NO RESTROOMS IN PARK (FOR NOW)

UHCA has been advised by the offices of Mayor Gloria and Councilmember Whitburn that the proposed comfort stations being discussed for Old Trolley Barn Park are not moving forward at this time.

Numerous surveys over the years have indicated strong opposition to the idea of adding restrooms to the park, most recently in April by UHCA (72% opposed) and in August by the City (84% opposed). Dozens of neighbors attended the September 14 Cookies with the Cops with the cops (see article below) and voiced their strong opposition to representatives from the Mayor’s office and Councilmember Whitburn’s office.

This issue has surfaced many times over more than 30 years since Old Trolley Barn Park was created. While the need for public restrooms is undisputed, the consensus of the UH community, as seen from the surveys and especially in the comments, is that this park is not the right location.

As a neighborhood park, it was never designed to include a restroom, and, in fact, restrooms were specifically excluded in the design due to inputs from the community and SDPD. Many residents expressed concerns over how other existing park restrooms are maintained, and recent examples of newly built restrooms in Balboa Park being severely vandalized and requiring hundreds of thousands of dollars in repairs—and still being mostly unusable—were cited.

With the growing problems at the Vermont Street Bridge, large transit intersections at El Cajon Boulevard and Park, and the upcoming redevelopment of the Normal Street Education Center property, the question was raised at the Cookies with the Cops event to the Mayor’s representative about locating restrooms at the HUB, closer to bus lines, and even working with local businesses and developers to include these necessary facilities where they are needed the most.

Councilmember Whitburn said, “Public parks should have public restrooms, and several years ago, it was proposed that a restroom be added at Trolley Barn Park in University Heights. Recently, there have been inquiries about the status of that proposal. Unfortunately, restrooms in Balboa Park have become unusable at times due to vandalism, unsanitary practices, and people sleeping in them. Before the city opens new park restrooms, the city must be able to ensure they will remain operable, clean, and safe. The city is taking many steps to address homelessness and increase park maintenance. It is typical and important for public parks to have restrooms, and the city should work toward adding them when it can be assured they will meet the standards that everyone deserves.”

While not a definitive “no” to adding restrooms at the park in the future, Councilmember Whitburn and Mayor Gloria have listened to the community and expressed understanding for why there is strong opposition. Hopefully the funds that would have been used for restrooms can be allocated to addressing homelessness as well as the homelessness crisis that is affecting us all, including helping the homeless unhoused with longer-term solutions like shelter, direct services, and supportive housing.

—Marc Johnson

UH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

New UHHS Plaque

The University Heights Historical Society is pleased to offer our new 7-inch diameter, bronze color house plaque made from 14-gauge steel, sandblasted smooth and coated with a durable UV powder coat to endure the elements for many years to come.

The plaque features our beloved community icon, the ostrich, and comes with 2 screws for attaching to wood or stucco, and a white plastic backing to make the lettering more visible.

Join your friends and neighbors in proudly displaying the plaque on the front of your house or business. Free installation is also available from longtime UH resident, Renee Gregorio.

Order yours today at www.uhhshst hc.org/online-store – Kriss Hearn

Plume: Lauren Doucette

Sometimes a new volunteer comes into the organization and fits in like a missing puzzle piece to complete the picture. That describes Lauren Doucette to a tee! Lauren began volunteering with UHCA helping us set up the amazing ticket/check-in system for our Block Party event, and she has continued to help make events run more smoothly. This month, she and her husband were celebrated the wonderfully received seed exchange event. UHCA officially chartered the Garden Club with Lauren as the leader.

Lauren’s story is what we hope many of our volunteers experience: fitting in, making an immediate impact, and influencing and/or leading their passion projects. UHCA proudly awards a plaque to Lauren for all that she has done, and all that she will do to help make UHCA and UH better! — UHCA News Team

Looking Ahead

NEW UH GARDEN CLUB (NEXT TO SPROUTS) UPDATE

2022 UHCA OFFICER ELECTIONS

CRIMEWATCH 6:45-7PM

STAY TUNED FOR DETAILS

Cookies with the Cops

More than 14 UH residents joined SDPD Officers and representatives from Mayor Gloria’s and Councilmember Whitburn’s offices on Wednesday, September 14, at Old Trolley Barn Park for an open discussion about crime and safety issues in the community.

A number of Old Trolley Barn Park neighbors attended, with signs expressing their frustration over continued attempts to locate comfort stations (restrooms) in the park. The first 20 minutes of the meeting were spent on that topic.

Kolha Zeiser from Mayor Gloria’s office addressed the crowd, stating, “We know from past health crises that public restrooms are needed, but at the same time, we also hear your concerns and have been reviewing the surveys. We are working with Councilmember Whitburn and are committed to coming back with our plans by next Monday.”

Several residents brought up recent thefts, especially bicycle thefts, and Officer David Surwillo advised everyone to take photographs of their bikes, including serial numbers, to help police in identifying stolen bikes and advised people to file the appropriate police reports when there is an incident. “We’re using big data analytics, and when the statistics show increases in property crimes, that helps the department allocate resources—beat cops—to areas trending upwards,” Officer Michael Hayes added.

Surwillo also reminded residents to take a common sense approach to home safety: “We know with the heat lately folks are leaving windows and doors open. Just make sure you lock up, especially your lower levels, when you leave. Don’t leave extra keys around, and if you have doorbell or other cameras, that footage can be really helpful to our officers and detectives if you do have an incident.”

Homelessness was another topic covered, with residents expressing frustration about the lack of resources being deployed, especially not seeing a PATH field worker assigned to UH, as was promised at the last Cookies event in March. Zeiser from the Mayor’s office responded, “We’ve definitely listening to this. The City contracts with a number of agencies, and we will be following up on how they are responding. This is why it is so important for Get It Done reports to be filed so that we have a way to track performance.”

Andy and Mary Lange from the Vermont Street Bridge area offered thanks to the Mayor’s office, Councilmember Whitburn’s office, and especially the SDPD for helping to improve the situation at the bridge (as reported in UHNews, September 2022). While not completely under control, Lange told the representatives that the numbers of encampments and issues surrounding them were reduced. Zeiser responded, “I’m happy that we were able to help coordinate a response, and we will be working to remove the fencing under the bridge shortly.”

UHCA thanks the representatives from the City and SDPD for engaging at the event, listening and talking directly with the community, and for their responsiveness. Thanks to Stu McGraw, Marc Johnson, and Sol Schmier for helping set up the event, and special thanks to ZoneWatch Zone 4 coordinator Heather Wilcox for her tireless efforts and to BFDF for the amazing tie dye shirts!

—Nan McGraw, with photographs by Roxanne Goeart, Marc Johnson, Bill Ellig
Neighborhood Mixer: seed-swap, yard sales, or the first-ever celebration, a beautification event, the Cops, our Block Party/25th Anniversary.

We have a lot going on as we start the fall season! The Neighborhood Mixers and an upcoming business roundtable are just two initiatives that UHCA has taken on, thanks to the tireless efforts of our new and energetic board members and committee chairs. A new Garden Club just formed, and people are super excited (we have a lot of gardeners!). I personally love seeing new volunteers find ways to engage and lead in areas they are passionate about, whether it’s community safety, networking, gardening, or business strategy. We are all bigger and better together, and that’s why we volunteer with an organization like UHCA, which helps individuals amplify their voice and activate their ideas and passions.

UHCA, and our neighborhood, are fortunate that we have such a diverse and talented group of people willing to give their time and energy to our various initiatives, events, and activities. I’m grateful watching our organization not only come back from the pandemic, but begin to grow again. The most recent discussion about restrooms in the park really demonstrated to me the power of UHCA neighbors banding together to make their voices heard.

We are all UHCA, and I thank each of you for making us stronger together.

MARC JOHNSON
September 1 UHCA Community Meeting Summary

The September 1 UHCA Community Meeting was held at 6:45pm via Zoom, with 41 attendees. The full meeting is available for replay at www.uhsd.org/attend-a-meeting.

Crime Watch

Nan McGraw opened the Crime Watch portion with Officer Michael Hayes. There are reports of noisy automobiles in Mission Valley Mall, these are not a street take-over, just a car show. Pam Isaacs from Zone 3 shared that they continue to have car break-ins. Officer Hayes reminded folks to not leave valuable items in the vehicles. The fence along Golden Gate is still in need of repair. Deborah Webh-Morrison from Zone 3 shared that the Vermont Street Bridge looks great and thanked Jennifer Bishop and the Beautification Team for all the hard work. Marc Johnson concluded that the police were amazingly responsive to a break-in call in his building. If you want information on a particular incident, please let Officer Hayes know in advance. Thank you SDPD.

Announcements

Marc Johnson opened the General Meeting, welcoming us back from our summer break. He hoped we enjoyed the Concerts in Trolley Barn Park which are put on by Ernie Boom and the UHBCD. Stu McGraw and attendees were thanked for representing and leading a UH contingent in the SD Pride Parade. Marc thanked our local Business Members, many of whom are small businesses, for their support. Please support them in return. Volunteers are always needed for Beautification, Events, Web Helpers and the UHCA News. Please let us know how you can assist us at volunteers@uhsd.org.

Events

There will be a Cookies with the Cops on September 14 at the Old Trolley Barn Park from 6pm to 7pm. Angela Jackson-Llamas shared that there will be a Neighborhood Mixer at Park & Rec on September 23 at 6pm with happy hour drink specials and pizza provided by Pemberley Realty. Angela’s hoping this will become a regular event. The UH Arts Open & Taste will be happening on November 13 – hosted by the UHBCD. More info at uhsdarts.org. Stu McGraw shared the next UH Community Yard Sale will be on December 3. You can register for free at uhsyrdc@gmail.com.

Officer Nominations

October is Election month for the UHCA Officers. Nominations are now being accepted. Our nominations updated as of this issue going to press: President – Marc Johnson, Vice President – Lisa Gera, Secretary – Angela Jackson-Llamas, Treasurer – Brent Orlesky. A description of each Officer position is on Page 11 of the September 2022 UHCA News.

Zone Watch Coordinators manage email lists of participants wishing to receive University Heights crime watch information and updates. Download more on the UH Zone Watch program at uhsd.org or contact your zone’s coordinator or Nan McGraw.
Calendars, tourism, and special events are becoming more common. This trend is helping communities reintroduce themselves to their neighborhoods and bolster their local economies.

The Crows of October
Among the many natural cycles that we in the suburban environment are poised to observe, one that is widespread and diverse involves the social and geographic shifts exhibited by birds as they transition from the warm months of nesting to the cold of winter. Perhaps most notable are the cyclic appearances and disappearances to and from any given area by migratory species. However, some non-migratory species undergo changes equally notable, and few more so than the huge gatherings of American Crows (Corvus brachyrhynchos) after the breeding season.

Following the dispersed nesting of pairs during spring and early summer, communal gatherings actually begin as early as August, with loose aggregations of crows seen flying steadily overhead in evenings and early mornings as they move to or from communal roosts. As fall progresses, the numbers increase to hundreds or thousands moving overhead above our neighborhoods.

At first glance the numbers may not seem high, as the birds tend to struggle broadly across the sky alone or in small clusters, but if an observer extrapolates the number visible in a quick glance by the hours over which the birds pass, the quantities become quite enormous. At times the crows make themselves even more conspicuous by cawing as they pass above. Occasionally a small group will settle on route in neighborhood trees or on wires during the early morning hours and call incessantly, much to the irritation of humans trying to sleep.

The other side of the story occurs at the communal roost sites, which typically occupy dense groups of suburban or rural trees somewhat separated from human habitations, but often within earshot. Biologists have explained the non-breeding roosting phenomenon, practiced by many bird species throughout the world, in terms of collective advantage to individuals in locating food supplies while flocking during daily forays. Obviously, many mouths can make short work of a limited food supply, but studies of several roosting species have shown that older, more experienced birds that are better at finding food may subject themselves to this potential competition during the day, while they reap the advantage of sheltering in the middle of large aggregations for greater warmth on cold nights. Crows tend to select new night roosts every year or few years, perhaps in response to human attempts to disrupt them.

The trade-offs of dense night roosting are many and complex. I have walked through abandoned (off-season) crow roost sites and found large accumulations of excrement and the carcasses of the few birds that perished for one reason or another. Considering these phenomena in the context of behavioral evolution, one might surmise that birds would not continue to roost communally if it were not to their collective advantage over time.

— John Lueco

Pet of the Month Ruprict
When he sees a big truck, he will mimic the “beep beep” sound of the truck backing up. When the phone rings, Ruprict responds with, “Hello.” If he sees someone he recognizes, he will whistle. For fun, Ruprict mimics the sound of a text alert and the smoke detector. Ruprict is especially adept at mimicking a door knock. Sometimes he can mimic an entire conversation! At some point in the day, Ruprict practices his repertoire repeating his entire collection of words and sounds. During his “verbal” calisthenics, Ruprict is always trying to learn new words and sounds.

In 2010, Scott met Xzavier during Pride and they have been together ever since. Xavier also had a fondness for birds, and when he started dating Scott, Xavier knew he had to win over Ruprict. Xavier started bonding with Ruprict by playing music and singing and dancing along. Ruprict warmed up to Xzavier and began to bob his head in time to the music. The three of them have lived together in a small apartment in University Heights for the past 7 years.

Xzavier also has a love for birds, and he is a Congo African Grey Parrot named Ruprict. He is a Congo African grey parrot, and he belongs to Scott and Xavier. Scott was 19 and living in Utah when he got Ruprict as a Christmas gift. Scott has always been fond of birds and had a cockpit at the time. He wanted a talking bird, and his research led him to a pet store with three African Gray Parrot eggs about to hatch. When Ruprict finally hatched, Scott was there. Ruprict staggered over to Scott, and Scott knew Ruprict was destined to be his bird.

Parrots survive best in a climate that doesn’t get too hot or too cold. Perhaps 2005 Scott and Ruprict relocated to San Diego. While Scott knew that parrots were smart birds, he was not quite prepared for just how accomplished Ruprict would become. Ruprict not only understands and can mimic words and sounds, but also does so at the appropriate time. When a dog or cat walks by, Ruprict will bark or meow.
Neighborhood Allstar: MaryLou Ruane

One of the best aspects of our neighborhood is its walkability—our nice wide streets with relatively low traffic make getting those “steps” in every day a pleasure. Not so pleasant are the plastic food wrappers, to-go containers, liquor bottles, cigarette butts, and dog waste bags that litter our sidewalks, easements, gutters, and streets. While many of us will reach down to pick up and dispose of an occasional stray plastic bag or bottle as we walk, very few of us make a regular habit of traversing neighborhood streets collecting litter and debris in order to keep our streets and sidewalks clean. But MaryLou Ruane does.

You’ve likely seen MaryLou in the morning as she quickly moves through one of her three favorite routes covering a total of about 20 blocks, her white 5-gallon bucket and “teacher grabber” tool in tow. She removes gobs of garbage during her 1-hour litter collection walks, and our neighborhood is more livable because of her efforts.

MaryLou and her husband Fred retired in May of 1994, and MaryLou soon started feeling “a little useless” after decades of productive employment with SD Unified. She started taking regular walks and “just could not pass by the litter” she saw. “So, I got a bucket and under-upper to take with me, and that began the project,” she says.

MaryLou has noticed that much of our neighborhood’s litter comes from garbage trucks – either flying out of the trucks as they move through the streets or escaping capture as the mechanical arms pick up bins and shake their contents into the trucks. On the other hand, fast-food-related debris like napkins, cups, and straws come from passing cars, MaryLou says. And it is painfully clear to her that items like “cigarette butts, used Kleenex, masks, little liquor bottles, plastic gloves, and bags of dog poop thrown in gutters, bushes, and yards come from people walking in the neighborhood.” While she does not pick up the cigarettes, MaryLou and Fred have placed “BUTT CANS” in areas heavily littered with cigarette butts, which has helped.

Most people know how toxic cigarette butts are and how they harm wildlife. Like cigarettes, the other litter strewn about our streets adds to the pollution burden affecting neighborhood wildlife and aquatic life when the toxins are washed into storm drains and eventually the San Diego River and downstream to the bay and ocean. So, thank you to MaryLou Ruane for caring so much about our neighborhood and quality of life here that she is willing to literally “walk the walk.”

MaryLou, you’re an Allstar! (And also, Happy Birthday!)

—Judith Annicchiarico

Fever Dream

“We’re looking for worms, something very much like you, and the exact moment when they touch your body for the first time.”

It seems like the kind of task you’ve given in a dream. Something nonsensical, but grounded in just enough logic that you convince yourself that, not only is it a sound goal, it’s imperative. It’s life or death.

Fever Dream (originalmente Distancia de Percebo) is a 2014 psychological horror novel from Argentinean author Samantha Schwelben. Through the novel, the reader has the sense of densely populated farming practices weighs heavily over all, but none more so than the unsuspecting families of a rural countryside. Schwelben takes inspiration from the soybean farms of Argentina, a top producer of genetically engineered crops grown to resist pesticides. However, this wanton chemical use has led to water supplies being contaminated by agricultural runoff.

Schwelben utilizes the concept of an unseen and unstoppable contaminant as the source of her horror, as our main character, Amanda, is immobile and infected. She recounts everything to a young child, David, who understands the worms and the true nature of her infection better than Amanda does. Every action, every thought, every justification is laid out and coldly dissected by the child, who seems to randomly declare things vitally important or completely meaningless. David’s intense vigilance and constant barrage of questions, coupled with the unbroken stream of consciousness style of writing, feels oppressive, leaving both Amanda and the audience struggling to feel safe when so much is kept hidden from them.

The interrogation feels cyclical, yet ever moving forward as it spirals down, spirals around, spirals back to our beginning. But we have to go again. After all... “This could have to do with the worms.”

—J. Lamas

Selling Your Home? You Have More Leverage Than You Think!

The real estate market is shifting. In the past few months, we’ve gone from chaotic open houses to hoping people show up. Buyers’ agents have gone from frantically writing offers “over list price” to offering “at list” and sometimes below. It sounds like it might be harder to sell your home under these conditions, but these are actually great signs that we’re moving into a healthier market. If you’re thinking of selling your home, here are a few very important things to consider:

1. Utilize Your Leverage!

As I write this, there are only 26 properties on the market across all of 92116. In University Heights, sellers still have leverage...but with higher interest rates, the buyer pool has diminished greatly (pushing many first-time buyers out of the running). When planning to sell, make sure you have a deep understanding of what’s happening in your pocket of San Diego and not just county, state, or country-wide headlines that don’t directly apply to you.

2. You’re Selling More Than a Home – You’re Selling a Lifestyle!

What is your absolute favorite thing about your home? Is it the physical structure? Is it the garden you planted with help from the community seed swap? Or, is it how you can walk to summer concerts in the park or trivia night at Park & Rec on Tuesdays? Maybe it’s even the sense of community and relationships you share with your neighbors. If thinking of selling, make sure you’re working with an agent who thinks of your property as a brand and showcases the history and liveliness of our community.

3. The Golden Rule

What do you look for when searching for a new home? Treat buyers as if you were one! Don’t leave deferred maintenance for the next owner; you’re only hurting your profits. Turn-key properties move quickly (and for top dollar)...those with a laundry list of do’s do not. Need to update one of your bathrooms? Do it! When buyers are touring your property, they don’t want to be thinking about the stack of future projects waiting for them as soon as they purchase your home. The little things count.

4. Stand Out (Like an Ostrich!)

Prior to listing your home, analyze your competition. What are some attributes of your home features that others in the neighborhood don’t have? Elevate your curb appeal by brightening up the front yard with colorful flowers and vegetation (might I suggest Eden on Park Blvd?). Pro Tip: Get a general inspection prior to listing your home and have it done with more confidence when making an offer. As a seller, you’re also increasing your odds for a smooth escrow…and who doesn’t want that?

— Matt ‘Axe’ Axelson is a real estate agent in University Heights (Matt@agentsofarch.com)
Winslow University Heights Update

Winslow, a 379-apartment home community with approximately 17,000 square feet of retail, is well into construction along Park and Meade. Quarterra (formerly LMC) broke ground in December 2020 and reports the project is on track for a Summer 2023 grand opening. Winslow will be Quarterra’s fourth San Diego community after having built Luma, Shift, and Marisol in Little Italy, East Village, and Carlsbad, respectively.

Winslow will include a variety of studios, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units and offer residents a modern pool deck, 24-hour fitness center, fireside lounge with professional kitchen, and co-working lounge with private conference rooms and a collaborative workspace.

[Editor’s Note: It has been reported elsewhere and the San Diego Development Services Department shows a “14,980 square foot CVS Pharmacy currently under construction” on their OpenDSD website.]

More information can be found at www.liveatwinslow.com

--Dan Ferguson, Sr. Vice President, Quarterra/Lennar Corporation

IN DEVELOPMENT
**A Brief History of Planning in San Diego**

[This is the third part of a four-part series, “NEIGHBORHOODS IN TRANSITION: WHO DECIDES OUR FUTURE?” focusing on how community planning works in San Diego. The full series is available online at www.uhhs-uhdc.org/blog/neighborhoods-in-transition.—eds.]

**Urban Planning Begins in the Early 1900s**

Planning in San Diego didn’t start until the early 1900s. Before then, speculators and developers created their own plan for land they bought. A good example is University Heights, which was planned and subdivided by the College Hill Land Association in 1888.

In 1903, when George Marston, founder of Marston’s Department Store, convinced the Chamber of Commerce to form a civic improvement committee. The committee hired John Nolen, a nationally recognized landscape architect, to give some direction to the unmanaged growth of San Diego. He created “San Diego: A Comprehensive Plan for its Improvement,” a 109-page study on the future of San Diego.

Nolen’s recommendations were submitted in March 1908 and included grouping public buildings, developing the waterfront into a recreational and transportation center, providing scattered playgrounds and wide boulevards and avenues, and setting aside public beaches and regional parks.

“...These recommendations may appear to present a heavy task for a city the size of San Diego,” Nolen said in the report’s conclusion. “Yet, after careful consideration and a comparison with the programs and achievements of other cities, I believe the proposed undertakings are all of a reasonable nature.”

The city later hired Nolen again to prepare a “City Plan for San Diego” that was approved on March 8, 1926.

**San Diego’s First General Plan Adopted in 1967**

In the 1950s, the city approved a Municipal Code change to add a zoning provision. This ordinance served the city until the first General Plan was adopted and ratified by the voters in 1967.

In 1974, with a grant from the prominent San Diego Marston family, planning consultants Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard produced *Temporary Paradise*. This groundbreaking study focused upon the natural base of the City and region and recommended that new growth complement the regional landscape to preserve its precious natural resources and San Diego’s high quality of life. *Temporary Paradise* served as a major influence on the subsequent comprehensive update of the *Progress Guide* and General Plan adopted in 1979.

The *General Plan* was again updated in 2008 and approved by a unanimous vote of the City Council. In June 2015, the *Land Use and Community Planning Element* was amended to include a “City of Villages Strategy” to “focus growth into mixed-use activity centers that are pedestrian-friendly, centers of community, and linked to the regional transit system.”

**Community Plans Adopted for University Heights**

University Heights is split down Park Boulevard between the Uptown and North Park Community Plan Areas. Several community plans were approved for North Park affecting University Heights east of Park Blvd., including the 1969 North Park Commercial Area Plan, the 1970 Park North-East Community Plan, and the 1986 North Park Commercial Area Plan, the 1970 Park North-East Community Plan, and the 1986 North Park Community Plan. The first Uptown Community Plan was approved in 1975 and updated in 1988 affecting the west side of University Heights.

In 2007, the *Mid Cities Community Planned District* (MCCPD) was approved as part of the Municipal Code to further regulate land use in the Mid-City area, which included the area of University Heights east of Park Blvd. The MCCPD required residential buildings to include at least 5 architectural features from Contemporary, Spanish, or Bungalow styles.

Both the North Park and Uptown Community Plans were updated and approved in 2016 after several years of community input and collaboration with the City planning staff to increase density in the older neighborhoods of North Park and Uptown while maintaining historic community character.

However, the *Land Use Element* of the North Park Community Plan update approved by the City Council in 2016 drastically increased the allowable height and density of buildings along El Cajon Blvd. It also allowed for density bonuses of 33% above the normal zoning limitations in the “Transit Oriented Enhancement Program Area” and density bonuses of 66% in the “Pedestrian Oriented Development Enhancement Area.”

The 2016 Uptown Community Plan update also suffered a similar fate. In a surprising and unexpected move on November 14, 2016, after eight hours of City Council deliberation, District 3 Councilmember Todd Gloria made a motion to approve the Planning Commission’s recommendation to maintain the densities of the current 1988 Uptown Community Plan, eliminate the Mid-City Communities Planned District (MCCPD), and replace the MCCPD with the City’s new standardized zoning.

At their meeting on October 6, 2016, the Planning Commission maintained that the proposed 2016 Uptown Community Plan reduced the number of housing units in the Uptown area by 1,900 as compared to the 1988 Plan. However, Commissioner Hoff- man felt that the 1,900 units were in areas related to airport safety considerations and would not impact the actual number of units.

The 2016 update to the North Park and Uptown Community Plans essentially allowed developers to build projects with significantly increased densities and building heights in the North Park and Uptown areas with only ministerial review and “suggested” design guidelines.

An amendment to the Uptown Community Plan, called the *Hillcrest Focused Plan Amendment*, is currently in progress to increase the allowable number of units by at least 10,000 units within the Hillcrest area.

-Bill Eilig, Uptown Planners Board Member emeritus

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**Plan Ahead & Save the Date**

**UH Community Yard Sale Saturday, December 3**

Time to clean out the garage, closet, or storage space? Looking to pick up a few items? Be part of the University Heights Yard Sale.

**Email uhyardsale@gmail.com to register & be included on the map**

**STU McGraw**

**San Diego Realty**

(619) 793-7785

SOLDJUSTIMUMCRAW.COM

WoodsRealEstateServices.com

23154 Avenida Vicente

**University Heights is split between North Park Planning Committee and Uptown Planners along Park Blvd.**
Just Sold in North Park & Buyer Sale in Hillcrest

1270 Cleveland Avenue #A135 | San Diego, CA 92103
2 BD | 2 BA | 1,077 ESF | $712,500

Upgraded luxury condo in Uptown District! Super sunny ground floor corner unit with modern features and custom European imported kitchen appliances with stainless counters and space-saving design. Contemporary porcelain tile throughout, custom lighting, two master bedroom suites and a brand new HVAC unit just installed! Move in ready! Two underground parking spots.

2544 33rd Street | San Diego, CA 92104
3 BD | 2 BA | 1,460 ESF | $1,445,000

Fabulous North Park location on a large corner lot! Original hardwood floors, remodeled kitchen with granite counters and sleek cabinetry. Spacious MBR suite with pitched ceiling, a beautifully updated private bathroom with walk-in shower, and sliding doors that take you to the backyard and patio area. The hall bathroom has a roomy jetted tub, separate walk-in shower and skylight for added illumination. Upgrades to the home over the past 14 years include new roof, central heat and AC, stucco, and dual pane windows. Plus a 2 car detached garage!

Your home is where you make some of your best memories, and that’s worth protecting.
I'm here to help.
LET'S TALK TODAY.

Give your home the protection it deserves.

State Farm Fire and Casualty Company, State Farm General Insurance Company, Bloomington, IL
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State Farm Lloyds, Richardson, TX

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MEET THE UHCA EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICER NOMINEES

Every two years, UHCA nominates and elects Executive Officers to serve as leaders of our organization for the next two years. At our last virtual meeting on September 1, nominations for officers were opened, and the final slate of nominations is now being announced. One nomination was received for each office, with two nominees withdrawing and one additional one added after nominations opened.

At our October meeting the membership will be asked to vote for the nominees by acclamation as there are no contested positions. We want to thank these nominees for stepping up and look forward to electing our new leadership team at the next meeting.

For President:
Marc Johnson

Marc and his husband Jeffrey have been proud University Heights residents since 2012, moving here from Boston, originally from Chicago. They share their loft with two dogs, Carson and Maddox. Marc is the Sr. Market Development Manager for HP’s inkjet print division based in Rancho Bernardo and has worked in that industry for over 30 years. Jeffrey is an artist, primarily abstract acrylics, and has displayed his work at UH businesses and during the Taste of UH and Concerts in the Park events.

Since moving here, Marc has led the 6unit HOA as President, and both Marc and Jeffrey have been active with the UH Park & Recreation and Open Space Advisory Group, which Marc has chaired and where he led the 7+ year effort to get a dog park built. Marc has participated as a member of UHCA for nine years, been a board member for the past two years, was elected as Vice President in 2020, and stepped in to fill the role of President in 2021 when it was vacated.

“UH is such a gem of a neighborhood—the history, the walk/bikeability, the eclectic businesses – but most of all it’s the people that make this a truly special community,” Marc said of his motivation for being involved with UHCA. “I’m deeply invested in this neighborhood and want to see this community thrive for all of us. I believe an active association like UHCA is the best way to amplify our voices.”

For Vice President:
Lisa Getz

My name is Lisa Getz. As a San Diego native, my roots run deep in the community. I’ve always had a passion for our city, particularly here in University Heights where I’ve owned my small business since 2004.

Eight years ago, I personally created an Instagram account named UniversityheightsSD to promote local small businesses in UH and showcase our wonderful neighborhood. Since its beginning, UniversityheightsSD has grown to over 13,700 thousand followers. Using my experience working with social media, I am currently managing and growing the UHCA Instagram account.

Over the years, I’ve volunteered for many UH events. You may have met me recently at the 25th Anniversary Sign Celebration, Cookies with the Cops, or Party on Park. Currently, in an effort to increase funding for UHCA, I volunteered to take on promoting and selling UHCA-related merchandise. With the help of UHCA’s amazing team of volunteers, merchandise sales reached record breaking numbers at this year’s Summer Concerts, and sales continue to rise under my guidance.

Some of my prior volunteer experience includes being a Board member for ACES. ACES is a 501c3 formed to assist the El Cajon Animal Shelter to help pay for surgeries for adoptable injured animals coming into the shelter.

I am committed to making our neighborhood a great place to live, work, play, and stay. I will serve our community relentlessly.

For Treasurer
Brent Orlesky

My name is Angela Jackson-Llamas, and I’m excited to run for Secretary of the Board for UHCA.

I’ve lived in San Diego since 1980, moving here in first grade. Over the years I hosted more than one birthday party for my son (who is now 26) at Trolley Barn Park.

Last year my wife and I had the opportunity to purchase a beautiful home in University Heights, and we could not be more excited. We love this community and are happy to be a part of this great group of volunteers ensuring that it retains its character and beauty. Professionally, I work for a local government agency, overseeing the development of affordable housing and homeless shelters on government-owned property. If elected, I’m looking forward to bringing my knowledge of the inner workings of government agencies, as well as real estate development, to the community conversations.

—Bios submitted by candidates

Seed Swap Smash!

The first University Heights Seed/Garden Swap event held on Saturday, August 27 on Maryland Street was a success! Twenty-five garden enthusiasts from University Heights gathered in the garden of Lauren and Chris Sera to swap seeds, tips and tricks, garden supplies, seedlings, plant cuttings, homesteading equipment, garden reference books, and more. Neighbors connected during the event on how best to protect garden beds against slugs and pill bugs, where to pick up the best soil amendments for their fruits and veggies, and which varieties do best in USDA hardness zone 10A where (University Heights is located).

Special guests who attended the swap included Helene and Peggy from the University Heights Library who provided seeds from their summer seed initiative. They also shared information on the upcoming Master Gardeners of San Diego Plant Sale happening on September 24 from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at Casa Del Prado in Balboa Park and the January, 2023 orientation course for those considering becoming Master Gardeners themselves.

Sam from City Farmers Nursery educated participants on his home-brewed CFN compost tea, as well as seed tape that allows gardeners to evenly distribute small seeds on a compostable sticky tape with the guidance of a measuring stick.

UHCA events committee member, Lisa Getz of Original Skin and Body, was present selling UHCA t-shirts and other merchandise, as was UHCA VP, Stu McGraw.

Enthusiasm about this garden event has led to our creating an official University Heights Garden Club, open to all individuals interested in gardening, homesteading, and the like. Future events will include Cocktails in the Garden, seminars/presentations on various garden related topics, additional seed/garden swaps, and possibly even an UH Garden Walk.

If you would like to get involved with this new club, please contact Lauren Doucette at gardencsb@uhsd.org.

[Editor’s note: Lauren will be the featured speaker at the October 6 Community meeting and will discuss “How to Get Started Growing Your Own Food.”]
BIRNEY BUZZ

Birney Brings Back Past Traditions

The first month of school was a busy one at Birney Elementary for all its bees and their families. Parents and families were excited to return to campus for Back-to-School Family Friday on September 9th after two years of attending the event online. Clad in masks for the safety of the teachers and staff, hundreds of parents met their children’s teachers and heard about classroom plans for the school year.

Mr. Patrick Delany, 3rd grade Birney teacher, says this important event “gives parents an opportunity to meet and have a dialogue with their child’s teacher very early in the year. This meeting not only gives teachers the chance to describe classroom policies and schedules but also lets parents see the learning environment where their children will be spending so much time over the next nine months.”

He added that Birney “wouldn’t be the school we are without the parents’ support. Birney’s built up such a strong relationship with the community under Ms. Amanda’s [the school principal] leadership, so seeing [parents] back in the classroom after the last couple of years felt like a welcome reunion for all of us.”

During Family Friday, the Friends of Alice Birney Elementary (FOABE) and PTA also shared some of their plans for the school year. FOABE announced the launch of the Fall Fundraiser. As in previous years, FOABE has partnered up with Boon Supply to offer a wonderful catalog of items such as totes, reusable food containers, water bottles, and more. Parents, grandparents, and other community members can make purchases to support FOABE, which funds Birney’s “Specials,” which include garden, art, and Spanish classes, field trips, and assemblies. Forty percent of all purchases go to Birney; donations can also be made directly to FOABE to support these programs.

September also saw the return of students to Garden, Art, and Spanish “Specials.” These classes are a highlight of many students’ days at Birney. Ms. Mindy, the Garden teacher, creates a welcoming and stress-relieving environment that fosters collaboration and a connection between students and the food they put into their bodies. Olivia H, 2nd grader, said, “I like Garden because it’s a really great program. Plus, you get to exercise when you do it and you get to do fun stuff, like try new foods.”

In addition to teaching the garden classes, Ms. Mindy hosts a farm stand several times a year on select weekends to help raise money for the garden program. Produce and flowers are harvested from the school garden and then sold on a pay-what-you-want basis with the help of parent and student volunteers. Birney 4th grader, Neve D, who stopped by the last farm stand outside Twiggs Coffee on Park Blvd. to buy some produce, said, “I think it’s cool because we grew the food in the garden. It’s nice to know that other people can enjoy what we grew, too.”

You can follow @friendsalicebirney on Instagram to find out when and where the next Birney farm stand will take place. Other upcoming Birney events include parent organization–PTA and FOABE–meetings on September 22 and October 20 and a Halloween costume exchange in mid-October. As always, to get involved, please contact FOABE at info@friendsofbecebirney.org.

— Sarah Layne, Proud Birney Parent and UH Community Member

ROO NEWS

A New School Year with More Extracurriculars

Students of Roosevelt International Middle School (RMS) have been settling into the back-to-school routine over the final hot weeks of late summer. As these 6th–8th grade kids become immersed in the International Baccalaureate curriculum and accustomed to the occasional animal/tourist noises from their neighbors at the San Diego Zoo, they can also look forward to an unprecedented variety of extracurricular activities.

For the athletically inclined, San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) offers a new intramural sports program for middle schools. Last spring, it conducted a pilot version of this program, during which Roosevelt Girls Soccer took gold in the tournament, and the boys squad won silver! For fall, the district is offering basketball and track & field; then in winter, soccer and volleyball will be on the roster.

By the end of September, RMS will have rolled out its wildly popular After School Enrichment (ASE) program, which is funded by Friends of Roosevelt, the school foundation. The ASE program, which is run by volunteers and provided at no charge to families, offers a variety of clubs every week day, including Improv, Art, Sports, Strategic Games, Theater, Comic Book Club, and much more.

Budding musicians will have a number of opportunities to explore traditional and electronic music during the school day, as well as after school. Band and Orchestra are offered as after-school activities throughout the school year, and Director Elias-Rojasrup

and the musicians are hoping to have more opportunities to perform live this year, as Covid restrictions become less severe.

If students crave adventures farther afield, they can participate in either the 6th Grade Camp, or the 8th Grade Field Trip, 8th graders all over San Diego get a chance to commune with nature at the Cuyamaca Outdoor School, and 8th graders can explore the trajectory of US History by visiting Washington D.C., New York City, and Boston.

We all are wishing these middle scholars the best as they embark on a year of educational and cultural opportunities.

Please visit the Friends of Roosevelt website (friendsofroosevelt.org) to keep up with the latest news from Roosevelt International Middle School.

— Andy Hinds

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ROO NEWS (below) from spring semester

Girl’s soccer team (top), Boy’s soccer team

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Fall Events at the Library

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This month we let you know about what our chapter is doing to support the library, and this month we are asking you to step up and support our library by supporting the Libraries and Parks for All Investment Act of 2024.

The Library and Parks Investment Act of 2024 is a community-led, citizens’ initiative to improve San Diego’s libraries and parks. The measure, if passed, will provide a permanently restricted revenue source for libraries and parks.

This measure will invest in our local libraries and parks, benefitting our entire community by providing funding for:

- Rehabilitating and Modernizing Aging Facilities
- Enriching Arts, Library Materials, and Recreation Programming
- Educational Programs

It generally takes place from October 15th from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. on the third Saturday and Sunday of the month.

The Friends of the San Diego Public Library continues their monthly book selections.

The Friends of the San Diego Public Library will soon be offering “One Book One San Diego” (OBOSD) reading selections for all ages!

Selections were recently announced at the San Diego Festival of Books and include The Vanishing Hall by Brit Bennett (adult), The Magic Fish by Trung Le Nguyen (teen), and We Are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom (kids). You can place a hold on these titles now!

The “In-N-Out Cover to Cover Reading Program” for children is returning again! It generally takes place from October – November. Miss Helen will present a morning Storytime with Arts & Crafts on Saturday, October 8 at 10:30 a.m. and an evening Storytime on Sunday, October 11 at 6 p.m. The UH Library will host a “Literature Comes To Life” children’s interactive program where kids get to portray story characters on Tuesday, October 18 at 6 p.m. Stay tuned for details about a special “Lead Safety and Prevention” Storytime during National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, October 23 – 29. Also in the works is a Sugar Skull Making Craft for Día De Los Muertos. Programs may be subject to change, so please contact library staff to confirm details.

Do you know about the 2022-2023 “One Book One San Diego” (OBOSD) reading selections for all ages? Selections were recently announced at the San Diego Festival of Books and include The Vanishing Hall by Brit Bennett (adult), The Magic Fish by Trung Le Nguyen (teen), and We Are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom (kids). You can place a hold on these titles and pick them up when you come visit us at the library! San Diego Public Library will soon be offering OBOSD programs related to these book selections.

The Friends of the San Diego Public Library continues their monthly book sale on the lower level of the library on the third Saturday and Sunday of the month. Please check our support on October 15th from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

In addition to running the store, Sundi participates in fundraising events throughout San Diego on Park Blvd., Adams Ave., and most recently on 30th Street. Just before the pandemic, Sundi had the idea to merge her two loves, antiques and animals. She came up with the idea of selling and consigning vintage items with all the proceeds going to small, local animal rescues. Located at 2545 El Cajon Blvd.,(with the entrance on Hamilton Street), the store is large, bright, and airy – a delight from the moment you walk in. This is not your grandmother’s antique store filled with old, dusty and musty things. Rather, it is a wonderful collection of items from bygone eras in a modern setting. Organized by category – glassware, jewelry, trinkets, books, purses, furniture, clothing, etc. – the store’s natural flow invites customers to meander among and browse the many treasures on display.

Fur, Fins & Feathers is the brainchild of Sundi Sage, the founder and CEO.

Sundi’s area of expertise is antiques as she has been in the business for 27 years. She has owned antique stores throughout San Diego on Park Blvd., Adams Ave., and most recently on 30th Street. Just before the pandemic, Sundi had the idea to merge her two loves, antiques and animals. She came up with the idea of selling and consigning vintage items with all the proceeds going to small, local animal rescue shelters. The store’s mission statement says it all: “Our mission focuses on the overall betterment of all animals. We will advance this cause through education, rescue, rehabilitation, pollution solutions, repurposing and kindness. All the while contributing to our animal friends’ health, wellness, and quality of life.”

Fur, Fins & Feathers accepts donations as well as selling items on consignment. When customers buy that special something at the store, it is a win-win for everyone: customers take home a new prized possession, while knowing they are helping out animals in need. At the end of every year, the Board of Directors divvies up the proceeds (minus overhead expenses) to various local animal rescues.

In addition to running the store, Sundi participates in fundraising events throughout the year. The next event will be “Bunny Fest 2022” on September 18 at Liberty Station. As the name implies, the event is dedicated to supporting rabbit rescue.

It has been a bit challenging to get the word out to customers that Fur, Fins & Feathers remains open and full of great things. Sundi is hopeful, now that the pandemic is behind us, that more people will come to the store. There is free on-street parking and it’s open five days a week (closed on Mondays and Tuesdays).

Fur, Fins & Feathers
2545 El Cajon Blvd.
Wed Sat 11-4, Sunday 12-6

—Jane Gilbert

Family-owned and operated

Thank you.

—Isabel Schecter, President
Friends of the University Heights Library
Email: info@friendsofuhlibrary.org
Website: www.friendsofuhlibrary.org
* The Friends of the San Diego Public Library is a California Tax Exempt Non-Profit Corporation under IRS 501(c)(3). EIN: 95-3313747. Your tax-deductible membership dues and donations may be matched by the City of San Diego.

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