MAJOR DEVELOPMENT COMES TO UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS IN 2018
THE PRICE (AND VALUE) OF VIGILANCE

2018 witnessed strong interest in redevelopment of several prominent University Heights properties. Our community was ready for it.

The San Diego Unified School District began with a proposal to swap its Ed Center site for a new headquarters, but ended by deciding not to move forward. Rather, they chose to fold the future of their 60-year-old Normal Street facility into a larger bond measure. As you read this, the results are in. Measure YY passed, so the district will now decide whether to refresh its current campus or purchase an alternate site and sell or lease the current location.

If the former, we will have an opportunity to influence the government or private parties involved.

UHCA’s ability to amplify the community’s voice also came in handy when the DMV announced plans to upgrade its 60-year-old Normal Street facility without providing for mixed-use, transit-friendly development, public access or public parking at this important site. Because our community is known to be engaged, active, and aware (thanks to UHCA News and our monthly meetings), our elected representatives did not need to be prompted to get to work to ensure a better outcome. Although not officially on hold, the DMV project has now shifted into “slow motion,” while its leadership investigates new designs and locations. UHCA, Uptown Planners, our elected representatives, and community members worked together like a well-oiled machine to achieve a good result. Working together successfully helped us learn to work together better. We improved our lines of communication, built trust, and established credibility that is now a valuable intangible asset that will serve us well.

Another example is the Lennar project along Park Boulevard. Lennar, one of the largest home builders in America, was not obligated to seek local approvals because the project conforms to current zoning regulations. Yet, they came to our November meeting to answer our questions and hear our concerns.

A strong turnout of 120 well-informed, articulate, and courteous neighbors impressed Lennar, making it likely that other developers or public officials will share their plans and get our input. Only time will tell how many of our suggestions will find their way onto Lennar’s drawing board, but at the very least, UH residents who participated in the discussion went away with a better understanding of the process that shapes their immediate urban environment and a greater ability to influence its future.

The process of creating a Community Benefit District to benefit commercial property owners and businesses on Park Boulevard. However, residents also should be concerned, because if successful, the new district has the potential to impact neighborhood identity; e.g., by market-ing a name like “West End” rather than University Heights.

Another opportunity for UH residents to influence what happens to their neighborhood emerged late in 2018. An organization called New City America began the process of creating a Community Benefit District to benefit commercial property owners and businesses on Park Boulevard. Members worked together like a well-oiled machine and established credibility that is now a valuable intangible asset that will serve us well.

By the time you read this, New City America may have decided not to include Park Boulevard north of Meade, which may be good or bad, depending on your point of view. Either way, you can be sure that UHCA will do its best to give the community a voice and a forum to influence the result. So, stay tuned and stay informed. And if you can, consider becoming an UHCA member ($25 at uhsd.org). More members give us a louder voice, which tends to make people who want to do business in our community show up at our meetings and respond to our concerns.

— William Smith

Following the Crime Watch portion of the meeting on December 6, we will have brief announcements followed by UHCA Awards of the Year and our annual dessert potluck.

As in previous years, we’re pleased to honor our Blockwalkers, the 67 invaluable volunteers who deliver more than 4800 newspapers 10 times a year throughout University Heights. Help us recognize these special neighbors: JD Abercrombie, Carol Baras, Karen Boyd & Dennis Richards, Ernie Bonn, Mark Briei, Paula Cameron, Louisa Compagna, Priscilla & Terry Dickson, Tom & Barbara Dowdy, Randi Dropkin & Phyllis Luth, Pepe Martinez, Sheila Moss, Sharon Nelson, Matt Norton, Barbara Noyer, John O’Connor, Gale Osbourn, Laurie Parker, Colette Pisacano, Jean Rannels, Sheila & Tom Riis, Karen Rosen & John Chan, Brian Ross, Paul Sandbo, Tim Sanders, Dawn Sass, Scott Schechter, Kelly Shaw, Josh Stag, Mary Anne Stevens, Theresa Friederich & Wayne Takasugi, Patrick Tresse, Ron Widmer, Jennifer Williamson, Jim Webb, and Richard Wood.

Lastly, we’ll be bestowing the Plume of the Year on Brent Orlesky. Don’t forget to consider participating in our annual Birney Giving Tree that helps students at Alice Birney Elementary School make this time of the year just that much more special.

We will conclude with our traditional annual dessert potluck. Please bring a dessert to share with your neighbors.

Looking Ahead:
NO UHCA MEETING IN JANUARY.
NEXT UHCA MEETING WILL BE FEBRUARY 7, 2019

Topics will be announced on our website in the next few weeks.

UH YEAR-END DEVELOPMENT ROUNDUP
DESSERT POTLUCK AND AWARDS CEREMONY AT DECEMBER 6 UHCA MEETING
**MEMBERSHIP**

JOIN TODAY AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

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

JOIN, RENEW OR DONATE ONLINE AT UHSD.ORG.

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**NEW/RENEWAL MEMBERS**

**GOLDEN OSTRICH**

Steven Kolbert, Peter & Pati Roches, Sharon Retchke, Mariana Venegas & Robert Deila Valle, Nancy Jackson, Brian Lemmon & Greg Holochubier, Nan McGraw, Theresa Friedrich & Wayne Takasugi, Jennifer Coshimoto, Patricia Ryan & Lloyd Alexander

**BUSINESS**

Cindi Hill, EUB Compliance Advisors; Mark Kastner, Circle of Living, Jeremy Dall, Bex Brands

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**HOUSEHOLD**


* Indicates new and renewing members who have made a donation in excess of the cost of membership. Thank you for your generous support of the work UHCA does to ensure that our wonderful community remains wonderful!

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**UHCA NEWS**

**EDITORIAL BOARD** Maureen Markley, Phyllis Kessel, Nan McGraw

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS** Carol Neidenberg, Jennifer Markley, Nan McGraw, Phyllis Kessel, Rod Girvin, Ari Honarvar, Kurt Hermansen, Jennifer Ayala, Julie Smith, Justine Hall, Steu McGraw, Amanda Hammond Williams, Victor Church, Andy Lange, Marybeth Cruder, Melissa Leitch

**ART DIRECTOR** Felicia Crossley, O Design

**SPECIAL PROJECTS CONTRIBUTING WRITER** Phillip Gill

**PHOTOS** Dawn Harrison, Dave Harrison, Harrison Photographic; Paul Farris

**ADVERTISING DIRECTOR** Susan Holts SusanS@uhsd.com

Published 10 times per year by the University Heights Community Association. We welcome articles, letters, and announcements about issues and events relating to University Heights. The deadline for submission is the 5th of the month. Email submissions to uhcanews@yahoo.com. We retain the right to edit submissions for style and content.

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**PHONE BOOK**

**UCSD Household**

**415 Membership** & mailed UHCA News

**978 UHS Membership**

**100 Golden Ostrich**

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**Yearly Membership**

- $25 Household
- $45 Membership & mailed UHCA News
- $978 UHS Membership
- $100 Golden Ostrich

**Business Name**

**Name**

**Address**

**City/State** Zip

**Phone**

**Email**

**Donor**

& _____________ Donation for keeping up the Good Work (Donate as a member or non-member)

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**New Crime Watch Signs**

Be on the lookout for the new signs that are now up. If you know of an old dilapidated sign that should be given priority, please email UHCA Secretary Kurt Hermansen at klh@haboekurtus.com.

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**NEW SPONSORS**

- Bex Brands
- Hill Compliance Advisors
- Mariana Venegas & Robert Deila Valle
- Nan McGraw
- Tamara Zoby
- Mark Koepman

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**FREE COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Cal Fresh, Medi-Care, Covered California, etc.

**RECEIVE UHCA NEWS**

Download and use this app if you see a non-emergency problem in the city like potholes, graffiti, etc.

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**Volunteer Your Time on a UHCA Committee!**

- ** Beautification & Planning** Keep UH beautiful.
- **Blockwalker** Help deliver newsletters to UH residents and businesses.
- **Marketing & Merchandising** Promote UHCA via marketing/advertising, visual arts, photography, and product merchandising.
- **Membership** Help meet record goals for 2018 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 the various events and general meetings.

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**SLOW DOWN SIGNS**

Speeding on neighborhood streets in UH is a chronic problem. Sharing time off trips by speeding has small benefits and high risks. Set your alarm clock 15 minutes ahead and slow down.

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**UH PHONE BOOK**

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**UHCA NEWS**

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**UHCA OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT** Carol Neidenberg  president@uhsd.org or (619) 549-3996

**VICE PRESIDENT** Maureen Markley

**SECRETARY** Kurt Hermansen

**TREASURER**Keith McGraw  website@uhsd.org

**FACEBOOK** universityheightscommunityassociation

**INSTAGRAM** UniversityHeightsSD
Another year has passed and 2018 is in our rear-view mirror. Once again, your involvement — whether it being the community association, renewing your membership, or volunteering your time — is what makes University Heights a unique and wonderful community to live and work in. You are the reason.

Committees - UHCA wants to recognize our committee members who are the backbone of our success. The Beautification Committee for the cleanups and efforts to make Trolley Barn Park more usable and enjoyable for everyone. Hats off to our UHCA newspaper team: ten times a year, copywriting, editing, and designing papers that are delivered by 62 blockwalkers who deliver more than 4,800 papers to residences and businesses. Marketing and Program Committees — for great merchandise, handsome street pole banners, and interesting speakers at our meetings.

Events – There were the perennial Cookies with the Cops and Caroling in the Heights. The Baby Buggies/Movies in the Trolley Barn Park were initially funded by a Bike to Work SAN DIEGO grant and then supplemented by a County of San Diego grant, thanks to support from Supervisor Ron Roberts’ office. If you weren’t able to catch a movie, you missed the kids lining up for the face painting and popcorn for all. Next year, join us. Also, we held our first, now annual, fantastic Tag Sale event. Look for the second one in 2019.

Streetscape in 2019. To do so, we need your continued help and participation. If you’re not a member of UHCA now, please join. If you are a member, please renew your membership and consider joining at the Ostrich Level. Wishing you and your loved ones a happy and healthy holiday season!

CAROLING IN THE HEIGHTS
EVENING OF FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7

The University Heights Community Association is very excited to introduce a new format of group to annual Caroling in the Heights. Chamber Bravura is an internationally acclaimed, San Diego based a cappella youth choir. The leader of this group, Katherine Girvin, is district-wide principal of the Barroge Springs Unified School District and daughter of Rod and Nancy Girvin who reside in University Heights.

This world-renowned group is composed of vocalists from various middle and high schools from around San Diego County. The kids range in age from 11 to 18 years old. They have performed at the Vatican, Carnegie Hall, and Lincoln Center multiple times and have won competitions around the globe. On an international level, they have toured across Italy, Germany, Austria, New Zealand, England, Ireland, Wales, and the Czech Republic. They also represented the United States at the Australian International Music Festival in Sydney, Australia, in 2017. We are indeed fortunate to have this talented group of young people in our community.

The San Diego Trolley Company will be transporting the 25 carolers from one point to the next. Here is the schedule:

5:50-6:30 pm, at BFDF/UPS, 4075 Park Blvd (refrshments from BFDF)
6:30-7:20 pm, at Vermont St Bridge (UIA sides) (refrshments from Mystic Mocha)
7:30-8 pm, at The Point (Golden Gate and Rhode Island) (refrshments from Twiggos)

in case you missed

The November 1, 2018, UHCA general meeting opened to a standing-room only crowd. Nan McGraw and Bill Smith conducted the meeting, which started with Crime Watch at 6:45 pm.

a. Officer David Surwilro reminded everyone: If you see something, say something.

b. You can file police reports online or submit a work order using the Get It Done app, for iPhone and Android, which is great for reporting homeless encampments, potholes, graffiti, streetlights, or anything non-emergency, and you can track the response.

c. CrimeMapping.com is a much better source than Nextdoor for gauging verified crime statistics.

REPORTS

Marcie and Greg Sorini and Brent Orley set up the UHCA Gifting Tree, our holiday fundraising program for most-need kids at Birney Elementary School. We will collect gift certificates at the December UHCA meeting and present the proceeds to Birney.

Rod Girvin encouraged volunteers to help with the UHCA November Fall Cleanup, which will take place at Birney Elementary School, with participation from Birney parents. Meet at Meade and Park at 9:00 am.

Tyler Renner, rep for City Councilmember Chris Ward.

UIHCA NEEDS TECH VOLUNTEERS!

Although there will be 486 residential and 71 retail parking spaces (557 total, one per bedroom), none will be visible from the street. Garage entrances will be on Park and on Meade. The sidewalks will be wider but the streets will not be narrowed. The alley in back will be widened by about 6 feet. There will be five courtyards, some facing the street and some inside. The largest open space will be on the corner of El Cajon and Park. Three eucalyptus trees will be saved, if possible. Lusti Motors will remain, giving their lot to the Georgia side of the business.

Lennar expects to pay the $2.68 million ($7,000 per unit) in Development Impact Fees to the North Park community. It is up to University Heights to ensure the funds benefit the University Heights community near the impacted area. Councilmember Ward has prioritized the roundabout at El Cajon and Park Boulevards. This is also an opportunity to advocate for improvements to the Highway 163 approach. Construction should start June 2019 and take about 30 months.

Bill Smith at wlsmithjr@msn.com if you’re interested.

UHCA is looking for a web designer/developer who has the time and desire to help our organization serve the community with a more usable and informative website. Experience with Wix would be ideal but not essential. Also, if you are a Salesforce power user or developer (or know one), we need help fine tuning and migrating membership data to the Non-Profit Success Pack (NPSP), as well as implementing the Volunteer Management module. Contact Bill Smith at wlsmithjr@msn.com if you’re interested.

UHCA NEEDS TECH VOLUNTEERS!
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WILL UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS BE REBRANDED AS "WEST END/PARK BLVD"?

New City America Inc (NCA) will soon be petitioning University Heights property owners to vote for a new "West End/Park Blvd Maintenance Assessment District" (MAD) which levies additional property tax in exchange for a little extra fiscal impact. That the city already provides: street sweeping, policing, power-washing sidewalks, etc. MADs are most commonly administered by groups of local volunteers, but it’s become big business for consultants like NCA, supported by big developers moving into UH and North Park.

Community organizing is going corporate and local volunteers can’t compete. The Little Italy Association of San Diego, managed by NCA, has 29 Board Members, and annual revenue exceed $2.5 million in FY15, mostly from property taxes. Little Italy is almost at the "saturation point," but NCA has dozens of MADs across the country following a business model. Neighbors in Kensington refused the option in 2005 when faced with a plan that included the replacement of Kensington’s historic neon sign.

In October, property owners on El Cajon Blvd west of Texas and Park Blvd from Adams to Robinson were contacted by NCA’s "The West End/Park Blvd CID Steering Committee" with a letter and a survey wherein the words “University Heights” cannot be found.

Many UHCA board members already concede the likelihood of giving up some identity, autonomy, and oversight. Is an ostrich head in the sand? UHCA is volunteer led, supported by you and your neighbors who made UH what it is, including the rescue of Trolley Barn Park from a large development. If you want to live in “University Heights,” instead of West End, I urge you to get involved! (stumcgraw@gmail.com).

Sleepy University Heights is in for a wake-up call. Welcome to North Park, you’re at the West End. —Stuart McGraw

THANK YOU FROM THE UH OSTRICH STRIDERS

To our UH neighbors, friends and family—Thank you, thank you! Together we raised $3943 for the holidays. What better way to honor those or those you love than by donating to a worthy cause! You know you want to. Share the love here: http://main.acsevens.org/goto/UH0strichStriders.

Thank you again for your continued support and encouragement. It is very much appreciated. We look forward to having you join the team next year.

—Melissa Leitch, Team Leader, UH Ostrich Striders

FLORAL NOTES

Florabella, our neighborhood florist, was a slightly tattered building, a hardly noticeable presence on the street, but inside there was always a spirited welcome. In 2015, from Adams to Robinson were contact -ed by NCA’s "The West End/Park Blvd CID Steering Committee" with a letter and a survey wherein the words “University Heights” cannot be found.

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TROLLEY BARN PARK REPORT

The park looks beautiful and we are so lucky, yet a closer look reveals dead trees, sick trees, trip hazards, and a homeless occupation.

Longtime UH resident and Certified Arborist, Ed Upchurch, owner of Ed Upchurch Tree Service on Cleveland Ave., identified a severe case of psyllids on the eucalyptus trees at the west end of the park. Ed estimates the trees have been infested for up to five years and should be treated with a systemic injection and spray. The eucalyptus drop contaminated leaves and block sunlight, thus infecting and killing the trees below.

The west boundary of the park was planted with Sweet Hakea trees (resembling 8 foot pine trees) in order to hide the fences of the neighboring properties. Seven of these trees were removed in recent months. There are only a few left and most of the fence is exposed.

Tyler Renner of Councilmember Ward’s office organized an audit of the park and its natural assets. Matt, a City of San Diego Horticulturist, recommended the introduction of native shrubs and trees that are drought tolerant, some with large canopies to mitigate radiation, increase capacity for carbon sequestration, and are attractive to birds, butterflies, etc. Matt is impressed by the local advocates of the park and I, among others, am impressed with his ideas.

Michelle Chicarelli (City of San Diego Park and Rec Department, Area Manager ID) is pursuing solutions to the trip hazards along the walkway caused by tree roots and removal of tree stumps. The homeless element at the benches east of the playground can be mitigated by lifting the tree canopy as high as possible with respect to the health of the tree. This will remove visual barriers and maximize light and air circulation. It’s important that the police can see through the park as they pass by.

What are your ideas for Trolley Barn Park? Are you a guardian for children using the playground? Do you use the field? Contact stumcgraw@gmail.com or 619 793 7795 with your ideas.

—Stuart McGraw

Law Office of
Rosemary Leonard

Estate Planning ♦ Elder Law
Probate ♦ Wills ♦ Trusts

Medical Planning

619-295-8705
rosemaryleonard@cox.net

Conveniently located in University Heights

Florabella, our neighborhood florist, was a slightly tattered building, a hardly noticeable presence on the street, but inside there was always a spirited welcome from Jen, Sarah, and the rest. A haven of dewy loveliness and fragrance, they offered friendly hellos and lots of fresh flowers for a last minute gift or your own house. I feasted on buckets of lilacs in spring, peonies in summer, wavy tulips, voluptuous lilacs, and violet blue anemones, always accompanied by that damp, green, slightly chilly abundance. An invitation into the inner sanctum of the refrigerated case to choose was heaven.

When Florabella had to vacate that Madison Avenue building, a large fan group of us were sad but hopeful for their speedy return in a new location. As of my latest bulletin from Sarah, "We are still unsure what the future holds. We are in a "delivery only" site and we miss seeing you and hearing your stories of your beloved flowers. We are so grateful for the loyalty and support of so many of our friends in University Heights." Do come home soon. In the meantime, you still can order delivered bouquets for the holidays. —Phyllis Kessel
FOOD AND BEVERAGES

RESTAURANT REVIEW

STELLA JEAN’S ICE CREAM

My friends and I have long said all Park Blvd needed was a good ice cream shop. Then it would have just about everything you could ever want within a few convenient blocks. Our prayers were answered by Stella Jean’s Ice Cream. Steven Torres and Gan Suchesrakdham opened the shop next to its sister company, Pop Pie Co. Stella Jean’s is all about making really good ice cream and creating a space to support the community.

With that philosophy in mind, many of the flavors are made with ingredients sourced from local farmers markets, served up by the friendliest staff who will let you sample every flavor—because it really is hard to choose just one. My personal favorites included the salty caramel corn (just as amazing and sweet-salty as it sounds) and mint chocolate chunk: a chocolate ice cream that made me want to buy their entire supply. Luckily they do have pints of ice cream for purchase along with kid size, single, double, and triple scoop options. The interior of the brick and mortar is bright and well designed, and while it doesn’t offer ample seating, I doubt anyone would leave their ice cream alone long enough to even sit down. — Justine Hall

STELLA JEAN’S ICE CREAM
4404 Park Boulevard
University Heights
619 501-8252
Hours: Sunday-Thursday 12 noon-11 pm.
Friday, 12 noon-11 pm. Saturday, 11 am-10 pm.

RECIPES

COCKTAILS ANYONE?

If you are looking for a special New Year’s Eve Cocktail, or anytime cocktail, look no further than Collins & Coupe for the right mix of things. It’s located at 2876 El Cajon Boulevard and if you’re interested in unique cocktail ware and supplies, it is a must. This is a good time of year to check it out, as well as a great place to do your holiday shopping. They also have gift certificates for the cocktail enthusiast on your list!

Owner Gary McIntire holds occasional published and private classes focusing on specialty drinks. For info on classes, get on the email list: collinsandcoupe@gmail.com. Here Gary and his wife Logan are toasting the New Year with his specialty cocktail. You can’t help but have a festive holiday party with this drink. It’s a variation of the classic French 75 cocktail, which is named after a WW1 gun. The syrups listed can be found at Collins & Coupe.

Raspberry Pepper 75
1/2 oz Fresh Squeezed Lemon Juice
1/2 oz Small Hand Foods Raspberry Ganache
1/2 oz Black Slate Black Pepper Syrup
1 oz Old Harbor San Miguel Gin
Top with a splash of Champagne

Add all ingredients except champagne to a shaker filled with ice. Shake for 30 seconds and strain into a glass, saving room to top off with champagne. Finish with the bubbles, add a lemon peel for garnish, and enjoy! — Nan McGraw

COLLINS & COUPE
2876 El Cajon Boulevard
University Heights
619 727-4971
Hours: Mon. & Thurs., 11 am-7 pm. Tues. & Wed., by appt. Fri., 11 am-8 pm. Sat., 10 am-8 pm. Sun., 10 am-7 pm.

EATING OUT IN UH

American Market 4395 Cleveland Ave. 296-8333
Bahia Mexican & Seafood 1985 El Cajon Blvd. 542-0540
Bahn Thai 4846 Park Blvd. 296-0683
Circa Restaurant 4136 14th Ave. 296-1100
Circa Restaurant 2172 Adams Ave. 296-9152
Coza Bar 2172 Adams Ave. 269-6612
El Zarape 4642 Park Blvd. 692-1652
Flavors of East Africa 2322 El Cajon Blvd. 955-8778
Grains 2201 Adams Ave. 269-0999
Great Maple 1450 Washington St. 296-0626
Hope at Lafayette 2223 El Cajon Blvd. 780-0358
Hundred Proof 4486 Park Blvd. 501-6838
Laster’s on Park 2201 Adams Ave. 501-6838
Loving Hut 1905 El Cajon Blvd. 683-9450
Madison 4822 Park Blvd. 296-0656
Mama’s Bakery & Lebanese Deli 4237 Alabama St. 688-0717
Meraki Café 1735 Adams Ave. 269-9618
Mazze Abyssinian Bistro 4851 Park Blvd. 546-1900
Mystic Music 2105 Mission Ave. 688-0717
Park Boulevard Deli 4054 Park Blvd. 295-1362
Park House Eatery 4574 Park Blvd. 295-7275
Pizzaria Bruno Napoletano 4205 Park Blvd. 260-1311
Pizzaria Luigi 2172 El Cajon Blvd. 294-9417
Pomegranate Vegetarian Cuisine 4687 Park Blvd. 269-9489
Red House Pizza 2310 El Cajon Blvd. 297-4007
Red Fox Steak House 4404 Park Blvd. 501-4440
Red Fox Steak House 2225 El Cajon Blvd. 297-1313
Romy’s Delicatessen 4846 Park Blvd. 296-0683
Sabor Latino 4175 26th St. 291-6287
Sante Caffe 4404 Park Blvd. 501-8252
Sereno’s Market & Deli 4620 Park Blvd. 260-0504
Twiggs 4586 Park Blvd. 296-0616
Twisted Taps (beer & wine) 2352 El Cajon Blvd. 542-9927
Wing Stop 1901 El Cajon Blvd. 297-9464

We Fix Your Computer! We come to you or you come to us for the lowest rates Call Robert at 858-449-1749

Photos: Harrison Photographic
Thank you for being a part of the University Heights Library community this year. As 2018 comes to a close, the Friends of the University Heights Library is able to look back at the support we provided to our branch library and be proud of what we have achieved, including purchasing new books and equipment, sponsoring children’s programs, improving the facilities, and providing hundreds of volunteer hours to our branch.

We were able to support our branch through membership dues, book sales, and charitable contributions.

This year, we encourage you to support the library by making a charitable donation. You can make a donation any day of the year, or you can participate in GivingTuesday, a global day of giving. GivingTuesday is celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving (fall Black Friday and Cyber Monday) and kicks off the charitable season, when many people focus on their holiday and end-of-year charitable giving.

The University Heights Branch Library needs your support. Please join or renew your membership and make a donation to help us continue to support our library. Also, please spread the word and tell your friends and family to do the same.

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MINDING THE PLANET

The Opriskos family moved to University Heights from Takoma Park, Maryland, a community that was a progressive, environmentally active community. They were recycling and heating their East Coast house with a corn stove and composting in a curbside co-op. On the move, Katrina, Chris, and their two children discovered a refill shop while looking for a place to live in San Diego; and when they settled in their neighborhood, they decided to open their own eco-conscious location nearby.

Here’s the concept. Instead of throwing away your plastic bottles after one use, you can refill them again and again at their shop with natural, non-toxic goods. Their botanical products for household and home include everything from toothpaste and shampoo to laundry detergent. Household cleaners are free of harmful chemicals, shampoo has jojoba oil, lemon, borage, and mustard seed.

Recent news about the horrendous plastic trash that has accumulated in our oceans makes this chance to recycle our plastic bottles seem like a good idea. — Phyllis Kessel

EARTHWELL
4114 Adams Avenue
Kensington
619-888-1160
Open Wednesday-Sunday, 11 am-7 pm and the first Monday of each month
www.earthwellrefill.com

Music students typically choose their instrument sometime during elementary school. For Imani Ojutomori, the right moment came when she joined the Roosevelt International Middle School orchestra last year. After meeting all members of the string family, the cello piqued her interest. “I found the cello’s sonorous tones the most pleasant,” says Imani, now in eighth grade. At Roosevelt, students can take orchestra or band as an elective, taught by Nathan Elias Kocivar, a professional jazz musician. “I hope to inspire students to become lifelong musicians,” says Kocivar. “If I can get students to work hard and enjoy playing an instrument, they will be playing music for the rest of their lives.”

Through San Diego Symphony field trips and Mr. Kocivar’s guidance, Imani quickly gained a deeper appreciation for making music. “Taking on a new instrument is a daunting task, but the orchestra put me at ease by leaving me plenty of room to explore and play on my own,” she says.

Imani is also passionate about math, her favorite school subject. She plans to work as a research scientist someday and make an impact on the environmental, biochemical, or pharmaceutical field. In her free time, she likes to read, draw, and write science fiction.

“Would Imani continue playing the cellos beyond Roosevelt? Definitely, because I’ve barely scratched the surface of what music has to offer, and playing an instrument is too enjoyable for me to stop.”

Come see Imani and other music students perform at the free Winter Concert on December 13, 2018, at 6:30 pm, at Roosevelt’s Auditorium. Students are hoping to participate in a Disneyland music festival this year. Please help make this Christmas wish come true. Visit www.friendsofroosevelt.org/contribute and donate to the music program. — Jennifer Ayala, parent of students at Roosevelt and Birney and a board member of the Friends of Roosevelt Foundation

BIRNEY BUZZ

As Birney gears up for the winter holidays and the New Year, the Friends of Alice Birney Elementary will host the Big Give online fundraising event on Thursday, December 13, from 7 am to 7 pm. Our goal is to raise $23,000 to fund Spanish, Art, and Garden. Show your holiday spirit by supporting your neighborhood school with one last tax-deductible contribution before the end of the year. We also offer many great sponsorship opportunities for local businesses. To learn more about what our International Baccalaureate students are up to, how close we are to reaching our fundraising goals, and how you can sponsor your world-class neighborhood school, check out www.friendsoalicebirney.org

We would like to extend our thanks to the University Heights Community Association for the special donation of several bicycles to Birney. We plan to use them for a special opportunity drawing during the largest fundrais-er of the year, our annual jogathon, Run for the Green, and our summer Passport to Adventure celebration. Stay tuned for more details.

When students return to school in January, we’ll celebrate Great Kind-ness Challenge for two weeks. Students, teachers, and staff will focus on performing acts of kindness, which highlights one of our important International Baccalaureate learner profile attributes. — Ari Honarvar

BIDES FOR BIRNEY

Our Birney Bees have been working hard this fall to get good grades, attend school every day, arrive on time, and show their IB (International Baccalaureate) Learner attitudes and personal-ity traits by being knowledgeable, principled, reflective, balanced, open-minded, courageous, and caring inquirers, thinkers, and communica-tors. Thanks to our community partners, the University Heights Commu-nity Association (UHCA), this season they can win a brand new, shiny bicycle for their efforts. All students at each grade level who have managed the tri-ects of school good news – perfect attendance, excellent grades, and excel-lent citizenship – will have their names entered in a drawing for a bicycle, and the names will be drawn at the closing assemblies the week before school gets out for Winter Break. Well done, Birney Bees, and thanks to UHCA for always supporting our school in so many ways. — Amanda Hammond-Williams, Prin-cipal, Birney Elementary School
UH BEAUTIFICATION TEAM REPORT
FALL CLEANUP A SUCCESS

On November 10, more than 25 volunteers from the University Heights Community Association Beautification Team and the community took advantage of the lovely fall day to conduct a cleanup along Park Boulevard and Meade Avenue adjacent to the Birney Elementary Joint Use Field and along Campus in front of the school. By the end of the morning, enough trash, weeds, tree and shrubbery trimmings, and sundry debris had been collected to fill a large dumpster. In addition, new plants were planted at the entrance to the playing field at Park and Meade, making this highly visible corner clean and attractive to the visitors and residents who pass daily through this major entrance to our community. At the same time that this work was taking place, 30 Birney kids, parents, and volunteers were doing a cleanup on the school campus with Beautification Team support. Trees and bushes were trimmed, planters were cleared of dead leaves, and the sidewalks swept.

Thank you to all of the energetic and enthusiastic volunteers whose efforts made this cleanup a success. Thanks also to Twiggs for providing coffee and to the following businesses which contributed gift certificates for the raffle prizes for the volunteers: Twiggs, Cueva Bar, Pop Pie, and Anderson’s Nursery. Thank you also to Councilmember Chris Ward’s office for contributing the dumpsters and to the NASSCO Cleanup and Restoration Committee for the use of their trash bags, gloves, and tools. It is this sort of community-wide effort that makes University Heights such a wonderful place to work and live. — Rod Girvin

CAMELOT CANYON UPDATE
ANOTHER FIRE UNDER THE VERMONT ST. BRIDGE

In the early morning on Sunday, October 28, another fire broke out in the canyon under the Vermont St. Bridge (aka Camelot Canyon). Fortunately, this fire was quickly contained and wasn’t as threatening as the fire in March. At about the same time, a third fire was reported behind Ralphs. Scant details were available at the time this article was written, but there is no reason to believe either fire was arson.

As reported in last month’s UHCA newspaper, prior to this second fire, the city did send a crew in to clean up their jurisdictional area of the canyon. But, as the photos show, a tremendous amount of dead brush, palm fronds, and cut limbs remain as highly combustible material to fuel a third and possibly life-threatening fire. Camps are both built and abandoned frequently under the trees on the city side, leaving piles of clothing and trash behind.

While it may be inevitable the homeless will continue to call the canyon home, it’s irresponsible of the city to allow the fire hazard to continue. To make sure the canyon brush management is completed, the UHCA Beautification Team is considering several further steps: 1) a petition signed by as many residents as possible, 2) a gathering with as many residents as possible to present the petition at a City Council meeting, and 3) media involvement. To help with this effort, email MaryBeth Chruden at mb552@aol.com.

We ask all residents of UH to continue to put pressure on our elected officials to take this matter seriously and get the canyon cleaned up before another fire erupts. You can contact any or all of the following:

Office of the Mayor: John Ly, Senior Community Representative: jly@sandiego.gov

Councilmember Chris Ward: Aide: Tyler Renner 619 236-6633, trenner@sandiego.gov

Senator Toni Atkins: Aide: Toni Duran 619 645-3133, toniduran@asm.ca.gov

Assemblymember Todd Gloria: Aide: Nick Serrano 619 645-3090, nickserrano@asm.ca.gov

You can also submit a report on the city’s Get It Done website: sandiego.gov/get-it-done or download the app.

— Andy Lange and MaryBeth Chruden
POLITICAL NEWS

IN PLACE OF THE USUAL REPORT FROM RON ROBERTS, OUR COUNTY SUPERVISOR WHO IS RETIRING IN JANUARY, WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING TRIBUTE TO SUPERVISOR ROBERTS FOR HIS MANY YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

OUR TRIBUTE TO SUPERVISOR RON ROBERTS

After a 20-year career in architecture, Ron Roberts ran for and became our City Councilmember in 1988. Then six years later, he became a member of the County Board of Supervisors representing District 4. Now termed out, we humbly acknowledge his long public service career. Among the many examples of his unwavering support for University Heights are:

- The Trolley Barn Park acquisition was already in process and the design had been approved. Then, in 1989 the City Manager recommended that funding for the park’s construction be eliminated. At the time, University Heights was divided into two City Council districts. Our champions were District 3 Councilmember Gloria McColl, who in 1985 influenced the rest of the Council to purchase the land for the park, and newly elected District 2 Councilmember Ron Roberts. They fought for us and were able to successfully sustain the construction funding in the FY90 budget. The Trolley Barn Park officially opened April 6, 1991.

- Hoffman Canyon was bulldozed by water utilities into a 57’ wide road so that the city could repair broken and deteriorating sewer pipes. It looked like a freeway was being built through Buchanan and Hoffman Canyons as workers removed the vegetation. Thanks to Ron, the city mitigated the barrenness by planting new vegetation and trees. We remain grateful for his foresight.

- After the wooden bridge that linked University Heights with Hillcrest was taken down in 1979, we were assured the bridge would be rebuilt. In 1988, the funding for the construction was in jeopardy. Councilmember Ron Roberts and his colleagues came to the rescue. The ribbon cutting and grand opening of the Vermont Street Bridge was December 10, 1994.

These are just a few of the many examples of what Ron Roberts was able to achieve for our community. Think of what he has done that has impacted the entire County of San Diego. It’s an impressive list of accomplishments, projects, and support. After three decades of being a champion for University Heights, Ron, we salute you, we thank you, and we will certainly miss you.
FROM YOUR COUNCILMEMBER

For the last several months, my office has been working with members of the University Heights community and representatives from the San Diego Unified School District to find a solution for issues at Birney Joint-Use Park.

The City of San Diego and the San Diego Unified School District partnered to designate the Willie Serrano Field at Birney Elementary as a joint-use park after school hours. This is one of dozens of joint-use spaces around the city that allow our community to share limited space for neighborhood recreational opportunities. These spaces are for all community members—families, individuals, Birney students and parents, and residents with dogs.

However, we know there have been issues with community members using this field as a de-facto, off-leash dog park. Unfortunately, there have been a number of individuals that are not being respectful of current regulations.

Currently, dogs are allowed at the park, like any City park, but they are not allowed to be off-leash. We know that after work hours, there are large numbers of dogs off-leash. This presents problems for other residents who want to use the park. Additionally, faculty at Birney Elementary and parents have reported continued issues with dog waste being found during school hours and holes being dug on the field.

As a dog owner myself, I know it is important to have a space for our pets to exercise; and there are no other available dog parks in our immediate neighborhood. I am committed to finding new opportunities for public parks and exploring options for future dog park sites. However, in the meantime there will be additional enforcement for off-leash dogs.

The City of San Diego’s Animal Services are now contracted through the Humane Society. Signage with their updated enforcement policies have been placed at the park. This includes their enforcement number (619) 243-3466. Their officers are on-duty from 8 am to 6 pm. After those hours, Police Non-Emergency can be contacted at (619) 531-2000.

The Humane Society scheduled 16 after-hours patrols of Birney Joint-Use Field just last month. This was in addition to the routine patrols during their normal operating hours, which includes weekends. Officers were in the park conducting enforcement activity between 5:30 and 8:30 pm a few times a week at the beginning of November. This type of enforcement will continue, so please be mindful of the rules and regulation of the park.

The University Heights Recreation Council, which is the community advisory group for Park and Recreation spaces, will be discussing Birney Joint-Use Park at their meeting on Thursday, December 6, at 5:30 pm in the Birney library. The aim is to discuss ways to share this valued space.

If you need any more information on this important issue, please contact Tyler Renner, my community liaison for University Heights, at 619-239-6633 or trenner@sandiego.gov.

— Councilmember Chris Ward, San Diego City Council, District 3
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Scott Schechter, MBA, CFP®
Financial Advisor

Eagle Strategies, LLC
1048 Johnson Avenue
San Diego, CA 92103
sschechter@eaglestrategies.com
www.sschechter.com
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Good friends never say goodbye, they simply say ‘SEE YOU SOON’

RSVP: pemberleyrealt@gmail.com
or TEXT 619-598-4424

After two wonderful & prosperous decades in UH, Soltan Banoo Restaurant is retiring. We thank our customers & community friends for a joy filled journey & hope that you come and visit Mehin, Sanam & Roxanne at our beloved family business Pemberley Realty. We hope Pemberley will be a place where we can meet our neighbors & celebrate our community.

University Heights!

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