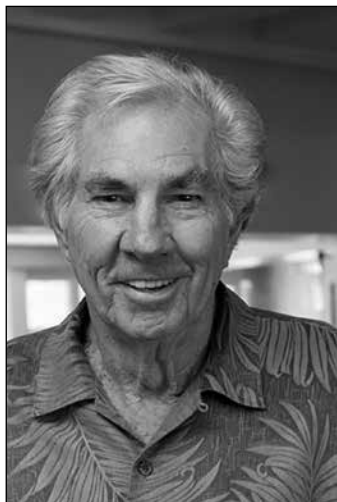
In April and May of 2022 alone, the New York Times ran stories titled "It's Life or Death: The Mental Health Crisis," "Hundreds of Suicidal Teens Sleep in Emergency Rooms. Every Night," "Teens in Distress are Swamping Pediatricians," and more, each detailing aspects of declining teen mental health. Medical professionals continue to debate the causes of this trend, assessing →

CONGRATS, JIM!

by Sherryl L. Parks | Kalamath Drive

After a two-year break due to COVID, the San Diego County Fair will return to the fairgrounds with the theme, “Heroes, Re-United!” Heroes from all over the County will be honored during the opening ceremony on Wednesday, June 8. One of our very own Del Mar residents, Jim Watkins, will be among those honored.

Jim was nominated based upon his sixty years of work to enhance our downtown. As an example, Jim attended dozens of meetings in our planning for the Civic Center. When the costs of Streetscape seemed too high, he reminded council of the importance of making Del Mar a viable downtown and an alternative to other beach cities.



*Jim Watkins.
Photo by Tina Nomura.*

This will not be the first time Jim has received accolades for his work. The list of awards is long. It is interesting to note that Jim’s service was not only to City of Del Mar and the Chamber of Commerce, but also from The Rotary Club, the Boys and Girls Club, the YMCA Youth Award. The City of Del Mar has recognized Jim three times with resolutions and commendation stretching from the first one in 1973, 1981 (Man of the Year) and in 2006.

When asked Jim will tell you his greatest accomplishment for Del Mar’s future was to lead a campaign to stop condominiums being built on the North Bluff in the 1960s. Does this sound familiar? He thinks the most important financial contribution is the L’Auberge and in his heart he notes his pride in his kids: Kit Leeger who recently served as architect to the remodeled St Peter’s Church and KC Vafiadis who manages the property at the heart of the city. KC has also been instrumental in the Business Advisory Committee and many projects sponsored by the Del Mar Village Association.

We are proud to have Jim Watkins recognized at the local San Diego County Fair. There is no doubt he is viewed by us as a ‘founding father’ to Del Mar. Please introduce yourself if you see Jim after a game of tennis at the Pacifica’s Breeze. He’s the guy with the twinkle in his eyes and a big smile on his face. ▣

the influence of factors like social media, parental influence, and world affairs. For resources on how to support those you care about, SDUHSD recommends visiting takeaction4mh.com ▣



by Kara Adams, Assistant Program Director

Volunteer of the Year - 2022

At our annual volunteer appreciation party, DMCC’s president Terry Kopanski presented the 2022 Volunteer of the Year award to Phyllis Mirsky. Phyllis won volunteer of the month in November 2021 for her hard work overseeing the public communications and print materials for DMCC’s Annual Benefit Gala. Her dedication to DMCC didn’t start or stop there. For years, she has been working hard on the Tuesday Lunch Connections volunteer team, a carefully choreographed dance of serving beverages and food to Del Mar’s most mature seniors and doing the cleanup afterward. In the summer of 2020, she retired from the DMCC Board of Directors after a 6-year stint as secretary. Phyllis is the elbow grease type of volunteer. She and her husband Ed can always be counted on to show up early to an event to help with setup and stay late to help with the cleanup. Phyllis says, “it’s the people that DMCC serves that make it all worthwhile.” Thank you, Phyllis!

Training New Volunteers This Summer!

DMCC transportation services are vital to seniors who are aging independently at home but no longer drive. These programs help community members with grocery shopping, medical appointments, and other essential errands. We are training new volunteer drivers and van hosts this summer! Our volunteer drivers love the flexible schedule, and they report enormous satisfaction from the difference they make in the lives of their neighbors. If you are a licensed driver with a clean record, your own vehicle, and a desire to spend a little time with your senior and disabled neighbors, this volunteer opportunity may be right for you. Van hosts provide light physical assistance and facilitate conversations during our Monday Retail Therapy Club and Wednesday Grocery Van shopping trips. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for DMCC, please give our office a call to find out more.

Volunteer of the Month – May

DMCC’s Volunteer of the Month for May 2022 is Stephen Groban, MD. Steve was nominated for volunteer of the month by Nicole Holliday for his service on DMCC’s Health and Wellness Committee.

DMCC programs and services depend on our incredible volunteers! To learn more about Steve or being a DMCC Committee Member, visit dmcc.cc/volunteerofthemonth.

For more information... or to join our email list:

Please visit our website at dmcc.cc or contact the DMCC office at (858) 792-7565 or dmcc@dmcc.cc.



*Hot spots of COVID virus infection
(Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center)*

IS THE PANDEMIC OVER?

by Don Mosier | Rimini Road

I have generally supported statements by my old friend, Tony Fauci, but not after he set off a media storm on April 25th when he said the “We are certainly right now in this country out of the pandemic phase.” Dr. Fauci did moderate his statement the next day, but the damage was done. We can all relax and get back to the pre-pandemic normal was the instant conclusion. I wish this were true, but it is not.

A pandemic means that the COVID virus infection has spread to the entire world and its incidence is increasing. Data for the month of April show the greatest increases in infection in South Korea (almost 4 million new cases), followed by Germany, France, Italy, Australia, Japan, and the US (more than 1 million new cases in the past month). So, by any definition, the pandemic is not over. The map below shows the current hotspots of infection.

COVID infections in California are increasing (although the data quality is poor because of unreported home tests), and there has been a recent uptick in COVID-related hospitalizations and deaths. Deaths are increasingly concentrated in the elderly and immunocompromised, and up to 40% were in those who were vaccinated (two doses of Pfizer or Moderna mRNA vaccines, not necessarily after one or two booster shots, by the CDC definition). This adds to the growing evidence that immunity is declining with time after vaccination, particularly among the elderly.

The CDC recently reported that over 60% of US citizens show evidence of prior infection with COVID-19, a big increase following the wave of Omicron variant infections this past winter. Some commentators have suggested that we are approaching a state of herd immunity where most of



UNPREDICTABLE PATHS

Claire McGreal | Stratford Court interviews Frank Chisari, physician and virologist | Crest Road

Claire: These COVID variants seem to move from the east coast to the west. I have been watching the case counts rise daily in MA. Guess we need to stay very careful and ever vigilant. If you have any further advice, we are all ears.

Frank: Your guess is correct. The airborne SARS-CoV-2 virus is so easily transmitted from person-to-person, and it replicates so rapidly in their respiratory tracts that it produces huge numbers of mutations per day in each infected person. A small fraction of those mutations will mask the virus from that person’s immune response which gives the mutant virus particles a survival advantage over the rest of the virus particles that haven’t acquired the immune evasive mutations in that person. So, pretty quickly, those immune evasive variants become the dominant population in that individual.

Then, because the mutant virus is so easily spread through the air to anyone in the area, it soon becomes the dominant strain in the local population. Along the way, these mutants

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us are resistant to virus infection. Unfortunately, this is not true and immunity after natural infection seems to wane even faster than after vaccination. New variants (BA.4) with improved transmission have been detected in South Africa, so it is not clear how vaccination or prior infection will protect against serious illness caused by this or other virus variants.

It remains important for our older residents to get a second booster and to wear masks when in indoor settings. Not the good news that the end is in sight, but the only news we can responsibly share. □

often acquire mutations that make them less pathogenic (cause milder disease). That's what "smart" viruses do because the newly infected persons feel okay, so they go to school, work, restaurants, theaters, take vacations, etc., without knowing they're infected, and that spreads the virus widely and quickly throughout the population and ultimately all over the world.

Claire: Are the elderly more vulnerable?

Frank: Once that strain of virus spreads widely enough, however, it can reach elderly, diabetic, asthmatic, leukemic, transplant patients, etc., who can get seriously ill from the same, otherwise benign, virus that may cause nothing more serious than "common cold" symptoms in young, healthy people. The virus can spread to such high numbers in these susceptible patients that they require hospitalization, and possibly even die from what seems like a mild infection in most of its victims. So, even a virus that seems innocuous can kill a lot of susceptible immunocompromised and, especially, elderly people if it spreads sufficiently widely.

Basically, what I've just described is a very common scenario, especially for respiratory viruses. Indeed, the virus will continue to mutate and evade the immune response until the scientific community develops a vaccine the virus cannot evade. That can happen, at least theoretically, if the mutations that allow the mutant virus to evade the immune response also prevent the virus from either reproducing itself or from spreading to others.

Claire: So, what are the best ways to protect ourselves?

Frank: Bottom line: (1) get vaccinated and boosted to protect yourself against any vaccine-sensitive variants that still linger in the population; (2) avoid crowds as much as possible especially indoors; (3) wear a good quality N95 mask whenever you're indoors in public spaces; and (4) stay outside as much as possible.

This doesn't mean you have to become a hermit. For example, I just flew to Salt Lake City and back last week on a fishing trip with a buddy who had been immunized and boosted (as was I) and wore an N95 mask (as did I). I spent several days eating inside a restaurant with a lot of guys who behaved like they thought they were immortal. Fewer than 1% of people in the terminals and airplanes were masked. And nobody granted me 6 feet of space in any of those places. Also, I rode in our unmasked guide's pickup truck with the windows closed at the beginning and end of each fishing day. So, I think I was probably exposed to the virus quite a bit during that trip. Despite all of that exposure, neither my buddy nor I got infected according to antigen tests we took while we were away and 5 days after we got back home, probably because we were fully vaccinated and boosted, wore N95 masks under all those conditions (except while eating) and used hand sanitizer often.

Claire: What is your prediction for how long this pandemic is going to last?

Frank: I don't think we will be rid of SARS-CoV-2 for a very long time. Nonetheless, given that it has already mutated away from being highly deadly in most



Best of luck, Kristen!

Del Mar is losing a superstar, our Assistant City Manager Kristen Crane. She brought us an unbeatable combination of integrity, commitment, and professionalism. She will take on a similar role in a larger, diverse, full-service city, Murietta. Hopefully, our community can organize a big thank you celebration to recognize all of her accomplishments. We wish you well, Kristen.

(see our website for a copy of her message to her co-workers)



EDCO enters

Unanimous Council approval of new solid waste collection rates with new contractor, EDCO. See details on city website.

Drought danger

We are among the 13 million Southern Californians who are not yet mandated to cut outdoor watering to two days per week and soon possibly one. The reason: our water is imported from the Colorado River rather than from the State Water Project's State aqueduct. The river provides water to some 40 million people and farmlands from Wyoming to the U.S.-Mexico border. However, this is not a supply chain issue. It is the depletion of an essential resource: the water woes on the Colorado River are worsening as a result of the ongoing drought. Distribution, now wildly complicated, is going to get more so with less water. Last winter's snowmelt runoff that forms the river's headwaters was down to 32% of the "average." Lake Mead, close to full in 2000, dropped down to 41% of capacity in 2019 and is even lower now at 34%. The forecast for this year is a continuance of the drought with warmer temperatures and less snowmelt. We won't have more water in our climate-changed future. It is time to accept our new normal and to learn to better conserve.

people (which, again, is what "smart" viruses do), and despite the fact that we may not be as well protected by vaccines against new strains of the virus, it's quite possible to reduce the risk of getting infected by following the simple precautions I described above. And since the virus has also evolved to be less pathogenic, most people who do get infected will most likely have cold and flu-like symptoms and not need to be hospitalized. And if they are immunocompromised or elderly and do get very sick, there are antiviral drugs available that, if taken early, can keep most of them out of the hospital. □

A FAMILIAR TALE

By Dolores Davies Jamison | Crest Road

When UCSD grad Rex Pickett set out to pen his recent murder-mystery book, *The Archivist*, he was determined to keep things as real as possible. The result is a surprisingly familiar tale that features this Del Mar resident's favorite haunts.

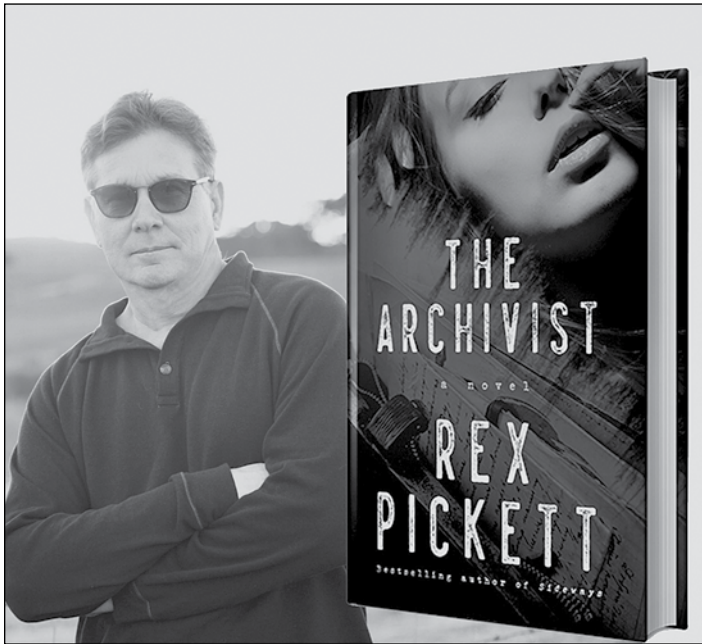


Photo illustration Dolores Davies Jamison.

While Pickett has written more than 25 screenplays, he is best known for his novel, *Sideways*, adapted for the screen in 2004, and becoming one of the most popular films ever. Pickett lived in Del Mar for several years during and after his years at the university, and has a special fondness for the beaches and bluffs of La Jolla and Del Mar. The *Archivist's* protagonist, Emily Snow, lives near the Del Mar bluffs, surfs at Black's Beach, and—like Pickett—sips her cappuccinos at Bird Rock Coffee Roasters on Carmel Valley Road. Snow also works as an archivist at Memorial Library at Regents University, a stand-in for Geisel and UCSD.

“It's been said that writers write best when they stick to what they know,” said Pickett, who grew up in San Diego. “These are all my favorite spots and I know them and value them immensely.”

“When I was young we used to surf Black's Beach when no one knew about it,” he recalled. “One morning, before the sun had come up—in the saturnine dawn—four of us were bobbing in the water waiting on the next set of waves. Suddenly, there was a Polaris-like explosion no more than fifty yards from us. Seawater rained from the sky. A whale had spouted. At Black's, the cliffs shield you from the world and it was like going back in time. Throw in a breaching whale and it was positively primeval.” →

BIZ OUTLOOK

by Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street



Photo by Julie Maxey-Allison.

How's Del Mar doing? Two of our local business owners give their overview:

“The Plaza is doing well. We continue to experience more interest in the Plaza from a multitude of tenants, as well as our own tenants doing better now that the pandemic seems to be somewhat under control” reports Plaza owner Patty Bruten. What about the retail space vacated by the Banana Republic? “There is lots of interest. We are working through some good options, but nothing is done yet.”

Stratford Square owner KC Vafiadis: “From my perspective, the businesses are doing pretty well. They are all having staffing issues, and the price of food has risen so dramatically that the restaurants are trying to balance raising their prices which could push away customers or taking a hit to the bottom line. The dynamic of the pandemic and trying to recover from it has been a

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After returning to Del Mar many years later, Pickett says he's come to appreciate the bluffs more than he did in his youth.

“It boggles my mind that train tracks run so close to a collapsing bluff. I walk on them every day. There's the upper bluff with its stunning views of the ocean and the peninsula of La Jolla in the distance. The lower bluff brings you down to those train tracks that fortunately are not going to be there forever. With their vertically fissured faces, the cliffs are magisterial— they look like some ancient civilization immortalized in amber. I feel fortunate every day I walk the bluffs/beach and marvel at how they unwittingly keep out the encroachment of the world. The *Archivist* features so much of the bluffs, the ocean, their majesty, their sounds ... I can hear the waves crashing at night and the occasional clanging of a train's horn, and it haunts me in an ineffable way,” said Pickett. □

EVERY DROP COUNTS

by Valérie Dufort-Roy | Klish Way

Last July, responding to the drought emergency, Governor Newsom asked Californians to cut their water usage by 15% (compared to 2020). Nevertheless, in March, our usage was up 18.7%. Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Ventura counties are under restriction to reduce outdoor watering to once a week, and could face volumetric restrictions. Their water provider asked all Southern Californians to voluntarily slash consumption by 35%.



Shirley King with her 200-gallon rain barrel.
Photo by Art Olson.

By now, many of us have adopted water saving measures by fixing leaky toilets (up to 200 gallons/day), running only full-loads of laundry (with high-efficiency washing-machines), embracing drought-tolerant landscaping, drip-irrigation and mulch to retain humidity, turning faucets off while brushing teeth or shaving, timing our showers to “I Feel Fine” (Beatles), and gawking at the bathtub with shameful envy. What’s next?

Beyond attracting rebates (check on SoCalWaterSmart.com), upgraded appliances and bathroom fixtures will save gallons. An old toilet can waste 6 gallons/flush, while →

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constantly changing scene with hidden surprises at every turn. Fortunately, the consumer seems to want to get out and support local businesses. For the retail shops, it’s day by day — some are great, other days they see no one. Overall though, I think it’s been a steady recovery for them and as Del Mar continues to recover and fill some of the empty spaces, it should just get better for them. (Hope there is no big recession looming!)” However, continues KC, “There are still a few missing pieces like the empty lots and some underutilized lots like the Berkshire Hathaway property that are important to the overall revitalization of Del Mar.” □

In Brief

Young Ukrainians

Two male refugees (age 24) from the Crimea area of Ukraine, both very courteous and friendly. Need housing, together or separate, and part time work (driving, construction, rental business). Contact victoriabradshaw@yahoo.com



Alex (left) and Denys (right). Photos by Victoria Bradshaw.

newer models use 1.28 gallons/flush. The Niagara Stealth, an ultra-high-efficiency toilet, uses only 0.8 gallons/flush. An old shower head can use 2.5 gallon/minute (GPM), while newer options include guilt-free 1.8 to 1 GPM with pressure-compensated flow rate.

What about dishwashing? Knowing that a faucet flows at 1.8 GPM will make one reconsider hand washing dishes. An EnergyStar certified dishwasher uses about 3.2 gallons/cycle. Running the sink for couple of minutes to hand wash equals an entire dishwasher cycle. So, let’s load up!

Since our gardens make for 53% of our consumption (2011, California Department of Water Resources), it sounds reasonable to irrigate with rainwater and gray water. Using rain barrels for irrigation works beautifully in Del Mar! Shirley King, Del Mar resident, has four barrels (total 360 gallons). Despite poor rainfall, she has been able to avoid using new water for half a year, with more to spare! Following specific City guidelines, redirecting laundry water could save an estimated 4,000 gallons/year. It is also possible to redirect gray water from showers and bathroom sinks, following permitting requirements. To top it off, condenser clothes dryers extract moisture and generate more collectable water for the garden!

Manually collecting gray water inside our homes allows to water houseplants or thirsty gardens, and to rinse dishes before loading the dishwasher:

- When waiting for hot water in the shower, collect cold water in a bucket.
- Wash your veggies in a large bowl to collect the water.
- Use your dehumidifier water.

As of writing, Drought.gov indicated that 95.18% of the state is under severe drought, 60.97% in extreme drought. Let us pitch in with meaningful ways to reduce our consumption. □

DON GIOVANNI AT ST. PETERS

by Jeff Barnouw | Amphitheatre Drive



*Dona Elvira and Zerlina.
Photos by Katie Hickey.*

If we take strictly the early name of opera, “dramma per musica,” Mozart and DaPonte’s *Don Giovanni* is a prime example; the drama is not just presented but produced through the music, above all the sung music. A semi-staged performance of the opera on April 30 (and May 1) at St. Peters Parish Hall by the FF Collective, led by Tasha Hokuao Koontz (see *Sandpiper* April 2022), enabled the audience to experience the often violent conflict of passions of its characters in an exceptional way. Because it was presented with minimal scenery, costumes and stage business, but with crystal clear singing and brilliant facial and gestural expressions, one could follow the action more precisely than in a big-stage full production. Mozart conveys the import of each phrase with his music, essential for solo arias, but this effect is magnified in the exceptionally many scenes in which characters interact intensely, in duos, trios and groups up to six, in which each person has her own thoughts, passions, melodies and rhythms. To sort this conjoint action out, psychologically-and-musically, in a full production has always been a challenge for me. This was the first time I felt I was getting all or most of it.

The performers were moreover marvelous singers and actors, and they were acting, reacting, throughout. The interplay of Donna Anna (Tasha Koontz) and Don Ottavio (Dave Margulis) revealed a complex relationship, while that of Zerlina (Sarah-Nicole Carter) and Masetto (Brandon Morales) suggested depth and nuance usually lost in bigger



Leporello and Don Giovanni, Masetto and Zerlina.



Leporello reciting the catalogue of Don Giovanni's sexual conquests to a despairing Dona Elvira

productions. The fearsome twosome of Leporello (Colin Ramsey) and Don Giovanni (Ted Pickell) was continually entertaining in its tensions and shifts, the servant deploring yet admiring and aping his overbearing yet devious boss. The Commendatore Don Pedro, murdered at the outset, comes back toward the end as “the stone guest,” a grimly expressive and efficacious avenging statue, played with an astonishing voice equal to the part by Shelby Condray. Donna Elvira (Sarah Tucker) is a loose cannon, hating and still loving the man who seduced and abandoned her. She obstructs his further attempts at seduction or bamboozling and spurs the other victims to revenge.

The women take the initiative in this drama, appropriate as the choice of a company founded and run by women. Tasha Koontz’s welcome notes stressed the topicality of victimization, but I think female agency is as important here. The collective (ff for fortissima) will show a change of pace in its next production: *Sexy Songs*, Saturday, June 11 at 5 pm and 8 pm. □

WELCOME, KAREN!



Karen Brindley began as Director of Planning and Community Development for the City of Del Mar on Jan 31, 2022. The Sandpiper interviewed Karen after 3 months on the job.

Sandpiper: Karen, tell us about your background.

Karen: I am a native San Diegan and went to San Diego State. My education

is in Public Administration and City Planning. I am passionate about public service and providing positive impacts within the community. I have over twenty five years of local and regional planning and management experience serving in various capacities with the City of San Marcos, including as Special Projects Manager and Planning Manager. Prior to coming to Del Mar, I worked as the Community Development Director for the City of Lake Elsinore. During my tenure in San Marcos, I also represented the City on SANDAG's Technical Working Group, and served as Chairperson between 2017 and 2021. This working group addresses regional land use, housing, transportation, and sustainability issues. My work with this group included interactions with former Planning Directors Kathy Garcia and Joseph Smith.

Sandpiper: What brought you to Del Mar?

Karen: I have always loved being in Del Mar and the beautiful coastal environment. Community topics relating to the certification and implementation of the Housing Element, advancing the creation of affordable housing at the Fairgrounds, preparing for Sea Level Rise, and SANDAG's bluff stabilization and rail realignment are areas of interest that I am looking forward to addressing with the community and City Council. I also really respect and enjoy working with a community that is so engaged!

Sandpiper: What are the biggest challenges you see?

Karen: I am looking forward to continuing to work with the community and city council to find methods that will implement the City's Housing Element, state housing laws, and Coastal Act in ways that preserve Del Mar's community character while implementing the Community Plan and Local Coastal Program. I look forward to continued community engagement and working with the City Council during this process.

Sandpiper: What are your observations after 3 months on the job?

Karen: The residents, business owners, and dedicated volunteers who serve on our advisory committees truly care about their community, and I admire their ongoing commitment invested in ensuring the unique and



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sand beach, its still undeveloped sandstone bluffs, the open vistas and private gardens, the groves of native and exotic trees, and the presently degraded but restorable San Dieguito Lagoon." In large part, mission accomplished.

But the controversy surrounding development of the plan presaged future disappointments, not the least of which is a community that falls far short of the original goal of preserving the opportunity for people of all economic and social backgrounds to share in these accomplishments. While the plan envisioned a vibrant Village Center District with "duplexes and multiple development on parcels greater than 7,000 square feet" to provide a mix of housing opportunities, the protection of "existing moderate cost housing from unnecessary redevelopment," the allowance of "density and floor area bonuses for new rental housing," and discouraging "the conversion of apartment units to residential condominiums," you would be hard-pressed to judge those objectives as accomplished.

So, what can we learn from Del Mar's experience in citizen-based planning? One obvious take-away is the best laid plans are subject to forces of change no individual or community can anticipate. Another is that it takes more than a planning document to accomplish a community's shared objectives. And perhaps most importantly, achieving a community's shared objectives requires a sense of perspective – an understanding of how we got here, how the decisions we make today can shape our future, and the obligation we all share to look beyond our immediate self-interests to achieve meaningful progress. ■

In Brief

Watermark appealed

The Del Mar Hillside Community Association and an individual resident have each filed an appeal with the California Coastal Commission (CCC) seeking to overturn the Watermark project which was approved "by right" by the city of Del Mar. The CCC is required to hold a public hearing within 49 days to determine if it raises a "substantial issue" limited to whether it conforms to the Del Mar Local Coastal Program or to Coastal Act public access provisions.

beautiful community character is retained. I am fortunate to join Team Del Mar and truly appreciate the dedicated and talented Planning and Community Development staff who have been very supportive as I've stepped into my role. I look forward to continuing my career of public service in Del Mar.

Question: What are your interests outside of the job?

Karen: I enjoy being active outside – love to hike, mountain bike, explore nature, including the beautiful beach! ■

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COMMUNITY PLAN BEGINNINGS

by Tom Shepard, former Mayor of Del Mar | San Diego

I had the honor of serving as mayor of Del Mar from 1974 to 1975, during much of the 20-month period when residents — assisted by city staff — developed, debated and eventually adopted the Community Plan. While the outcome of those deliberations is now ancient history, successes and failures embodied in that plan may be instructive today in guiding residents and city officials struggling to apply the vision contained in the plan to current circumstances facing the city.

It was a radical concept in 1973, when Planning Director Gary Binger and City Manager Wayne Dernetz proposed a process to develop a community plan driven primarily by residents. That concept presumed a shared belief that the plan's primary goal should be "to preserve and protect that unique environmental quality which now is the Del Mar Experience...to preserve as well the opportunity for people of all economic and social backgrounds to share in a liveable Del Mar, while preserving that experience for the future."

The process of developing the plan was not without controversy, accentuated by the nature of a truly participatory, citizen-driven effort. But over months of contentious task force meetings and widespread community debate, residents learned to articulate shared values and build resilient coalitions. Regional leaders emerged from that process, including the late Dick Rypinski, who became mayor and went on to lead what eventually became the San Diego Association of Governments; Sage Sweetwood, who became mayor and later a major force in statewide healthcare and environmental planning; City Attorney Roger Hedgecock, who became a County Supervisor and subsequently mayor of San Diego; the late Dave Keeling (and his son Drew), who was a driving force in alerting



*Tom Shepard (left) with Joel Holliday.
Photo courtesy RWB Multimedia.*

the world to the reality of climate change (along with creating Del Mar's Floor Area Ratio ordinance), the late Lee Rovner who led successful efforts to permanently preserve Crest Canyon; the late mayor Lou Terrell; former mayors Al Tarkington, Nancy Hoover, John Weare, Rosalind Feierabend; community leaders Joe Lang, Rosanne and Joel Holliday, Ann and Bob Hohmeyer, Mary Ann and Bud Emerson, Carl and Lorraine Rouse, Freda Reid, Jan McMillan...and so many more.

Opponents of the plan referendized the council's approval of it. We made the decision to repeal the housing and trails elements, which were the most controversial, in order to ensure the remainder of the plan would be approved by voters.

A number of the objectives laid out in the Community Plan have been largely accomplished: ...to maintain a village-like community of uncrowded, predominantly single-family residences...permanent protection of the outstanding natural features...preserving Del Mar's 2-1/2 miles of

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