The Point
By Bernie Horan

Our neighborhood has been experiencing more than the usual number of problems related to theft, drugs and other illegal activities. One location, in particular, has been a continuous problem this year. Many of you are familiar with the overlook on The Point as well as many more people from the wider neighborhood and beyond have enjoyed this overlook for years and periodically have encountered problems there. This past spring, however, the illegal activities became more severe. Illegal drugs use and sales, groups of drunks, sexual activity and property damage have inundated your neighborhood for years and periodically. Unfortunately, it also attracts the problem element as well.

In September, the University Heights Community Association (UHCA) set up a meeting between the neighbors near The Point and the San Diego Police Department (SDPD). Molly Chase from Councilmember Todd Gloria’s office also attended. As a result, the police have increased patrols in the area and the neighbors met to discuss strategies. Join your neighbors to “Walk Our Neighborhood to your route. Are you jogging or biking?” Add that stretch of the canyon rim from Massachusetts St to Campus Ave. The Point, where it will be lit up with Andy Cameron’s inventive, theatrical magical stage lighting. Twiggs again will provide delicacies at The Point.

We need to help our neighbors and clean up our neighborhood in the process. Please consider joining us in our own self-policing efforts. We need to “take back” The Point. One example took place on November 14 when 50 residents met to discuss strategies.

Join your neighbors to “Walk Our Hood,” Meet at The Point at 6 pm on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays (Golden Gate Drive and Rhode Island St) and walk the canyon rim. The unwanted activity extends along the Canyon rim from Massachusetts St to Campus Ave.

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The illegal activities have been occurring at all times of the day and night. Please help us by diverting your walk through this area. Are you jogging or biking? Add that stretch of the neighborhood to your route. Take the dogs for a walk and include the large area overlooking the (Continued on p. 3)

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Caroling in the Heights:
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

Join us for UHCA’s annual movable Caroling in the Heights featuring our favorite professional carolers, The Full Measure Carolers. Skyler and his pals will start by strolling across the Vermont Street Bridge on Sunday, December 13, starting at 5 pm. Twiggs Coffee Shop and Bakery will provide cookies. Continuing on at 5:30 pm to Mystic Mocha, which is always a big hit. The new owners, Natalie Buczowski and Francis Weidinger, are carrying on the Mystic Mocha tradition of providing delicious morsels to temp you. Then, Cueva Bar and Cira are hosting in front of their restaurants on Adams Avenue near the Trolley Barn Park with surprise treats. Finally, The Point, where it will be lit up with Andy Cameron’s inventive, theatrical magical stage lighting. Twiggs again will provide delicacies at The Point.

Our thanks go to the UH businesses that help make this evening a wonderful community tradition.
There are times in my life when the holidays truly have been "the most wonderful time of the year." The family convenes from afar at one place and it becomes a celebration of family and the ties that bind. I love catching up with everyone and reaffirming the larger family bond.

At other times, the holidays have been the most challenging time of the year—something to be endured until January 2. The first holiday season after my parents and brother died was difficult. All the other families celebrating their reunions just seemed to be mocking my loss. Though with time, the losses get absorbed, the psyche adjusts and life shifts. Life moves on, whether you want it to or not. You move with it or life begins passing you by. Gradually, the holidays become a wonderful time of year again.

When I was a child, Christmas was all about getting presents. While I still enjoy getting presents, now I enjoy giving more than receiving. I love shopping around for something I feel uniquely suits the giftee. There are always a few folks on the list that I can quickly think of 15 things I could give them. Then there are the folks that I just rack my brain trying to think of something before finally going with the ultimate cop-out, the gift card. Nothing quite says, "I couldn't be bothered shopping for you" more than a gift card.

The crass commercialization of the holidays is antithetical to what the holidays are supposed to be celebrating. Yet our economy is dependent on a surge in consumer spending at the end of the year, so it’s your patriotic duty to go out and shop—even if it’s a crummy gift card!

I hope this holiday season is a most wonderful time of year for you. If it’s not, know that life goes in cycles. Perhaps, as the song says, next year all your troubles will be out of sight. Have yourself a Merry Little Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa or Festivus!

University Heights Map: Boundaries and Zone Watch

The bold street names on this map define the boundaries of the community of University Heights. Every block and apartment/condo should have an established Neighborhood Watch. A zone is a neighborhood within University Heights as defined by the six zones on this map.

The blocks within each zone are linked together via a Zone Watch Coordinator who manages an email list of participants wishing to receive crime watch information. For questions or for more info, contact either your zone’s coordinator or Christopher Hutchinson.

Membership Form

Join UHCA today and be part of the team! The success of the University Heights Community Association is largely dependent upon the volunteer efforts of area residents.

Yearly Membership
- $25 Household
- $45 Membership & mailed UHCA News
- $75 Brainstorm Membership
- $100 Golden Ostrich

Name
- Business Name ________________________
- Address _______________________________________
- City/State __________________ Zip __________
- Phone __________________ Email ____________

Refereed by:
- NEW
- RENEWAL

Volunteer Your Time on a UHCA Committee!
- Beautification & Planning: Keep UH beautiful.
- Blockwalker: Help deliver newsletters to UH residences and businesses.
- Marketing & Merchandising: Promote UHCA via marketing/advertising, visual arts, photography, and product merchandising.
- Membership: Help exceed goals for 2015 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 our paper.
- Program & Events: Plan and oversee various events and general meetings.

University Heights Community Association
THE POINT
CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

valley, but remember that the area is not a leaky free zone. If we are out in
numbers at all times of the day and
and evening, it will discourage the illegal
activities of others. This type of
campaign is not new and has proven
effective in other communities.

Be an active part of UH. Help
your neighbors and help keep our
neighborhood safer and clean. If
you see something, call the police at
(619) 531-2000. Be safe, be alert and
be helpful. If you are experiencing
problems in your own area of UH, let
us know so we can help you to do the
same thing.

Finally, please plan to attend UHCA's
February 4 meeting at Alice Birney
Elementary School Auditorium on
Campus Avenue. We begin at 6:45
pm. A full discussion of this particular
problem and of crime in general in UH
will be the main topic. We want to
have feedback from the neighborhood
about options we have to help alleviate
criminal activity at The Point. Our
decisions, which will be presented to
Uptown Planners and San Diego Parks
and Rec, could affect your usage of The
Point. Be part of the solution.

“AREA 2” FINDS ITS VOICE

By Mike Haskins

For as long as most residents of
University Heights (UH) can remember,
there has been a church on the 4300
block of Park Blvd. Fifty years ago, it
was a thriving fixture of faith in UH.
But communities change over the years
and the church, failing to stay relevant,
slipped into decline.

In the eyes of the neighborhood, it
became “that church.” Facilities appeared
derelict. A large parking lot sat unused,
a seeming injustice to the commerce of
local businesses whose growth is rigidly
limited by a lack of parking. Decades pass
and start to beg the honest question:

“Why can’t that property be
used to benefit the community?”

Five years ago on Super Bowl Sunday,
“that church” merged with a young,
community-oriented congregation called
“New Vision.” With New Vision, they
accepted the leadership of Pete Contreras,
a local pastor invested in the urban
community where his family lives. Pete is a
passionate advocate for the marginalized,
disenfranchised, impoverished and
homeless. He has been a respected
bridge-builder and peacemaker in San
Diego for over 25 years.

Soon after the merger came opportunities
to demonstrate new resolve. When
an arsonist set fire to the Alice Birney
Elementary School, Pete offered free
use of church facilities for school events
until the facilities were rebuilt. Through a
cooperative relationship, Birney families
experiencing food insecurity connect with
New Vision’s weekly food distribution
and other food resources. Most recently,
teams of student volunteers came to help
in the community garden and contribute
to the success of the Birney School’s
Urban Harvest event.

So, what’s up with New Vision, an
active, growing, multi-ethnic, cross-
socioeconomic congregation? First, we
are here to stay. Rumors that “Area 2”
is soon to be sold are unfounded. Next,
there is a vision to develop the property.
Church staff support future development
that can benefit the community and
sustain our faith-based presence in UH.
Ideas from developers and the community
are welcome. Finally, we “get it.” We need
to be understood as more than “that
costume” and engage in this process that
effectively designates our property
as “Area 2.”

On November 14, over 50 concerned
University Heights (UH) residents,
SDPD representative, and a lighting
expert, Andy Cameron, met at The
Point in response to a call to action from
the UHCA to fight a marked increase in
observed and reported criminal activities
involving drug usage and dealing,
alcohol, assault and sexual activity in Zone
1. Much of the illegal activity is at The
Point, the city-owned open space north
of Golden Gate Drive between Delaware
and Massachusetts Streets.

Among the topics discussed were ways the
local community can be more proactive in
combating criminal activities. In an effort
to balance concerns regarding access to
The Point with public safety, UH residents
most directly impacted by the problem
developed a proposal that the city
adopt a 24-hour alcohol ban and late-night
curfew. With the encouragement of the
SDPD and Councilmember Todd Gloria’s
office, they are hoping to put The Point on
a par with over 150 parks and mini-parks
throughout San Diego by adopting the 24-
hour alcohol ban. UH has bans in effect at
the Old Trolley Barn Neighborhood Park
and the Joint Use Willie Serrano Field at
Birney Elementary School. Should the
proposal be adopted, The Point would join
over 40 city parks and public spaces subject
to nighttime closure or curfew, including
other isolated neighborhood spaces like
the Spruce Street Bridge in Bankers Hill.
The police advised that a curfew provides
a clearer violation, enabling neighbors
to more safely identify and report illegal
activity after dark. Important to many at
the meeting, the proposal won’t restrict
residents from 24-hour use of the right
way path connecting New York and
Rhode Island Streets.

Other possible actions discussed at the
Take Back The Point! meeting include
improved lighting, video surveillance, a
greater SDPD presence, private security
and broader neighborhood vigilance.

UHCA is interested in
community input as the
proposal moves forward.

You can find the latest proposal and
survey at www.uhca.org, which will
lead you to uhpsichtour@gmail.com.
Responses are due by December 15.
Questions? Call Janet Taft (619) 922-0557
or Doug Wallingford (619) 894-4454.

Take Back The Point!

By R. Douglas Wallingford

White fence along part of Golden Gate Drive

Blockwalkers Needed

OPEN BLOCKS:
• 1600 block of Lincoln Avenue
• Georgia Street from El Cajon
  Boulevard to Lincoln

Help UH and become a Blockwalker. Delivering the UHCA News is a
valuable service to our community. It takes about half an hour 10 times
a year. Plus it’s good for your health!

Please contact Nan McGraw
(619) 260-0668 or nmcsan@aol.com
to volunteer.

SAVE THE DATE
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF
OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY PARK

By Monica Lanctot

It took quite a fight to make Trolley Barn
Park a reality. Now it’s time to revisit that
spirit of community perseverance by
celebrating the park’s 25th anniversary
on April 16, 2016. We’ll have a stage with
live entertainment and activities for kids
and adults alike—maybe even something
for the neighborhood dogs! We’ll keep
you posted as the plans become firm. If
you’re interested in volunteering or have
ideas for activities and entertainment,
contact me at webmaster@uhsd.org.

SOCKS FOR VETS

We’ll be collecting new socks for homeless
veterans at our December meeting and
donating them to the Veterans Village
of San Diego. Let’s help our homeless
veterans by supporting another successful
UH sock collection. Bring new socks to
the December holiday meeting. After the
meeting, the Socks for Vets box will be
moved to Twiggs at 4590 Park Blvd and a
second will be at the UH Branch Library
before December 15.

SOCKS FOR VETS

Please donate new socks for men & women.

Bring to Dec 3 UHCA meeting or UH Library until December 15.

VETERANS’ VILLAGE PROVIDES
HELP TO VETERANS, MILITARY
FAMILIES, AND ACTIVE DUTY
MILITARY.

Memorial Day Weekend and Veteran’s
Day.

www.uhsd.org
Happening in the Heights

COMEDY

TWIGGS
4590 Park Blvd (at Madison)
(619) 296-0616 / www.twiggs.org

● Comedy Heights: Every Sat, 8 pm
● Roar Theater Comedy: Fri, Dec 18: 8 pm
● Roar Theater Comedy: Fri, Jan 5: 8 pm
● Celtic Ensemble: Every Sun 4-6 pm

SWEDENBORG HALL
1531 Tyler Ave.
www.swedenborgianchurchsandiego.org

● Side Stage Improv Class
Every Wed and Sun in Dec: 6:30 - 9 pm
Wed, Jan 6: 6:30 - 9 pm
Sat, Jan 30: 7:30 - 9:30 pm
More Info: mike@sidestageimprov.com

LESTAT’S ON ADAMS
3343 Adams Ave.
(619) 282-0437 / www.lestats.com

● Comedy Night: Hosted by Rejan Dharni
Every Tuesday: 9-11 pm

MUSIC

PARK & REC
4612 Park Blvd.
(619) 795-9700 / www.parkandrecsd.com

 ● The Bedbreakers Band (Uptempo Roots, Blues, & Rhythm Music: Performing The Second Saturday Of Every Month Through April 2016: 9 pm

LESTAT’S ON ADAMS
3343 Adams Ave.
(619) 282-0437 / www.lestats.com

● Open Mic Night: Every Monday 6:30-11 pm

3RD SPACE
4610 Park Blvd.
(619) 255-1151

● Contact: John Ciccolella for details

ACROSS THE STREET AT MUELLER COLLEGE
4607 Park Blvd.
(619) 507-7223
www.sidestageimprov.com

● Contact: John Ciccolella for details

SWEDENBORG HALL
1531 Tyler Ave.
(619) 296-5662

Vículos: The Swedbergian Church of San Diego

● Industry Mondays: 12–5 pm ($5 cover)

THEATER

DIVERSIONARY THEATER
4427 Park Blvd.
(619) 220-0097

● A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS:
This uplifting musical pageant by Pulitzer Prize–winner Paula Vogel weaves together a stunning tapestry of our country’s deepest crisis, showing us that hope, humor and peace are innate to being American.
— Wed, Dec 10 - Thurs, Jan 3

Happy 21st Birthday, Vermont Street Bridge!

The first bridge connecting Hillcrest to University Heights (UH) was built in 1916 following the Panama-California Exposition in Balboa Park. The wooden trestle bridge shortened the walk between the two neighborhoods and provided access to the streetcar lines running along University Avenue and Park Boulevard.

The wooden trestle bridge was deemed unsafe in 1978 and demolished in the spring of 1979, leaving UH without a bridge to Hillcrest for the next 15 years. The University Heights Community Association (UHCA) led a 15-year fight to have the bridge rebuilt, tirelessly lobbying city and state officials for help.

The present modern steel bridge was opened in December 1994. Each holiday season, UHCA volunteers decorate and light the bridge with over 5,000 lights. Thank you to UHCA members who worked hard to make this vital link to Uptown possible and to the volunteers who clean and decorate the bridge every year.

December 2015 Calendar
IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

By Monica Lanctot

In the UHCA November meeting, State Senator Marty Block provided an overview of his 2015 legislative actions and listened to feedback regarding constituent priorities for 2016. Senator Block represents California’s 39th legislative district and focuses on education, public safety and veterans’ issues.

Here are some of the key points in his address and following discussion with attendees:

• In state government, about half of the budget goes toward education—more than $50 billion in California.

• Senator Block has been focused on organizing events to educate senior citizens on potential scams and to assist veterans and military families turn career experience into education credits.

• Senator Block’s staff can assist constituents in all manners concerning state services, with staff contact information found on the senator’s website, sd39.senate.ca.gov/contact.

Every January, the California state legislature, made up of 40 Senators and 80 Assembly Members, presents legislation that will then move through the legislative process. The goal is to have this legislation approved by the Senate, the House and the Governor by the end of the legislative year. If you have ideas for statewide legislation, please contact Senator Block’s office. Other presenters at the November meeting included Dave Surwillo, San Diego Police Department’s Western Division community relations officer. Officer Surwillo discussed recent criminal activities in the neighborhood and introduced several new members of the police force who will be assisting in the University Heights area.

Assistant Director Lee Ann Jones-Santos of the San Diego Public Utilities Department also provided details on the proposed increase to potable water rates. For more information on the increase, download the presentation on the UHCA website at uhsd.org or email Jones-Santos at LSantos@sandiego.gov with questions.

We would like to thank Senator Block, our speakers and political representatives who stopped by with updates, and all of the attendees for participating.

LIGHTS IN THE HEIGHTS 2015

By Cheryl Ann Cooke

Is one of your best childhood memories of the holiday season drinking hot cocoa while your parents drove you around the neighborhood to see all the beautifully decorated houses? Now it’s your turn. Show us what you can do, make up a new theme, do something unusual or go classic. You could be a winner in the 2015 Lights in the Heights contest sponsored by the Beautification & Planning Committee of the University Heights Community Association!

The annual contest is free to enter and is open to residences (houses, apartments, condos) and businesses in University Heights. If you want to be sure that we don’t miss your house or you want to nominate a festive neighbor, please e-mail me at UHCAOstrich@gmail.com and we will be sure not to miss it!

Judges will drive the neighborhood the week of December 13, with final viewing and judging on the evening of December 17 - unless it rains like last year! Winners will be announced in December on the UHCA Facebook page and at the February 4 monthly UHCA meeting at 6:45 pm at Alice Birney Elementary School Auditorium. So come on and deck those halls and make University Heights warm with holiday cheer!
Living Well

You Don't Have To Gain Weight Over The Holiday
By Brian White

When you were a kid, time seemed to stop from Halloween until Christmas arrived, but as adults the holidays seem to happen with lightning speed. Before we know it we wake up, hung over on January 1, ready to commit to a New Year’s resolution. But we can limit the damage the holiday season does to our bodies by following a few simple tips.

First, limit the bloating beverage. Sure, it’s nice to go to Lestat's or Twiggs and get a big delectable pumpkin spice eggnog mocha latte milkshake coffee, but these drinks can be killers! If you know you’ll be hitting a slew of holiday parties this year, begin cutting your caloric intake by switching to boring, old plain coffee. Remember, it may take an hour to burn 500 calories on a treadmill.

Second, move more but don’t use as a license to eat. Aim for a consistent, daily fitness routine, but look for ways a license to eat.

Third, don’t skip meals. “Saving” calories doesn’t work. You’ll end up feeling stressed and you will overeat at the party. Nobody has endless will power; it is about behavior design when it comes to healthy eating. Ruin your appetite before a party with a handful of raw nuts or an apple with some peanut butter. These proteins and carbohydrate-rich snacks will take the edge off your hunger and keep you from diving headfirst into the buffet table.

Remember, the holidays are a time to enjoy and cherish what you have, not to force yourself to struggle and suffer. So take these three simple actions, try to design your behavior a little healthier for the holidays and let the rest fall into place. Set up your environment to help you lose weight instead of feeling guilty about lacking the motivation to ignore the caramel apple muffin at your neighborhood UH coffee house. A lack of willpower doesn’t make you a failure, it makes you human. So design your behavior the best you can and enjoy all the holidays can offer!

Brian White owns a personal training gym, has boot camps in Balboa Park and consults with companies around San Diego with their wellness programs. www.yourhealthbedoinit.com (619) 800-1625.

LESS STRESS, MORE JOY FOR THE HOLIDAYS
By Miriam Cuperman

For many people the holiday season can be a challenging time. The number one question I get from my clients is how to manage the stress over the holidays. It is supposed to be a time of joy, but ensuring that everything is perfect leaves many of us feeling stressed instead. We over commit, placing so many demands on ourselves to make the holidays perfect that we end up over-spending, frazzled, frustrated and even sick.

Here are some of my top ways to reduce stress and have more joy this holiday season:

Be realistic and let go of perfectionism. It’s not about recreating the fairytale, cooking up a storm or setting the perfect table. In years to come, what children will cherish most is the memory of decorating the place setting cards with you, not the six side dishes.

Know your limits. Creating memories is wonderful but avoid over extending yourself. Instead, focusing on one or two traditions that are special to you and your family. Choose quality over quantity.

It’s okay to say NO. It doesn’t make you selfish. Truth is you can’t please everyone all the time. It’s okay to say no if you don’t really care to participate or don’t feel like going to all the parties. Choose the ones that bring you joy and don’t stress over the others. If you feel that an activity is going to zap your energy, just say no.

Take time for yourself. Eat well, limit your caffeine, don’t overeat or turn to comfort food, stick to your exercise routine even if it is a walk around the blocks with your dog, play loud carol music and dance around the house.

Practice gratitude. The moment you feel overwhelmed, stop and think of something you are grateful for - your health, your family, another holiday together, a warm home, food on the table or a memory that puts a smile on your face. For me is thinking of the Pohutukawa tree; native to New Zealand, it flowers around now, lighting the coast with red flowers. It is nature’s Christmas tree wishing a joyful season.

Miriam Cuperman is a San Diego-based Integrative Nutrition Health Coach. She can be reached at www.miriamcuperman.com or coach@miriamcuperman.com.

HOLIDAYS AT THE UH BRANCH LIBRARY
By Philip J. Gill

The holidays are a time for giving and for celebration, so come do some of both with your fellow Friends of the University Heights Branch Library at your annual holiday open house on Wednesday, December 16, from 6 pm to 7:30 pm. We’re asking all of you to donate socks to the Socks for Vets campaign for the Veterans’ Village of San Diego. Then stay for some music, some food and some holiday cheer!

In the New Year, we’ll be changing the night of our monthly meetings. Instead of the second Tuesday evening of the month, we’ll now be meeting on the second Wednesday evening of each month. The time is still the same, that is, 6:30 pm. I hope to see more of you attending the meetings regularly in the New Year!

I know in columns earlier this year I discussed the phenomenal results from our big August book sale—over $3,000! Well, the security doors that our hard work helped purchased have been installed (see photos). Thanks to all those who worked so hard to make this happen!

In last month’s column, I invited all Friends to attend our annual chapter meeting in January. I wanted to let you know that the annual meeting has been postponed. We’ll announce the new date in February.

Philip J. Gill is president of the Friends of the University Heights Branch Library.
Between the Covers: What’s Happening at the University Heights Library

By Kim Schmidt, Librarian

Senior Mobile Tech Lab
The first two seminars put on at the library by Senior Mobile Tech Lab were extremely popular. In fact, we’ve scheduled additional labs into the New Year. The third Senior Mobile Tech Lab is scheduled for Tuesday, December 1, and the fourth one is scheduled for January 5, from 12:30 – 2:30 pm.

If you are 60 years or older, join us for one-on-one tutoring in the use of your smartphone, tablet, laptop, electronic reader or other device. Tutors will be on hand with laptops for the public to use. Patrons are also encouraged to bring their own devices to the session. Learn how to send and receive email, surf the Internet, use Facebook and other social networks and more. Funded by the County of San Diego Health & Human Services, the program is free.

Holiday Open House
I can’t believe it’s time once again for the library’s annual Holiday Open House. This year we will feature the musical stylings of The Bayou Brothers, a San Diego band specializing in Cajun and Zydeco music.

There will also be a buffet with food from local eateries. The community always has a great time at this event. Please join us to enjoy the music, the food and mingling with your neighbors. The celebration will be on Wednesday, December 16 at 6 pm.

Circus @ the Library
At 6 pm on Wednesday, January 20, we are having a circus-themed program for kids. You will meet Free Spirit the clown and get to hear from REAL circus performers. They may even show you some skills. Join us and get your clown on!

Meet Toni Atkins, California State Assembly Speaker and Her Staff
The University Heights Library is honored to be chosen as one of the local venues for Public Office Hours for Speaker of the Assembly Toni Atkins and her staff. Please feel free to drop in, say hello, ask questions and discuss your concerns. The “office” is open to the public at 3 pm on the first Wednesday of every month. The next two sessions will be December 2, 2015, and January 6, 2016.

Become a Friend of the University Heights Library
If you enjoy the services and programs provided by the University Heights Branch Library, you need to know that our programming depends on the generosity of donations from the community. One of the best ways you can help support the library is to join the Friends of the UH Library. For a minimum donation of $10 ($5 for students and seniors) you can sign up for an annual Friends membership. Just stop into the library or call us at (619) 692-4912 to the public at 5 pm on the first Wednesday of every month. The next two sessions will be December 2, 2015, and January 6, 2016.

Friends of the Library Book Sale - Saturday, December 19 (8 am - 3 pm) and Sunday, December 20 (noon - 4 pm)
Foul great bargains on books, DVDs, music CDs and vintage vinyl at the Friends of the San Diego Public Library Book Sale. All proceeds for the book sale go to support the Friends of the San Diego Public Library. Please join us.

Book Club and Salon
The UH Book Club and Salon will not meet in December. The January meeting will feature the book Animals Make Us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals by Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson. The meeting will be Wednesday, January 27, 6:30 pm at the UH Library.

Regular Monthly Programs for Kids
Also on tap are the library’s regular weekly/monthly programs for children, including:
• Arts and Crafts for Children with Ms. Kira, every Saturday at 10:30 am
• Story Time for Children of All Ages, every second and fourth Thursday of each month at 10:30 am
• Story Time for Babies, Toddlers and Younger Children every Friday at 10:30 am.

All programs are free to the public. Please drop in!

PLEASE NOTE: The library will be closed December 25, 2015 – January 1, 2016, for the holidays. The Central Library and 12 other branches will be open during the holiday week. For a list of open locations, please check the library website at sandiegolibrary.org

The January Book Club & Salon: Animals Make Us Human: Creating the Best Life for Animals

In Dr. Grandin’s groundbreaking and best-selling book, Animals in Translation, she drew on her own experience with autism as well as her distinguished career as an animal scientist to deliver extraordinary insights into how animals think, act and feel. Now in Animals Make Us Human, Dr. Grandin builds on those insights to show us how to give our animals the best and happiest life—on their terms, not ours.

In 1990 she was diagnosed with autism, and although considered “weird” during her young school years, she eventually found a mentor who recognized her interests and abilities. It is clear throughout the book that autism has provided Dr. Grandin with extraordinary insights into animals and perhaps an extraordinary patience with animals. Dr. Grandin works primarily with feed animals, consulting with private corporations on humane policies and practices for raising and killing animals for food. She also consults with zoos on habitat, behavior and quality of life issues. She has designed one-third of the livestock-handling facilities in the U.S., and is regarded as one of the highest functioning individuals with autism in the world.

Join the Book Club & Salon discussion on Wednesday, January 27, 2016, at 6:30 pm. The book will be available at the UH Library’s front desk during December/January. New members are always welcome!

Uh Book Club & Salon
Wednesday, January 27, 2016, at 6:30 pm
UH Branch Library
4103 Park Boulevard (at Howard Avenue)
(619) 692-4912

The University Heights Branch Library
4103 Park Blvd.
San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 692-4912

The University Heights Library is an important and enriching part of the community. We are here to serve you and we need your support to keep the programs going. Join the Friends of the UH Library to support the library. For a minimum donation of $10 ($5 for students and seniors) you can sign up for an annual Friends membership. Just stop into the library or call us at (619) 692-4912 to receive a membership envelope. Help our library to be a valued and popular part of the community. For more information, please call the library at (619) 692-4912.
Hey y’all, my name is Gemma. I have lived in this area since mid-July. I am still a pup and very rambunctious. I love people and can’t imagine NOT wanting to play with me or NOT find me adorable! I know I have inadvertently chewed up some things around the house, I should not have, but, hey, it was there for the taking so I think it is my owner’s fault!

Anyway, I am a mixed-breed, they say, part collie and part poodle. I am also a water baby and very smart, I hail from Montana, where I was picked up as an eight-week-old pup, but I really like the weather down here better. My home now has another dog that hasn’t been very tolerant of me because she is very smart. I have three cats that kind of tolerate me but won’t play with me all at all. I like to hang out at the park at The Point on Golden Gate, so if you see me in the area, you better be ready to greet me and play a bit because without play, what fun is life?!

The North Park Community Association (www.NorthParkSD.org) hosted a Community Forum on Homelessness on October 28 at the North Park Community Center (www.northparkcommunitycenter.org), which allowed the audience to ask panel members questions about the homelessness situation in San Diego, included Councilmember Todd Gloria, City Clerk Keith Richert of the San Diego Housing Commission, J.D. MacDonald of the Uptown Community Service Center, Margo Brueghel-Stevens of the Behavioral Health Program of San Diego County and Sgt. Rex Cole of the San Diego Police Department’s (SDPD) Homeless Outreach Team.

Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins kicked-off the meeting stating that there are approximately 135,000 homeless in California, the fifth-largest homeless population in the country. At the state level, most assistance funds health care and affordable housing, but that funding is drying up. Speaker Atkins stated that she is committed to lobbying for a way to permanently fund affordable housing.

The panel discussed how, despite the increased in homeless populations across the state, the programs available do not have large numbers of “repeat customers.” Oddly enough, most of the homeless populations in San Diego live in downtown San Diego and Mission Bay. Sgt. Cole stated that most of the downtown community populations are there because so many services are available to them in that area, which makes it attractive to them. He also stated that “homelessness is not a crime” and that it is both a problem and a symptom of much larger problems that cannot alone be solved at the local level.

**What can you do?**

• When approached by the homeless, **DO NOT GIVE THEM MONEY or FOOD.** This is an enabling action. As recommended by Cecily Thornton-Stearns, take the time to talk with them and educate them about available programs. Call 2-1-1 San Diego and connect them directly with people they can talk to. Also become aware of the countyside services available to help homeless.

• Sgt. Cole highly recommended that you report any tent cities that you see in your neighborhood to the SDPD Homeless Outreach Team. Todd Gloria’s office has staff dedicated to homeless issues and offered their office’s support to get Caltrans to help with tent cities in areas abutting freeways and major roadways.

• Councilmember Gloria suggested that more communities install “Red Meters.” These meters, which are part of the group’s “Make Change Count” program, take donations from people looking to help out the less fortunate. Funds go directly to the Ending Homelessness Campaign, a nonprofit that helps those in need by providing move-in kits, hygiene kits and job interview assistance. People can put change into the meters or donate with their credit cards, either at the meter or on their website. www.endingshelters.org.

• Councilmember Gloria also suggested that more communities provide storage solutions for local homeless populations, like the Transitional Storage Center in downtown San Diego. Bin’s are provided to the homeless to store their belongings and allow the city to enforce laws against leaving unattended property in public spaces. This makes our communities look better and easier for the homeless to get to the help they need to go on job interviews now that they don’t have to lug their property around with them.

• J.D. MacDonald recommended donating time or money to established assistance programs, such as the San Diego Rescue Mission (www.sdrarescue.org), Connections Housing PATH (www.epath.org), Neil Good Day Center (www.alphaproject.com), Father Joe’s Villages (www.fatherjoe.org), the Uptown Community Service Center (www.uptownucsc.org) and Rachel’s Women’s Center (www.rcwscsd.org).

Together, we can have a “collective impact!”

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**PET OF THE MONTH: GEMMA**

December Pet of the Month: Gemma

Birney’s Fall Fundraiser bigGIVE

Set for December 17

Birney’s big fall fundraiser, bigGIVE, is scheduled for December 17. This online fundraiser helps fund our “specials” that are not funded by the school district but are essential to our International Baccalaureate (IB) designation and the continued success of our school. Specials include Spanish instruction, art, music, dance and our award-winning garden program. This year, Birney has changed the scheduling of Specials to allow younger students more time to participate in the event.

Parents, extended family members, staff, and community members contribute almost one quarter of our annual goal of about $90,000 during this fundraiser. For the past several years, we’ve had anonymous donors who have put up “seed money” of $3,000 to support the fundraising efforts of our school. We are hoping to find other generous benefactors in the community. If you are in financial position to do so, please consider being our “knight in shining armor” or donating during the online drive. Please contact alicebirneyfriends@gmail.com or go online to www.friendsofbirney.org on December 17 to participate in our fundraiser. Thank you!

**Third Annual Urban Harvest Festival a Rousing Success!**

The 3rd Annual University Heights Urban Harvest Festival was amazing! Thanks to our incredible collaboration and hard work, we created a community event to remember. Students and teachers were able to get gorgeous perfect autumn weather. More than 1,500 people attended, and we were thrilled to see so many University Heights community members attend.

A significant amount of volunteer power made this event a success, and some volunteers went above and beyond to make this event a reality. Thanks to Skip Howard and Alex Muñoz, for continuing their work refining and improving their trebuchet, which ran all day with no significant misfires; Tulip Howard, for curating an amazing array of vendors; Xanthe Rivera and Marcela Salman, for creating a wonderful array of children’s activities; Sarah Hilliard, for coordinating all of the volunteer efforts; Joanne Carrubba, Lisa Fremud and Tom O’Malley, for organizing the field into an even better layout than last year; Molly McJohn, Bex Brands and Extra Graphic, for the amazing T-shirts; Paul McLure, Katie Callaghan and Art Horovitz, for lining up wonderful entertainment from Courtney Preis, The Heartbeat Trail, Mitten’s and the WorldBeat Center; and The University Heights Community Association (UHCA) for helping us make this a community-wide event.

Thank you to all our sponsors and partners: ArtFORM, Bex Brands, Bullseye Kettle Corn, Caribbean Escape, Extra Graphic Screen Printing & Design, Grace Images, the Pumpkin Station in Mission Valley, San Diego Advanced Skin Care, San Diego Stage and Lighting, Specialty Produce, Stuffed and Tiny Turtles.

Special thanks go to Pastor Mike and all the middle school students from the New Vision Christian Fellowship for being such wonderful. Special thanks also go out to Mindy Swanson and Mickey McQuerry, for running our school’s award winning eco-garden program; Jennifer Ayala, for keeping us organized and for chairing this event; and, but not least, Amanda Hammond-Williams, our esteemed principal, for making Birney an incredible IB World School the entire community can be proud of and for still showing up for trebuchet safety watch.

**North Park Toyland Parade**

Birney will again participate in the North Park Toyland Parade on December 5 at 11 am. Come out and watch the parade, support your local school and enjoy the festival that follows.

**Neil Ferrier Memorial Planned**

Neil Ferrier, a long-standing member of University Heights Community Association (UHCA), Uptown Planners and a UHCA News BlockWalker, passed away suddenly in October. There will be a memorial service for Neil on Saturday, December 15, 3 pm, at the LGBT Center’s library, 3009 Centre St., San Diego, CA 92103.
Farmer’s Bottega Restaurant is a wonderful addition to the ever-growing Uptown offerings. It is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, although we found that dinner was a definite cut above the breakfast and lunch service.

They have a delightful patio, and a modern/rustic/industrial interior lit by unique ceiling fixtures.

We have tried several breakfasts - from the gluten-free French toast, the least expensive, to the most expensive, a smoked salmon Eggs Benedict, served on a potato pancake rather than bagel or English muffin. The French toast was delicious, the Benedict not so much. There are some classics that lend themselves to more modern variations, but in this case, the smoked salmon, red onion and caper combination works much better on a good toasted bagel with cream cheese than on a potato cake with hollandaise sauce and an egg.

The night we went to dinner, we had the duck ragout gnocchi, the quail and a special of crab stuffed salmon. All were large portions, and all were outstanding. I think the ragout was the star - succulent pieces of duck in the large portion of gnocchi with a flavorful creamy sauce. The quail came with two whole quail, wonderful for dinner, and just as good for lunch the next day. The salmon was a large fillet with crispy skin on one side and oh so moist! The entrees are reasonably priced considering the quality and portion size, and the sides were original and good!

The desserts are not house made and fell short of our expectations. But if you walk just one block east, you will find Rita’s, where they serve Italian ice, cream ice and soft-serve custard in over 10 different combinations. My favorite, being a Dairy Queen freak, and still mourning the loss of our neighborhood DQ on El Cajon Blvd, is the dipped cone.

Let’s be Neighborly
New Mission Hills Eateries
By Andrea Bacal

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Rita’s Ice Custard Happiness
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Mini Clean UH Up Nov. 14
Thanks to all who came out to make the Washington St./163 Highway entrance area look sharp. We appreciate your neighborhood pride. The next major cleanup will be on the day of the 2016 Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon. See you then!

Lights in the Heights 2015!
It’s time to decorate for the holidays and the Lights in the Heights contest. See the article elsewhere in this paper for details. Have your decorations up before the week of the December 13 so we can see your best work.

New Committee Chairperson
I am pleased to announce that Cheryl Ann Cooke is stepping into the position as chair of the University Heights Community Association (UHCA) Beautification & Planning Committee. Cheryl has been an enthusiastic committee member for several years. She has written grants to improve UH and was responsible for coordinating the activities in the Busing for the Environment grant that created the vertical gardens on the bus stop in front of the Birney Playing Field. She has also been involved in Lights in the Heights, decorating for the Rock ‘n’ Roll Half Marathon and cleanups, among other activities. You will see her byline in this and future papers. Please give her your support! You can contact her at UHCA01stritch@gmail.com.

Making the freeway entrance at Washington St. and the 163 look better was what motivated me to start the Beautification Committee in 2011, and I will continue to be involved and coordinate Clean UH Up events. I have thoroughly enjoyed launching the committee and guiding it for five years. Beautifying UH has been a wonderful reward, but, even better, has been meeting the extraordinary people involved in UHCA, this committee and our neighborhood endeavors and making many new friends. Thanks to all for your encouragement and support!
NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTIONS
By Toni G. Atkins, Speaker of the California Assembly

Before each New Year many of us make resolutions, both personal and professional, as we start to think about what we want to accomplish that year. I’m no different. Some of my goals are professional, as we start to think about what we want to accomplish that year.

By Councilmember Todd Gloria

2015 was a year that I will remember for several programs and projects achieved to advance the quality of life in University Heights and the rest of San Diego.

The city recently transitioned our interim housing facility from a 16-week winter tent system to a year-round indoor housing facility that allows us to use our limited homeless services funds more effectively. The building includes 350 interim beds, and what they all have in common is that homelessness continues to have an impact on neighborhoods throughout our San Diego. I resolve to make additional progress addressing this critical issue in 2016, with the opening of multiple affordable housing projects and the consideration of changes to the federal homelessness funding formula so these changes could result in additional much-needed resources for our region.

Of the neighborhood improvements completed this year, the one I hear most about is the implementation of smart parking meters, many of which are equipped with pay-by-phone technology. We’ll soon cut the ribbon on the dog park improvements at Ward Canyon Park just down the road from University Heights. In 2016, I resolve to break ground on the new Hillcrest-Mission Hills branch library as the next major neighborhood investment.

As a policy wonk, I was proud this year to secure greater transparency in the city’s referendum and initiative laws. I resolve in 2016 to further advance the agenda of the people I represent by championing the approval and implementation of the aggressive Climate Action Plan and celebrating voter approval of a higher minimum wage for our City.

When 2016 concludes, so will my time as your council member. I am confident we will then recount the successful completion of these resolutions and many others that help make San Diego a truly great city.

One of the greatest triumphs of the 2015 legislative session was creating California’s first state Earned Income Tax Credit, which can benefit two million Californians, lift 50,000 people out of poverty and lift 500,000 people out of deep poverty. Getting as many people as possible to sign up and benefit from this tax credit would make my year.

Growing up in a military family and living in San Diego, it’s really important for me to support our veterans. While California voters passed Proposition 41 in 2014, there are still many veterans without housing. We are working on this issue throughout the nation and making real progress, which I am confident will continue in the New Year.

I’d like to see some Snoopy license plates on the Road! The Snoopy Plate was create following legislation in 2013. Proceeds from the sales go to the California Cultural and Historical Endowment to help museums make capital improvements to their facilities, which helps keep their doors open to the public. We still need about 900 pre-orders to begin production and the deadline is approaching, but we’re so close now! Visit www.snoopyplate.com to get your plate or to learn more about the program.

Every day 96 elephants are slaughtered for their ivory. I passed AB 96 to close loopholes in California’s ivory trade, which, in turn, will help decrease elephant and rhino poaching. California leads the way for our nation on many issues, including economic growth, social justice and climate action, and I would really like to see other states following California’s example on AB 96 and help to eliminate trade in ivory or rhino horn.

Some of these resolutions are easier than others, but I’ll continue working hard to lift people out of poverty, house veterans, fund museums and prevent the extinction of wildlife. I enter 2016 with a sense of hope that as I join with my colleagues in the legislature, we can help build a better California.

Speaker Atkins proudly represents the people of coastal San Diego, from Imperial Beach, along the Mexican border, north to Solana Beach, and most of central San Diego. For more information about Toni, please visit http://asmca.org/speaker/. Follow her on Twitter @toniatkins, or at Facebook.com/SDToni.

NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTIONS
By Supervisor Ron Roberts

New Year’s resolutions are personal matters, and nothing is more personal than one’s health. So my resolution for 2016 is to stay healthy, guided along the way by the county’s “Live Well, San Diego” initiative.

For me, eating healthy can be tricky, with my schedule often not in sync with the rough time periods when most people eat breakfast – you should if you don’t – lunch and dinner. So I resolve to stock my desk, and office mini-bridge, with even healthier snacks.

Part of being a good elected official is to set forth publicly identifiable goals, and then work to achieve them. So my 2016 resolution as the Fourth District Supervisor is to encourage record numbers of participants for county-overseen Live Well activities, from Be It Resolved

 Supervisor Ron Roberts resolves to work for the kids, transit, a new stadium and more

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