

# SANDPIPER

## BRUSH FOR BRUNCH

One answer for wildfires, no kidding, is goats.

Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

The threat of a wildfire sparking is a constant concern and it is always the right time to clear overgrown and dead vegetation. Although neither the City of Del Mar nor the City of San Diego employ goats in land management for fire protection, the cities of Laguna Beach, Anaheim and Lemon Grove do and have for some time. Laguna Beach Fire Marshall James Brown reports "We have been using goats for fuel modification since 1991, and they are a very important component of our wild land fire prevention program. Currently we have three herds working in the city, with a fourth one coming." Anaheim goats Chewy, Spot, Pokey, and Peggy and others, often named by residents, work to clear vegetation as part of the city's fire prevention plan. The City of Lemon Grove has hired goats for the last eight years in conjunction with Heartland Fire and Rescue and the Environmental Land Management company to "clear a sizable parcel of land in Lemon Grove that includes a canyon with residential houses at the top, along the ridge line. Around 200 goats are released on the site, divided into smaller sections, to remove the brush fire fuel," reports Elette Nash, Fire Marshall of Heartland Fire and Rescue. "The goats clear a defensible space against wildfires, protecting the surrounding residential neighborhood. Goats, environmentally friendly, do not disturb the soil, so there is less erosion to pollute the watershed. Goats are able to access parcels of land with steep terrain that would otherwise require hand cutting of fuel zones."

Our Crest Canyon may not be a likely spot for goats to go to work. Del Mar Fire Marshal Hans Schmidt reports the area "contains sensitive habitat and any type of mitigation has to be permitted through the California Department of Fish and Game." However, he adds, private property owners can hire goats (there are goat herd suppliers) to munch away unwanted foliage for fire prevention where permitted. By whatever ways, Fire Marshal Schmidt asks that you clear weeds, brush, and dead foliage to help keep your property and neighborhood safe. Questions? You can schedule a free inspection from the Fire Department, including properties along the canyon, to identify hazards and get guidance on how to deal with them at [weedabatement@delmar.ca.us](mailto:weedabatement@delmar.ca.us) or



Anna Sohn and Phil the Kid. Photo courtesy Anna Sohn.

858-755-1522. That extra green waste can be picked free between July 27 and August 10 if you reserve up to two three-yard waste bins now through July 24. Contact Waste Management: 866-967-3292.

Whether or not you choose to use goats to chomp through your excess foliage, you can have not one but two miniature goats (herd animals need each other for company) as pets. Delmarian Anna Sohn, a sophomore at Francis Parker School, does. A member of the Olivenhain Valley 4-H Club, she is active in introducing children to animals and has shown her goats at the San Diego County Fair. This year her goats Star and Comet, mini silky fainting goats, hosted Pearl, a miniature Nigerian goat who gave birth to Phil with Anna attending. Quite the kid. Both Pearl and Phil have moved on to new homes.

*continued on page 3*



## SUMMER'S SILVER LININGS

After a spring that broke records for disrupting every corner of our daily lives, we're more than glad that summer has arrived – and we're hoping for some bright-shiny silver linings along the way. Yes, the Fair was cancelled, and races will happen without spectators – but we Del Marians will enjoy our first summer in years without big traffic jams. And we can savor a bit of the Fair experience via the Fair's Food Fix, a drive-thru way to achieve deep-fried bliss. Tasti-Chips or Chicken Charlie's deep-fried Oreos and Twinkies, anyone? Or perhaps a six-pack of County Fair cinnamon rolls is your idea of a silver lining. We think a splurge is in order. If it helps, you can think of it as doing your part to improve our City's sales tax revenue.

The outdoors, as it turns out, is the safest place to be during the coronavirus pandemic, second only to staying at home, and we have two miles of the greatest beaches right here in Del Mar. Our two live cams (North Beach and Powerhouse/Main Beach) make it easy to look for a less-crowded time to hit the beach for some soul-reviving waves and sand. →

A canopy of stars might be just the thing to add sparkle to our summer. Some nearby campgrounds are open, where compliance with state and local public health ordinances can be achieved. Our region has a wealth of day-hiking opportunities, as well: just take along a mask for close encounters on narrow trails.

We'll not gather in a big crowd at Powerhouse Park for a Summer Twilight Concert – the first summer we won't have that opportunity since the Del Mar Foundation sponsored the inaugural concert in Seagrove Park in 1983. But we'll find creative ways to be more social, while protecting everyone's health and safety with masks, social distancing, hand-washing, and other mandated or recommended practices, so that we can enjoy summer with our extended families and friends.

The "we're all in this together" spirit was a powerful force that helped get us through the spring. A sense of shared sacrifice (though by no means shared evenly) served to remind us of our common cause, and to provide useful perspective on what is truly important. For some of us, our summer will be better because we've just taken a refresher course on the value of down time and less-structured lives. And more than in most election years, we are wide-awake aware of how much is at stake in November. So here's wishing everyone a restorative summer, leaving us ready for the fall campaign season, or for whatever comes our way when our summer turns to autumn. □



The Sandpiper is published by the Del Mar Community Alliance, a 501(C)(4) non-profit. Its purpose is to advocate the Del Mar Community Plan, to foster informed public and government decision-making regarding issues affecting the community of the City of Del Mar, and to encourage a social and political climate favorable to the protection of the community character of the City of Del Mar and its environs.

**Editorial Board:** Jeff Barnouw, Valérie Dufort-Roy, Bud Emerson, Virginia Lawrence, Julie Maxey-Allison, Don Mosier, Betty Wheeler.  
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PROTECT YOURSELF.  
PROTECT OTHERS.  
KEEP YOUR DISTANCE.  
WEAR A MASK.



*Back to business, but NOT as usual.  
Thank you for keeping your distance and wearing a mask in public.  
Photo Julie Maxey-Allison*

# NO EASY NUKE SOLUTION

## Task Force Report Released

Don Mosier, Task Force Member | Rimini Road

The long-awaited report from Rep. Mike Levin's Task Force on spent nuclear fuel at San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) was released on June 24th at a virtual press conference hosted by Rep. Levin and the Task Force co-chairs, former Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Chair Greg Jaczko and retired Rear Admiral Len Hering. The report is available in two formats, a 44-page paper document outlining policy recommendations, and an online report that includes a much longer technical analysis as well as dissenting comments from some Task Force members. The document is too long and detailed to report here, but here is an overview of the primary policy areas covered and recommendations for action for dealing with spent nuclear fuel at SONGS and other nuclear power plants as they undergo decommissioning:

### Policy Recommendations

- Federal Legislation and Regulatory Oversight
- State Legislation and Regulatory Oversight
- Best Practices
- Storing and Aging Management
- Safety and Handling

### Recommended Actions

- Spent Fuel Prioritization Act (HR 2995; would establish SONGS as highest priority for removal of spent nuclear fuel based on highest risk assessment)
- State Environmental Review (Coastal Commission, State Lands Commission, Regional Water Quality Board)
- Nuclear Waste Administration (new federal body)
- Spent Nuclear Fuel Canister Life (research to raise useful life from 20 years to 100 years)
- Resident NRC Inspector (during canister loading operations)
- Innovation
- Collaboration on Best Practices (Military operations are much safer than nuclear industry)
- Congressional Spent Nuclear Fuel Caucus (goal: equitable basis for national permanent repository for spent fuel)

The published Report and backup information is available electronically here: <https://mikelevin.house.gov/san-onofre-task-force-report/> □

FROM BRUSH FOR BRUNCH *page 1*



*A herd of goats munching brush.  
Photos Heartland Fire Inspector II Frankie Rodriguez.*

## SANDPIPER SUMMER ISSUE

There will be no print issue of the Sandpiper in August. However, the Sandpiper website will be updated regularly throughout the summer. [www.delmarsandpiper.org](http://www.delmarsandpiper.org)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- The Sandpiper welcomes readers' letters and articles.
- Material submitted must include the writer's name, street address, and phone number, and should not exceed 400 words.
- Material selected to be published may be edited or shortened.

Contact us via e-mail or post at:

The Sandpiper, Box 2177, Del Mar, CA 92014  
[editor@delmarsandpiper.org](mailto:editor@delmarsandpiper.org)



JULY 2020

In April, our long-time Board member and Communications Chair, Bill Morris ended his second term with the Del Mar Foundation. Looking back on his service, Bill recollected:

“Six years of eleven board meetings a year means sixty-six times I sat around a table with some of the most prolific volunteers in Del Mar. I’ve also scanned about seventy-two financial reports from some of the best treasurers I’ve ever encountered. Our amazing Grants Committee averages about a half dozen significant grants a year, so there are numerous items I can look at with pride as I walk through town. As far as events go, I’ve attended DMF Talks, so I am much better versed on a myriad of topics. I have been to numerous Twilight Concerts, so my rock and roll photographer yearnings have been well served as I’ve seen Powerhouse Park go from zero to thousands and back to zero occupants on numerous Tuesday evenings. Sixty or so different First Thursdays events have enhanced my cultural awareness of local artists during its 10-month season. I’ve seen several thousand Easter eggs snatched up by happy children and watched, amazed, as the Del Mar Fire department lit bonfires on the beach in Del Mar! I’ve laughed my camera off at Halloween Dog parades and realized that Beach Cleanup events mark Earth Day better than a wall calendar. The Picnic at Powerhouse Park, which has grown exponentially, was started during my service. Through it all, I’ve taken tens of thousands of photos, most of which are up on the web for public viewing at [photos.delmarfoundation.org](http://photos.delmarfoundation.org). The best news, from my perspective, is that while board service has a beginning and an end, volunteering is more like a ring, in that it goes on forever.”

Bill can attest to the benefits of volunteering! Whether you have hundreds of hours to volunteer, as Bill has done, or just a few hours, you can have a positive impact on our community. Helping out with the smallest tasks can make a real difference. And you benefit from deeper connection to the community, and a constructive way to reduce stress and anxiety, increase self-confidence and happiness, and provide a sense of purpose! The Del Mar Foundation is proud to be an active, hands-on organization powered by inspired volunteers and generous donors from a broad cross-section of the community. We’d love to have you participate! Please contact [volunteer@delmarfoundation.org](mailto:volunteer@delmarfoundation.org) for more information.



## SCARY NUKE SCENE

Cathy Iwane | Pine Needles Drive

Disasters of any kind bring me right back to spring 2011 and the triple nuclear meltdowns in Fukushima, Japan. After months of confusion, mixed messages – and, finally, elevated radiation levels in locally-grown food – I evacuated my family from Japan to north San Diego County.

As we have rebuilt our lives, my attention has shifted from Fukushima to the disaster-in-waiting at the seaside nuclear waste repository in San Onofre.

COVID-19 has us sheltering in place. How would we isolate during an evacuation? What would more than 8 million people living within 50 miles of the shuttered San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) do if, in the event of a radiological release, they had to up and leave?

Last month, on questioning from Rep. Mike Levin, a Southern California Edison (SCE) vice president played down the utility’s lack of resources and plans to evacuate people living near the shuttered nuclear plant, where workers are in the midst of transferring 3.6 million pounds of highly-radioactive waste from cooling pools into dry storage.

Edison Vice President Doug Bauder offered this mealy-mouthed reply:

“In fact, in June 2015, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) approved the SONGS Permanently Defueled Emergency Plan, which eliminates the requirement for SONGS-specific off-site emergency plans. However, more general “all hazards” emergency plans remain in place with local cities and counties. At present, Camp Pendleton remains our partner for initial responses to fire, rescue, medical, and medical transport needs. We also have a full-time and a part-time nurse practitioner on site, as well as a robust and well-trained security force. SCE has memorandums of understanding with local health care providers regarding health or medical treatment for employees and contractors. They have assured us they can continue to provide medical care, if necessary.”

Is he joking?

Bauder seemed unaware – or he just didn’t care -- that our health care system and emergency responders are stretched to their limit with the pandemic. He also hasn’t explained how the waste transfer qualifies as an essential activity and what is so urgent about the dangerous work that it can’t hold until the global crisis is over.

Edison’s determination to plow ahead follows a pattern of recklessness that includes a near-catastrophe in 2018 during the bungled loading of 50-ton waste canister. The steel canisters themselves are vulnerable to failure from scratching, gouging and corrosion – especially since their storage location is a stone’s throw from the ocean. If this weren’t enough, sea levels are rising and the storage →



## PICK IT UP

Valérie Dufort-Roy | Klish Way

It has been tough keeping up with eco-friendly practices during the pandemic. Our reliance on online shopping skyrocketed with all the packaging it generates, reusable bags are disallowed in many stores, bulk bins have been shuttered, and asking restaurants to use self-supplied takeout containers is unthinkable. How to pursue the commitment to better the environment in the midst of a pandemic where disposable masks, gloves and chemicals are widely used to prevent the spread of the virus? While we wait for better days, why not clean up our beaches?

Researchers estimate the number of pieces of plastic in the oceans at 5.25 trillion. Just last weekend, strolling the one-mile stretch across Powerhouse Park, my family saw a birthday balloon, soda can, juice box, bottle caps, and discarded toys.

Local beach cleanups are regularly organized by several organizations, such as San Diego Coastkeeper and The Surfrider Foundation (San Diego Chapter). Aside from removing trash from our beaches, the cleanups raise public awareness, encourage everyone to take action, contribute to research, and influence legislation. Of course, anyone can pick up papers or cigarette butts when visiting the beach, as it is part of basic civic duty. When volunteers take the time to sort the trash they find, they contribute to scientific knowledge about what types of debris end up on our beaches and allow for the legislative process to be better informed.

The Surfrider Foundation data shows that since 2017, 134,066 volunteers picked up 858,512 pounds of trash and recyclables through 2,659 formal cleanup events across the Nation's coasts. The most common items collected are plastic fragments, pieces of foam, cigarette butts, food wrappers, bottle caps, and rings.

As of now, while public cleanup events have been paused, solo cleanups are a great option! Considering that many will "staycation" in San Diego, why not enhance our beach experience by removing trash? The Surfrider Foundation recommends to plan your activity when there is no crowd (early morning or evening), wear gloves, mask, have sanitizer at hand, two large buckets to separate trash from recyclables and a log to record your finds. Once you get back home, simply register online and input your finds, before discarding in trash or recycling. This is a free, educative and fun family activity for all, and most important, an activity that makes a difference to our environment. ■

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vault is located near an earthquake fault.

Contractors at the nuclear plant should stay home like the rest of us. Work should resume only when Edison can show that evacuation, emergency response and medical infrastructure is in place to provide for our safety. ■



**Del Mar Community Connections**  
Supporting and Serving Seniors

## JULY 2020

Ashley Simpkins, Program Director

### Library Deliveries

In addition to delivery of groceries, cleaning supplies, and facemasks, we're proud to announce that DMCC now offers delivery of items you're checking out from the library.

The Del Mar branch of the San Diego County library is now accepting new loan reservations for door side pickup. If you make a library reservation and you are enrolled in DMCC pandemic deliveries, just designate DMCC as picking up your items, then tell us that you made that reservation, and we will deliver your items to your door. Please note that we cannot accept items for return to the library, as they are not currently accepting returns.

All 65+ residents of 92014 qualify to receive DMCC pandemic delivery services. To request these services, please visit [dmcc.cc/COVID-19](http://dmcc.cc/COVID-19) or call (858) 792-7565.

### DMCC On-Demand

Missed a DMCC program? Ran through your entire Netflix queue? Visit our website to find on-demand videos of recent and past programs, which we work hard to make engaging and informative. When you visit, you'll find videos of such recent programs as: the COVID-19 Q&A with infectious disease experts Frank Chisari and Don Mosier, the scam prevention program with the educator from the sheriff's department, or the Meet Libby program in which Library Manager Polly Cipparrone teaches us how to check out e-books from the library. We've also added past Sunday Salon presentations – Sandra and Bram Dijkstra take us on a tour of their incredible art collection and share personal stories about it, and Nate McCay talks about coin collecting and his longtime interest in the Ship of Gold.

We're constantly adding new content! To find these videos and more, visit [dmcc.cc/programresources](http://dmcc.cc/programresources).

### Volunteer of the Month

DMCC's Volunteer of the Month for July 2020 is Dianne Reppucci-Bierman, volunteer driver, because her willingness to help out in a pinch is invaluable.

DMCC programs and services depend on our incredible volunteers! To learn more about Dianne or becoming a DMCC volunteer driver, visit [dmcc.cc/volunteerofthemonth](http://dmcc.cc/volunteerofthemonth).

### For more information... or to join our email list:

Please visit our website at [dmcc.cc](http://dmcc.cc), or contact the DMCC office at (858) 792-7565 or [dmcc@dmcc.cc](mailto:dmcc@dmcc.cc).



# VIRUS VITRIOL

## Dealing with COVID-19

Don Mosier | MD, PhD, Rimini Road

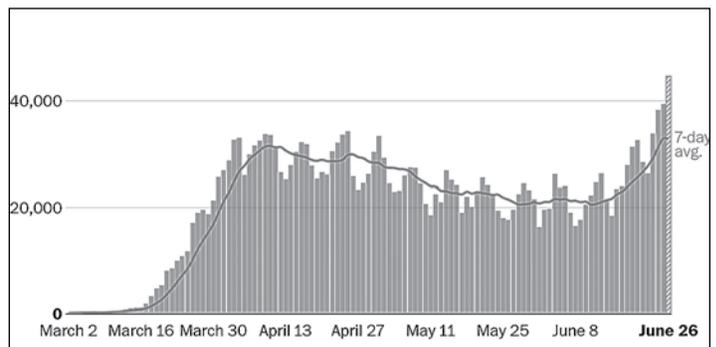
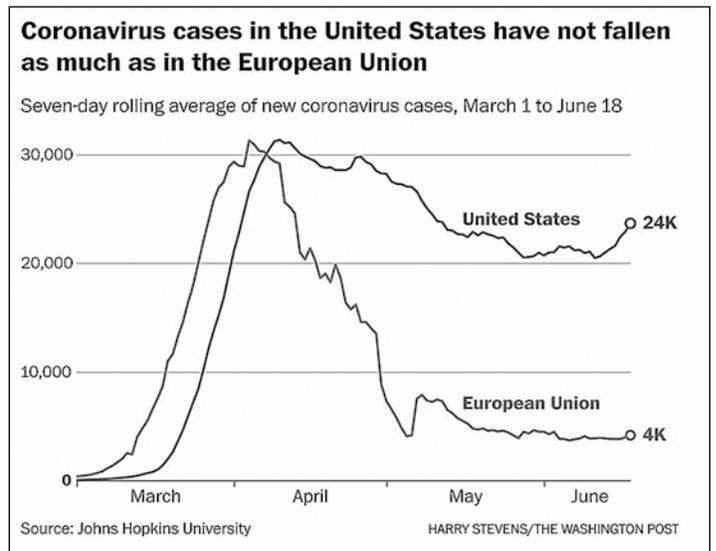
The virus that causes COVID-19 disease, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2), first was transmitted to humans in late 2019. It is a new virus causing a new disease that has now (as of June 28th) infected more than 10 million people worldwide and caused more than 500,000 deaths, including more than 125,000 in the US. There is still a lot we don't know about the consequences of infection. Why are some infected individuals asymptomatic (as many as 40-50%) while others die from the infection? Do individuals who recover from clinical disease return to normal health or do they suffer long-lasting organ damage? Do individuals who recover from infection develop protective antibodies, and how long do they last? How easily is the virus transmitted by airborne routes? Six months into the pandemic, none of these questions have satisfactory answers. We will have to wait for solid, peer-reviewed scientific studies to understand more about this disease. I respect the attitude of my friend Dr. Anthony Fauci, who is not afraid to say "I don't know the answer to that question."

Despite this lack of knowledge, all of us who are anxious for more information are almost daily besieged with "expert" advice both from medical professionals who profess to know more than possible and from conspiracy theorists who willing spread false information. These messages, whether possibly true or demonstrably false, get amplified by the print and social media, especially when they come from the current occupant of the White House, and past trusted sources like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention compound the problem by remaining silent. A recent post in Scientific American by Sarah Kreps and Douglas Kriner of Cornell University ("Good News and Bad News about COVID-19 Misinformation," posted June 10, 2020) reports the results of a survey designed to determine if a random sample of US citizens could distinguish true from false statements about the COVID-19 virus. Between 20-25% of respondents believed the false information, but an equally troubling percentage rejected the true statements. They concluded: "Our evidence points to a public that is too polarized, ideologically entrenched, and awash in information to believe even true content; the more individuals consumed social media for their news, the less capable they were of sniffing out the differences between real and fake content; many do not trust anything."

I read this post hoping to understand why so many people are not wearing masks or practicing social distancing. More information and messaging may be futile if "many do not trust anything," including advice coming from public health officials. So maybe we can just keep this local and decide to protect ourselves, our family, and our neighbors by taking personal responsibility for our actions. →



*Back to business, but NOT as usual.  
Thank you for keeping your distance and wearing a mask in public.  
Photo Julie Maxey-Allison*

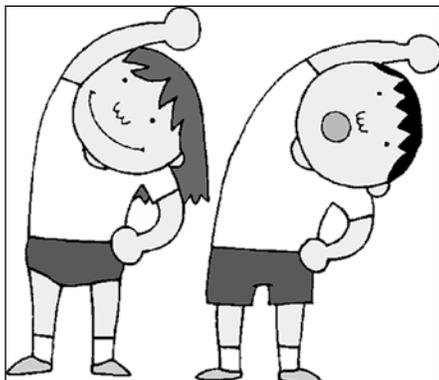




# MOVE IT

Danica Edelbrock, M.S

*Danica Edelbrock, M.S. is an Exercise Physiologist with over 20 years experience developing specialized fitness and exercise programs for the San Diego community.*



### Movement is Life

The last few months have been life changing for most people. During times of change it's important to hold onto the things that are within our control. One aspect of our life that we have control over is daily movement. We

must harness our inner strength and keep moving during these uncertain times.

### Overriding the Blues

Americans are reporting increased and sustained symptoms of depression and anxiety related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Finding motivation may be difficult but getting exercise in every day will stimulate the release of endorphins, hormones secreted that diminish pain and trigger a positive feeling within the body. Improvements in mood have been noted in as little as 5 minutes of physical activity and once this happens a cascade of positive benefits ensues. It may sound daunting to exercise every single day but your body will thank you for it.

### Daily is Ideal

To maintain optimal health and create healthy habits we must focus on these components of physical wellness every day; cardiovascular, flexibility, balance, and relaxation.

Cardiovascular exercise, like walking, biking, swimming, or dance classes, has been studied and proven to enhance mood, strengthen the heart, improve circulation, and manage many metabolic conditions, like diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity. At least 30 minutes a day is recommended. Ten minutes three times a day is just as beneficial.

Daily stretching will increase blood flow and energy levels, reduce joint and muscle pain, improve posture, reduce risk of falling and reduce risk for injury related to enhanced activity or inactivity! As little as 5-10 minutes of total body stretching daily will improve how you feel.

Balance involves our neuromuscular system which is dependent upon many variables including sleep, fatigue, illness, stress and age; therefore a minimum of five minutes every day should be devoted to balance. The exercise →



*Back to business, but **NOT** as usual.  
Thank you for keeping your distance and wearing a mask in public.  
Photo Julie Maxey-Allison*

can be as simple as standing on one foot with the eyes open or closed. For optimal benefit each leg should be challenged for 30-60 seconds before changing to the other leg. Please take the time to practice frequently. It could prevent an unnecessary fall.

Stress can wreak havoc on our body causing physical symptoms of low energy, headaches, upset stomach, aches and pains, insomnia, decreased immune system, and an increased risk for certain diseases like heart disease and cancer. Stress is innate and is our body's reaction to harmful situations, real or perceived. We must learn techniques to manage our stress to live a longer, healthier life. It can be as simple as stopping and taking a few long, slow, deep breaths when we feel our heart and breath rates begin to quicken.

### Be Safe

A physician consultation is always recommended prior to starting a new or more rigorous exercise program. Please exercise safely at home in an area free of clutter or obstacles; stay hydrated and cool. It is extremely important to get outside and connect with nature and others but please wear a mask and maintain social distancing. □



# ROVING TEEN REPORTER

## Grading Grief

Neha Pubbi | Torrey Pines High School Junior

*The Sandpiper editors would like to thank its outgoing roving teen reporter, Dhathry Doppalapudi, who will be moving on to the University of California San Diego in September to study computer science. We would also like to welcome Neha Pubbi, our incoming roving teen reporter, who is currently a Junior at Torrey Pines High School.*

COVID-19 has changed the normal for everyone. Students in San Diego ended the school year through online and distance learning and with an adapted grading policy, including the San Dieguito Union High School District (SDUHSD). They announced on April 3, 2020 that the district would be implementing a credit/no credit policy, also known as pass or fail. However, due to students’ and parents’ protests and pushback the district board voted to change the policy to a hybrid grading policy, where students have the option to choose credit/no credit or letter grades for each class of their second semester transcript on May 14, 2020- one month away from the end of the semester.

“I chose the letter grade option because I am in AP classes and it would help my Grade Point Average (GPA). I think most of the people I know chose the letter grade option because again they had kept up with the work and had weighted classes,” said Erin Poe, a Senior at Torrey Pines High School.

Many students chose and supported the letter grade option to raise their GPAs to be competitive college applicants, especially if they had weighted classes. Many students wanted to show colleges their grades, GPA, and progress over the year.

The policy change was a result of student and parent objection and petitions, drive-in protests, and the threat of board member recall.

“I think that the district originally made the pass/fail decision because they were trying to deal with everything going on, and they made a snap decision. They changed the policy because people were protesting and angry about it. When they decided the policy, there was not a lot of student voice in the decision and process originally,” said Poe.

Many were worried that the students would be negatively

impacted in the college admissions process by only the credit/no credit option. However, not all students felt that way.

“I don’t think the pass/fail option would put students at a disadvantage at all because this pandemic is not just here in our own Carmel Valley bubble or San Diego, it is all over the globe and United States, so everyone is being affected by it. Overall, colleges will know that the transcript will not reflect your actual potential,” said Vianna Igo, a senior at Canyon Crest Academy. □



*Dhathry Doppalapudi, outgoing roving teen reporter.*



*Neha Pubbi, incoming roving teen reporter.*

# COVID COST CUTS

Tom McGreal | Stratford Court

**B**y now everyone has read about the City’s Fiscal Year 2021 Budget revisions totaling \$4 million in response to the COVID-19 related lost revenues. The breakdown is as follows:

- Operating costs cuts \$1.5 million
- Project cost cuts \$1.0 million
- Reserve reductions \$1.5 million

The City Council unanimously supported this mix of budget actions after the City Manager made the case that further cuts would impair the City’s ability to deliver essential services.

So, where does this leave us now? ■

It took just three of the months of a pandemic and economic shut down to trigger this kind of significant financial impact. This City’s revised budget outlook bets on a gradual economic recovery during the coming fiscal year.

Let’s hope this is right, but there are two key elements that we need to carefully consider.

This is an ongoing economic and health crisis that won’t be over until the COVID-19 risks are reduced to the point where normal routines and spending activities can resume. Experts are telling us that a vaccine or curative therapy may be a long time coming. In the meantime, we need to implement norms of behavior that allow us to coexist with the virus. This is particularly challenging in Del Mar, because our small community accommodates millions of visitors. This also makes it even more crucial that we create a culture in Del Mar where residents and visitors are committed to wearing masks, social distancing, testing and contact tracing. Management of the health crisis and the economic recovery are inextricable linked.

From a financial standpoint we need to figure out how to deliver City services in an economy that provides a reduced level of revenues. Our reserves can support deficit spending in the short term but we need a plan now that identifies what steps we will take if the recovery fails to meet the timetable in our current revenue forecast.

The City Council agreed in concept that a Resolution would be adopted at a July Council meeting requiring that General Fund Reserves would be replenished as a priority before increases can be made to spending for operating costs. This is a good first step to address the treatment of revenues in a healthier economy.

Let’s also be sure that we have a plan to adapt to ➔

# IN BRIEF

## BACK TO THE BEACH

**O**ur beach is open. “We experienced the busiest first half of June that I can recall in my 28-year history working on the Del Mar beach,” reports Chief Lifeguard Jon Edelbrock. There was an influx of “out-of-town visitors who came early and stayed late each day, plus locals and tourists, some wearing masks, some not. With the greater number of beach goers there were the usual challenges of a busy beach with ocean rescues, administering first aid, some enforcement contacts. Street traffic was thick with drivers searching the area for elusive parking.”



*Back to business, but **NOT** as usual.  
Thank you for keeping your distance and wearing a mask in public.  
Photo Julie Maxey-Allison*

new behavioral norms in the pandemic and be ready with a budget plan that addresses the very real financial risk that the recovery might take a lot longer.

Below are some questions that might help us deal with the new normal.

Can Del Mar launch an effective public persuasion campaign to get everyone wearing masks and practicing social distancing? Can we open certain Streets to pedestrian traffic only for better social distancing?

Can we keep spending in line with revenues? Can we redefine essential City Services that are triggered upon reduced levels of revenues? Is there an employee compensation model that allows adjustments to reduce costs in a crisis? Will meaningful police reform lead to reduced cost from the Sheriff’s contract? How can we rebuild reserves to ensure needed resilience? ■



## FACT CHECK: Clean Energy Alliance Funding

**CLAIM:** The Woodpecker’s June issue claims that in the thick of the COVID-19 budget crisis, Mayor Haviland has led

the effort to fund the Clean Energy Alliance (CEA) with Del Mar chipping in \$150,000, “with Haviland’s assurance in the May 18, 2020 special council meeting that there would be no further liability or cost. One month later, as a CEA board member, Haviland voted in favor of asking the 3 Alliance cities (Del Mar, Carlsbad, Solana Beach) to consider providing a guarantee or cash collateral of \$4.5 MILLION to meet CEA’s approved startup budget for 2020/21.”

Once again, the Woodpecker misstates the facts and fails to provide relevant context, misleading readers as to the financial risks of the CEA.

**BACKGROUND:** The creation of the CEA Joint Powers Authority was approved by a 4-1 Council vote, putting Del Mar on track to provide greener energy at a lower cost than SDG&E, and providing local control over Del Mar’s energy, with service starting in May 2021. The CEA is the most significant way Del Mar can meet the greenhouse gas goals in its Climate Action Plan (CAP), which was adopted unanimously with strong community support. The CEA is the #1 priority of the CAP and the Sustainability Advisory Board. Each of the three cities in the CEA (Del Mar, Solana Beach and Carlsbad), which have equal voting power, agreed to advance \$150,000 in start-up costs, which is planned be paid back within the next few months. The CEA’s May 2020 financial pro forma shows that once it begins selling power in May 2021, it will have the resources to service its loan, pay its operating costs, provide power at lower cost than SDG&E, and put money into a reserve, with an estimated \$14.8 million in reserves by 2025.

**FACTS:** The decision and commitment to fund Del Mar’s \$150,000 share of the CEA’s start-up costs was made before the COVID-19 pandemic, and was included in the City’s budget; the June 15 Council action was simply unanimous approval of this previously-committed expenditure.

Because the CEA is a separate governmental entity, it serves as a “firewall” protecting participating cities from financial risk from its operations, as confirmed by legal counsel. Mayor Haviland’s assertion that there is no liability to the City is accurate. It is also accurate that no further costs can be imposed on the City without its consent, and as noted above, once the CEA starts selling power in May 2021, its financial pro forma shows it will have a positive cash flow and the ability to build substantial reserves.

The CEA has planned to secure a line of credit and →



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Photo Julie Maxey-Allison*

loan to cover its operating expenses (including entering into power contracts) during its start-up period, so that it is prepared to sell power in May 2021. At its June meeting, the CEA’s board discussed two loan options. One of the two options under consideration by the CEA requires security totaling \$2.5 million; the other loan option does not require security, but is more expensive. The member cities are expected to consider both loan options. The Woodpecker misstated the security requirement as “a guarantee or cash collateral of \$4.5 million.” The \$2.5 million (not \$4.5) security can be met in a number of ways - including apportionment among the cities based on energy load (which would result in an approx. \$75,000 share to Del Mar); or by third party participation. And only one of the two loans under consideration requires security. Either of these loans will result in Del Mar getting back its \$150,000 advance for start-up costs within the next few months. While a security requirement would result in some risk, the pro forma and other financial analysis indicates that the risk is not significant, either in terms of the likelihood that the CEA would not be able to service the loan, or in terms of the total dollar amount at risk.

The Woodpecker reports that there were “calls from residents asking for City Council to hold off on getting into the electricity business,” but fails to note the strong support from many other residents, including the Sustainability Advisory Board, to move forward with the CEA in order to meet our Climate Action Plan and gain local control over our energy. □

# NIMBY → YIMBY

Bud Emerson | Klish Way

**N**IMBY Del Mar is now YIMBY Del Mar, YES IN MY BACKYARD, more granny flats. City Council has now enacted a new ordinance required by state law that removes almost all obstacles to building them, officially known as Accessory Development Units (ADU), on existing lots. These ADUs will not be subject to design review or floor area limitations, although they are subject to a height limit of 16 feet. Hopefully we can build informal systems to encourage neighbor to neighbor consultation though to lessen deleterious impacts on neighborhoods.

We can choose to view this as a glass half full, a win-win, or whatever metaphor floats your boat. We can achieve much progress on our required fair share of affordable housing and we can enrich the demography of our town.

Let's imagine some possible outcomes.

A young couple moves into a small ADU in the South Hills backyard of her parents with the intent of exchanging units when kids come along and parents want less space.

A caregiver moves into a small South Bluff ADU to help a single senior stay in her home instead of moving into a care facility.

A Sheriff Deputy and spouse live in a North Beach granny flat.

A city staffer and spouse live in a one-bedroom ADU three blocks from City Hall. The spouse telecommutes from home.

A retired single engineer lives in a one-bedroom granny flat in South Hills and starts a small neighborhood handyman business.

A head waiter in Jake's restaurant moves into a business district ADU with his spouse who teaches in Del Mar Heights School.

A Nigerian virology scientist with Scripps Research lives in a two-bedroom unit in North Hills with his spouse and two young toddlers. He commutes by bus.

A visiting professor at Scripps Oceanography rents a one-bedroom ADU in North Beach. Another bus commuter.

A single mom with two elementary school kids lives in a South Bluff 2-bedroom ADU where she does freelance writing.

A UCSD post doc from Asia rents a studio in the North Commercial zone for one year. Bikes to UCSD.

A fitness trainer and yoga teacher couple live in a one-bedroom granny flat in Central Hill area, providing in-home coaching throughout the community. →

# TRAVELING TOMATOES

Linda Chisari | Crest Road

**A**s I make the season's first batch of fresh tomato sauce, I realize that tomatoes, like people, have been enriched by relocating and mingling.....

Many varieties of tomatoes blend in my sauce

Offering a complexity of flavors, sizes, and colors

Some from warm climates, some birthed in chillier places

Some native to south of our border,

Others from lands even further away, across the seas.

Long ago tomatoes originated in Mexico,

Later, their seeds were carried to Italy

By adventuresome souls seeking other places to thrive.

Varied in many ways, tastier together than standing alone

Italian recipes, Mexican recipes, Spanish recipes

Marinara, Salsa fresca, Pan con tomate, Shakshuka....

How dull and repetitious the tomato repertoire would be

If tomatoes all had stayed home and never been taken

To other places where they were encouraged to flourish in new ways! □



*Waiting on the windowsill. Photo Linda Chisari.*

These are only a few imagined newcomers to our neighborhoods. They bring talent and vitality to our community. They perform useful services to our City. They participate in civic and social activities. Their small living quarters fit seamlessly into neighborhoods and enrich the character of our population. They help us meet our housing goals, but more important, they help us achieve the vision describe in our Community Plan. Perhaps our readers can come up with more scenarios.

Details about ADU program can be found on City website [DelMar.ca.us/](http://DelMar.ca.us/) □



## VIDEO VOICES

### Design Review Board Meetings

Don Mosier | DRB Member, 2002-2006

One impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been to force the City Council, the Design Review Board (DRB) and the Planning Commission to meet by video conferencing instead of in person. The DRB is mandated to review complete project applications within 60 days of receipt, so it can't delay review until social distancing restrictions are lifted. This means that the review process goes on with some significant changes:



1. Public comments must be submitted as red dot letters or emails by 3:30 pm on the day of the DRB meeting. This means that the public cannot comment on the presentation by the applicant or any last many changes to the project, nor can they amplify on any concerns raised in their red dot comments. Red dot letters can be read into the record if they are limited to 500 words, but longer letters are only available to DRB members, so the public is not fully aware of concerns about the project. Some of these problems are lessened by the City's decision to allow telephone participation in meetings beginning July 1st, but any public comments have to be scheduled by noon the day of the meeting, so no spontaneous reactions will be heard.
2. Social distancing recommendations have restricted the ability of DRB members to enter neighboring houses to evaluate view and privacy impacts. This leads to a conundrum evident in a recent project hearing; DRB members can accept neighbor's complaints about view impacts without confirming them from the primary living area (the Design Review Ordinance standard), or they can continue the project approval until a later meeting in the hope that they can enter the residence in question.
3. The current review procedure appears to be tilted in favor of the applicant. In the past, project opponents could comment after the proposal was presented, and the owner/developer could offer rebuttals or minor project tweaks to seek project approval. The Citizen Participation Program (CPP) that requires neighborhood input before designs are finalized is also impacted by COVID-19 safety →



## LET OUR PEOPLE MEET

### Advisory Committees

Jeff Barnouw | Amphitheatre Drive

On June 15, meeting virtually, the Del Mar City Council voted 3-2 to consider options for restarting committee meetings that have been on hold for some months since the local onset of the novel coronavirus pandemic. City staff recommended that all committees other than Planning Commission, Design Review Board, and Finance committee be considered non-essential, and proposed cancelling their meetings through the 2020-21 fiscal year. The reason given was the staff time required to facilitate the meetings. This was also the reason given by Deputy Mayor Gaasterland and Councilmember Druker for opposing the idea of finding a way to let the advisory committees meet.

This suspension is analogous to the restrictive format of the virtual meetings of the Council and DRB which, until recently, had not taken full advantage of the capacity of Zoom, so that present participation was unnecessarily restricted to the principals of each hearing, with the public able only to submit red dot letters before each session. This was pointed out in a red dot letter by Art Olson "at" the May 18 City Council meeting, which I seconded in a red dot letter to the DRB a week later. This restriction significantly hampered the ability of neighbors to make their views clear, since they could not respond to what was going on in the virtual meetings. As of July 1 the public is able to make comments during the meetings of the City Council, Planning Commission and DRB.

The non-essential committees have in fact numerous ongoing functions that cumulatively are essential to having a civic life. I am on the Lagoon Committee. Ellen Breen, chair of that Committee, reports that many members have expressed eagerness to resume meeting. A "Blue Carbon" subcommittee, consisting of Carol Kerridge, Geoff Criqui, Bill Michalsky, and Brad Allison, has continued its work during the shutdown. See the article on Blue Carbon by Geoff Criqui in this issue, page 16. □

guidelines. The hope was that the CPP process would result in projects that would come to the DRB with support from the neighbors. Instead, some recent projects have entirely ignored CPP feedback.

Can these problems be fixed? I have two suggestions: have the Planning Department accept video recordings from neighbors that show view impacts from both inside and outside perspectives (the latter subject to DRB confirmation); and, open up DRB hearings for neighbors to participate by teleconferencing. If the Del Mar Fair board (on which I serve) can take public comments by Zoom, why can't the City of Del Mar? □

# WINSTON TALKS END

Councilmembers Dwight Worden and Sherryl Parks

After two years of off-and-on discussions between Winston School and the City, the City announced on June 2, 2020 that discussions are concluded and the Winston lease will remain unchanged. The City released a one page summary and a more detailed review about this topic. You can find both statements here: <https://bit.ly/WinstonTalks>

In 2006 the City secured the right to purchase what is now the Shores Park property from the Del Mar Union School District (DMUSD) for the greatly reduced price of \$8.5 million (down from the \$22 million sought by DMUSD). Fundraising was undertaken by a citizen group called “Friends of Del Mar Parks” and by Winston, a tenant of DMUSD at the time with a lease that expired in 2008. That effort raised \$5.3 million, (including \$2.954 from Winston) but fell short of the \$8.5 million needed and the city sold its Balboa Reservoir property to pay the balance and close the deal, eager to start the park planning process.

Winston got the long-term 55-year lease it requested. Rent started to accrue in 2008 at \$197,245 per year, the same amount it had been paying DMUSD but Winston got rent credit for its \$2.954 million contributions to the purchase such that Winston will not pay any new money rent to the City until 2023. Among other topics the lease committed Winston to rebuild its school and return the site to the City at the end of the 55 years in a clean, graded condition. Milestones are set in the lease to measure Winston’s progress.

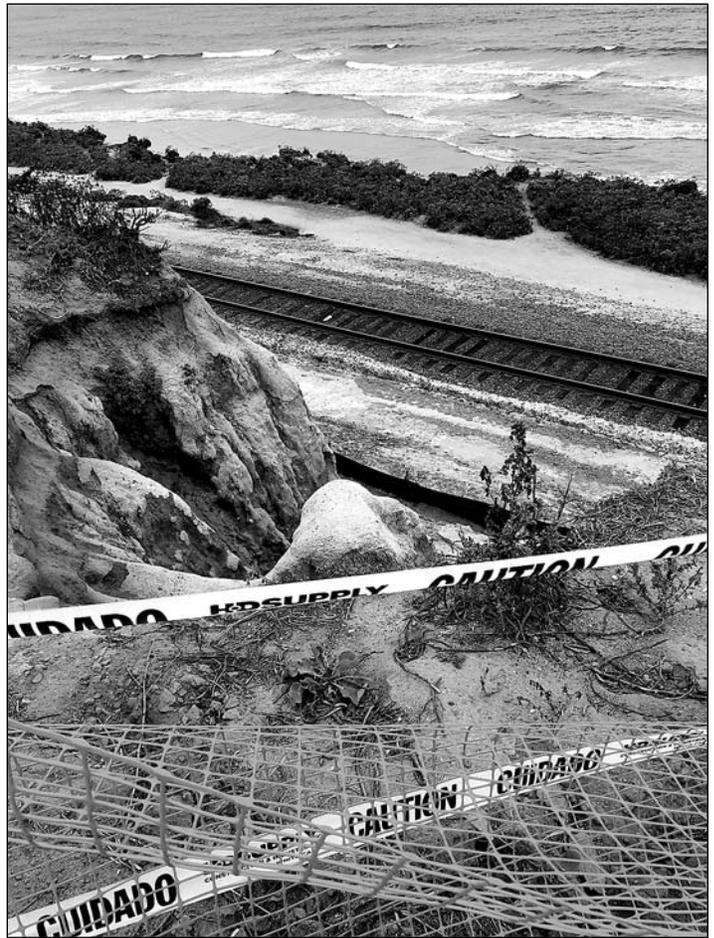
All was then quiet until June of 2018 when Winston asked in writing for a rent reduction from \$197,245 per year to \$1 per year, a doubling of the lease term from 55 to 99 years, two additional 25-year options in its favor and extension of its milestone obligations, the first of which (submission of complete redevelopment plans to the City by December 2019) was approaching. For the next two years the City and Winston discussed the requested lease revisions including exchanging a number of ideas and proposals.

In fall 2019 Winston agreed to acquire an independent appraisal and share it with the City. Winston was sure the appraisal would prove its demands for substantial rent reduction were reasonable. Although Winston acquired the appraisal it declined to share it with the City, presumably because it did not support Winston’s contention the rent was too high. That concluded the lease discussions leaving the lease unchanged. It is noted that Winston has contested some aspects of the statements released by the City.

Winston remains a valued part of the community with a right to stay on site until 2063. We hope they do. They have started the planning process to redevelop their school site and the City looks forward to receiving their redevelopment plans due under an extended milestone date by October 2, 2020. □

# BLUFFS GOING GOING GONE

Photos Julie Maxey-Allison



*Above the train tracks.*



*Below the train tracks.*

# HOUSING BLENDING

Ann Gardner | Via Latina

How can Del Mar add more housing while keeping its small beach town character? The DRAFT plan for achieving that goal as part of the City's 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Housing Element update, and its possible environmental impacts, is now posted on the City's website for your review and comment. The Draft was built upon input from a local survey, a public workshop, State law, and, perhaps most important, because of the COVID shutdown, from neighborhood representatives who made up the City's Ad-Hoc Housing Task Force. The Task Force scoured the landscape, talked with friends and neighbors and researched available options. Their goal, as reported to the Council on June 15, was to encourage local consensus on how best meet the State's requirement that we provide more housing for all income levels.

The 6th Cycle Housing Element is a State-mandated program that, based on our region's allocation for 163 new housing units at various income levels, requires Del Mar to implement programs that will accommodate 101 affordable units in the lower income category (\$43,150 to \$69,040). The City also has an obligation to accommodate 46 additional "carryover" units from the prior Housing Element. The Task Force determined this was possible: "The City has many creative ways to meet these goals and we believe it can be done while adhering to all State laws and to the spirit of our Community Plan and dispersing units throughout the City. We Can Do This."

Both the Task Force and City staff agree that State incentives for building Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), smaller houses on the same site as a primary dwelling, and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units within the walls of a dwelling unit, are a key component in accommodating more housing units throughout the community. ADUs are limited to 850 to 1000 square feet and a height of 16 feet; JrADUs are limited to 500 sq. feet. Both are subject to administrative review only and are exempt from the lot's floor area ratio limit and the design review ordinance.

At the June 15 Council meeting Planning and Community Development Director Joseph Smith reported that the housing approach to date focuses on five areas: 1) housing units in the downtown commercial areas, 2) at the Fairgrounds, 3) lots with Public Facilities and vacant City-owned properties, 4) on vacant residentially-zoned land (R1-40 and R1-14 zones) in the North Bluff area along Border Avenue, and 5) along south Stratford as necessary to meet State law requirements that such locations be considered.

The Draft Program Environmental Impact Review (PEIR) is posted on the City's website and is available for public review and comment through August 31. Two informational sessions are scheduled to cover the Draft PEIR: City Council on July 6 and Planning



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Photo Julie Maxey-Allison*

On a separate but parallel track, the City reports that the outstanding 5th Cycle Housing Element Program actions to allow future housing to be developed in the North Commercial Zone along the Jimmy Durante Blvd/San Dieguito Drive area and in the Professional Commercial Zone along Camino del Mar and Ninth Street will go before the Planning Commission on August 14 for a recommendation before it is presented to the City Council for adoption in September. Other than allowing for future housing, the NC/PC amendments will not change the current development standards (i.e. floor area ratio or height limitations).

Commission on July 14. Written comments will be responded to and included in the final EIR, which will then go to the Planning Commission, along with the draft 6th Cycle Housing Element, in September, and to City Council in October, and then on to the California Housing and Community Development, with a final approval deadline of April 2021 for the Housing Element. □

# FAIRGROUND HOUSING OPTIONS

Mayor Ellie Haviland and Councilmember Dwight Worden

The Community Relations Committee (CRC) of the Del Mar Fairgrounds meets with Councilmembers and staff from Del Mar and Solana Beach each month to discuss issues of mutual interest such as housing options at the Fairgrounds. For many years the City of Del Mar has been evaluating options for permanent affordable housing at the fairgrounds. The fair board did send a letter to the City of Del Mar in 2013 agreeing to collaborate on siting affordable housing there, but there is a new urgency to develop a more specific plan with a realistic timeline as part of the next Housing Element. Affordable housing could benefit low wage fairgrounds employees as well as provide options for housing veterans who find employment after graduating from the transitional housing programs. There are several federal and state programs that could help fund these efforts, and there are some indications that Del Mar and Solana Beach could receive credit for affordable units even if they are located within the city limits of San Diego.

More recently the CRC has had a discussion of temporary modular housing for homeless veterans on property owned by the fairgrounds. This possibility was based on a proposal brought to fairgrounds staff by Fixx and Ballard Logistics in May. They offered modular units for single or family occupancy with bathrooms but without full kitchens. Meals would be provided in a separate dining facility. Support services for veterans and security would also be provided, a “full, wraparound” operation. Fairgrounds staff is evaluating current facilities operated by Fixx as well as alternative suppliers of homeless housing. It is unlikely that these transitional housing modules would count as affordable housing. According to Fairgrounds staff, that issue is still under discussion at the state Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) as the number of homeless in California continues to increase as the economy suffers because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

So far it's still at a preliminary concept stage and we have a long list of questions about this proposal with very few answers about even basic details such as the number of units proposed, the location, the timing, how such a project would be managed, its financing, and what the review and approval process might be. Community input into the project is critical and we encourage the Fair Board to start that process as soon as possible.

The financial stress faced by the fairgrounds has led it to consider all potential sources of revenue, including ground leases for modular housing and rental income for affordable units. Stay tuned to see how these fairground proposals fare. □

# SAND DOLLAR\$

Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

Count down on the grains. The city's work on the Sand Compatibility and Opportunistic Use Program, SCOUP, is up-to-date, and moving forward for local approvals. The SCOUP will make it easier for future beach sand replenishment - a priority adaptation measure funded to date by the City's 2019-20 budget. That's a start. However, with no funds available for the 2020-2021 fiscal year, it will take longer than initially planned to gain the necessary federal and state approvals. City Principal Planner Amanda Lee reports the item is on its way to the Planning Commission for a recommendation in July and then to the City Council for approval in August. Once approved by the Council there are further hurdles, on the scale of the 12 labors of Hercules, toward approval and implementation. Several federal and state commissions, including the Coastal Commission, are involved. A significant factor is a pending Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) decision on August 6, 2020. If all goes well, RWQCB and the State will rethink and reduce permit fees that over the past two years skyrocketed from thousands in permit fees to hundreds of thousands in costs which has made beach nourishment cost prohibitive for most cities in the region. SANDAG is supportive and is coordinating an effort to get the State's fees reduced and help the City continue its plans for beach nourishment. □



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Photo Julie Maxey-Allison*

# VISIT THE SANDPIPER ONLINE!



[www.delmarsandpiper.org](http://www.delmarsandpiper.org)

# SANDPIPER

DEL MAR'S COMMUNITY JOURNAL

Box 2177, Del Mar, CA 92014

DATED MATERIAL

## BLUE CARBON TREASURE

### at the Bottom of Our Lagoon

Geoff Criqui | Blue Carbon Subcommittee of the Lagoon Committee

It may surprise you to learn that our lagoon has buried treasure, of a kind. It's blue carbon, which refers to carbon sequestered by marine environments.

Increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions bring about climate change. Tidal marshes, seagrasses, and mangrove forests act as large carbon sinks, which through underwater accumulation of dead plant biomass and eventual conversion through sedimentation of this biomass into inorganic carbon can help to reduce atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> and thereby mitigate climate change.

Such systems cover a tiny portion of the seabed but account for at least half of ocean carbon storage in sediments, with carbon storage comparable to the thousand-fold larger amount of plant biomass on land.

Mangrove forests are the most threatened, both from land use changes and sea level rise, but are confined to tropical and subtropical areas. Locally we do have seagrasses (visible along Del Mar Beach's tidepools at very low tide as a carpet of slippery green) as well as tidal marshes, which are the lagoon areas directly to our north and south. The lagoon to the south emptying into North Torrey Pines Beach is mostly within the Torrey Pines State Reserve.

The San Dieguito lagoon to our north lies partly in the City of Del Mar and partly in San Diego. The City of Del Mar has a Lagoon Committee, of which I am a member, dedicated to protecting this resource.

Lagoons have many benefits, including scenery and recreation, as a refuge for plant and animal



*San Dieguito Lagoon. Painting Mac McMillan.*

species, and a protective catchment area during severe weather events. Blue carbon storage is an additional and underappreciated facet of these lagoons. We have yet to directly measure the amount of blue carbon stored in our local lagoons, but such lagoon sediments can be 8 meters deep and for each 5 square meters of surface area can bury 1 kilogram of carbon per year.

Unfortunately, blue carbon ecosystems are threatened, by some estimates disappearing at a rate of 2-7% per year, faster even than rainforests, and land use changes that eliminate lagoon acreage have the effect of releasing years of carbon stores as CO<sub>2</sub>.

Likewise, restoration of lagoon areas, as we have been fortunate to see in recent decades in Del Mar's lagoon through the hard work of many, is a difficult process with carbon storage returning slowly, so preservation of existing lagoons is key.

The next time you walk along the lagoon path remember to give a thought to blue carbon. □