Sandpiper

DEL MAR'S COMMUNITY JOURNAL

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SURF CUP OPEN SPACE WIPE OUT

by Dwight Worden | Seaview Avenue

The final key piece of what was supposed to be 600 acres of permanent open space for public use and enjoyment was recently denuded of its open space protections by the San Diego City Council. This important open space acreage was dedicated to the City for the benefit of the public in 1983 in exchange for approval of the controversial Fairbanks Ranch project. Shortly thereafter, about 400 of the 600 acres of public open space were leased by the City of San Diego for private golf course use with limited public access. About 60 acres of the remaining open space was more recently leased by the city to Surf Cup for its intensive youth soccer programs. Surf Cup has been in litigation for years over allegations its use violates the open space deed restrictions.

Last fall, the City of San Diego City Council dealt the final blow to this public open space by eliminating or dramatically revising the public protections. This action was opposed by many key environmental organizations and stakeholders, including the City of Del Mar, the Sierra Club, the Environmental Coalition of San Diego, the San Dieguito River Park JPA, the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy, Friends of the San Dieguito River, and others.

The Sierra Club has now filed suit challenging the City of San Diego's decision. In sum, the suit alleges that the City of San Diego failed to analyze the environmental impacts of intensifying use at Surf Sports Park and eliminating deed restrictions not only on the polo fields, but on additional open space parcels conveyed under the same grant deed. The petition asserts that increased traffic, large events, and expanded commercial uses threaten surrounding communities and the San Dieguito River Park, and that the City relied on outdated data while bypassing required CEQA review.

More than just the fate of the polo fields is at stake in this case. Part of the deal allowing the Fairbanks Ranch project to proceed was the dedication of 600 acres of permanent open space for the public benefit. Now, 400 acres are tied up in a private golf course and the open space restrictions on 60 remaining acres have been substantially modified or eliminated. The public use open space that was the key public benefit justifying the Fairbanks project has now been all but eliminated.

As stated by Sierra Club attorney Isabella Coye: "The City Council must uphold its prior promise to its electorate — that the Affected Lands would be dedicated for open space uses. Furthermore, the city is legally bound to implement promised mitigation measures under CEQA and state law."

The Sandpiper will provide updates as the suit progresses. ◻

DEMOCRACY DEFENDERS

On Saturday, January 10th, the weekly protest against the actions of the Trump administration swelled from the usual 20-30 participants to an estimated crowd of 250. The crowd joined those across the nation protesting the ICE murder of Renee Nicole Good earlier that week in Minneapolis. The protest target was clearly the police-state actions of ICE and the gaslighting from Washington about Good running down the ICE agent who shot her. Many cars passing by the demonstration honked in support. The protestors gathered in the Civic Center Plaza for a moment of silence in memory of Good, and a moving rendition of taps by a Vietnam veteran. ◻

Protesters at Del Mar Civic Center. Photo: Art Olson

DEL MAR DESERVES BETTER

Why is our City Council representative appointment to SANDAG important? First, it is well to understand SANDAG'S vital role in the region. It is composed of reps from all of the city and county jurisdictions in the region (with the larger ones having weighting capability). This is where key county-wide strategic decisions are made. Many of these decisions have local impact for Del Mar such as transportation, housing, sea level rise, bluff and beach erosion. And very importantly the train tunnel decision coming up.

Over the years Del Mar has achieved out-sized influence in this regional forum largely from the respect our Council rep earns in working with other jurisdictions. Building relationships, forging alliances, working cooperatively, supporting political campaigns, all add up to voting support we need for key Del Mar issues. When it comes time to vote on issees important to Del Mar, our efforts to play team ball pay off with needed votes. Failure to do so leaves us with one vote and no supporters.

In the near term future there will be some key decisions affecting Del Mar which will be taken at this regional forum. We need to take a hard-nosed look at our current Council make-up and decide who is most likely to earn voting support for Del Mar's vital interests. Gaasterland clearly has lost support from other SANDAG board members. We can't afford to treat this appointment frivolously or let egos get in the way. There is too much at stake. ◻

FLU SEASON HERE WITH A VENGEANCE

by Don Mosier | Rimini Road

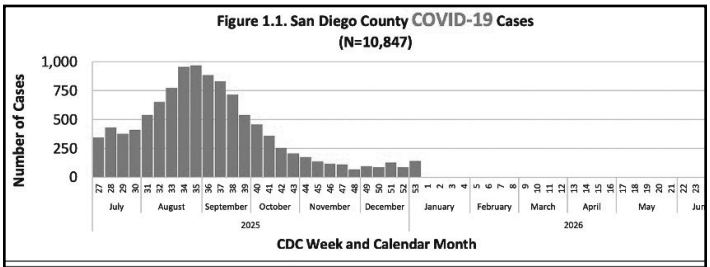
A new strain of influenza, H3N2 subclade K, is causing widespread infection of children and adults in San Diego County. Based on current trends, hospitalizations and possibly deaths from flu are expected to surpass those from COVID-19 this year.

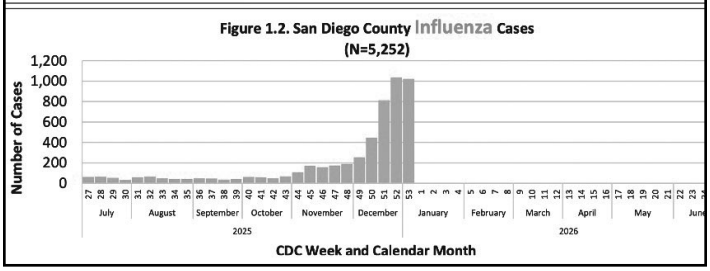
The San Diego County Respiratory Virus Surveillance Report tracks COVID-19, flu, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) cases on an annual basis beginning each July 1st. The results of tracking COVID-19 and flu are shown in Fig. 1.1 and 1.2.

Infections with the COVID virus peaked at the end of August last year and have declined to low levels by the end of 2025. Of the almost 11,000 infections, 69 resulted in the death of the infected individual.

Infections with the influenza virus have increased since the beginning of December and are now tracking at more than 1,000 per week. At that rate, influenza will infect more people than the COVID virus by early February. Fortunately, the new flu strain has only caused 6 deaths as of Jan. 1, 2026, but this number is expected to increase in the next few months.

Individuals over 65 are at higher risk of hospitalization or death from infection with either flu or COVID. The high-dose flu vaccine for older adults is partially protective against the serious consequences of infection with the new flu strain and is highly recommended by local infectious disease experts. Wearing face masks at social gatherings or during travel is also recommended. ◻





Sandpiper
DEL MAR'S COMMUNITY JOURNAL

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.

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GAINING FROM GIVING BACK

by Lana Weber | Torrey Pines High School Junior

Every year, millions of students begin their college application process, filling out boxes detailing their accomplishments, awards, and activities. Buried in that list is the section many view as just another requirement for their academic resume: volunteer work. But taking time to give back does far more than check a box. It offers teenagers a break from academic pressure, widens their perspective on the world around them and reminds them of the everyday privileges they often take for granted.

For many teens, volunteering gives them the opportunity to explore future career paths while simultaneously bringing a smile to others' faces. Working in a local hospital introduces students to the responsibilities of a healthcare provider. Caring for animals at shelters or clinics exposes aspiring veterinarians to the different aspects and demands of that profession. Volunteering at a department at a local food bank can help students learn accounting and leadership skills, while working with underprivileged children in a foreign country can prepare students for jobs such as teaching or social work. Regardless of how or where students choose to give back, volunteering builds critical life skills including communication, time management and problem-solving.

Volunteering can also offer an important break from the constant demands of school and extracurriculars. When students step into a service-role, their attention shifts from their own deadlines and obligations to thinking about how they can make the lives of others better. That focus breaks the cycle of academic stress and offers students a sense of purpose.

In addition, volunteering gives students the opportunity to make new friends, as they meet individuals who share some of the same passions and hopes for the future. When students decide to take a leap of faith and volunteer somewhere they've never been before, immersed in a culture they're not familiar with, it provides them the opportunity to bond with people they may have never met otherwise. Volunteering allows students to learn how to bridge cultural differences in an effort to share their experiences with others, which can result in simply a growth in self confidence, or even the formation of lifelong friendships based on shared values and experiences.

Perhaps most importantly, volunteer work cultivates gratitude. When students see the challenges others face, within their own communities or on a larger scale, they gain a deeper appreciation for all they have. This shift in perspective can lead to an opportunity to see the world through a more empathetic lens.

So while many students view volunteering as simply a box to check when it comes to college applications, the practice of giving back to others can be deeply impactful - offering a chance to explore interests, relieve stress and develop a deeper sense of purpose. All while making a difference in the lives of others. □

QUOTABLE DEL MAR: PATTY BRUTTEN

"In an age of instant delivery and growing isolation, let us remember the power of community and the importance of supporting our local businesses. Let's not forget to keep in mind the simple act of stepping out of our homes to connect, shop and engage can combat the loss of Main Street retail, and foster a vibrant community. Now more than ever let's invest in those who serve us and strengthen the bonds that tie us together."

Photo courtesy of Patty Brutten

Patty Brutten first came to Del Mar as a UCSD college student. Years later, she and husband Marc Brutten returned to Del Mar, where their impact has been immeasurable – as owners of the Del Mar Plaza, "guardians" of the historic Canfield–Wright House ("The Pink Lady"), and as philanthropists. Just a few examples of Patty's philanthropic work: hosting fundraisers for the child advocacy nonprofit Voices for Children, helping foster teens at San Pasqual Academy go to college, and working to connect young people with the outdoors. This month, however, the Sandpiper particularly celebrates her years-long efforts to bring vitality and resident-serving business to Del Mar Plaza. The Plaza once again has an independent bookstore and an excellent market – and Patty gets the lions' share of credit for those accomplishments. □

IMPLAUSIBLE NUKE PLAN

by Don Mosier | Rimini Road

County Supervisor Jim Desmond, a Republican, will term out this year, and he has announced his candidacy for the 49th Congressional seat currently held by Democrat Mike Levin. Congressman Levin has been aggressive in proposing solutions for the nuclear waste stored at the shuttered San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS), including convening a SONGS Task Force (of which I am a member) in 2019. By contrast, his predecessor, Republican Darrel Issa, had ignored the risks posed by the megatons of nuclear waste at SONGS. Levin's efforts to make bipartisan progress on moving nuclear waste to interim storage sites have stalled since the 2024 election, as cooperation across the aisle has largely ended in the current Congress.

Candidate Desmond, who serves on the Community Engagement Panel appointed by SONGS operator Southern California Edison (SCE), recently sought support from fellow County Supervisors for a "new plan" to move the nuclear waste from SONGS. He sponsored a plan to "explore how spent nuclear fuel can be reused or repurposed through next-generation nuclear technology." This new plan is a replay of earlier attempts to reprocess nuclear fuel, a technology fraught with problems.

Reprocessing creates weapons-grade plutonium, which is why Congress outlawed it in 1974. Several attempts to create pilot-scale reprocessing plants in the U.S. have failed. The waste generated by reprocessing is even more radioactive than the starting material, so disposal or storage is even more problematic than the challenges we currently face. Building a new reprocessing plant is prohibitively expensive, which is why a proposed new facility in Georgia was cancelled in 2019. There is stored nuclear waste at 103 nuclear power plants in the U.S. How many reprocessing plants would be needed to reprocess that much waste?

Investor-owned utilities like SCE have backed reprocessing to shift the liability for nuclear waste storage to other private entities or the Department of Energy, despite the many problems associated with reprocessing. Perhaps they helped candidate Desmond advocate for "next generation nuclear technology." Or "magic nuclear waste removal." □

IN BRIEF

NUKE REMOVAL FUNDS

Representative Mike Levin (D, 49th) announced on January 12th that over $100 million for government programs to address spent nuclear fuel storage and relocation was included in the fiscal year budget approved by both the House and the Senate.

His press release stated: "The funds will be used to develop the infrastructure needed to safely transport and manage waste, work with communities to identify a suitable new site, and support research into improved long-term management of spent nuclear fuel."

The hope is that these funds will help provide a solution for the nuclear waste stored at SONGS.

BYE BYE PLASTICS!

by Ann Feeney | Rimini Road

Well, not all, but still good progress. At the recommendation of the Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC), the Del Mar City Council passed an expansion of our current plastic ordinances on January 6, which will go into effect 6 months later. In this new ordinance, the city will ban the use of ALL non-compostable single-use food disposable service ware and Styrofoam coolers. This restriction includes plates, drinkware, cup lids, and all utensils, in addition to the previously banned plastic straws, coffee stirrers, single-use plastic bags, and Styrofoam take-out containers, which were outlawed in ordinances passed in 2016-2019. The ordinance also bans the distribution of single-use plastic beverage bottles in all City facilities and at City-sponsored or City-permitted events. City staff, in consultation with SAC, will provide outreach and education to all City businesses, restaurants, and food service providers. Big thanks to Kaitlyn Elliott-Norgrove and Clem Brown for drafting and supporting this new ordinance. Many of our neighboring cities have already passed similar ordinances.

On the state-wide level, no more plastic bags will be provided at grocery stores as of January 1, 2026. Our state Senator Catherine Blakespear authored the 2024 bill that closed the loophole in the 2016 bill that banned single-use plastic bags. In that older law, thicker plastic bags were allowed, with the logic that they are reusable. However, most of the thicker bags were not reused, and they are also not recyclable. Paper bags will still be allowed, but it is best if you just bring your own reusable bags to the grocery.

Plastic is made from fossil fuels, and plastic production is responsible for 3.5% of all greenhouse gas emissions as well as releasing many toxic substances. Once plastics are made, they remain around for thousands of years, breaking down into smaller and smaller particles. These microplastics are ingested by marine life and enter the food chain. Microplastics have now been found in our brains, blood, and in fetuses and newborns. Plastic pollution from discarded plastics choke our oceans, waterways, and endanger marine life. We must curb plastic production and use to preserve our environment and our health.

Del Mar Climate, a group of local residents who organize symposia twice a year on various climate-related topics, will focus on plastic pollution and health hazards of plastics at their April 2026 symposium. □

Del Mar FOUNDATION

CHANGING U.S. POLICY

by Sudeepto Roy | Vice President & Secretary, Del Mar Foundation

The Del Mar Foundation opened its 2026 DMF Talk Series with a timely and grounded presentation by Richard Kiy, President and CEO of the Institute of the Americas, based at UC San Diego. His talk offered the audience not a polemic, but a historical lens on two centuries of U.S. engagement in the Western Hemisphere, showing how history, geography, and economics continue to shape policy choices today.

Kiy traced U.S. foreign policy from the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 through eras of expansionism, gunboat diplomacy, Cold War interventions, and later trade-led integration. He observed that doctrines often persist long after the conditions that created them. The Good Neighbor Policy, the creation of the Organization of American States, and postwar development efforts illustrated moments when cooperation and diplomacy yielded more durable influence.

Turning to the present, the operation that resulted in Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife being taken into U.S. custody to face federal charges, has sent shockwaves across the region. Kiy highlighted how U.S. attention to Latin America and the Caribbean has waned since the early 2000s, even as China has expanded its footprint. For San Diego, a border region with deep trade, manufacturing, and cultural ties to Mexico, Canada, and the broader Americas, these shifts carry direct local significance. Chinese engagement now spans 5G infrastructure, renewable energy, electric vehicles, ports, rail, logistics, and critical minerals. Kiy noted that as Washington disengages from regional partnerships, China has moved decisively to expand its influence in infrastructure and digital markets.

He also pointed to renewed U.S. focus on Canada and Greenland, driven less by ideology than by structural forces. Climate change has opened Arctic and Northwest Passage shipping routes, intensifying interest in critical minerals and rare earths. Greenland's geographic position has gained new relevance for missile defense and Arctic security, while Canada's control of northern waterways and mineral resources has elevated its strategic importance.

Kiy closed by emphasizing the enduring value of North American integration. The combined GDP of the United States, Canada, and Mexico, approximately $32 trillion, represents one of the world's largest economic blocs. He noted that a shift from partnership toward primacy carries strategic consequences. History shows that U.S. leadership has been strongest when anchored in alliances, open markets, and shared prosperity, principles essential to long-term stability across the hemisphere.

DEL MAR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
www.dmcc.cc (858) 792-7565

by Ashley Simpkins | Executive Director

Will you be DMCC's Valentine?

The Champagne and Chocolate Open House is an annual event for older adults and those who care about them to come to DMCC headquarters, connect with the community, and enjoy some bubbly and chocolate on us. On Fri, February 13, we hope we'll see you at the Del Mar Community Building (225 9th St) between 2 and 4pm. This is a great opportunity to meet DMCC's participants, volunteers, community partners, and staff, and to learn more about what we do. Bring your questions and ideas! Also – bring a new friend or longtime neighbor who might benefit from getting involved with DMCC. We'll have volunteers on hand performing blood pressure screenings as part of San Diego County Love Your Heart week.

Please make sure you register so our Social Good Times committee can ensure they've supplied enough treats for everyone: www.dmcc.cc/champagneandchocolate

Talking Taxes

On Tuesday, February 24 at 10:30am, DMCC Board Member Wayne Otchis, a retired accountant who ran his own local tax preparation service for decades, will appear at Del Mar Town Hall (1050 Camino Del Mar) to make a presentation about what Del Mar seniors need to know as they prepare their 2025 taxes and plan their 2026 finances. He will review changes in tax laws at the federal and state level, and he will be available for questions. You can find information to register for this or any other DMCC activity by visiting www.dmcc.cc/calendar.

Save the Date!

We'll share more details in next month's column, but we're so excited to announce that on Saturday, March 28, DMCC will be hosting the Del Mar Senior Fair in partnership with the Farmers Market. While the Farmers Market is going on downstairs at the Civic Center, we'll be in the upstairs plaza with nonprofit and government information tables, all sharing services and resources that are a benefit to Del Mar seniors. Hope to see you there!

Volunteer of the Month – December

DMCC's Volunteer of the Month for December 2025 was Jim Dutton. Jim is a driver in our Essential Transportation program, as well as a member of the team that creates engaging Page Turners author visit book club meetings. He was nominated by board member Dan Maneval, because "Jim is always willing to help new clients and provide valuable feedback to the staff – we really appreciate his attention to what's most important."

DMCC programs and services depend on our incredible volunteers! To learn more about Jim or opportunities to help our Transportation or programming teams, visit dmcc.cc/volunteerofthemonth.

COUNCIL DEADLOCK ON SANDAG

by Betty Wheeler | Seaview Avenue

On January 6, the City Council deadlocked 2-2 on the appointment of a Councilmember to sit on the SANDAG board as Del Mar's primary representative. Councilmember Terry Gaasterland asserted that "continuity and longevity" and the strong constructive relationships she said she has developed at SANDAG were reasons why she should continue in the role. Mayor Tracy Martinez asserted that Gaasterland promised on the record, when last year's appointment was made, that she would not seek appointment again this year.

Councilmember John Spelich noted that Gaasterland did not get any votes when she ran for a SANDAG leadership position. Councilmember Dan Quirk indicated he would support Gaasterland.

Though traditionally Councilmembers have not voted for themselves for appointment to a position that carries a stipend, Gaasterland made it clear she would vote in this case. With a 2-2 split, the Council did not have majority support for any appointment; no formal vote was taken. City Manager Ashley Jones later reported: "On Thursday, January 8, the City Attorney was formally notified by SANDAG… that the City's current representatives to the SANDAG Board, which includes Councilmember Gaasterland (primary); Mayor Martinez (1st Alternate); and Deputy Mayor Spelich (2nd Alternate), will continue to serve until such time the City Council votes to recall or replace them."

At the Council meeting on January 20, the issue of SANDAG appointments was again on the agenda. Breaking a longstanding Del Mar tradition (but not a legal requirement) not to vote for oneself for a position that carries a stipend, Councilmember Gaasterland made a motion to appoint herself as the primary, Mayor Martinez as the 1st alternate, and Deputy Mayor Spelich as the 2nd alternate. That motion lost by a 2-2 vote, with Councilmember Quirk voting with Gaasterland in favor of the motion (after first attempting to abstain). But the effect of that failed motion was to leave Gaasterland in place as the primary SANDAG representative, and Martinez and Spelich as the alternates. That will be the case until such time as the Council musters a majority vote for SANDAG appointments. ◻

VALLEY FARM MARKET AT LAST

by Betty Wheeler | Seaview Avenue

The January 10 grand opening of Valley Farm Market brought Del Mar's 13-year "grocery drought" to an end with a flourish.

From the seafood and meat counter to the vibrant selection of organic produce, it's evident that what's on offer is expertly curated. The store is not large enough to stock 100 kinds of bread, but what it offers is well-chosen. The salmon is from Faroe Islands; tuna poke is house-cut and marinated, as are the beef and chicken. While some produce is in the now-ubiquitous plastic clamshells, there are many fruits and vegetables you can individually select, and bypass the plastic altogether.

L-R, Deputy Mayor John Spelich, Mayor Tracy Martinez, and Plaza owner Patty Brutten. Photo: Betty Wheeler.

Owner Derek Marso's grandparents launched Valley Farm Market in 1956 in Spring Valley. He's now a third generation owner — and a butcher (and a former KSU defensive end). You get the sense that three generations of "market knowledge" are reflected everywhere in the new Del Mar store. Local sources are strongly represented on the shelves, as are specialty products. The wine selection is good, and there are prepared foods in hot and cold cases if you're not in the mood to cook. The Market's "sister" business, High Marea Coastal Turf + Surf, also opened next door on January 10 and did brisk business on its first day.

For the first time in 13 years, Del Martians don't have to leave town to buy groceries. After Harvest Ranch Market closed in 2012, the Plaza struggled for years with indifferent, absentee owners and other indignities. Current owners Patty and Marc Brutten have worked hard to restore luster and vibrancy to the Plaza, including resident-serving businesses like Camino Books. Patty, in particular, has spent years getting a market back to the Plaza for the benefit of the community. This is our chance to have a market we can walk to, with interesting, high-quality food and friendly workers. To paraphrase Benjamin Franklin, "A market, if you can keep it." Let's make this one succeed. ◻

A DEL MAR LOVE STORY

by Lynn Gaylord | Ocean Front

Amanda Devine grew up here on 10th Street in Del Mar, having gone to Del Mar Hills Elementary, Earl Warren, and then Torrey Pines High School. Gio Morelli, on the other hand, grew up in Victorville and moved here while attending San Diego State University. Upon graduating, he worked at Sbicca's on 15th Street here in Del Mar. And that is where the two would meet.

Gio was the bartender and Amanda was a managing partner with the owner, Dan Sbicca. Gio and Amanda's love produced the cutest, most darling daughter in 2022, and they named her Capri.

Gio, Amanda, and Capri. Photo: Lynn Gaylord

When Dan Sbicca decided to sell the restaurant in 2024, it just so happened that Greg and Jen Glassman were looking to retire and find a local interested party who to take over Zel's restaurant. From that point on, it was all meant to be as Gio and Amanda loved Del Mar and wanted to work nowhere else. They took over the keys in mid-February 2025, renamed the restaurant Coral, and opened two months later in April. With Gio making 95% of any needed and minor improvements, they were more than excited to begin serving their beloved Del Mar.

When asked why they picked the name Coral for the restaurant, they responded: "As coral is the sum of many different parts of the ocean coming together to form a new entity, we see the restaurant as taking pieces of our experiences, both personal and professional, to create a new space. And hence the name Coral."

As Amanda and Gio have said many times: "We love going to work every day and seeing everyone in town. There is no other place on earth like Del Mar. It is a safe and clean place, and residents take pride in how everything looks. We love Del Mar!" ◻

UNSUNG HEROES DESERVE PRAISE

by Neelum Arya | Zuni Drive

On December 5, 2025, from approximately 11:30 a.m. until 8 p.m., Del Mar Heights Road and lanes on Interstate 5 were closed because a mentally unstable man threatened to jump from the overpass. Community residents and school leaders at Del Mar Hills and Heights were the unsung heroes that day and they deserve praise for keeping our children safe during a chaotic situation.

The incident began shortly after 11:30 a.m. when a motorist spotted a man on the Del Mar Heights bridge and called 911. Police were sent to try to retrieve the man, and specially trained negotiators were also summoned to the scene. The public received little-to-no communication about the closures from the various law enforcement agencies involved, compounding the initial gridlock and bringing much of San Diego County to a standstill. According to media reports, San Diego police acknowledged the trouble the incident caused for motorists but said if a similar situation were to reoccur, they'd respond the same way. Three state senators, four assemblymembers, and one San Diego city councilman sent a letter to state transportation and law enforcement officials requesting answers to questions and pushing for a coordinated response plan for freeway closures in the future. As lawmakers and agency officials review and revisit these policies, including the North Coastal Sheriff's Station, which services Del Mar, more coordination with our local schools is needed to address concerns specific to children.

That day, a police helicopter circled above Del Mar Hills Academy while children were outside. Lacking any notification by law enforcement, Del Mar Hills Academy Principal Andrea Sleet brought the children indoors to eat lunch until school staff could confirm that the surrounding area was safe. Community members then began reporting traffic concerns, and the schools sent parents emails around 1:50pm letting them know about the traffic and reassuring parents they would remain with their children. Community residents reported erratic driving at the intersection of Mango Drive and Del Mar Heights Road and believed children would have difficulty crossing the intersection. While police presence was requested at the Mango/Heights intersection, none arrived. Going above and beyond their normal school duties, Hills Principal Andrea Sleet with plant manager Jose Casas, as well as Heights Principal Kate Daniel with assistant Mohsani Hoveyda, donned safety vests and provided crossing assistance at the Mango/Heights intersection for nearly an hour that afternoon to help children safely walk home. Many children remain at school for aftercare, so school leaders were quick thinking and implemented commonsense solutions to ensure all remaining children got home safely. The schools adjusted their ordinary emergency-release protocols and made personal calls to parents to help facilitate the transportation of children home. ◻

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THANK YOU DEL MAR

Each Fall, the Del Mar Community Alliance (DMCA) asks neighbors and friends to make donations that will allow us to continue publication and distribution of the Sandpiper – Del Mar's only community journal and an important source of information. With elections coming up in 2026, the Sandpiper will be more important than ever before. In Fall 2025, the DMCA campaign was inspired by a generous $9,000 matching gift offer from Jeff Barnouw. The community responded generously, and with the leadership of longtime supporter Rosanne Rennie Holliday and the DMCA Board volunteers, DMCA received 61 donations totaling $40,915. These funds will allow the Sandpiper to continue bringing Del Mar the accurate, timely, lively community news that helps make our town such a special and desirable place to live.

Thank you, Jeff, and thank you to all our donors!

Donors to the Fall DMCA Campaign: Jeff Barnouw, remembering Dagmar Barnouw | Lynn & Charlie Gaylord | Rosanne Rennie Holliday | Betty Wheeler & Dwight Worden | Mary & Jeff Friestedt | Carol Mason | Bud & Mary Ann Emerson | Jim Crouch & Elizabeth Bell | Karl Hostetler & Greet Hostetler | Arlene & Ronald Prater | Sandra & Bram Dijkstra | Nancy Fisher & Mike Salt | Barbara & John Healy | William Holliday | Carol Kerridge | Beth Levine | Ann Feeney & Don Mosier | Arthur Olson & Shirley King | Rose Ann Sharp | Glenn & Randee Warren | Nancy & John Weare | Fred Duttweiler | Catherine Atcheson | Anne Farrell | Lisa & David Knight | Alan & Jennifer Lonbom | Jodyne Roseman | Sheila & Michael Sharpe | Joe Calabro & Joanne Gervase | Sheila Fallon Friedlander & Martin Friedlander | Diane J. Gherson | Harlan & Regina Horner | Harvey & Beth Oringher | Sherryl Parks | Barbara Marmor | Barbara Aufiero & Henry Wong | Steven Reich | Karen Searey | Patricia & Dr. Robert Bone | Joan & Craig Brown | Linda & Brett Castile | Michael Criqui & Nan Criqui | Bonnie & Paul Grossman | Peter Jensen | Terance Kopanski & Carol Steblay | Chana Mannen | Margaret & Brian Maple | Alice McNally | Philip & Karen Posner | Greg Seremetis | Chic & Joe Sullivan | Harriet Wadia | Jeanne Waite | Susan & Allan Wegner | Kevin Berry | Teresa Campbell | Donald & Jeanette Cleveland | Patricia Nelson | Barbara Stegman | Rev. Sarah Motley Fischer

OCEAN ART

by Julie Maxey-Allison | 10th Street

A new art gallery/studio has opened in town: the Sarah O'Connor Art Gallery at the Lemon Tree complex overlooking Del Mar's Civic Center. Sarah works in her studio and in plein aire on canvas, Styrofoam, wood—and repurposed surfboards using various mediums—oil, acrylic, and resin. A surfer and scuba diver, Sarah is in the ocean waters, above and below, where she absorbs and interprets the images she sees as well as our local land sites into her creative visions. Her formal training was at the University of Notre Dame, and she has taught art at many San Diego schools, including Sage Canyon, Ocean Air, and Canyon Crest Academy. Visit the gallery Monday, Tuesday, and Saturday, 11-4:00 PM, and at Sarah's sunset "golden hour" open gallery times, 3:45-5:00 PM on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month. For additional open hours, check the website or call for an appointment. 1049 Camino Del Mar, Ste E, 858-774-1966. SarahOConnorArt.com. □

Sarah O'Connor in her gallery. Photo: Julie Maxey-Allison