

Sandpiper

DEL MAR'S COMMUNITY JOURNAL

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SURF CUP TSUNAMI

by Jeffrey J. Carmel | Board Member Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley

Seven years after signing a controversial 2016 lease with Surf Cup Sports for use of the former Polo Fields in the environmentally sensitive San Dieguito River Valley, the City of San Diego is in the hot seat for its management of the 80-acre property.

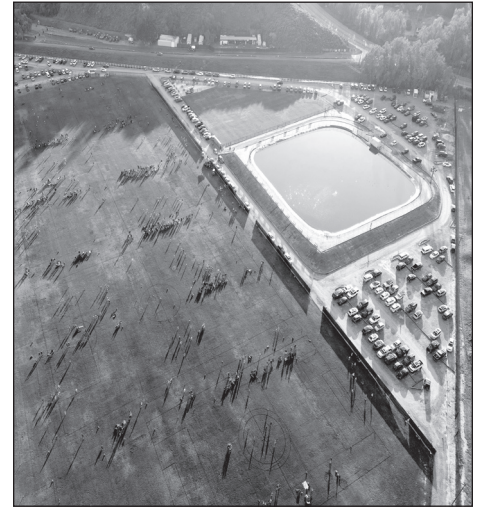
A new complaint filed in April 2023 by the Fairbanks Polo Club Homeowners' Association is asking for a California Superior Court judge to rule on the city's failure to enforce what the group maintains are repeated violations of both the lease and controlling Grant Deed by Surf Cup Sports as the company has expanded its operations and activities. This includes unaddressed traffic, air quality, and other environmental impacts on the

surrounding communities, as well as contentious modifications to the site. Surf surrounded much of the property with chain link fencing, poured a mid-field concrete pad, and most recently, began construction of a cordoned-off training facility for San Diego Wave FC, a National Women's Soccer League expansion team.

The lawsuit specifically targets Surf's aggressive commercial use of the 80-acre property for weekend soccer tournaments, daily practices, and non-sporting events well beyond the 25-day limit established by the Grant Deed that transferred the land to the city in 1983. Those activities now draw hundreds of thousands of people and vehicles each year to an area that was to be preserved as open space in a natural condition as near possible, according to the Grant Deed, "for passive non-commercial recreational uses (e.g. picnicking, walking, hiking, and similar activities), and reasonable support facilities...and active non-commercial recreational uses not involving large assemblages of people or automobiles...."

A previous lawsuit by The Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley (FSDRV) sought to require an Environmental Impact Report before the city approved the Surf Cup lease. That suit and subsequent appeal were denied based on the assumption that continued use of the property would not exceed the 25-day limit.

Although not a focus of the current lawsuit, Surf Cup is also required by the 28-year lease agreement, to restore the portion of the Coast to Crest Trail that parallels the fields at an estimated cost



A typical weekday afternoon on Surf Cup's Field #5. Located in the northeast corner of the 80-acre property, Field #5 is less visible but sees far greater use than the main fields. In addition to multi-day weekend tournaments Field #5 hosts soccer practices and scrimmages nearly every afternoon from 3 p.m. until dark throughout the year. This involves scores of players, their families, and hundreds of cars. Because daily use of Field #5 is not listed on any official Surf Cup calendar, such activities fly under the radar in broader discussions of days, events, or income from the site leased from the City of San Diego.
Photo by Jeffrey Carmel.

of \$1 million. Other than a cosmetic brush and weed cleanup in early 2022, trail restoration has yet to begin.

Last month the city filed a motion to change the venue from the North County Division to the Central District, quite possibly to avoid the hassle of traveling 40 miles for hearings in Vista instead of a few downtown blocks. That hearing was set for June 30, 2023 with a case management conference scheduled for late September. ■



An aerial photo showing a typical weekend afternoon on the fields (February 2023). You can see the concrete pad in the center as well as part of the fenced-off Wave practice field and some of their trailers (lower left) as well as the fencing covered in black mesh that surrounds the fields.
Photo by Jeffrey Carmel.

LEADERSHIP LACKING

There was a time when Del Mar gained regional respect for environmental policies, beginning with the adoption of our groundbreaking Community Plan in 1976 and the more recent unanimous passage of our Climate Action Plan in 2016. Unfortunately, implementation of both plans has slowed to a crawl, and Del Mar's leadership has been ceded to other local coastal communities.

The city budget was cut back during the height of the COVID pandemic resulting in "temporary" pauses in many "non-essential" programs, but current city revenues are back to pre-pandemic levels, but the pauses remain. No action has been taken on needed updates to the Climate Action Plan, no new solar panels on municipal buildings despite the successful performance of the City Hall installation, one new electric vehicle (EV) in the city fleet, no upgrades to EV charging stations despite numerous funding options, and intentional sidelining of the Sustainability Advisory Committee, to name but a few of the pauses.

Councilmember attacks on the SANDAG Regional Transportation Plan ignore the importance of modifying the way we travel to reduce our high pollution levels, and they have once more placed Del Mar in opposition to our coastal neighbors to the north. We have not had a Del Mar representative on the SANDAG Energy Working Group, a place where long-term energy policy is developed, since 2016. More cars on wider freeways are not the answer to a better future.



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.

Editorial Board: Jeff Barnouw, Bud Emerson, Virginia Lawrence, Hylton Lonstein, Julie Maxey-Allison, Don Mosier, Betty Wheeler.

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The supreme irony is that we are so close to international leaders generating the knowledge to combat climate change, with many faculty of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography and UC San Diego living in Del Mar. We have the local knowledge to do better, but we have not heeded their expertise. As the advice from our many citizen committees has been ignored or dismissed, it has become more difficult to recruit or retain the experts we need.

It is time to refocus our efforts and stop the needless pauses in environmental programs. Del Mar needs to do better, and, maybe someday regain our regional prominence. ■

READER FEEDBACK

SAY IT ISN'T SO

When I read that the City Council had turned down a donation of a sculpture by Isamu Noguchi I thought maybe this wasn't THE Isamu Noguchi? But then I saw a photo of the Noguchi on offer in the Sandpiper. How is it possible that a town known for its mid century design, architects and architecture failed to grasp the significance of this piece? Even a quick Google would have alerted anyone who bothered to look that Noguchi has pieces in the permanent collections of the Met and MOMA and that his iconic furniture and lighting designs are still in production by Herman Miller. I recently bought one of my young grandchildren a stunning picture book A Boy Named Isamu which describes how walking on the beach and looking at the shapes of the rocks provided Noguchi's early artistic inspiration. Octetra sounds made for Del Mar.

Is it too late to apologize to the donors and ask for a restart?

Robin Vanderlaan, 13th. Street

NOT MY CUP OF TEA

As a 56-yr resident of Del Mar, I would like to express my relief that none of the 3 sculptures recommended by the Arts committee was selected for display at the City Hall. None was aesthetically pleasing. None conveyed any sort of message about the city itself. Perhaps one could have been added to the tot lot as playground equipment. I am reminded of the sculpture ostensibly of a breaking wave that was placed in front of the Scripps Research Institute on North Torrey Pines Road some 35 years ago. It was equal in aesthetic appeal to the sculptures proposed for the City Hall. People commented that the sculpture looked more like an ailing bacterium than a wave. After a few years, it was removed. It is better not to have an unappealing stature in the first place. I applaud the good sense of the city council members in rejecting all three proposed sculptures.

Sincerely,

Linda Holland, Coast Blvd.

Roving Teen Reporters

KATHRYN AND NATALIA PICK UP THE PEN

by Natalia Mochernak and Kathryn Reese | Torrey Pines High School Seniors.

Natalia and Kathryn interview each other.

Glitter gel pen poised at the ready, a little girl with bouncy blonde pigtailed stared across the lunch table. “So,” she started, watching beads of sweat trickle off of her victim’s face, “what’s your favorite ice cream flavor?” The girl’s partner jumped in: “And what’s your favorite topping?” At the ripe age of six, Natalia and Kathryn were seasoned journalists, passing off heated interrogations for “interviews.” They terrorized the playgrounds of Del Mar Heights Elementary School, scrounging up the juiciest stories from reviews of school plays to the inner lives of teachers, all for their very own newspaper – “The News Crew.” Having known and written with each other their entire lives, naturally Natalia and Kathryn continued their journalistic journey together into high school – becoming both writers and editors for the Torrey Pines High School paper, the Falconer. While their stories have certainly matured from the days of ice cream polls into writing about child homelessness and diversity in education, the root of their passion for journalism remains: an undying value for human connection and the art of storytelling. And, unsurprisingly, this value first surfaced from the interesting happenings and people of their hometown, Del Mar. →



Natalia:

I moved to Solana Beach when I was 12, but for me, Del Mar will forever be home. Growing up here was an eternal summer: pizza slices from Sam’s, adventuring through the Torrey Pines extension, and days by the sea at Junior Lifeguards. Del Mar is where I learned how to write – really write – and so all of my pieces are an ode to this town and the lessons it has ingrained in me. I

believe Del Mar’s true sunshine comes not from the weather, but in the people who reside here. The people whose stories it is my mission to share.

Kathryn:



When I think of home, I think of the ocean. I think of my elementary school’s old bones and watching out for snakes in the grass. Home is watching my father chat with strangers on the street because he knows everyone in town. It’s the people that make it: Johnny-O who let us stow surfboards at his house, Betsy Schulz whose artwork colors our town.

Home isn’t just the place I was raised in, it’s the people and experiences that have shaped who I am. They say we “write what we know,” and though I dream of writing about the world, one thing created that dream: my home. ■

HENRY ABARBANEL 1943-2023

A top tier physicist as well as a community activist, Henry admirably served Del Mar’s interests locally and regionally for years as a Council Member, Mayor and member of the County Water Board.

Read the full article at <https://delmarsandpiper.org/>



Henry Abarbanel and Beth Levine.

IN BRIEF

Rental Assistance Retraction

In a reversal of its previous decision to terminate housing subsidies for four low income families, the City Council approved a compromise funding and service agreement with Del Mar Community Connections for management of the Rental Assistance Program. DMCC will assume all responsibility for administering the program, with the City paying a minimum of 50% of the costs. The City’s annual contribution will be based on actual expenses, as well as the amount of Housing In-Lieu revenues the City receives. The agreement will take effect July 1 and continue for the four current participants until the program terminates due to attrition. No new participants will be accepted moving forward. ■

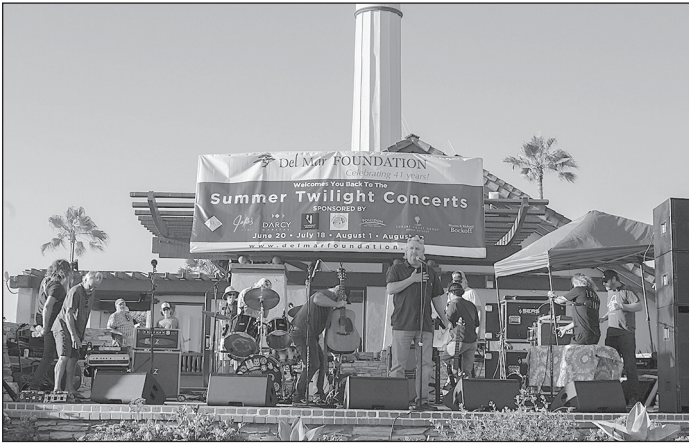
GOOD GARMENTING

by Valérie Dufort-Roy | Klish Way

SUMMERTIME, LIVIN' EASY!

by Hylton Lonstein, President

Borrowing from Gershwin's song, we're all about celebrating summer, Del Mar-style. If you missed the first Summer Twilight Concert (pictured below) on June 20, you have three more chances to catch this iconic Del Mar event this summer. Details: www.delmarfoundation.org.



This year's edition of the 4th of July Parade may be in the rearview mirror by the time you read this – all the more reason to sign up for DMF's email list for the earliest notice of our events: bit.ly/DMF-signup

DMF is a hands-on organization powered by inspired volunteers and generous donors from a broad cross-section of the community. If you are interested in working on our community events, or if you enjoy graphic and website design, or social media work, please let us know. We would love your input and your volunteer time! ■



Sustainability: The Company Patagonia has pledged 1% of its sales to protecting the environment. Pushing its commitment further, the company reports being in business to save planet Earth. Not convinced? The founder donated his ownership to a collective that will use all profits that aren't reinvested, into the business of fighting climate change. Patagonia also offers a store credit to customers who return their old Patagonia garments to the store, and offers a repair guide to promote garment maintenance for years, or slow fashion.

Why would this company take such steps to embrace sustainable fashion?

At the antipode of Patagonia and a few others lives fast fashion, fashion meant for a season, where brands produce some 20 collections a year, encouraging a disposable or throwaway culture. From the casual t-shirt requiring 700 gallons of water for production to the pair of jeans using 2,000 gallons, the production of clothing impacts the environment throughout its lifecycle by a repeated and excessive use of natural resources. It involves an intensive usage of water, energy, and chemicals, leading to water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and soil contamination. Moreover, the short lifespan of fast fashion garments results in textile waste, finishing their life in landfills or incinerated. The human impact is significant, with the industry pushing for a rapid production at a very low cost. Poor working conditions and low wages in garment factories are common, especially in developing countries.

To reduce these sustainability impacts, several cost-effective alternatives to fast fashion have emerged.

Brands such as PACT, Proclaim or Knickey prioritize sustainable practices using organic or recycled materials, reducing water and energy consumption, and ensuring fair and ethical labor practices while producing garments with higher quality and longer lifespans. Locally, Ineffably is a store at the Flower Hill Mall, selling such brands.

Even better, adding pre-owned clothing to a wardrobe is an excellent way to reduce the demand for new garments and extend the lifespan of existing ones. Thrift stores or consignment shops (such as Junebug, La Costa Kids, Little Love, Carolyn's Designer Resale, St-Peters Thrift, My Sister's Closet) and clothing donations on networks such as at the Buy Nothing Project on Facebook are great places to find unique secondhand pieces. And if you have skills, why not consider making your own clothing by upcycling old garments to give them a new life, reducing waste and saving money.

By dropping our participation in fast fashion and →



PLAYING OPOSSUM

by Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

Ours are opossums. Our west coast opossums, originally from Virginia (*Didelphis virginiana*), first arrived, or were presented, in Los Angeles, in 1906 or 1910, depending on the source, perhaps as exotic pets. Opossums' relatives, possums, spelled without that opening o, live in Australia.

Just lately, in the evening while trying to strategize about how to get rid of ever-present rats, an opossum passed through the back garden. Though the prevailing opinion on opossums is not good, possibly because of their looks—with their sort of rat like face, but looks aren't everything. It turns out that opossums excel at controlling pests including those aforementioned rats. Opossums eat them—along with their skeletons. Gone! Omnivorous, opossums also opt for a diet of mice, snakes, slugs, insects, rotting fruits and such.

Also, opossums do not attack or fuss or worse as do raccoons and skunks when scared. An opossum will first try escape. It does not move fast possibly because of the opposable thumbs on its rear feet. It can climb and try hiding, hanging up high via its prehensile tail. (My visitor simply walked away.) Or it may just stay still hoping that any danger will disappear. If not, it will perhaps hiss. Lastly, it will look lifeless, swooning into a comatose state aka “playing possum” (yes, incorrect spelling).

Nocturnal, opossums range from 2 to 3 feet long, including their prehensile tail. They weigh an average of 4 to 7 pounds but can bulk up to 15 pounds within their three year life span. As the only marsupial living in the wilds of North America, females come equipped with a pouch for pups, Joeys, just like kangaroos, koalas, for their litter.

Not only do they consume rats and pose little danger, opossums are almost as good at self grooming as house cats. Their strong immune system fends off many diseases including rabies (they do not carry the rabies virus). They may, however, be hosts to parasites, fleas, carrying leptospirosis, a bacterial disease that can be transmitted to humans. What gets them? Few live to their first birthday due to constant threats from dogs, garden pesticides and cars.

If an opossum comes your way, maybe let it do the good work it can do for you. Or be in touch with the Opossum Society: OSUS@OpossumSocietyUS.org. ■

rather building our wardrobe around well-made pieces that will last, we can contribute to a more sustainable and responsible fashion industry while enjoying fashionable clothing at affordable prices. ■

by Ashley Simpkins, Executive Director

DMCC's New Directors

Every July brings changes to the DMCC Board of Directors as we welcome new members for a three-year term. In 2023 we are very pleased to welcome a class of four new board members! **Phyllis Mirsky**, 2022 Volunteer of the Year and retired science librarian who previously served six years as DMCC's secretary, is returning for another term after a three-year hiatus. **Judd Halenza**, a retired commercial realtor and Navy combat pilot, previously served as president of the Del Mar Foundation. **Katie Militello** is a therapist who specializes in issues facing seniors and has professional expertise in marketing. **Tanya Young** is an artist who specializes in scientific illustration and also serves on the Del Mar Garden Club board.



New DMCC board members Tanya Young, Judd Halenza, and Phyllis Mirsky. (Not pictured: Katie Militello.) Kara Adams.

As these incredibly talented volunteers join the DMCC team or deepen their commitment to it, we give huge thanks to two departing board members who have made important contributions. Pat JaCoby is retiring at the end of a second full six-year stint, after serving as Publicity Chair, Program Chair, and even Secretary. Marilyn Carpenter has been serving as Transportation Chair and Outreach Co-Chair, and will continue to volunteer for DMCC as a van host.

Don't Fall Victim to a Senior Scam!

On July 14 at 10am, DMCC will invite the FBI to make an in-person presentation at Del Mar Town Hall about the most frequent senior scams, how to avoid them, and what to do if you fall victim anyway. Registration is required; to learn how to sign up for this or any other DMCC program, visit www.dmcc.cc/calendar.

Volunteer of the Month – July

DMCC's Volunteer of the Month for July 2023 is **Melissa Gans**. Melissa was nominated by Program Committee Chair Sheila Sharpe and Program Committee member Susan Halenza for creating and leading the Knitting Circle, a new, engaging, and very well-attended weekly entry on the DMCC activity calendar.

DMCC programs and services depend on our incredible volunteers! To learn more about Melissa or becoming a DMCC volunteer program leader, 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. ■

FISCAL FITNESS

by Tom McGreal | Stratford Court

The City Council held a Budget Workshop on May 30 & May 31st to review the details of the FY 2024 & 2025 budget. The process of reviewing the departmental budgets, staffing, service levels and spending priorities was detailed and well done. If you watched any of the two-day meeting, you saw the significant level of scrutiny that goes into the financial management of a small City like Del Mar.

If you step back from the Workshop details and assess Del Mar's overall financial condition, the City's General Fund is in excellent shape. The two-year Budget shows that Revenues are back to pre-pandemic levels, departmental budgets are fully funded, service capabilities are restored and Reserves are at the target levels.

Based on feedback provided by the City Council the final proposed budget scheduled to be adopted on June 19, 2023 reflect the following results.

| (\$ millions) | 2023 Projected | 2024 Budget | 2025 Budget |
|-----------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Revenues | \$19.7 | \$20.3 | \$20.7 |
| Operating Expenses | \$17.7 | \$18.2 | \$18.6 |
| Project Spending | \$1.8 | \$1.7 | \$2.1 |
| Cash Flow to Reserves | \$.2 | \$.4 | \$.3 |
| Reserves | \$9.7 | \$10.1 | \$10.4 |

(Operating Expenses include Expenditures, Transfers to Funds and City Hall Debt)

It's important to note that the General Fund Reserves include a Contingency Reserve for the two-year Budget period that totals approximately \$5 million or 27% of Expenditures, which represents 97 days of operating costs. The other large Reserve component is the Pension Reserve which will total \$4 million in FY 2025 and keeps the City on track toward its policy goal of having a fully funded Pension Liability by 2032.

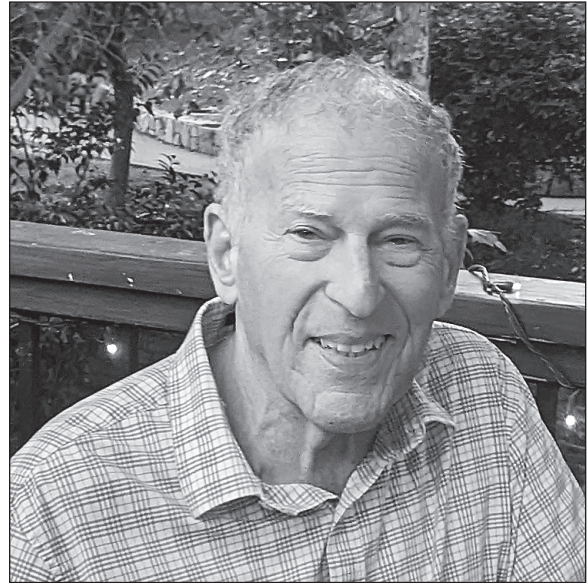
Measure Q Reserves (not included above), which represent the 1% District Sales Tax approved by the voters in 2016, are part of the General Fund, but are reported separately and set aside to fund Del Mar's Citywide Undergrounding and Shores Park development. Measure Q Reserves for FY 2023 are projected to total \$7.4 million. Measure Q Revenues are Budgeted to total \$3.4 million in FY 2024 and \$3.5 million in FY 2025. With the small Tewa undergrounding project now completed, undergrounding for the two top priority large scale projects along South Stratford (project 1A) and Crest Canyon (project X1A) are underway. These two projects are projected to cost \$5.6 million in FY 2024 and \$6.7 million in FY 2025. The ending FY 2025 Measure Q Reserves balance will be \$1.9 million. Based upon the cost and timing data gathered thus far, the Underground Project Advisory Committee will be preparing a long-term Cash Flow model that will provide the City with a clear picture of the timing of revenues and costs for citywide undergrounding.

Ongoing discussion and debate about specific →

IRA SHARP 1943-2023

A civic leader who was influential in Del Mar and in regional and national spheres. Among his many achievements was the ban on gun shows at the fairgrounds here and around the state.

Read the full article at <https://delmarsandpiper.org/>



Ira Howard Sharp

YES, WE HAVE NO BANANAS



Yes, we have no Bananas (Republic) but we may, in time, have a market that will sell real ones on the Plaza's street level.

Photo Julie Maxey-Allison.

spending in the Budget is essential to good fiscal management. However it's ultimately up to the City Council to control spending to ensure that cash flow is positive and reserve levels are maintained. This two-year Budget shows that we should feel very good about the overall financial condition of the City. ■

FROM FARM TO DEL MAR

by Jeff Barnouw | Amphitheatre Drive

I went back to the Del Mar Farmers Market on a recent Saturday after a more-than-Covid hiatus of 4 years. Between 2017 and 2019 I wrote a number of articles on events there, vendor profiles, scholarships and grants awarded. Now I wanted to start up again. Outwardly things seem much the same, but a lot has been happening.

I did a tour around the market, talking to new and familiar vendors and taking photos. Toward the north end Kaitlynn De La Cruz Hernandez was running the stall for Smit Farms, helped by her husband Kevin. At mid-point near the entrance to the underground garage was Kyle Manning Tea Bazaar (shop on Kettner Blvd in Little Italy). If tea is not your cuppa, there are the offerings at Mr Brown Bean Coffee run by Hector. Two booths that came recommended were Sourpuss Donuts (Renee Fox chef/owner) who fry sourdough instead of baking it, and North County Olive Oil (Sue and Greg Robers) who also offer pasta and raviolis.

In January 2022 Karl Willert and Virginia McMinn joined the Board of Farmers Market. Karl succeeded Leslie Robson as President, while Virginia took charge of PR Media. Stuart Fish is Vice President and Rita Meier Treasurer, with Leslie now Secretary. Having made my tour of the stalls, I had lunch with Karl and manager of the Market Fabian Huertas, on whom I had written several times. We were later joined by Rita. who helps keep things running smoothly.



*Karl Willert and Fabian Huertas,
Photo by Jeff Barnouw.*

My meal was from S Taco Loco, owned and run by Javier Soto (a popular name recently, he acknowledged). At lunch all agreed the market was enjoyable to be part of and going well, but that there were changes they were making too. They're looking for more vendors and for volunteers for both the Market and the Board. And they are trying to use less plastic and generate less waste. Sustainability is a constant concern.

As we talked we had agreeable musical accompaniment from Mario Gomes, a Brazilian one-man Reggae band who plays under the stage name Marauak. He starts his Saturday morning in Ocean Beach at Val's Coffee Shop before coming to Del Mar and later drives up to a third gig at Dana Point. The atmosphere at the Market is engaging. Stop by and buy. ■

ELUSIVE COVERAGE

by Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

Wildfires: the burns of 2007, 2008, 2017 and 2018 joined a long list of the "worsts" in California. The 2020 and 2021 wildfires that followed topped the list as the "worst" ever recorded, not only devastating more, an astounding millions and millions of acres in climate changed, flammable California, but also continuing the trend of obliterating California home insurers profits because of the losses and high costs of rebuilding. Compounding the risks this year are fears of damage from the rushing waters runoff from the recent storms and the super high snow pack. The result: insurers State Farm and Allstate publicly announced that they are withdrawing from the California market. Other insurers are following. Many will not be issuing or renewing home insurance policies. Those that stick around are sure to rethink the risk and cost of home insurance policies.

California wildfires are not new. Many more make up that "worst" list from years back. In 1968, reeling from the aftermath of the fires that burned in the 1960s, the California FAIR Plan was established. It is the state's insurer of last resort, providing access to fire coverage for California homeowners who can't get it from a traditional insurance carrier. However, its funding comes from the insurers doing business in the state in proportion to their share of the market. With fewer insurers in the state the plan is in danger of going bankrupt.

Brace for an increase in your home's insurance policy—if one is offered by the insurer ready to take the risks, but only for the right price. ■

IN BRIEF

Short Term Rentals

A consultant review of short term rental operations in Del Mar in the time frame of January through April 2023 is scheduled for presentation to the City Council on July 10. Council will be asked to give direction at that time for next steps.

What's Up with Watermark?

The Watermark housing project on Jimmy Durante is under appeal with the Coastal Commission. Staff expects to schedule it for review in Fall 2023.

941 Soon?

The 941 voter-approved, mixed use project on the corner of 10th and CDM, including two affordable housing units, is still under review for a building permit with issuance expected by Fall 2023.

Housing Final Finally

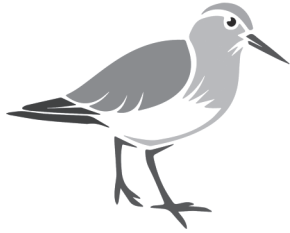
The Del Mar Housing Element due in 2021 received final compliance approval by the State Housing and Community Development Department on June 1.

VISIT THE SANDPIPER ONLINE!

SANDPIPER

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DATED MATERIAL



www.delmarsandpiper.org

— COVID UPDATE —

NEW COVID VACCINES THIS FALL

by Don Mosier | Rimini Road

As the COVID virus continues to change, the vaccines that prevent serious illness need to change too. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) scientific advisors have recommended that new vaccine formulations should target the most common current variants of the virus, named XBB.1.5 and XBB.1.16. The mRNA vaccines produced by Moderna and Pfizer targeting the XBB variants are currently undergoing testing and should be available by the fall. Both the FDA and the World Health Organization are recommending that the vaccines only contain XBB sequences and not the ancestral COVID virus sequences in the original and the later bivalent vaccines.

One reason for this recommendation is that repeated shots of the older vaccines are thought to favor immune responses to the original sequence rather than any new variant sequence included in a bivalent (older + new variant) booster. This means that future COVID vaccines are likely to change each year (or, perhaps, more frequently) to match the dominant variant at that time, much like the flu vaccine changes each year, and to contain only one variant sequence.

Also like the flu vaccine, predicting the right vaccine formulation in time for manufacturing and distribution is a guessing game, and the rapid appearance of a new and distinct virus variant can upset this strategy.

Protection against hospitalization conferred by current mRNA COVID vaccines seems to wane after six months, particularly in the most vulnerable older individuals. A protein vaccine produced by Novavax may produce more durable responses, but data are lacking on how it might work on individuals who have received multiple doses of mRNA vaccines.

Stay tuned as more information is gathered and be prepared to roll up your sleeves again this fall. ■

— DOGS OF DEL MAR —

DEL MAR DOGGERS DAY

by Kelly Berger | Del Mar resident since 2003 and owner of Del Mar Doggers

More than 13 years since leaving the corporate world of radio in the wind, I've been blessed to spend my days with the most incredible dog pals and cat friends on the planet - our clients' LOVE PUFFS. Most days I get to spend with the same weekly group of friends, roaming the beautiful cliffs, beaches, parks of Del Mar and Carmel Valley.

My team of six amazing pet loving humans get to share time, dog walking in nature around Del Mar, the gorgeous city we call home. Our service area includes Del Mar and communities within five miles including Solana Beach, Carmel Valley and Torrey Hills.

Our team pet sits, stays overnight in client's homes, and does drop-ins on their furry friends while our clients are working hard to bring home their pets' bacon bits, catnip, and bones. Or recharging their own batteries while traveling.

Learn more at delmardoggers.com. ■

