

# create



Local artists got together to beautify Lola's benches: **a)** Sean Cooley, **b)** Sean Dominguez, **c)** Bryan Snyder, **d)** Josh Potter. **e)** The artists and the Lola's team pose outside the local landmark.

## Lola's Battles COVID with Creativity

Written by Matthew Gose | Photos by Taylor Mohr

Since 1944, Lola's 7Up Market and Deli has established itself as not only a destination for supreme Mexican cuisine, but also as the venerable heart of the community. From Carlsbad High students, to surfers, to neighborhood residents, anyone who stays long enough in Carlsbad eventually encounters this quaint, authentically sweet and gracious family-owned establishment.

Despite these deep roots and a devoted customer base, Lola's, like so many other businesses in 2020, has contended with the turbulence of the pandemic. As state regulations forced eateries to move their businesses outside, third-generation restaurant manager Deedee Trejo Rowlett and her family saw the challenge as a creative opportunity.

Instead of simply placing plastic tables and chairs out on the sidewalk, Rowlett and her family chose to use the grassy lawn behind Lola's to create something beautiful and lasting.

"We decided to do wooden picnic benches," says Rowlett. "We thought, why not ask some friends to make them pretty for us?" Rowlett enlisted the help of four local artists—Sean Dominguez, Josh Potter, Sean Cooley and Bryan Snyder—to apply their unique creative

expressions to the otherwise ordinary benches.

Snyder, local arts legend, director of the Carlsbad Art Wall and current member of the Carlsbad Arts Commission, immediately jumped at the opportunity to give back to his favorite local eatery. He says Lola's has invested in him personally as well as the community at large for decades. "When Lola's asks you to do something for them," Snyder says, "your answer is YES!"

So far, customer response has been jubilant, with the benches adding a welcome sense of light and positivity to an otherwise discouraging year.

Rowlett hopes that Lola's can foster more creative projects in the year ahead. "Everyone needs a smile these days," she says.

**LOLA'S 7UP MARKET AND DELI**  
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