

SANDPIPER

PLANTS CAPTURE CARBON

Dolores Davies Jamison | Crest Road

Longtime Del Mar resident Joanne Chory, a noted plant biologist at the Salk Institute, is helping to lead an ambitious effort to coax plants to capture and store more carbon dioxide than they normally would. In a recent zoom collaboration between the Del Mar Garden Club and the Salk Institute's Women in Science program, Chory discussed and fielded questions on the Harnessing Plants Initiative, a significant endeavor aimed at genetically optimizing certain plants to grow deeper, more robust, and decomposition-resistant root systems, which will enable the plants to sequester more carbon in the soil for longer periods. The initiative has received significant funding from the Bezos Earth Fund.

"Humanity is at a crossroads," said Chory. "We are now facing collapsed ecosystems and the effects of climate change, along with a burgeoning human population. If we don't make all possible efforts to substantially reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, we will be leaving our children and grandchildren to live in a much more dangerous and unhealthy world."

Chory and her colleagues—the project includes five teams



Hopefully some 500 million hectares—can be put to work by sucking between four and eight gigatons of carbon out of the atmosphere per year.

From Chory's ZOOM presentation in collaboration with the Del Mar Garden Club.

of plant biologists—have already identified genes in some plants such as Arabidopsis, that can be retooled to grow more roots. Ultimately, the goal is to modify the genetic blueprint of crop plants such as corn, soybeans, rice, and wheat, so that vast areas of farmland—hopefully some 500 million hectares—can be put to work by sucking between four and eight gigatons of carbon out of the atmosphere per year. Plants can be optimized to enrich soils and increase crop yields, as well as reduce carbon emissions, according to Chory.

While optimizing crops to absorb more carbon dioxide won't be enough to slow climate change, Chory said, it is a bridging technique that will buy us time when implemented with other strategies, while more permanent solutions can be considered. One of the most significant challenges in growing huge numbers of enhanced crops at scale is the need for farmers to be incentivized to buy the seeds Chory and her colleagues develop. The project will ultimately include 20 farming test sites across the U.S. where enhanced crops can be studied and monitored to ensure that carbon sequestration goals are being met. Some of the plants that Chory's group is studying should be ready to plant next year.

For more information: <https://www.salk.edu/harnessing-plants-initiative/> □



Surprise Garden. Photo Julie Maxey-Allison.

CHARGING AHEAD

Electric vehicles (EVs) have been around for over a decade, but they still represent less than 3% of registered vehicles in California. Governor Newsom has announced that 100% of light duty vehicles will be zero-emission vehicles (EVs and hydrogen fueled) by 2035. Although EV sales have been slow the last 2 years, there are indications that the market is improving as more choices of EV vehicles are available (68 different models are on sale in California now). The California Energy Commission reported that there were 395 EVs in the 92014 Zip code in 2018. That number is increasing rapidly with the Tesla 3 model one of the most popular vehicles in California; 130 EV sales were reported in our zip code in 2020.

What does this mean for Del Mar? We have two factors that reduce the environmental impact of buying an EV. The first is the fact that our electricity supply from SDG&E is currently less than 40% renewable, so charging your car with dirty energy defeats the goal of zero emissions. Yes, your car may have zero emissions, but your power plants have plenty. You can eliminate this problem if you have

rooftop solar panels and can charge your car while the sun is shining. That brings us to the second problem in Del Mar; trees. Trees are great for the environment and for community character. However, if trees shade your roof, you may not have enough sunshine to make solar panels feasible. This leaves the options of charging at work or putting your charging system on a timer so your car charges at “super off-peak” rates (currently, midnight to 6 am weekdays).

Help is on the way. When the Clean Energy Alliance (CEA) launches service in May or June of the year, you will have the option of choosing 100% renewable energy at a very small price premium (about \$2/month on a \$100 billing). This choice will allow you to reap the full environmental benefits of zero-emission cars (and soon light trucks) because no dirty energy will be involved in home charging. And you don't have to cut down your trees to install solar panels for this benefit. So you get the dual benefits of clean energy and trees that sequester carbon dioxide.

If you already have solar panels installed, you are in even better shape. SDG&E prohibits net metering customers from opting for their Ecochoice 100% renewable option. Not so for CEA customers; you can get more for any excess energy you put back on the grid (e.g., 6 cents/kWh for CEA versus 2-4 cents from SDG&E) and still choose the 100% renewable option for any power you draw from the grid. These are smart choices that come with having local control of CEA rates and policies. ■



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.

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The Winds of Change. Photo Julie Maxey-Allison.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Material submitted must include the writer's name, street address, and phone number, and should not exceed 400 words.

Contact us via e-mail or post at:

The Sandpiper, Box 2177, Del Mar, CA 92014
or at editor@delmarsandpiper.org

SIX MONTH FINANCIAL RESULTS LOOKING GOOD

Tom McGreal | Stratford Court

Based upon the City's financial results for the six-month period ended December 31, 2020, the budget for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2021 shows some good news compared to the Covid budget adopted last June. The Budget for General Fund Revenues was increased by \$369,810 and Expenditures were increased by \$105,940 leaving the Contingency reserve at \$2,317,331 (or 58 days of Operating costs).

The Finance Committee unanimously recommended these Budget actions on February 23rd and the City Council approved the adjustments on February 27th at the Council workshop.

There is a healthy dose of conservatism built into the new budget. No adjustments were made to Property Tax or TOT (hotel tax), which are two of the largest revenue contributors. The biggest reduction in Revenues was a reduction of \$200,000 to Sales Tax, which eliminated any reliance upon the Fairgrounds for Sales Tax revenues for the second six months of the fiscal year. The biggest contributors to the revenue increase were Parking meter and Parking violation revenues at \$250,000 each and Planning Service revenues of \$113,070.

The primary increase in Expenditures is the \$83,620 cost of restoring the 3% Salary cuts. The Agreements with the Del Mar Fire Fighters Association and the Del Mar City Employees Association provided that salaries would be restored as of January 1, 2021 if the City Revenues hit certain benchmarks. The benchmarks were exceeded in the six-month results.

As a result, the General Fund Reserves will total \$5.1 million including the Contingency Reserve of \$2.3 million. This leaves the City with the task of replenishing Reserves totaling \$2.1 million in order to get back to the pre-Covid Reserve targets. The Staff will be presenting a Reserve Balance Policy to the Finance Committee and the City Council as part of the Budget Workshop in May.

The Measure Q Reserves are projected to total \$2.1 million as of June 30, 2021, which position the Council to consider the resumption of the Utility Undergrounding plan.

There are a few additional budget issues for the Council to consider if they are not resolved by Budget time:

Do we need to budget for the cost of a Special Election related to the Referendum on the North Commercial area rezone, which is projected to cost up to \$175,000?

How much will we need to budget for potential penalties and fines assessed by Housing and Community Development related to the Housing element, if we miss the April 15th compliance deadline? →

RESIDENT ENERGY CHOICES

Don Mosier | Rimini Road

Cleaner energy is coming to Del Mar! The Del Mar City Council approved the default electricity product offered by the Clean Energy Alliance (CEA) at their March 15th Council meeting: the choice was 50% renewable/75% carbon-free (mainly hydroelectric) sources, matching the default products in Solana Beach and Carlsbad. The default electricity offering mean that you will be automatically enrolled with this energy choice unless you chose another option. This default product is still less expensive by about 65 cents per month for the average customer than the current 39% renewable product offered by San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E). Del Mar residents will be automatically enrolled in the CEA service in May or June at the default product price unless they choose to opt down to the 50% renewable product, opt up to the 100% renewable product at an extra charge of \$2-3/month, or opt out and remain with SDG&E as their electricity provider.

Some myths about CEA and the other 20 Community Choice Aggregation providers have resurfaced. Here are a few:

- One is that if electricity costs go up, CEA bills will no longer be less than SDG&E. This is false, since higher wholesale energy prices will impact the bills for all energy providers.
- A second argument is that increasing use of solar and wind power will drive up costs because of competition for limited energy sources. The opposite has proven true; more demand has led to more incentives to build renewable energy generators.
- Some have argued that SDG&E shareholders will suffer if many customers (including those in San Diego enrolling in San Diego Community Power) leave their service. False again; SDG&E shareholders are guaranteed a fixed rate of return on investment by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). Much of your monthly bill (which will still come from SDG&E) is for transmission and distribution of electricity, and generation of electricity must be charged at its cost.
- In addition, some have expressed concern that the exit fee (or PCIA, the power charge indifference adjustment) will go up with time and increase rates for CEA customers. The PCIA reimburses SDG&E for long-term power purchase agreements to serve customers who are now leaving their

continued on page 5

Can the organizational design of the City Staff be streamlined as decisions are made following the departure of the City Manager?

Stay tuned! ■

APRIL 2021

DREAMING BIG, THEN MAKING IT SO DMF's founders Lou Terrell and Joel Holliday



When Del Mar Day, a terrific 1980 event, turned into an annual happening, the need for a nonprofit organization to manage its finances became clear. That's how the Del Mar Foundation came to be, with early incorporation and organizational work in 1981 (though DMF views 1982 as its "birth year"). The close ties between Del Mar Day and the City explain why one of the Del Mar Foundation's Incorporators was the City of Del Mar (Lou Terrell,

Mayor), along with the Del Mar Chamber of Commerce and the Del Mar Day Committee (Harvey Shapiro, Chair). In fact, early DMF Board meetings were noticed by the City Clerk, and the incorporation work was done by the City Attorney (Dwight Worden).

The vision for the Foundation articulated by the first Board of Directors (Joel Holliday, Lou Terrell, and Bill Kirwin) is notable for its ambition, well beyond Del Mar Days. Lou Terrell envisioned cultural performances, resulting in the first Twilight Concert Series in 1983. These concerts continue as a signature DMF event, along with other cultural events that Lou worked to achieve for our community. Joel Holliday envisioned a Community Endowment to provide funding for important community goals. A 1983 letter from the Board declared that the Foundation's goals were "to provide the residents of and visitors to the Del Mar Community with cultural, recreational, and environmental amenities; to establish an endowment fund to provide both short and long-term funding sources for projects targeted to enrich the quality of life for Del Mar and the surrounding area; and to increase community involvement in civic affairs."

In 2007, in perhaps the most momentous action in DMF history, Joel Holliday, back on the Board, led the launch of the DMF's Community Endowment. In short order, Founding Endowment donors gave more than \$600,000 to kick-start this important community resource. Quite an achievement during a worldwide economic crisis!

It would take a book to describe the visionary leadership Lou Terrell and Joel Holliday have provided to DMF and our community. In countless ways, Del Mar benefits because Lou and Joel dreamed big, then made it so. ■

Thanks to Sophomore Ayana Johnson's initiative, Torrey Pines High School (TPHS) has a Black Student Union (BSU). "Our main goal is to educate and bring awareness about Black culture, Black lives and Black issues, and to create leaders of the future. We want to create a safe space for people of color to come and have a unified club to where they don't feel a difference within our school, even after I graduate," Johnson said.

Del Mar and TPHS being predominantly white communities furthered the need for a Black Student Union. "I saw some diversity at Torrey Pines, but there wasn't a supporting group where students could find kids who look like them. We're not just a black student union, we have kids from all cultures all races, all backgrounds. We want to bring a focus to Black issues and Black culture that may be overlooked in the school curriculum and that may not be taught in the right way," Johnson said.

Johnson and the Vice President of the BSU, TPHS Sophomore Lia Turner, stress the importance of learning about Black achievements, inventions, and culture. "TPHS being predominantly white definitely increased the need for a BSU because many students just learn the history of Black people as slaves. They don't learn about the accomplishments of Black people or what they've done before and after they were slaves. It is really important to educate more people so they're not ignorant to this subject, as most are today," Turner said.

Johnson and Turner understand that the club might make some individuals uncomfortable, but they believe it could be necessary to gain an appropriate education about Black culture and history. "Presenting during Student Connectedness time, there might have been white students who were super uncomfortable because they don't want to admit their privilege or that there's kids walking around Torrey Pines saying the N-word. We want people to get a little uncomfortable," Johnson said.

While Johnson and Turner were worried about backlash, they felt supported by the TPHS staff and administration. "I thought we would struggle to create the BSU, because we have no Black teachers or Black staff, but our club advisor Mr. Collins, Mr. Ashby, and Principal Coppo were extremely supportive and supported us as Black students," Johnson said.

With Johnson and Turner founding a BSU at a predominantly white school, they are educating and raising much needed awareness. ■

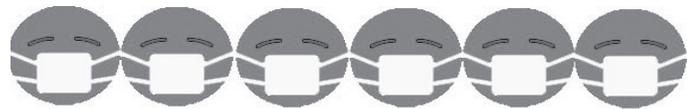


*Bluff collapse just south of 4th Street on February 28.
Note that the side piece of cement is gone.
Photo Julie Maxey-Allison.*

Bluff Buttresses

“The California Transportation Commission has awarded \$10.5 million to regional planning and transportation agencies to complete repairs to the bluffs near 4th Street after a collapse in late February.

The funds will pay to install up to 18 support columns along the upper bluff and build a new seawall to reinforce the base of the bluffs. Completion is expected in July.” ■



FROM RESIDENT ENERGY CHOICES *page 3*

service. As these power purchase agreements expire, the PCIA charge will go down although it may take a few years to disappear. There are also proceedings at both the CPUC and bills in the legislature to change the way the PCIA is calculated since SDG&E can still sell the unused energy and collect twice for the same power supply.

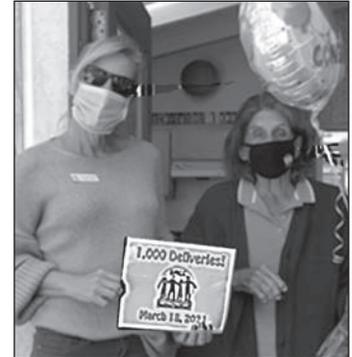
- A final argument against local control of your electricity supply is that municipal governments are inept at managing services. Your water supply, sewer, and waste pickup are all managed by Del Mar, and the most common complaint is that the city is slow to fix potholes. SDG&E remains responsible for all transmission infrastructure, so the sole role of CEA is buying cleaner electricity at a competitive price. We all stand to benefit including our children and grandchildren, who will inherit a cleaner planet. ■

APRIL 2021

Ashley Simpkins, Program Director

Our Thousandth Delivery!

On March 18, 2021, DMCC’s delivery driver Amanda Allen made our thousandth pandemic response delivery. Since March 30, 2020 we have provided groceries, meals, masks, and other essential hygiene and safety supplies to more than 120 senior households. We are proud of our efforts to help seniors stay safe from viral exposure, and we thank the Del Mar Foundation for their partnership in helping to provide this vital service to the community.



Authors visit *Page Turners Book Talk* group

Many Del Mar seniors are avid readers. That’s why our book talk club, organized in partnership with the Del Mar branch library, is a great destination for an author visit. On April 22, Chuck Weikert, author of *Coral Reef Curiosities*, will visit the group remotely to discuss his book that chronicles the secret lives of coral reef animals.

On July 22, author of multiple New York Times-bestselling novels Lisa See will visit remotely to discuss her newest book about the diving women of South Korea’s Jeju Island, *The Island of Sea Women*. DMCC will be distributing some free copies of her book so that as many people as possible can get involved with this opportunity to meet a renowned writer.

Visit dmcc.cc/calendar or subscribe to our email list to learn more and find out how to get yourself signed up for these programs!

Volunteer of the Month – April

DMCC’s Volunteer of the Month for April 2021 is **Carol Steblay**, member of DMCC’s program committee and volunteer driver, because she does great work collaborating with the Alzheimer’s Association on behalf of DMCC, and because she always does things cheerfully. Thank you, Carol!

DMCC programs and services depend on our incredible volunteers! To learn more about Carol or other DMCC volunteer opportunities, visit dmcc.cc/volunteerofthemonth.

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

Please visit our website at dmcc.cc or contact the DMCC office at (858) 792-7565 or dmcc@dmcc.cc. ■

COOL KOLL BREW

Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

Owner Charles Koll opened the restaurant Viewpoint Brewing Company (2201 San Dieguito Road, 858-356-9346) in a former factory space facing the San Dieguito Lagoon July 2017. All went well. Then CV19 took over. The result: “business was awful in 2020 reports Charles.

Though Viewpoint did prepare food for take out, the closing of indoor dining took its toll and many of the staff were furloughed. But “we have come back stronger in 2021” says Charles who offered former staff members the option to return to their jobs. During the downtime he worked to “manage responsibly” and come up with possible solutions. The use of the floor space, much open to the lagoon, was redesigned to meet required standards and customers have now returned.

Charles with Mo Katomski, the brewer, run quite a brewing set up on site. The beer is made in a super sanitized area of shiny stainless steel fermenting tanks. The used grains are sent off to local farms to feed pigs and cows and possibly become part of a dog treat. Viewpoint’s beers are available locally at L’Auberge in Del Mar.

If you still prefer take out to dine in, you can order your freshly prepared meal from Viewpoint, one of the first to offer M’Porte, a sustainable metal container that you buy once for \$25 and continue to reuse when you return for your next take out meal as well as at various local restaurants. Otherwise, know that the restaurant’s take out containers are compostable. And towards further sustainability, customers can recycle their own empty bottles to buy beer. Another option: order their meals sold in frozen form by In Good Company, a source for frozen meals packaged from local restaurants delivered in sustainable, returnable containers. □

SERIOUSLY SUSTAINABLE BREW

Valérie Dufort-Roy | Klish Way

Viewpoint Brewing Co. is taking sustainable practices seriously. The team runs a tight ship where food supplies are closely monitored following the first-in first-out system to ensure that no food goes to waste. The spent grain from brewing beer is sent to local pig

farms. Biodegradable containers are used for takeout, while promoting the M’Porte reusable containers. Viewpoint was one of the first restaurant to join M’Porte, the Zero Waste takeout solution, when it launched in 2019. Viewpoint’s delicious food is also available for purchase through eatigc.com (Eat In Good Company), which delivers frozen chef meals at home in reusable containers. Of course, beer can be purchased in refillable growlers!

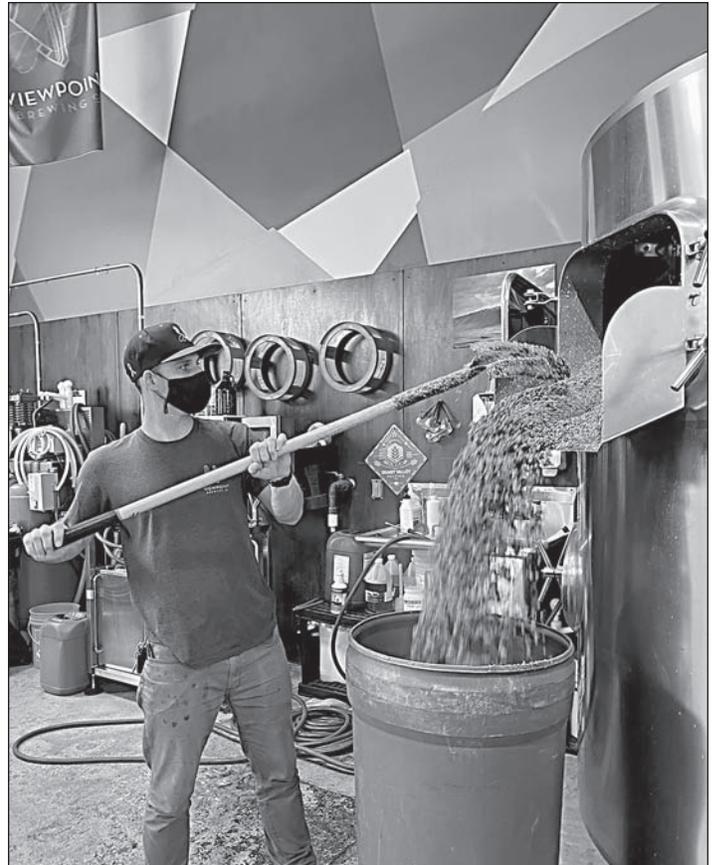
Furthermore, Viewpoint is looking for a food scrap recycling program to divert away from the landfill. Charles, owner, reports working proactively with Clem Brown, Environmental Sustainability Manager at the City of Del Mar. With the support from the City Council, Charles is confident to find a solution in the near future.

How to enjoy Viewpoint Brewing Co. takeout food sustainably with M’Porte?

- For the first time, one could order their container directly from mporteco.com, or simply call a participating restaurant and ask for their takeout meal to be served in a M’porte (“empporter” which means “to take with you” in French) Zero-Waste Takeout container.
- The one-time \$25 cost of the container is added to your bill.
- Once you are done enjoying the meal, simply →



Charles Koll, owner at Viewpoint Brewing Co., with Zero Waste M’Porte takeout meals: roasted cauliflower with pistachio appetizer and the famous Viewpoint mac n’ cheese.
Photo Valérie Dufort-Roy.



Photos on this page Julie Maxey-Allison.



FROM SERIOUSLY SUSTAINABLE BREW *page 3*

rinse the container, until you plan on a takeout dinner again!

- When ordering takeout from a participating restaurant again, mention that you will be trading a M'Porte container, and request to place your takeout order into a sanitized M'Porte container.

- Et voilà! You have successfully saved a container. You are part of the solution!

- Extra points for scanning the QR code of the M'Porte program on a sign near the cashier, which helps the program track how many times the containers are traded around town! ▣

IN BRIEF

WHITHER WINSTON

The City Council response to the Winston School offer to purchase is “not interested in considering a sale of the property or a renegotiation of the lease.” Winston now is required to address several significant matters in its redevelopment application. The original application deadline of December 31, 2019 was extended several times to April 8, 2021. The City Attorney has stated that, should Winston fail to meet this April 8 deadline, “the City will exercise its right to terminate the Lease. Accordingly, the lease termination would become effective July 1, 2022.” ▣

HOUSING SETTLEMENTS

Bud Emerson | Klish Way

Finally, we have a housing plan. Actually we have two plans, both passed unanimously. One is the final piece of the plan for the last eight years (fifth element). The other is the proposed plan for the next eight years (sixth element).

After months of political pandering and finger pointing, out come two plans that not only escaped a last minute promise of severe sanctions from the state, but are rational, multi-faceted, balanced intentions to distribute all levels of housing throughout the community.

Despite all of the political gamesmanship, these plans represent the best ideas gleaned from vigorous citizen input combined with the professional expertise of our Planning staff. (See the city website for the complete texts of both plans).

But they are plans, not production. Del Mar is at the bottom of the list when the production of all cities is measured. Over the last few decades our actual production is zero.

Perhaps we can now put politics aside and unite the community in actually producing our fair share of a state-wide challenge to solve a severe housing shortage.

Before we get started, let's try to set a new frame for this work. Maybe we can stop looking at this as a burden afflicted on us by state mandates. Let's try to see this as an opportunity to contribute our fair share and enhance the quality of our community life at the same time.

Let's focus on the demographic enrichment we could achieve by opening more doors to a variety of people who could qualify for affordable rents—a range of incomes of about \$40,000-\$90,000 depending on family size. We can welcome teachers, firefighters, international graduate fellows, visiting scientists, single parent families, artists, city staffers, sheriff deputies, fixed income seniors, retired engineers, musicians—a variety of interesting people of different races, backgrounds, ages, skill levels.

Del Mar has more open space per capita than almost any coastal town in Southern California. We already have areas of modest density that weave quite comfortably in the fabric of our community (Del Mar Woods, south end of Stratford, Grand Avenue, north end of Coast Highway....). We can be creative in strategically adding a few more with design features that fit well in neighborhoods. The thoughtful designs of the proposed Watermark property set a good standard.

The biggest plot of development opportunity is the fairgrounds. Our housing element plans prioritize development on the fairgrounds. At a time when the fair board is talking about re-purposing, we need to make a case with them for win-win housing on a portion of that state property.

Come on, Del Mar. Let's make it happen! □

OSPREYS: BABY BOOM

Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

Here they come, Ospreys getting ready to try their young wings. Shells off, feathers ready, they will soon fly out of the nests that have been home for the past weeks. The attentive parents who returned to nest—including the one featured—will soon have, well, empty nests. □



Dad flying overhead. Photo Ginni Kitchen.



Mom and one chick. Photo Ginni Kitchen.



Mom and two chicks. Photo Ginni Kitchen.

YOU ARE VACCINATED

Now What?

Don Mosier, MD, PhD

On March 8th, the CDC issued guidelines for individuals who have been fully vaccinated, meaning that at least 2 weeks have elapsed since their second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or the single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. These general recommendations acknowledge that we still have more to learn about COVID-19 transmission after vaccination, and the recommendations leave a lot of room for interpretation. Here are the recommendations with my comments in italics:

1. Fully vaccinated people can:

- Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing – *Great news, but safer if a small number of guests who have adhered to all precautions under #2 below and the meeting space is well ventilated. Including children in the gathering is not recommended, but all should be masked if they are present.*
- Visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing – *The current incidence of documented infections in San Diego County (3-5% positive tests in mid-March) and the high incidence of asymptomatic infections in younger individuals makes this seem like a difficult choice. I would not recommend this until more is known about vaccine protection from infection.*
- Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic – *How will we learn if vaccination prevents transmission if you follow this recommendation?*

2. For now, fully vaccinated people should continue to:

- Take precautions in public like wearing a well-fitted mask and physical distancing
- Wear masks, practice physical distancing, and adhere to other prevention measures when visiting with unvaccinated people who are at increased risk for severe COVID-19 disease or who have an unvaccinated household member who is at increased risk for severe COVID-19 disease – *Don't presume that you know or can find out whether people have medical conditions that increase the risk of severe disease, like cancer therapy or treatment for autoimmune diseases. Just wear your mask.*
- Wear masks, maintain physical distance, and practice other prevention measures when visiting with unvaccinated people from multiple households – *Good advice.* →

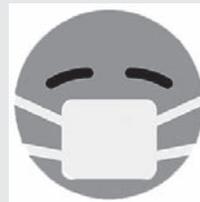
STRANDED ON SAND

Where's My Ma?



Baby seal abandoned on shore. Photo Julie Maxey-Allison.

IT'S **STILL** UP TO **ALL** OF US.



PROTECT YOURSELF.
PROTECT OTHERS.
KEEP YOUR DISTANCE.
WEAR A MASK.

EVEN **AFTER** YOU'VE HAD
YOUR 2ND SHOT!

- Avoid medium- and large-sized in-person gatherings – *Agree, but even small sized meetings with unvaccinated individuals carry a risk.*
- Get tested if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms – *Agree. Remember, some 5% of vaccine recipients will not make a protective response.*
- Follow guidance issued by individual employers – *Depends on who you work for.*
- Follow CDC and health department travel requirements and recommendations – *You are likely to need an international vaccine certificate (not your CDC card) for international travel. Vaccine coverage is lagging in Europe, and other countries. Coordinate your travel plans with current risk assessments.* ■

NUKE THREAT STRATEGY ???

Don Mosier | Rimini Road

On March 15 Southern California Edison (SCE) released a long-awaited strategic plan for relocation of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) from the current dry cask storage at San Onofre Nuclear Power Station (SONGS) to an interim or permanent off-site repository. The strategic plan was developed by consultant North Winds and their nuclear experts as a condition of a settlement agreement between SCE and Citizens Oversight reached in 2017. The short summary is that the federal government has failed to live up to its legal responsibility to build a permanent repository for SNF despite collecting over \$988 million from SCE ratepayers to fund a nuclear waste fund. Because of the lack of federal progress, the utility industry successfully sued the government and now receives funds from a Judgment Fund for decommissioning activities.

The strategic plan considers several options for relocating the nuclear waste from SONGS and also provides an optimistic timeline if the federal government could build or license interim or permanent storage sites and overcome financial and political obstacles to transporting SNF and locating the sites. Two interim storage facilities are under consideration in Texas and New Mexico, but there is strong local opposition to each of these and their capacity, if built, would be insufficient for all the SONGS waste. Two other options were rejected by the owners; the Palo Verde generating station in Arizona said no thanks, and the Department of the Navy said no to moving the waste inland on Camp Pendleton. The report cites four key objectives for the future:

“Four Strategic Programmatic Objectives:

- Provide direction, obtain appropriations, and take other necessary steps to restart the national program for spent nuclear fuel storage.
- Establish and implement a national consolidated interim storage facility (CISF) program with broad authority to enable multiple forms of business models (including contracting for private storage, implementing a federal CISF, or forming a public-private partnership with a non-federal public or private entity).
- Re-establish a program for a permanent geologic repository that addresses the need for stakeholder engagement and the consent of involved state, local, and tribal governments.
- Pursue opportunities for the industry to work together, perhaps via the Nuclear Energy Institute and/or the Decommissioning Plants Coalition, to create a consensus-driven prioritization scheme for removing SNF from shutdown sites and recommend that that scheme be adopted by the federal government. Adopting a more efficient approach for removing SNF from shutdown sites could save up to \$10 billion in Judgment Fund payments.” ■

THE RIGHT TO REPAIR

Valérie Dufort-Roy | Klish Way

Iwent through three electric water kettles in the same number of years, with no way to repair or salvage them. Do you remember when you could fix your toaster or your coffee machine by ordering replacement parts? When small repair shops could fix any appliance?

Every year, we find that a new phone or computer is launched, with better capabilities, amazing cameras, and so on. We read about Apple paying about \$500m to settle claims of intentionally slowing down devices supposedly to “save battery life.” This programmed obsolescence is meant to incite customers into upgrading to the next model, because who would tolerate a slow device?

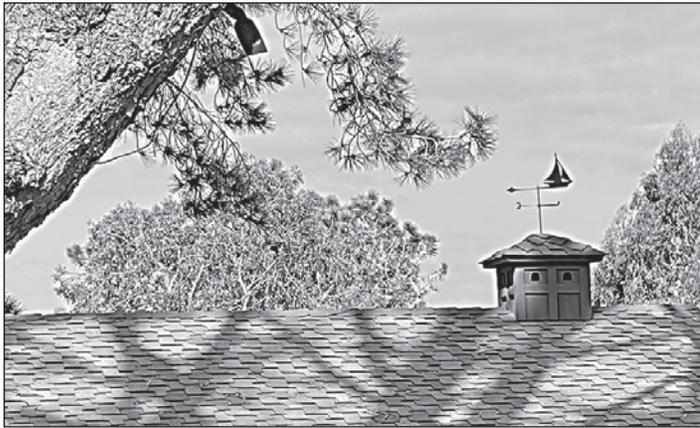
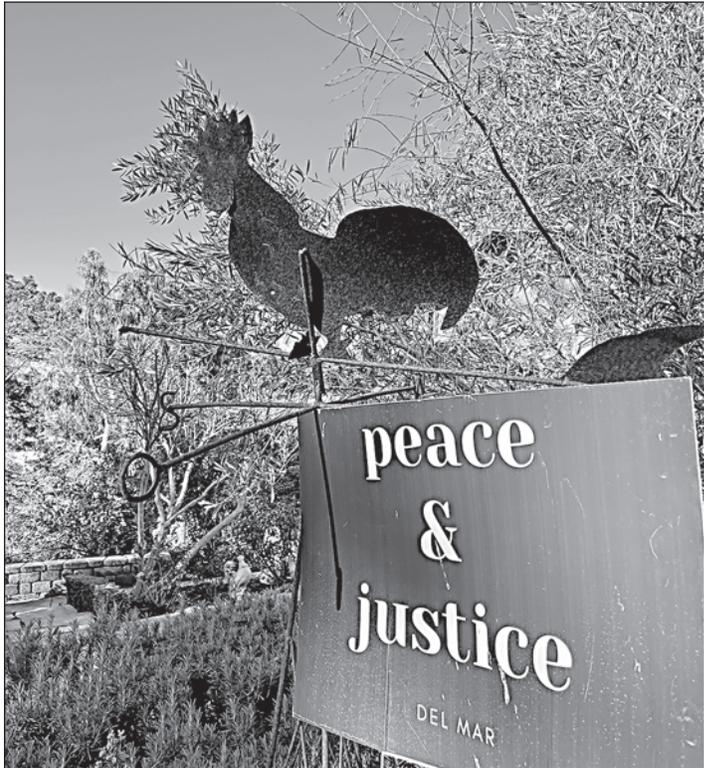
The right to repair is a concept that has grown in importance in recent years. It requires manufacturers to provide customers or repair shops access to service information and affordable replacement parts. The statistics are shocking: of the 53 million tons of e-waste are produced each year only 15-20% of e-waste is recycled. The EU recently adopted their Right to Repair law, where refrigerators, washers, hairdryers or TVs in the European Union need to be repairable for up to 10 years.

In 2019, California’s attempt to pass Assembly Bill 1163, which sought to update and revise gaps in existing recycling policy, was thwarted when industry lobbyists used public safety and privacy concerns. Despite the bill’s demise, the Statewide Commission on Recycling Markets and Curbside Recycling has recently issued recommendations proposing to “establish an ‘ease of repair’ requirement on manufacturers such that products can be reasonably disassembled and reassembled by the consumer to replace consumable or defective parts.”

With the pandemic, hospital repair technicians have reported lack of access to parts, tools, information and diagnostic software to keep medical devices, such as ventilators, defibrillators, or anesthesia machines, functional. Introduced in the US Congress in February 2021, the Medical Device Right to Repair Act would require “original manufacturer of powered medical equipment used in the treatment, monitoring, or diagnosis of a patient to provide documentation, parts, and tools used to inspect, diagnose, maintain, and repair powered medical equipment to an authorized repair provider [...]”

The pandemic has underscored the acuteness of the right to repair. Beyond a slowed down phone or a dysfunctional toaster, there is a patient whose intensive care might require lifesaving medical devices to be repaired. His or her life might very well depend on the ability of a repair tech to locate an instruction manual along with replacement parts. It’s high time that right to repair is enshrined in our laws. ■

The Winds of Change



Photos Julie Maxey-Allison.

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DATED MATERIAL

YOUNG PERSON PROFILE

Cello Challenges COVID

William Forrest | 11 years old

When the Pandemic hit I felt trapped. Basketball stopped. School learning stopped. Gatherings stopped. I could not leave the house; I was scared because I did not know if I was going to get sick. Before the pandemic, I practiced cello. During the pandemic, I kicked it up a notch. I started working harder because I needed a way to cope and I had the free time. I started putting in the work.

A typical pandemic practice is pretty intense and long. Everyday, I start with warm-ups. I play the C major scale in different forms, arpeggio, double stops, and octaves. Then, I play Friedrich Douthauer's book of etudes, where I work on rhythm, intonation, and bowing technique. Now it is time for my main set. Currently I am playing three Bach songs. Arioso from the Cantata 156, Sarabande and Gigue from Bach cello suite 1. It is hard and very disciplined, but I have fun. I enjoy playing in tenor clef because you read the music another 5 notes higher. I like challenging my brain. Sometimes when I need a break when doing cello practice, I play with my English Cream golden retriever Lemon or play with my bow and arrow.

A typical pandemic practice with my teacher, Dr. Anna Cho, is even more intense and even longer. She plays for the San Diego Symphony. She is strict but understanding and talented. Lessons with her are hard work. She makes sure every measure of music is perfect before I move on. We have continued lessons by zoom and outdoors in her backyard, distanced with masks. I enjoy when she does not stop me while playing because it means I am on the right track. She has a cute dog named Bobi.

Performances during the pandemic sometimes go well and sometimes, just terrible. I once played for my family and bit off more than I could chew. The music was too fast, too quiet, and I played too many pieces when I was not ready. I had a great performance when I played in front



*William Forrest and his cello.
Photo Nicole Forrest.*

of the town of Del Mar during the mayoral elections. I played one song, took my time, played with confidence, and I was prepared. Afterwards, I felt fulfilled. When cello goes right, I close my eyes and smile.

Now that the pandemic is close to ending, I will not take the cello for granted. In the future, when I face another challenge, cello will be my defense. □