

# Local

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## NONPROFIT SEEKS HELP GIVING OUT ITS GARDENS' PRODUCE TO THE NEEDY

BY LAURYN SCHROEDER

### SAN DIEGO

A San Diego nonprofit that operates two urban gardens announced Wednesday it plans to donate fresh vegetables and fruit to low-income families.

The urban gardens — located in Encanto and City Heights — are operated by the nonprofit Second Chance.

Typically the gardens are used as part of a youth gardening program that helps divert young people away from the criminal justice system. According to a Second Chance news release, the youth program has been suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To ensure the gardens' produce does not go to waste, Second Chance is seeking community support to help distribute fresh food and vegetables to residents in need.

"We are working diligently to provide access to safe produce while protecting our youth, staff and neighbors from the spread of COVID-19," said Kristin Kvernland, a Second Chance program manager.

"We are deeply appreciative of our supporters who have helped the Youth Garden be successful over the past 11 years. We are hopeful that the community will help again as we strive to assist our neighbors in need."

In an email, Kvernland said the Second Chance gardening program provides work-readiness training for low-income, credit-deficient teens who are considered at risk of becoming involved with — or have already entered — the criminal justice system.

Teens learn the basics of gardening, cooking and nutrition while tending to the two urban farms. Boxes of produce are sold and delivered weekly for \$50, and the revenue generated from the sales is reinvested into the program.

Without the program, Second Chance, like many nonprofits in San Diego, faces a decline in revenue, and is seeking assistance from donors and volunteers.

"It will cost \$25,000 to operate this program for the next two months without the usual sales of produce," Kvernland said. "We are seeking community support for outright donations or the purchase of produce boxes that can be donated to those who don't have access to fresh produce."

Donations to Second Chance can be made at [www.secondchanceprogram.org/give](http://www.secondchanceprogram.org/give).

lauryn.schroeder@sduniontribune.com

**MICHAEL SMOLENS** can be found in the A section

## MIGRANTS IN LIMBO AMID SHUTDOWN

Some worry conditions unsafe in immigration detention centers

BY KATE MORRISSEY

Migrants waiting south of the border for their chance at asylum in the United States are facing new levels of uncertainty as court hearings get rescheduled and border officials stop processing new cases as part of the federal government's response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Executive Office for Immigration Review, a Department of Justice agency responsible for immigration courts, announced earli-

er this week that all hearings for asylum seekers in the "Remain in Mexico" program would be postponed until after April 22. The move came after San Diego judges began canceling hearings, defying the agency's instructions to keep hearing cases under the program, officially known as Migrant Protection Protocols.

Ports of entry have stopped accepting new asylum seekers altogether, and anyone caught crossing illegally will be either immediately returned to Mexico or deported, depending on the migrant's nationality. Mexico has agreed to take in Central American migrants apprehended by U.S. Border Patrol, but not others.

As of Wednesday afternoon, Ti-

juana officials had received 88 people who had been caught by Border Patrol and turned back since the new policy went into effect late Friday, according to Carlos González Gutiérrez, the consul general for Mexico in San Diego. All but five of those people were Mexican, he said in a webinar on Thursday.

At the same time, the U.S.-Mexico border has closed to "nonessential travel" in an effort to contain the spread of the coronavirus. U.S. citizens, legal permanent residents, as well as cargo and workers in key industries can still cross north.

"This is an unprecedented response to an unprecedented situation," said Pete Flores, director of field operations for Customs and Border Protection's San Diego field

office, in a press call on Monday.

Meanwhile, controversy continues to surround the ongoing operation of immigration courts around the country.

Migrant advocates, the immigration judges union, and attorneys — both those who represent immigrants and the union for those who represent the federal government — have pushed for immigration courts to close completely and allow time-sensitive matters, such as bond hearings for detainees, to happen over teleconference.

"Close all the immigration courts," the National Association for Immigration Judges said over Twitter on Wednesday. "EOIR, you are endangering all of our lives."

SEE MIGRANTS • B3



HAYNE PALMOUR IV U-T

## THE KOOK CONTAGION

Rubber gloves, a mask and depictions of the coronavirus were attached to the Cardiff Kook statue on Wednesday.

## COUNCIL VACANCY IN ESCONDIDO WILL BE FILLED BY APPOINTMENT

Applicant chosen for District 2 seat will serve until special election in November

BY J. HARRY JONES

### ESCONDIDO

The Escondido City Council will appoint a replacement to fill the District 2 seat vacated earlier this month when Councilman John Masson died after a lengthy illness.

The new council member will serve only until the November election, at which point a special election will decide who should fill out the remaining two years of Masson's term.

Applications will soon be accepted for the seat and must be filled in and returned by April 15. Officials urged people to go to the

city's website for instructions. To qualify, applicants must live in District 2, which encompasses much of the northern part of the city, and be a registered voter in Escondido.

The City Council decided to appoint during a strange, virtual meeting Wednesday night with most of the members and city staff teleconferencing in from their offices for social-distancing reasons.

Each council applicant will be briefly interviewed by the council during a special meeting scheduled for April 22. The council could make a decision at that time or wait until its May 6 meeting. This will be the first time a council va-

cancy has occurred in the city since district-specific elections began in 2014.

Previous openings attracted dozens of applicants; however, that was for seats that had been voted on citywide. Limiting applications to those who live only in District 2 will likely reduce that number significantly.

In other action Wednesday, a disagreement led to a 3-1 vote over the purchase of catfish to stock Lake Wohlford and Dixon Lake for the next couple of years.

The council was asked to authorize a purchasing contract with a company called Imperial

SEE ESCONDIDO • B3

## OCEANSIDE PUTS NORTH RIVER FARMS REFERENDUM ON BALLOT

Voters to decide fate of 585-home project in Morro Hills on Nov. 3

BY PHIL DIEHL

Oceanside voters on Nov. 3 will decide the fate of North River Farms, a 585-home, agriculture-themed, mixed-use development proposed for the city's rural Morro Hills region.

The City Council decided Wednesday to place the measure on the ballot after a hard-fought effort by residents to collect enough signatures for a referendum on the controversial project.

The referendum also gave the council the option of overturning its approval of the project, but when Councilwoman Esther Sanchez asked whether anyone else would support that, she got no response. Mayor Peter Weiss later in the meeting said that would have been "prudent" to rescind the approval, but he declined a request from Sanchez to discuss it.

Sanchez said she hopes the North River Farms campaign will avoid the "misinformation that went out" previously on the project. The developer, Integral Communities, widely pitched the project as a way to preserve agriculture, while opponents said it would do the opposite.

Also, Sanchez said, the ballot measure should be written clearly so people will know whether they are voting for or against construc-

SEE OCEANSIDE • B4

## CLASSICAL GUITARIST STRANDED IN LA JOLLA SEES OPPORTUNITIES

Villegas will perform three livestream concerts this weekend

BY GEORGE VARGA

Because of the coronavirus, classical guitar star Pablo Sainz Villegas is stranded in San Diego — or, more specifically, La Jolla. That puts him almost 6,000 miles away from his wife, Valeria, at their home in Madrid, which — like all of Spain — is now under a nationwide lockdown.

His March concert tour of Germany has been canceled, along with his April tour of Japan. The May recording of his new album in Los Angeles is on hold. So is pretty much everything else on his

schedule, although he is currently brainstorming ideas to take his duties as the La Jolla Music Society's first education ambassador online.

Yet, while Villegas misses his wife, his parents — who live in the northern Spanish province of La Rioja — and the performances around the world that fuel his career, he also sees an unexpected opportunity the pandemic has provided.

"It is more challenging being away from my family. But it is in these moments of solitude where I can also find answers," Villegas, 42, said in a Wednesday phone interview.

"And it is a good time for reflection for all of us, not just me, or my family and my wife. For everyone, it is our choice whether to be dis-



HAYNE PALMOUR IV U-T

Musician Pablo Sainz Villegas holds his guitar while in the home of a La Jolla Music Society supporter in La Jolla.

tracted by spending 10 hours a day in front of the TV, or to also spend time with yourself reflecting on everything going on, and how our

condition now has happened at other times in history and united us.

SEE VILLEGAS • B3



## LOCAL REPORTS

## CRIME, FIRE &amp; PUBLIC SAFETY

## Two drivers seriously injured in wrong-way crash

## LAMESA

Two drivers suffered life-threatening injuries late Wednesday night when a wrong-way driver, suspected of DUI, caused a head-on crash on Interstate 8 in La Mesa, a California Highway Patrol officer said.

Drivers began calling 911 shortly before midnight, reporting a driver in an SUV traveling west on eastbound I-8 near the El Cajon-La Mesa city limits. A short time later, witnesses reported a collision just east of 70th Street, said CHP Officer Travis Garrow.

Investigators believe a 28-year-old man from San Diego was driving a gray Ford Expedition the wrong way on the freeway when he crashed head-on with a 45-year-old man from San Diego driving a red BMW 650I.

Garrow said the driver of the Ford was suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

The collision blocked all eastbound lanes of Interstate 8, Garrow said. Both drivers suffered major injuries and were taken to Sharp Memorial Hospital.

The driver of the BMW was believed to have been wearing his seat belt at the time of the collision. It was not known whether the driver of the Ford was wearing his, Garrow said.

karen.kucher@suniontribune.com

## Oceanside shooting victim seen in street is flown to hospital

## OCEANSIDE

A shooting victim was flown to a hospital early Thursday afternoon after a delivery driver spotted him bleeding on an Oceanside street, a police official said.

About 12:20 p.m., a package delivery driver spotted a man bleeding on Calle Los Santos, in the city's Libby Lake neighborhood, and stopped to help, Lt. Ignacio Lopez said.

The driver realized the man had been shot and called 911.

Police arrived, but the victim was uncooperative, Lopez said. Medics tended to the man, who was then flown to a hospital.

Details of the shooting were elusive. Lopez said police were still trying to figure out where the shooting occurred.

teri.figueroa@suniontribune.com

## Fire at shopping center quickly knocked down

## CARLSBAD

Firefighters quickly knocked down a fire that started in a space undergoing renovations in the Carlsbad Village Faire shopping center Wednesday night, fire officials said.

The fire was reported shortly before 8 p.m. at the shopping center on Carlsbad Village Drive and may have started in a unit undergoing construction work, said Carlsbad Fire Battalion Chief Ben Rosenthal.

A second alarm was called to summon additional firefighters to ensure the fire didn't spread. A third alarm was called by mistake and immediately canceled, Rosenthal said.

"There was quite a bit of smoke that made it to other units as well," he said. He said he did not have a damage estimate or cause of the fire.

He said there was mostly smoke damage to units adjacent to or above the

unit where the fire broke out. "Sprinklers kept it in check," Rosenthal said.

Firefighters from Carlsbad, Oceanside, Vista and Encinitas quickly extinguished the blaze. Crews remained on the scene until about 11 p.m., he said.

karen.kucher@suniontribune.com

## State prisons posting virus testing data online

The number of state prison inmates who have been tested for COVID-19, as well as how many of them have tested positive, are now being posted online, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation announced Thursday.

The tracker showed that three inmates at Richard J. Donavan Correctional Facility have been tested for the virus. None had been reported positive as of Thursday, according to the state's numbers. The Otay Mesa facility is the only state prison in San Diego County.

The "Patient Testing Tracker" will also provide data as to how many inmates have tested negative, how many have recovered, and how many have died. The data is detailed by the name of the prison facility.

Statewide, 167 state prison inmates have been tested for the novel coronavirus. One has tested positive. In addition, 11 corrections department staffers have tested positive, at a total of seven facilities. None are in San Diego.

More information about what the state prisons are doing to prevent spread of the virus can be found at [cdcr.ca.gov/covid19](https://cdcr.ca.gov/covid19).

teri.figueroa@suniontribune.com

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

## San Diego dodged most of 1889-90 flu pandemic

The influenza pandemic of 1889-1890, also known as Russian Flu, was first reported in Uzbekistan in spring of 1889 and took several months to spread throughout a world connected by steamships and railroads. By January 1890, the California State Board of Health noted: "Influenza, epidemic catarrh, or la grippe, prevailed extensively throughout the state from San Diego to Siskiyou."

About a million people died worldwide. San Diego — perhaps because of its relative isolation at the time — suffered few fatalities during the pandemic. In an interview with a Union reporter, one local doctor credited San Diego's climate for the positive outcomes and warned against false remedies.

From The San Diego Union, Thursday, February 6, 1890:

## A DISCOURSE ON LA GRIPPE.

## SOME USEFUL SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE DREAD DISEASE.

## An Interview With the President of the Board of Health on the subject of the influenza - remedies and treatment.

Dr. P.C. Remondino, President of the Board of Health, was interviewed by a Union reporter, as to the character and condition of the general epidemic in San Diego. The doctor stated that in Southern California, the disease was quite prevalent and had been for some weeks, but that it had not assumed the dangerous characteristics that distinguished it elsewhere. In New York for the week ending January 18th there were eighty-nine deaths from influenza. In Brooklyn for the week ending January 11th there were some 250 deaths due to the epidemic. Reports from Boston, Baltimore and all eastern cities — as well as the cities of the Western valleys — give a great mortality from the same cause.

In the northern and middle portions of California the death rate from catarrhal diseases has been something unprecedented.

"As I predicted," continued the doctor, "the epidemic has not been accompanied with any fatality in San Diego, our great immunity from all pulmonary and catarrhal diseases at all times being the basis of my reasoning. I don't think that a cholera epidemic would ever do us any damage for a like reason, there being here an absolute immunity from any ac-



tive intestinal or gastric disease of any kind.

"Aside from its great equableness, there is a something in our air that is inimical to the existence of any pulmonary or intestinal disease. I think that fully one-half of our population have fallen victims to attacks from the epidemic, however, with not a single death — considering that our population now numbers some 33,000 it is a remarkable showing.

HISTORICAL PHOTOS AND ARTICLES FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE ARCHIVES ARE COMPILED BY MERRIE MONTEAGUDO. SEARCH THE U-T HISTORIC ARCHIVES AT [NEWSLIBRARY.COM/SITES/SDUB](https://newslibrary.com/sites/sdub)

## ARTS

## Students start online art-dealing company

## CARMEL VALLEY

To help promote the work of local student artists, a group of students at Canyon Crest Academy launched an online business where they can sell original artwork made by their classmates.

"We got the idea from seeing how many talented artists there were at our school who didn't have a place to share their art," said Sarah Maloney, 16, a junior at Canyon Crest Academy who lives in Carmel Valley.

The online business, which she created with four classmates, is part of a school project. They began by promoting their idea and reaching out to classmates who might be interested in taking part. They've spent about \$50 in startup costs for expenses such as getting their website up and running, she said. The site, [shopstartistry.com](https://shopstartistry.com), which is under construction, has a page where all the artwork they sell will be on display, gaining exposure for the artists and potential profits.

The group of students behind Startistry have been speaking with about 30 other Canyon Crest Academy students who make art to see if they want to list their pieces on the new website, Sarah said. The group began circulating flyers encouraging any interested students to email photos of their artwork, along with a description that includes the work's title, genre and meaning. Artists also have to submit their name, age, contact information, name of the artwork, estimated price, and its size, dimensions and weight in ounces.

After submitting a work of art to Startistry, and after it's posted to the company's website, the artist receives 80 percent of the sale price if it is purchased.

"We really want to give them an outlet," said Sarah, adding that she likes making art sometimes, but she's mostly interested in operating the business and financial side.

She also said the company could eventually grow to include student artists from other San Diego-area schools who are also looking for ways to share their work and grow their audiences.

For more information, visit [shopstartistry.com](https://shopstartistry.com) or the company's Instagram account, @shopstartistry.

U-T Community Press

## EDUCATION

## Zoo launches online education program

## SAN DIEGO

San Diego Zoo Global announced the launch of an education program Thursday to keep parents, teachers and zoo fans connected to their favorite animals through free online content, entertainment and educational tools.

The #WereHereTogether program allows visitors to the site to check in on animals and receive daily updates from livestreaming wildlife cameras as coronavirus prevents in-person visits.

"During these uncertain times, our thoughts are with our community around the world who have always shown us tremendous love and support as we carry out our mission of saving the world's species," said Paul A. Baribault, president and CEO of San Diego Zoo Global. "With new challenges come new opportunities, and now more than ever, we want to share the joy of our stories direct from the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Park with fans everywhere."

The livestreaming cams allow viewers to witness wildlife explore, eat, swing and play throughout their day. The Butterfly Jungle Wildlife Cam will launch March 30 alongside existing channels.

In a single week, the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Park have seen a 1,000 percent increase on average in online webcam viewership, with the Polar Bear Cam and Penguin Cam leading with the most visits.

In addition to the live cams, #WereHereTogether provides supplemental curriculum on wildlife, with content for students K-12, animal care professionals, educators, parents and fans.

Programs include San Diego Zoo Kids, for K-5 students, in which younger kids can jump into the world of wildlife with video stories, hands-on activities and games, and links to live wildlife cams and information about how to help save species.

For middle and high school students, programs dig into conservation, and posts that cover subjects such as the happenings inside the pathology lab of Disease Investigations.

Go to [sandiegozoo.org](https://sandiegozoo.org) for more information.

City News Service

## HEALTH

## MS drug invented by Scripps gains FDA OK

A multiple sclerosis drug invented at Scripps Research in La Jolla has received approval from the Food and Drug Administration, but its roll out will be delayed by the coronavirus crisis, which is straining pharmaceutical companies worldwide.

The drug Zapospa is being brought to market by Bristol Myers Squibb, which developed the compound to treat adults with relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis, or MS for short.

MS, which afflicts 2.3 million people worldwide, is a chronic illness involving the central nervous system, says Healthline.com. The immune system attacks myelin, which is the protective layer around nerve fibers. Most people with MS suffer from fatigue. And many have trouble walking, which can be due to a variety of issues ranging from muscle spasms to poor balance.

In 2008, Scripps Research scientists Hugh Rosen and Ed Robertssynthesized the compound that's at the heart of the new drug. The breakthrough came during the Great Recession, when investment in drug discovery slumped. But the drug later made it through clinical trials, leading to FDA approval.

"This is very heart-warming," Rosen said on Thursday. "It's a good compound that will help a lot of patients."

The pathway to FDA approval was a long and twisty one. As Scripps officials noted, the institute licensed the drug — whose scientific name is ozanimod — to Receptos, a startup company. Receptos was bought by Celgene six years later. Then Celgene was bought by Bristol Myers in 2019.

Earlier in his career, Rosen played a role in developing Invanz, an antibiotic that fights bacteria, and Cancidas, which treats fungal infections.

Scripps Research has long been a powerhouse in drug development, playing a major role in medicines such as Surfaxin, which treats respiratory distress in preterm infants, and Tafamidis, which treats heart disease.

The institute is currently seeking survivors of the COVID-19 virus who are willing to donate some of their blood, which will be screened for antibodies that could be useful in fighting the virus. It is partnering on the project with UCSD.

gary.robbins@suniontribune.com

## AID DURING THE PANDEMIC

## GENERAL HELP/ INFORMATION

**COVID-19:** [covid19.ca.gov](https://covid19.ca.gov) is the state's website for information. In San Diego County, visit [coronavirus-sd.com](https://coronavirus-sd.com).

**Dial 2-1-1:** If you need help finding community or disaster services, dial 2-1-1. 2-1-1 San Diego is a resource and information hub that connects people with community, health and disaster services.

**Mental health:** San Diego County's Health and Human Services Agency offers these coping tips to help people remain calm and centered:

- Maintain meal, exercise and bedtime routines.
- Connect with others safely using technology.
- Stay informed, but avoid too much news.
- Share your concerns with friends and family.

**Access and Crisis Line:** (888) 724-7240. Help is available to you, 24/7, in more than 150 languages.

## FOOD

**The San Diego Food Bank** is holding a food distribution with the San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council at 9 a.m. Saturday at SDCU Stadium, 9449 Friars Road,

San Diego, until all the food is gone. You must be in a car to receive food. No walkups allowed. For more food distribution sites, visit [uniones.org/covid19](https://uniones.org/covid19).

**The Muslim Leadership Council of San Diego** ([mlcsd.org](https://mlcsd.org)), an umbrella organization representing over 25 Muslim organizations based in San Diego County, offers a free meal program for San Diegans affected by the COVID-19 crisis. The program will run from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. through March 31 and will include free delivery for health care workers, seniors and those without transportation. Sign up at [tinyurl.com/ulbr2pa](https://tinyurl.com/ulbr2pa). To volunteer or to sponsor meals, email [info@mlcsd.org](mailto:info@mlcsd.org).

**Serving Seniors:** Free meals from the nonprofit Serving Seniors are available to anyone 60 and older. If you are a senior in need, or know of one, you can sign up to receive meals by calling (619) 235-6572 and selecting Option One, or reaching out via email at [meals@serving-seniors.org](mailto:meals@serving-seniors.org). Recipients have the option of donating for meals, but nobody is turned away if they don't have the means to do so.

laura.groch@suniontribune.com

## HOW TO HELP

## DONATE/VOLUNTEER

**The Fallbrook Food Pantry** needs donations of nonperishable foods and toiletries. Please bring them to 140 N. Brandon Road from 8:30 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday. Call (760) 728-7608. Also, the Fallbrook Regional Health District is requesting donations of fresh produce at 138 S. Brandon Road from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Wednesday. Please call ahead to make sure someone is there: (760) 731-9187.

**The San Diego Food Bank** is requesting volunteers and monetary donations at [sandiegofoodbank.org](https://sandiegofoodbank.org). It is also still accepting donations through the Food Rescue Program from restaurants, hotels and food service companies. To donate unused food items, please deliver the food to these warehouses from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 3 p.m. weekdays: San Diego Food Bank/Miramar, 9850 Distribution Ave., San Diego, or North County Food Bank/Vista, 1445 Engineer Street, Suite 110, Vista. If you need to deliver outside those hours or have questions, email Kimberly Castillo, food procurement supervisor, at [kcastillo@sandiegofoodbank.org](mailto:kcastillo@sandiegofoodbank.org).

## The San Diego Rescue Mis-

sion is in urgent need of cleaning supplies and preventative products to help with the housing of hundreds of long-term students. Items needed: hand soap, hand sanitizer (at least 60 percent alcohol), tissues, trash bags and baskets, disposable face masks, disposable gowns, thermometers and disposable gloves. Drop off items any time at 120 Elm St., San Diego. For information, email [chernandez@sdrescue.org](mailto:chernandez@sdrescue.org). The Rescue Mission is also seeking money donations for the homeless. Donate online at [sdrescue.org/donate](https://sdrescue.org/donate).

**San Diego COVID-19 Community Response Fund:** A coalition of philanthropy, government and business partners has created this fund through the San Diego Foundation to help community-based organizations. Grant funding will focus on food security, rental and utility assistance, and income replacement or gap funding. The fund expects to move an initial round of grants in the next few weeks. All donations will go to organizations helping San Diegans affected by the health crisis. Call (619) 235-2300; email [info@sd-foundation.org](mailto:info@sd-foundation.org).

laura.groch@suniontribune.com