

LA JOLLA VILLAGE NEWS

August 14, 2026

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Posh fashion in La Jolla



Fashion Week San Diego held its annual 'Posh' runway show and 'The Shot' event last Friday centered around La Jolla Village retailers along with Fashion Week designers, partnered with La Jolla Merchants Association and Thread & Seed. Above, Yuliana Petelko models a dress from Cosette Von Lee. (Photo by James Giovanni/Courtesy of FWSD)

COVER STORY

Community rallies to help renovate Fire Station 16

The station on Mount Soledad is undergoing its first major renovation since opening in 1982, replacing cramped, makeshift sleeping quarters with insulated private rooms designed to give firefighters the uninterrupted rest they need between emergency calls. Led by the nonprofit San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation, the Rotary Club of La Jolla and La Jolla Sunrise Rotary Club, the effort has drawn support from architects, contractors, businesses, city staff and hundreds of community donors. The nearly \$150,000 project, now in its final stages, culminates years of discussion and planning. **PAGE 4**

PUBLIC SAFETY

'Lifeguard Angel' helps out first responders

La Jolla resident Linda Nolan Polly recently gave La Jolla lifeguards a beach rescue Utility Task Vehicle and a personal watercraft WaveRunner — equipment she says is priceless for the lives it will save. She's also made a substantial gift to the San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation. **PAGE 6**



PUBLIC RIGHTS

La Jolla planners support public access to beach, walking trail

Two proposals to protect public access to the Coast Walk Trail and southern La Jolla Shores were reviewed by the La Jolla Community Planning Association, which unanimously approved both plans during a its meeting. **PAGE 5**

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LA JOLLA SHORES:

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1 BD | 1 BA | 848 SF | \$564,000

Wheel cramping tickets on the rise on La Jolla Shores Drive

By Dorian Hargrove
TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

SAN DIEGO – Beachgoers and others who park along La Jolla Shores Drive near Scripps Institute of Oceanography and the accompanying beach are on notice to cramp their wheels toward or away from the curb to prevent getting a ticket. Drivers on La Jolla Shores Drive continue to receive hundreds of citations each year for failing to curb their wheels on the sloped street. San Diego’s Municipal Code requires drivers who park on streets with grades of 3% or more to turn their wheels toward or away from the curb, depending on whether the vehicle is pointed downhill or uphill. In recent years, parking enforcement officers throughout San Diego have been cracking down on drivers who fail to curb their wheels. Last year, parking officers issued 19,086 wheel-cramping citations, the highest

number of parking violations in at least five years, resulting in \$1,565,571 in fines. Among the most ticketed spots in San Diego remains La Jolla Shores Drive. Since the beginning of the year through August 1, San Diego parking enforcement officers issued 522 parking tickets to drivers who failed to curb their wheels. That is second only to Golfcrest Drive, at the base of Cowles Mountain. Since 2022, La Jolla Shores Drive has ranked among the city's top locations for wheel-curbing citations. Parking enforcement officers issued 494 citations there in 2022, the most of any street in San Diego. Citations climbed steadily after 2022, rising from 533 in 2023 to 719 in 2024 before leveling off at 722 in 2025. Times of San Diego contacted the San Diego Police Department to ask why wheel-cramping citations have risen in the past five years. San Diego Police Lt. Cesar Jimenez says it has more to do with staffing



Vehicles cramping wheels on a road.
(Photo by Dorian Hargrove)

than anything else, and in no way is it a response to the city’s tenuous finances. “While we cannot know the exact cause of an increase in citations, we can say there was an increase in the number of parking enforcement officers in recent years. In 2024, there were 55 parking enforcement officers; currently, we have 74,” Lt. Jimenez wrote in an email to Times of San Diego. “San Diego Police Department officers and parking enforcement officers have not been directed to increase enforcement to increase revenue nor to hit any type of enforcement quotas, which are illegal,” added Jimenez.

Transit fare increase

A San Diego Association of Governments committee recently approved the first significant transit fare increase since 2009. SANDAG’s Transportation Committee approved the fare increase to help keep transit service levels as high as possible as the agencies face budget challenges in the coming years. The increases will be implemented over two years, with the first taking effect Oct. 1, followed by that same date in 2027. This fall, monthly MTS and NCTD passes will increase from \$72 to \$85 for adults, and from \$23 to \$28 for senior, disabled, and Medicare recipient riders. The approved fare changes will not affect the Youth Opportunity Pass, which allows anyone 18 and under to ride transit for free with a Youth PRONTO app account or card. For the second increase in fall 2027, monthly MTS and NCTD passes will increase to \$95 for adults and \$30 for SDM riders. MTS and NCTD are also advancing the new PRONTO LIFE (Low-Income Fare Eligible) Program, scheduled to begin Oct. 1. That program is intended to freeze current adult regional fares for eligible riders enrolled in CalFresh, Medi-Cal and CalWORKs.

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Community rallies to help renovate Fire Station 16 on Mount Soledad

By Karen Pearlman

SPECIAL FOR TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

LA JOLLA – After more than four decades, firefighters at San Diego Fire Station 16 are finally getting something most people take for granted: a quiet, private place to sleep.

The station on Mount Soledad is undergoing its first major renovation since opening in 1982, replacing cramped, makeshift sleeping quarters with insulated private rooms designed to give firefighters the uninterrupted rest they need between emergency calls.

The nearly \$150,000 project, now in its final stages, culminates years of discussion and planning.

Led by the nonprofit San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation, the Rotary Club of La Jolla and La Jolla Sunrise Rotary Club, the effort has drawn support from architects, contractors, businesses, city staff and hundreds of community donors.

“This has been in the works since before the pandemic, so it’s been a long journey to get here,” said Wendy Moore, executive director of the San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation. “But once we finally got everything lined up and in place, it happened surprisingly smoothly.”

FIREFIGHTERS’ HEALTH

The renovation replaces the station’s aging open-concept dormitory, where firefighters slept behind makeshift partitions and accordion doors that were short in length.

“The firefighters’ bedroom doors were corrugated plastic that latched and squeaked,” said Cindy Goodman, president of the Rotary Club of La Jolla. “They didn’t even go to the ceiling, so every sound, every smell, every light — it all went from room to room. There was no privacy.”

The remodeled dorms include insulated walls, full-height doors, new windows, flooring, lockers, cabinets, desks, chairs, mattresses, bedding, televisions, individual lighting, white-noise machines and additional storage. The station is also sporting a new exterior and fresh interior paint.

Moore said the improvements are about much more than face value and a higher level of comfort for the firefighters.

“Sleep deprivation is so closely linked to mental health and cardiac issues, and



New windows that will provide firefighters views from nearly the top of Mt. Soledad at Fire Station 16.

they’re working these strange hours,” Moore said. “Anything we can do to help them rest and restore themselves is important.”

Architect Parker Davenport, who has donated his time to lead the project, said the sleeping quarters are the team’s top priority.

“What’s really important is their ability to get a good night’s sleep so they can respond efficiently to calls,” Davenport said.

Davenport, a member of La Jolla Sunrise Rotary and a project manager with Arista Architects, was recruited by retired architect and fellow Rotarian Tripp Bennett, who helped lead the successful remodel of Fire Station 13 in 2007.

“Being in the architecture profession, I had the tools to create a floor plan and work through the cost estimates,” Davenport said. “It was a good opportunity to use those skills through Rotary to give back.”

He said one of the most rewarding moments has been watching firefighters see their new rooms take shape.

“It’s been really awesome to see the firefighters walk into their rooms after they were framed,” Davenport said. “Seeing their reactions has been pretty gratifying.”

Goodman said the renovation reflects what can happen when community organizations, businesses, and residents work together.

Two grants — \$5,200 from the City of San Diego’s Community Projects, Programs and Services program, and \$11,000 from Rotary District 5340 — helped fund the project, along with donations from local businesses and residents. One of the most memorable gifts came from students at The



Architect and Rotarian Parker Davenport and workers at Fire Station 16. (Photos by Karen Pearlman/Special for Times of San Diego)

Evans School, who raised more than \$8,000 through their annual gratitude project.

The renovation has also benefited from donated materials and services provided by Arista Architects, Tucker Sadler Architects, Cultura, Sherwin-Williams, JB Pacific, Foundation Building Materials, Classic Hardwood Floors, Geneva Flooring and Tri-West Flooring, along with support from San Diego Fire-Rescue Department personnel and City of San Diego staff.

Fire Station 16, at 2110 Via Casa Alta, serves La Jolla and surrounding neighborhoods across approximately 3.45 square miles.

Construction has been carefully phased, so emergency response continues uninterrupted.

During the renovation, firefighters spend nights at nearby Fire Station 52 on the UC San Diego campus before returning to Station 16 during the day.

Project organizers hope to begin a second phase in the future to renovate the station’s kitchen if additional funding allows.

Capt. Paul Shuttleworth, who serves at Station 16, says the improvements represent an investment in the people who protect the community.

“Having a safe, comfortable place to rest between emergency calls isn’t a luxury — it’s essential,” Shuttleworth said. “This dorm remodel will make a real difference for the crews who serve our community every day.”

La Jolla planning group moves to grant public access to beach, walking trail

By Thomas Murphy
TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

LA JOLLA – The public may soon have access to two popular La Jolla locations following years of confusion over high tides, private property lines and contested signage.

Two proposals to protect public access to the Coast Walk Trail and southern La Jolla Shores were reviewed by the La Jolla Community Planning Association, which unanimously approved both plans during a Thursday meeting.

LA JOLLA SHORES

When the tide is at its highest, the waves crash against the Marine Room restaurant's west wall, cutting off beachgoers' access to the southern sands of La Jolla Shores. The beach area above the average high tide is privately owned, leading some beachgoers to cross private property to reach the beach.

The beach is bordered by the La Jolla Beach & Tennis Club, leaving no other public route to the southern shore. The Club's new proposal to the California Coastal Commission would ensure public access to the southern beach when high tides block the shoreline route.

Whenever the tide reaches the Marine Room's west wall, the Club would allow the public to pass through its property. A narrow concrete passageway along the Marine Room's southern side will be opened, providing beach access from Spindrift Drive. The shared-use walkway was included in the La Jolla Community Plan August 2014 update.

The club would also grant

access to its privately owned beach, a 10-foot sand buffer between the club and the average high tide.

The plan is in line with the Coastal Act, a state law protecting the public's right to access and enjoy all 1,100 miles of California's coastline. The 1976 law has carved out more than 2,500 public accessways as a result.

Signs explaining when the high tide cutoff and where people may walk would be put up on Spindrift Drive and Paseo Dorado, directing aimless beachgoers towards the access walkway.

The proposal was sent to the Coastal Commission in May and is now pending approval. If approved, the Club would be required to put up the signs and give the public access at high tide.

COAST WALK TRAIL

Concerns about public access to the Coast Walk Trail grew after private property signs were put up along the historic walking route in 2025.

The signs claimed people's "right to pass by permission and subject to the control of owners." They may look official, but residents say the City of San Diego did not approve these signs.

Kristen Churchill, a Coast Walk resident, raised the issue in a La Jolla Traffic and Transportation Board meeting this March; residents suspect the owner of six nearby parcels is responsible.

Teall and Carolyn Edds are associated with three limited liability companies — Coast Walk Cottage LLC, Heritage Bridge LLC and Coast Walk LLC — all of which filed a lawsuit against the city last

year. Carolyn Edds is listed as the secretary for Friends of Coast Walk Trail, a local nonprofit organization that has worked to restore and preserve the public space since 2010.

The companies are challenging the city's placement of a public right-of-way on their private property, which stretches across Coast Walk and down the cliff to the average high tide line.

Board members said a ruling that the land is private could limit the city's ability to maintain or widen Coast Walk Road, reroute the trail and respond to cliff failures.

During a May 19 board meeting, Churchill explained that the property owners are not disputing the public right-of-way on the existing asphalt path, but are contesting the total width of the easement that established the public's access.

After review, the Traffic and Transportation Board recommended the signs be removed and voted to support permanent public access, but requested a legal briefing on the issue before taking action.

The Planning Group unanimously supported the board's recommendation. The board also approved the creation of a vehicle turnaround at the dead end of Coast Walk Road.

While the La Jolla Shores proposal awaits Coastal Commission approval, the Coast Walk dispute will be decided in court. Both instances underscore the challenge of California's coastline: balancing private property rights with the public's right to reach the shore at all times.

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'Lifeguard Angel': Gratitude becomes a lifeline for La Jolla first responders

By Karen Pearlman

SPECIAL FOR TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

LA JOLLA — About six years ago, from the balcony of her Coast Boulevard condominium in south La Jolla, Linda Nolan Polly witnessed a dramatic high-tide cliff rescue that would change her life — and the lives of many others.

"I was sitting out on my deck on a Sunday afternoon, and I watched 100 people standing there looking at something, and I think, 'What are you people doing?'" Polly said. "All of a sudden, a lifeguard's truck roars down, they stop in the yield area, jump out, grab their boards... and there's some guy flailing in the water.

"I see them tear into the water. They get him out and revive him. They make sure he's OK. Then they turn around, walk up the hill, put the boards back on, turn the truck around and drive back over to the tower."

The stunned silence of the crowd wasn't enough for Polly, whose background in journalism and public relations had accustomed her to celebrating success.

"I thought, 'Does no one clap or cheer?'" she said.

That moment set off a chain of events that has transformed the lives of dozens of local lifeguards. Polly, an 81-year-old mother of two and grandmother of three, has spent years cooking homemade meals out of her kitchen for the crews. Most call her their "Lifeguard Angel" or "Saint Polly."

One lifeguard, an artist, gave her pottery he'd made as thanks.

Polly recently gave La Jolla lifeguards a beach rescue Utility Task Vehicle and a personal watercraft WaveRunner — equipment she says is priceless for the lives it will save.

She's also made a substantial gift to the San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation, which named her honorary chair of its Ready



Linda Nolan Polly (third from left) with her donations — the WaveRunner and UTV — for the San Diego lifeguards. (Photo courtesy of San Diego Fire-Rescue Foundation)

to Respond Gala this October. San Diego Lifeguard Services is a division of the Fire-Rescue Department.

"[Polly] is a familiar face at lifeguard towers, continuing to deliver meals, fund specialized equipment and champion the people who dedicate their lives to protecting others," said Fire-Rescue Foundation Executive Director Wendy Moore.

Polly said she hopes a significant gift she's making to the foundation in the coming weeks will be matched by other donors so that the nonprofit can provide more equipment, health and wellness support, training and technology for first responders.

She was honored again on Wednesday night, Aug. 12, at Ballast Point Brewery in Little Italy, receiving the Citizen of the Year award from the San Diego Lifesaving Association at its annual Hardy Awards.

Polly first won the honor in 2023 and said she wasn't entirely comfortable with a second.

"I tried to ask them to give the award to someone else, but they said 'no,'" she said.

Originally from Kansas and shaped by a Midwestern farming

upbringing in Iowa, Polly learned early that neighbors help without being asked. Food has always been her love language — she even wrote a book about it, "Midwest Moms: Recipes & Advice from the Heartland," in 2007.

Whenever her late husband, orthopedic surgeon Dr. Richard E. Polly, treated a patient she knew, a home-cooked meal would inevitably follow. She still shows up to her own doctors' offices with cakes and hot meals today.

After her husband died in 2017, Polly moved from the Midwest to La Jolla, where the family had vacationed for decades, and turned that habit toward the local lifeguard towers.

The connection started with a walk. Polly said she once saw a vendor near the Children's Pool "throwing his tchotchkes on the iceplant," certain his heavy boxes would kill the greenery below.

"I rang the doorbell at the lifeguard station and told them what was happening," she said. "They very nicely told me they don't mete out punishment. So I walked back and scolded him myself."

That encounter got her thinking about what lifeguards actually

do — and, after learning their starting salaries, she decided to give them a perk the best way she knew how.

"I can cook — this is what I like to do with my time," she said. "Everybody has hobbies, and mine is cooking."

So began her weekly meal deliveries. Every week, a home-cooked meal for 20 to 30 people arrives at the station by 11:30 a.m., saving the crews a lunch run.

Her philosophy: "If you're going to mess your kitchen up, you might as well do it all at once."

Polly shops mostly locally, including the newly opened Pacific Beach Grocery Outlet, whose manager recently handed her gift cards once she learned who the food was for. At Costco, her cart full of rotisserie chicken often draws looks.

"People look at my basket filled with rotisserie chickens, and I say to them, 'I don't eat 12 chickens!'" she said, laughing.

Her menus follow the sales, with one non-negotiable: protein.

"Oh, they eat lettuce, and they eat bread, but they want protein," she said of the lifeguards.

Not even back-to-back knee

surgeries slowed her down; she was back with meals within weeks, to the shock of crews who assumed she'd be out for months.

This past spring, Polly learned from lifeguard sergeants that equipment gaps were leaving blind spots on the beach — and putting swimmers at serious risk. She didn't wait.

"I heard somebody say, 'People will die this summer' because of not having the right equipment," Polly said. "When I heard that, I said, 'If you're telling me people are going to die, we need to get these on the water by Memorial Day.' I told them to send me a list of what you need."

She delivered: a new beach rescue UTV and personal watercraft for San Diego Fire-Rescue Lifeguards, valued at around \$40,000, and placed into service at La Jolla Shores.

"Ms. Polly is an extraordinary member of our community whose generosity, time and care have made a meaningful difference for San Diego Lifeguards," said San Diego Fire-Rescue

Lifeguard Chief James Gartland.

"From facilitating the acquisition of critical equipment, including a new Utility Terrain Vehicle and Rescue Watercraft through the Fire-Rescue Foundation, to spending countless hours giving back to our team through nutritious meals, kindness and words of encouragement, Ms. Polly's commitment to San Diego Lifeguards is nothing short of remarkable," said Gartland. "We are honored and deeply grateful for her support, and our beaches are safer because of her efforts."

Polly rarely seeks recognition, insisting the real reward is the crew's smiles and gratitude.

"Once you get started with the lifeguards, seeing what they do, it puts baking cakes and making chili in perspective," she said. "There is nothing that matches saving lives."

Experts to discuss nuclear waste remaining at San Onofre

By Thomas Murphy
TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

SAN DIEGO – The reactors and most of the former San Onofre power plant are nearing the end of decommissioning, but millions of pounds of spent nuclear fuel pose a separate, much longer-term challenge.

Two congressmen will meet with nuclear scientists, clean-energy advocates and former federal regulators on Aug. 20 at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography Seaside Forum in La Jolla for an all-day discussion about long-term management of the waste.

Most of the former San Onofre plant is expected to be demolished by 2028, but its nuclear waste will remain. The spent fuel is expected to remain at the site for decades because the United States does not currently have a permanent repository accepting commercial spent nuclear fuel, according to event speaker Rep. Mike Levin.

With no other option, over 80 sites across the country are stuck storing nuclear waste.

The San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, or SONGS, still holds 3.6 million pounds of spent nuclear fuel. After cooling underwater for at least five years, all of the fuel was transferred by 2020 to steel canisters housed underground, wrapped in reinforced concrete. Known as “dry storage,” the system uses passive air circulation to keep the fuel cool and will remain at the site long after most decommissioning work is complete.

Storage sounds simple, but is not without its own risks. In 2018, workers lowering a canister into underground storage failed to notice that it had become misaligned. The canister became stuck while being lowered and was at risk of falling 18 feet into the storage vault, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.



Dry canister storage at the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station. (File photo courtesy of Southern California Edison)

Higher-than-expected levels of radiation were detected, but crews resolved the situation. The NRC later described it as a “near-miss” drop event.

The issue will be at the center of the “Nuclear Waste to Clean Energy” symposium Aug. 20 at the Scripps Seaside Forum, hosted by the Samuel Lawrence Foundation in collaboration with Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Rep. Mike Levin will be joined by Rep. Scott Peters, former Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chair Greg Jaczko, Stanford energy researcher Mark Jacobson and Scripps oceanographer James Day.

Allen Field to reopen soon after resurfacing

FROM STAFF REPORTS

LA JOLLA – After more than six months of work to make it more even and improve drainage, Allen Field in La Jolla Shores at 3908 Torrey Pines Road is expected to fully reopen soon. The field has been closed since the beginning of the year while La Jolla Youth Soccer League has been resurfacing the playing field to smooth out the foundation, remove berms and replace the grass with sod, while also moving fences and relocating the storage shed.

Named for founding donor La Jolla Realtor Willis Allen Sr., Allen Field was originally earmarked for a new playhouse/theater complex to be run jointly by the city and UC San Diego. Some of the early founders in 1976 persuaded the city instead to make the site available for lease as a soccer field, which was completed in 1981. Over the next five years, several local families and organizations negotiated with the city, raising the money to develop the site. Field donations can be made through lajollasoccer.org.



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Doers and Dreamers: Laura Demoreno of The Daily Stem and The Giving Stem

By Molly Bowman-Styles
TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

LA JOLLA – Artistic minds bring big, beautiful dreams to life. In this edition of our Doers and Dreamers series, Mt. Soledad resident Laura Demoreno discusses how she turned her life-long love affair with flowers into a blooming social enterprise.

Like an artfully-curated bouquet, The Daily Stem and its charity branch, The Giving Stem, are the creative culmination of the formative experiences charting the course of her life's journey: social worker, mother, caregiver and a partner in her family business. With fresh flowers as her North Star, Demoreno's new endeavor is brightening the lives of caregivers to San Diegans living with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Times of San Diego:
Describe what inspires your company's philanthropic branch, The Giving Stem.

The Giving Stem came to me because, alongside my desire to start doing work that I love, I wanted to do something that fulfills me. As I mentioned, I was a social worker, and though I loved that career, I left it and I think deep down I've always had a desire to get back to it in some form.

On the other side of that, I lost my mother to Alzheimer's a few years ago. It was a long and terrible disease that affected our entire family. My father, who has since passed from pancreatic cancer, was her main caregiver. It was really striking to me that my father, who I'd only ever known as the one being taken care of, became the caregiver. Not only did he provide loving, meticulous care for my mother, he did it happily and with so much love. I saw how difficult that was for him both physically and emotionally.

One night, while thinking about this new project I was developing, and after some conversations with the director of ActivCare Mission Bay memory care, I came up with the idea to honor caregivers.

It started small, with weekly arrangements for ActivCare Mission Bay. From there I added Alzheimer's San Diego, delivering bouquets to caregivers at their support group meetings. Now, I'm working on growing this into something bigger: reaching home caregivers directly, the people quietly caring for a spouse or a parent at home, often with no organization behind them and no one checking in. Those are the caregivers I think about the most, because that was my father. If your readers know a home caregiver, or are one, I'd love to hear from them, this is exactly the kind of story and connection that helps The Giving Stem.

TOSD: When and how did you discover your gift for floral design?

It's been a long time coming. Over the years, one of my favorite parts of going to a grocery store, particularly Trader Joe's, was seeing what flowers they had available. I loved being able to pull a few different bunches and see what I could put together. This grew into a challenge for me: every week I'd pick up stems and arrange them. I love choosing color palettes and mixing textures. Whenever we entertained or hosted parties, I'd make sure to create arrangements for each table that matched the theme. I did this so often that my husband would tease me and say I should at least make it a business. So, I did — sort of.

With the launch of this business I have found wholesale flower marts and providers that not only have the most amazing blooms but they



One of Laura Demoreno's signature bouquets. (Photo courtesy of The Daily Stem)

are always happy to help and lend some guidance. Recently I've been working with a local wholesaler, Peak Blooms, and the owner, Izzy has been instrumental in guiding me through this journey as a new floral designer. I am happy to say I have found a community in this industry as well; it is so collaborative and inclusive.

TOSD: What inspires your signature floral designs?

I take my inspiration from all kinds of things: a sunrise, a sunset, a stroll along the cove. It also comes from following other floral artists and studying their work. Sometimes it's one amazing flower that calls to me and I build the whole arrangement around it. I've been introduced to the butterfly dahlia, the mandarin x-pression rose and the pom-pom dahlia, to name a few.

TOSD: What are your hopes and aspirations for The Daily Stem and The Giving Stem?

I think of The Daily Stem as a social enterprise, it's a for-profit business, but the profit has a purpose. The Giving Stem exists

because of The Daily Stem. Every time I sell a bouquet, it allows me to purchase extra flowers to gift to a caregiver. My hope is that I can grow this into a meaningful project. I've made some great collaborations and connections, all at a grassroots community level. This is a self-funded program; I'm not a nonprofit; it's just me trying to make it happen.

For instance, I sold an Easter arrangement to someone who found me on Nextdoor. The day I delivered her flowers, she came out of her house and, with the kindest disposition, told me how proud she was of me. I felt like it was my mother speaking through her, and when I got in my car, I was in tears, tears of joy and gratitude. A few weeks later, that same person connected me with a mutual Nextdoor neighbor who grows flowers in her yard. She had posted that she had some to give away; I went to pick them up and let her know I'd be using them to make bouquets for Alzheimer's San Diego and ActivCare Mission Bay. Once she heard how her flowers would be used, she started donating her exquisite flowers to

me weekly and I couldn't be more grateful — it's really helped me expand my reach.

I'm also excited about an upcoming collaboration with Bloomink, a Canyon Crest Academy student initiative that makes handmade cards using recycled paper and flowers. They'll be donating cards with messages of thanks for me to pair with the bouquets.

TOSD: Would you describe yourself as a Doer or a Dreamer? Why?

I'd say I'm more of a dreamer. I'm a bit risk-averse, so before I take action on anything, I tend to think it through and overthink it. Sometimes, I spend so much time thinking about the pros and cons that I never get to the "doing" part. I am proud of myself that I took this leap and made The Daily Stem/The Giving Stem a reality. Honestly, there have been a few times these past months where I've thought about giving this dream up. It isn't easy to stay positive on a week when the flowers don't sell or when I spend more on them than I make. That's when the self-doubt starts to creep in. Being a dreamer sometimes means having grand expectations that reality doesn't live up to. But being a dreamer also means allowing yourself to keep reaching for bigger things and that's the road I'm choosing every day.

TOSD: If you could make a wish for La Jolla, what would it be?

For me, La Jolla has always had a bit of a small-town feel, the kind of place where everybody knows your name. As an example: When my youngest son was born, the pediatrician who came to check on him in the hospital turned out to be the same mom who'd been sitting next to me in our kids' religious education class! Or the fact that whenever I'm out running errands, I will inevitably run into someone I know. My wish is that this kind of community never fades away.

From La Jolla to the world's beaches: Surf Diva celebrates 30 years

By Elizabeth Ireland
TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

LA JOLLA – Long before Coco and Izzy Tihanyi opened Surf Diva, their father, a Hungarian-born engineer and former competitive swimmer and water polo player, handed his daughters their first surfboards and encouraged them to be confident.

“Our dad taught us to be athletes and both parents taught us to be persistent and passionate about what you're doing,” Coco said.

Their mother influenced them just as much, though in a different way.

“Our mom taught us to be divas,” Izzy said, describing a childhood filled with ballet, piano, violin, opera and French fashion, alongside camping trips where their mother educated them about nature and sustainability, “before it was a thing.”

Thirty years later, that mix of grit and glamour remains the identity behind Surf Diva, which the sisters describe as the world's first female-focused surf school, located in a storefront on Avenida de la Playa in La Jolla Shores. The milestone, the sisters said, has arrived faster than they expected.

“I feel like these 30 years flew by,” Coco said. “Time goes by so quickly when you love what you



Izzy and Coco Tihanyi at an Omnia fashion show styled by Surf Diva.

do. It's like being on vacation every day.”

The Tihanyi sisters are lifelong La Jollans. Their family moved to the seaside neighborhood from Los Angeles when the twins were 8, and they went on to attend La Jolla's public schools, as well as a third sister, who attended UC San Diego.

When the sisters launched Surf Diva in 1996, some in the surf industry questioned whether women needed lessons designed specifically for them, but the Tihanyis couldn't ignore the gap others had missed.

“We saw adult women who wanted to learn and no programs,” Izzy said, noting that most instruction at the time was “geared towards kids or towards guys.”

“Women learn differently,” Izzy said.

That philosophy shaped a teaching style the sisters describe as more holistic than



Surf Diva in 1996, the year it was founded. (Photos courtesy of Surf Diva)

a typical lesson built around simply standing up on a board.

“It's about the ocean, the tides, the currents, the wind, the waves, the etiquette,” Izzy said. “We have a large number of students who want to learn the actual sport and spirit of surfing, including who has the right of way and what beaches not to surf when you're a beginner.”

One innovation from Surf Diva's earliest days has since spread across the sport world-wide: color-coded rash guards.

“I call it the story of the red rash guard. We were the first organized school that used rash guards for our instructors, putting them in red because it's easily recognizable,” Izzy said, adding that students were also grouped by color so instructors could keep tabs on smaller groups.

“That's been adopted throughout the world,” Izzy

said. “When you go to Australia now or Costa Rica or France, the schools have taken up rash guards for teaching. And that was started in 1996 in La Jolla.”

Surf Diva has trained more than 1,000 surf instructors over three decades, many of whom have gone on to open women's surf programs in Mexico, Costa Rica, Australia and Canada.

Despite outside offers to expand to locations such as Santa Monica, the sisters said they've chosen to keep Surf Diva rooted in La Jolla.

“We love La Jolla, and we love San Diego,” Coco said. “Izzy and I are so grateful to have surrounded ourselves with people who care.”

The business has become a family affair. Both sisters said they now employ their children at the shop and school alongside the kids of longtime friends and colleagues.



Coco Tihanyi teaching a surf group.

“This morning I had a full circle moment where I saw Diego, Coco's son, at the beach and he's a camp director, and he took my daughter surfing. She's a camp counselor and loving it,” Izzy said. “It just made my heart sing.”

Looking ahead, the sisters said they hope Surf Diva's legacy is less about the business itself than the example it sets.

“The fact that we were able to start a business and do it together,” Coco said, “one of our favorite mottos is 'what we do together, we do better,' and we tell our staff that too.”

Part of that ethos, the sisters said, traces back to another guiding motto they return to again and again.

“The best surfer in the water is the one having the most fun,” Coco said, “and that's what we try to do with everything.”

For more about Surf Diva, visit surfdiva.com.

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TIMES of SAN DIEGO



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Alicia Keys, Swizz Beatz cap 'Giants' exhibition with final flourish

By Drew Sitton
TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

LA JOLLA – Amid last week's closing celebration party in honor of Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego's (MCASD) record-breaking art exhibition, two of the guests were brought to tears by the works of Mickalene Thomas.

Lupe Castellón-Mendoza said one of Thomas' portraits reminded them of their grandmothers. They bonded with another woman in attendance over Thomas' glitter-infused 2010 work "Le déjeuner sur l'herbe: les trois femmes noires," which the woman said felt like her and her sisters on a picnic. As the party rolled on, they joined hundreds seeing art with people who looked like them displayed with dignity and grandiosity inside a museum space.

The exhibit featuring massive works by Black American and diasporic artists like Thomas was on display thanks to a loan from the Dean Collection, the personal collection of La Jolla residents and married music icons Swizz Beatz (a.k.a Kasseem Dean) and Alicia Keys.



Patrons at Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego view a selection of photographs by Gordon Parks along a red wall, with three photos from Kwame Braithewaite on a white wall. (Photo by Adrian Childress/Times of San Diego)

The titular Dean couple joined hundreds of guests dancing, viewing art and celebrating the closing weekend of "Giants: Art from the Dean Collection of Swizz Beatz and Alicia Keys." House DJ Joe Kay shared footage of the couple dancing with guests during his set on the museum patio. Swizz Beatz even took over DJing, to the delight of the crowd.

Earlier in the night, Keys joined Lisane Basquiat, the sister of and co-administrator of renowned artist Jean-Michel Basquiat's estate, for a conversation with ArtLeadHer independent curator Mashonda Tifrere at the beginning of the night. Basquiat and the Deans both have residences in La Jolla, where MCASD is located.

The event was the exclamation point on MCASD's superlative summer. "Giants" drew in big crowds since its debut in April. In all, over 29,000 people visited the museum, according to San Diego Union-Tribune over the course of the exhibition, the highest amount since the museum reopened after a renovation in 2022. The exhibition drew just under 2,000 people a week — doubling the museum's typical attendance, the U-T reported.

And thanks to the gift shop with "Giants" merchandise as well as a surge in membership sales, the museum tripled its revenue for the period to an average of \$19,579 per week.

The celebrity cache of the Deans certainly contributed to those numbers, as well as the chance to see works from artists like

Basquiat and Thomas as well as Kehinde Wiley, Gordon Parks, Esther Mahlangu, Kwame Brathwaite and Derrick Adams who aren't normally seen in San Diego.

In total, the exhibit included over 130 works by 37 Black artists. The touring exhibit originated in New York and made its west coast debut in San Diego. Museum admission is free on Sunday, "Giants'" final day in San Diego and on the west coast; its next showing will be at the Indianapolis Museum of Art from September 2026 to February 2027.

Another exhibit curated from the Deans' personal collection, "Hometown Heroes," will remain at the museum through Nov. 8. This exhibit features photography by San Diego-based Latino artists drawn from a Barrio Logan photography show that Swizz Beatz bought out in February as well as pieces in the museum's permanent collection.

Keys' imprint will also be seen on the local stage soon; the Tony Award-winning musical "Hell's Kitchen," which is loosely based on her youth in New York City, is scheduled for an Aug. 11-16 run at the San Diego Civic Theatre.

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La Jolla High Vikings football: A team built on community

By Ed Piper
SPECIAL FOR TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

LA JOLLA – This’ll build brotherly love: During La Jolla High football’s three-day (two overnights) preseason camp July 30–Aug. 1, 89 registrants shared one boy’s bathroom in the school gym.

Actually, there were more facilities a short distance away in the locker room next to the football field. But for quick access in the middle of the night, one bathroom?

And so, the growing pains will debut in a week when the young Vikings put on the pads and travel to Patrick Henry to play their 2026 season opener in front of real fans. After pastor Miles McPherson of The Rock megachurch in Point Loma challenged the Vikings at the Mount Soledad cross to think of their present and future individually and collectively, young quarterbacks Brody Bukich and Ty Tortorice will lead the La Jollans into battle on the gridiron.

“It’s a good group. It’s not a huge senior class,” said Vikings coach Tyler Roach,

now in his 10th year. “We’ve got some transfers. It’s kind of a chip on the shoulder thing. We’ve got a long way to go.”

A long way indeed, as the Vikings embark on a formidable schedule that includes state powerhouse Cathedral Catholic in Week 8, league rival Point Loma in Week 3 under former La Jolla High defensive coordinator Ryan Price, and vaunted St. Augustine at Mesa College in Week 6.

Defensive end/tight end Nico Bardaro, the newly-named team captain, says it is all about community.

As one of the faces of the current edition of the squad, Bardaro and several others showed their commitment before teammates at the Mount Soledad memorial in early August after a 2.8-mile run from campus.

The commitment was written across the sweaty faces on that hot, muggy August day.

“We need to grow and rely on each other,” the 6 foot 4 inch tall, 190-pound tri-sport athlete Bardaro said.

San Diego State football aims high, seeks Pac-12 championship

By Mark Nero
SPECIAL FOR TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

SAN DIEGO – When San Diego State kicks off its 2026 football season against Portland State on Sept. 5, it’ll be the official dawn of a new era for the Aztecs.

As in, a new conference and new rivalries, not to mention new players in the rotation.

The biggest change, long anticipated, is that San Diego State is no longer part of the Mountain West Conference. On July 1, the school’s athletic programs officially joined the reconfigured Pac-12 Conference (which, despite the name, only has eight football-playing members, for now).

Four other Mountain West schools – Boise State, Colorado State, Fresno State and Utah State – also left the conference for the Pac-12, joining holdovers Oregon

State and Washington State, plus Texas State, which defected from the Sun Belt Conference.

Due to the other four other former MWC schools, the experience of playing in the new Pac-12 won’t be completely unfamiliar for SDSU. But although the Aztecs’ 11-game 2026 schedule includes all the aforementioned Pac-12 schools, the first four matchups are against non-conference games.

After SDSU plays Portland State at home on Sept. 5, the Aztecs play UCLA – a former Pac-12 team – James Madison and Toledo the next three Saturdays. Of the four schools, James Madison could be the biggest challenge, as it had a 12–2 record last season and made the College Football Playoff (but lost to the No. 5 Oregon Ducks).

The other three schools, however, were a combined 12–25 last year.

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65						66						67		
68						69						70		

21. Nonclerical
24. Indonesian island
25. Educational environment
26. Namibian peoples
27. Bring out or develop
31. Moves into a place of thought
32. Out of the way
34. Loads a ship
35. Beloved Hollywood alien
36. Distinguishes
40. The ancient Egyptian sun god
41. Secondary or explanatory title
45. Relating to a wing
47. One who gives a speech
48. In the middle
52. Loop with a running knot
53. Airborne (abbr.)
54. Sweet persons
56. Put into play
57. Small cattle breed
59. Millisecond
60. Revolutions per minute
61. They ____
62. Moon crater
63. A place to stay the night

CLUES ACROSS

1. Midway between south and south-east
4. Fathers
9. Wine grape
14. Al Bundy's wife
15. Derived from ammonia
16. Venezuelan state
17. Interest rate
18. Experts
20. Vascular tissues
22. Smooth and glossy
23. Administrative region in S. Korea
24. One from Damascus
28. Special interest group
29. It cools your home
30. Oh, God!
31. Intestinal pouches
33. Men
37. Twelfth star in a constellation
38. Former CIA
39. Arrange in grades of size
41. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
42. "The Great Lakes State"
43. Having earlike appendages
44. Momentarily stop
46. Ancient kingdom
49. Of I
50. White clerical vestment

51. Songs to one's beloved
55. Charges
58. Computer application originator
59. A place to dock a boat
60. One guided by reason
64. Slang for cigarette
65. Sailboats
66. "Jerry Maguire" actor Zellweger
67. Screen type
68. Country legend Haggard
69. Puts together in time
70. When you anticipate arriving

CLUES DOWN

1. Involuntary muscular contraction
2. Eastern US transit agency
3. Leaves a place
4. Cease to participate
5. Current units
6. Cease to exist
7. General's assistant (abbr.)
8. Earth vibration
9. Very strong winds
10. For each one
11. A bog
12. The creation of beautiful or significant things
13. Affirmative
19. Pie ____ mode

ANSWERS

7	9	3	1	2	4	6	9	8
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The Social Diary – Bulgari lunch sparkles and Patrons of the Prado hosts One Haute Havana!

By Margo Schwab

SPECIAL FOR TIMES OF SAN DIEGO

On Aug. 6, FFOV that's Fortunate Friends of Valerie Cooper were invited to a special luncheon at the new Bulgari Boutique in the luxury wing of Westfield UTC. Guests enjoyed wearing exquisitely crafted

Bulgari jewelry, having a portrait drawing, a superb catered lunch... and oh my, shopping! Thanks to Bulgari and Valerie Cooper for a never to be forgotten afternoon!

Earlier on Aug. 1, it was One Haute Havana Night at the Spreckels Organ Pavillion in Balboa Park organized by the Patrons of Prado (POP) volunteer

ladies. The cause, raising funds specifically for Bucks4Buses and educational grants so all kids can access the park's wonderful Fleet Science Center, Mingei International Museum, Museum of Us, San Diego History Center, San Diego Junior Theatre, San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego Natural History Museum, The Old

Globe, and the Timken Museum of Art.

It was an incredible evening chaired by Debbie Rider and Susan Davey, giving the ICON Award for Arts and Culture to Joan and Irwin Jacobs with Irwin accepting the award. Patrons of the Prado has raised more than \$6.6 million since 1997!



Emma Zuckerman, Mina Kooklani, Valerie Cooper, and Miriam Smotrich at Bulgari. (Photos by Margo Schwab/Special for Times of San Diego)



Emil and Caroline Wohl at POP.



Bridget Cantu Wear and Byron Wear at POP.



Jeff and Annie Jacobs with Honoree Irwin Jacobs, and Gary Jacobs at POP.



Michelle Gurnee with Dr. Alexandra Schwartz aka 'Sandy' at POP.



Margo Schwab in Herve Leger and with Linda Swortwood, and Mina Kooklani at Bulgari. (Photo by Emma Zuckerman)



Margo Schwab and Emma Zuckerman at Bulgari. (Photo by Mina Kooklani)



Amy Grant, Maggie Watkins and Christy Billings at POP.



Model beautiful and smart, Valerie Cooper at Bulgari.



POP President Carrie O'Brien with Event Chairs Susan Davey and Debbie Rider.



Margo Schwab in Ralph Lauren at POP.