

Coronado Unified finalizes staffing cuts

The CUSD in a special meeting on May 1 finalized layoffs for the 2024-2025 school year.

BY SOFIE FRANSEN
The Coronado News

Coronado Unified School District trustees finalized their decision on staffing cuts this week, and by May 15, will notify eight employees that their jobs have been terminated.

The cutbacks, prompted by a budget shortfall, will affect two program specialists, one reading specialist, one mental health clinician, one clinical counselor, one school counselor, one spanish teacher and one maintenance worker.

“The staff has done everything they can to identify saving and cost-cutting measures and wherever we can scrape together the funding to keep the vital services that our community needs,” Trustee Whitney Antrim said at a special board meeting on May 1. “So while I will vote to support all three of these action items, I do it with a heavy heart, a reservation, and an understanding and a belief that this should not affect our kids directly.”

These layoffs follow state officials announcing in

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The Coronado Unified District Office. Staff photo by Julieta Soto.

HISTORIC HONOR TOUR

The welcome of a lifetime

Local veterans share about a special weekend that has positively shaped their life and sheds light on their years of service.

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News

Chuck Chaldekas was among a group of returning veterans who landed in San Diego to a crowd cheering for them in a heartfelt welcome.

This crowd was a contrast to his return from Vietnam in 1972.

Chaldekas was left speechless as he exited his plane, made his way down the escalator seeing sailors saluting him on the right and a floor full of spectators of all ages.

“I had a very joyful heart,” said Chaldekas. “I couldn’t utter a single word.”

Ninety Naval Special Warfare Korean and Vietnam combat veterans participated in the first commemorative pilgrimage of 2024 hosted by Honor Flight San Diego (HFSD) from April 26-28.

The three-day trip included visits to Washington, D.C. memorials honoring those who fought in WWII, Lincoln, Korea and Vietnam; Navy, and Marine Corps Memorials; as well as Arlington



Family friends welcome retired Navy SEAL Chuck Chaldekas who returns from a historic honor tour in April. Photo credit: Chris Stone. Courtesy of Honor Flight San Diego.

National Cemetery for the changing-of-the-guard ceremony.

“The memories and the thoughts that were brought back brought me to tears at least five or six times on that trip,” said Chaldekas.

A nonprofit branch of the nationwide Honor Flight Network, HFSD escorts veterans to Washington, D.C. using monies donated by individuals, foundations, associations, business owners and corporations who wish to

recognize veterans’ contributions and thank them for their service and sacrifice to the United States, according to the branch’s website.

On the tour’s last day, a very

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“These Vietnam combat veterans were finally able to see that the citizens of Coronado, San Diego, and the entire nation are grateful for their service and sacrifice ... What they did has not been forgotten, and over 800 people came to the airport to make sure they know that!”

- Julie Brightwell, HFSD Chair



Verella verella at Coronado’s South Beach in April. Staff photo by Julieta Soto.

Carried by the wind, Verella verella reach Coronado South Beach

Since March, beaches across the state have seen Verella verella, with Coronado witnessing the natural event in April.

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News

Windrows of unique sea creatures resembling small transparent vinyl records indicate spring across coastal cities.

In late April, beachgoers share

local shorelines with hundreds of what they describe as “gooey” and “very pretty” creatures — the Verella verella, a blue, jellyfish-like organism.

The Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego says the

Verella are three or four inches in diameter and are commonly seen off the coast of California and further north off Oregon and Washington.

Also called “by-the-wind sailor,” the Scripps Institution says their habitat is the sea surface, generally floating offshore, but

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this week

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The Coronado Public Library in partnership with the Coronado Island Film Festival will host Film Forum Coronado at 6 p.m. in the library's Winn Room. The film expert, Ralph DeLauro, will provide a brief introduction to this week's film, "Stage Fright" and will lead a discussion afterward. The discussion will focus on how lighting and camera angles can contribute to a scene's mood or propel the story. "Stage Fright" (1950) is directed by Alfred Hitchcock. The film is set in the stage world of London, and follows an aspiring actress (Jane Wyman) as she assumes undercover acting roles to prove her friend (Richard Todd) innocent of murdering his lover's (Marlene Dietrich) husband.

16 • thursday

The May meeting of the Republican Women's Club, Coronado Crown City will be held at the Coronado Historical Association Lecture Room, 1100 Orange Avenue, at 9:15 a.m. The speaker will be Vice Admiral Charles W. Martoglio, US Navy (ret), current advisor on issues impacting the United States, especially those involving China and Russia. He will discuss America's security in an era increasingly marked by confrontation and conflict. All republican women are encouraged to attend. Men are also welcome and encouraged to become associate members. Independent and undecided voters are welcome.

CONTACT US

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STUDENTS OF THE WEEK

Coronado High senior Rafael Roos, the first to earn a State Seal of Biliteracy in Dutch

The senior was hand delivered a letter of congratulations by the Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Coronado News staff

This year, Coronado High School awarded a record of 66 students with the State Seal of Biliteracy (SSB) — an honor given to high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading and writing in one or more languages in addition to English.

The high school offers language

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Coronado High School senior Rafael Roos (right) pictured with the Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Dirk Janssen (left) at a San Diego Kings Day celebration.

Photo courtesy of Maria Simon.

PETS OF THE WEEK

Meet Petunia & Taylor



Petunia.



Taylor.

Photos courtesy of PAWS of Coronado.

PAWS of Coronado

Meet Petunia, the lovely 2-year-old mixed breed female dog with a heart as gentle as her nature.

Petunia may be a bit shy at first, but once she warms up to you, she's a sweetheart through and through. This charming canine companion enjoys the company of other dogs, finding comfort and joy in their playful antics and companionship.

With her warm brown eyes and soft fur, Petunia is irresistible to both humans and furry friends alike. If you're looking for a loyal and loving furry friend to join your family, Petunia is the perfect match.

Open your heart and home to this wonderful mixed breed dog, and let the bond of friendship and companionship with Petunia fill your days with joy.

Meet Taylor, the embodiment of love and affection.

Taylor is a social butterfly with a penchant of making human friends and is searching for a home that mirrors her zest for life, says PAWS of Coronado.

A family or individual who appreciates the boundless love she has to give and can match her enthusiasm for walks and playtime would be a perfect fit.

Taylor is adaptable and ready to bring her positive energy to any loving home. If you're looking for a dog as sweet and has a zest for life like Taylor, then apply to adopt her today at PAWS.

All of the animals at PAWS are spayed/neutered, microchipped, vaccinated, and up-to-date on flea-preventative. Adoptions are by appointment only. If you are interested in adopting any of these animals, please www.pawsofcoronado.org.



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OPINION

Romanian Pastor, founder of Voice of the Martyrs stands up to the communists

BY JIM KORVER
Op-Ed

In Richard Wormbrand's autobiographical "Tortured for Christ," he shares much of the following: Orphaned at an early age and raised in a totally non-religious home, Richard Wurmbbrand, knowing poverty during WWI, became an atheist, bitter toward religion. He actually hated the "notions" of God and Christ. And yet he seemed drawn toward churches and visited a Catholic church at one time repeating the Hail Mary that he heard but nothing happened. Once he actually said a prayer, "God, I know you don't exist, but if you do, it is your duty to reveal yourself to me."

During this time of inner turmoil, an old carpenter high up in the Romanian mountains prayed, "My God, I have served you here on earth, please reward me before I die by bringing one Jew to faith in Christ." There were no Jews in his village, and he was too old to search for one, so he asked God to bring one.

Romania has 12,000 villages and Richard had no reason to go there but he felt "drawn." Upon hearing Richard was a Jew, the old man saw him as an answer to his prayer. It was his witness and faithful prayers that brought Richard to faith in Christ and soon his wife, Sabina, also an atheist, was converted and together they started a new Lutheran church in Bucharest, the capital city.

Then came the Nazis as they overran eastern Europe before the start of WWII and they targeted Jews especially, and Protestants. Sabina and Richard were arrested several times, beaten, and hauled before Nazi judges. That proved only a foretaste of what the Russian communists would do later.

When the communists pushed the Nazis out of eastern Europe, they established themselves and began bringing the population into subjection. In August 1944, 1 million Russian troops entered and took over 24 million Romanians. The Allied powers had their hands full with the Nazis, so they turned a blind eye toward Eastern Europe and the scourge of communism that was about to dominate during the ensuing cold war.



Jim Korver is a Coronado resident who has careers in aerospace, human resources and teaching. Photo courtesy of Jim Korver.

As an American, with great sadness I must relate the following:

Vishinsky, Foreign Secretary of the Soviet Union, stormed into the office of Romania's beloved King Michael I, pounded his fists on the table and said, "You must appoint communists to the government." The Romanian army and police were disarmed and by violence the communists came to power.

Richard recalls that it was not without the cooperation of the Americans and British. He writes, "Men are responsible before God not only for their personal sins, but also for their national sins. The tragedy of all the captive nations is on the hearts of American and British Christians," Richard wrote. "Americans must know that they at times unwittingly (or wittingly — this writer's view) assisted the Russians in imposing upon us a regime of murder and terror. As a part of the Body of Christ, Americans must atone for this by helping the captive peoples come to the light of Christ."

The communists convened a congress of 4,000 pastors, priests and rabbis to seek (demand) their support for their new rulers and it was amazing how easily and quickly many fell in line. These men of God chose Joseph Stalin, Russian dictator,

as the honorary president at the same time he was a mass murderer of Christians! One after another, bishops and pastors arose to declare that communism and Christianity were fundamentally the same and could coexist.

Sabina told Richard, "Stand up and wash away this shame from the face of Christ! They are spitting in His face!" Richard replied, "If I do, you lose your husband." Sabina answered, "I don't wish to have a coward as a husband." So, the message of Christ was broadcast to the whole country! Richard knew he would pay for this but said "It was worth it."

Orthodox and Protestant church leaders competed with each other in yielding to communism. An Orthodox bishop put the symbol of Russia, the hammer and sickle, on his robes and asked his priests to no longer call him Your Grace but Comrade Bishop. Two priests became officers of the secret police and a deputy bishop of the Lutheran church began to teach in the seminary that God had given three revelations through Moses, Jesus AND Stalin. At a congress of the Baptists, they stood and sang the anthem of the Soviet Union. The president of the Baptists praised Stalin as a great teacher of the Bible and did nothing but fulfill the commandments of God!

As Christians had done in Russia, Richard and Sabina helped develop the underground church in Romania. His work as pastor of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission and as a representative of the World Council of Churches in Romania provided the cover for his secret underground ministry, among Russian soldiers and the enslaved people of Romania.

Jim Korver is an 85-year-old resident of Coronado whose wife Angela is a lead nurse at Sharp Coronado Hospital. They are blessed with 13 children, 34 grands, and 9 greats. Jim has had careers in aerospace, human resources, and teaching plus the administrative leader/director in Christian schools in CA, ID and WA — and international Christian schools in Korea, Austria, Bolivia, Venezuela, Mexico City, Ghana, Kenya, Indonesia, Malaysia, and China.

Lisa Benson
Counterpoint Media

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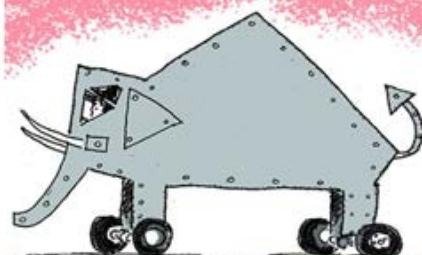
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CORONADO

Memorial Day ceremony returns to Star Park

Coronado News staff

Coronado's yearly Memorial Day ceremony, complete with a Presentation of Colors, the National Anthem, a guest speaker and the opportunity for attendees to bring flowers for their loved ones who have passed, will return to Star Park on Monday, May 27 at 10 a.m.

Nationally, Memorial Day is a time to honor service members who have died in military service to the nation. Locally, past Memorial Day services have been attended by thousands of Coronado residents, whether directly or indirectly affected by tragedy or loss, according to Joe Ditler, who is helping promote the event for Post 2422 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

The VFW in Coronado was founded in 1932, when 100 members of the community signed a petition to be granted their own chapter. Ever since that day, the organization has hosted a ceremony for Memorial Day, Ditler said, and it has grown to become one of the most cherished events in Coronado throughout the years.

According to U.S. Census data, veterans comprise nearly one-tenth of Coronado's population, and the Chamber of Commerce estimates nearly a third of the population is active military.

Last year's event found a turnout of 800-1,000 people gathered to remember fallen veterans and loved ones.

The guest speaker for this year's event will be Vice Admiral Dan Cheever, commander, Naval Air Forces and Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.



Vice Admiral Dan Cheever will be the speaker for Memorial Day Services held at Star Park, Monday, May 27 at 10 a.m. Photo courtesy of Joe Ditler.

In addition to Coronado VFW Post 2422, this annual event has been put together with support from the City of Coronado, the Marine Corps League (Coronado Detachment), United States Navy League (Coronado Council), and the Military Officers' Association of America (Silver Strand Chapter).

The event will last about an hour, starting at 10 a.m. in Star Park (1030 Star Park Circle), located across from the historic home of L. Frank Baum, author of "The Wizard of Oz."

"Gidget" is coming to Coronado this summer

The Coronado Island Film Festival will be having two events on July 12 and 13 in honor of Kathy Kohner-Zuckerman, the inspiration behind the 1959 film, "Gidget."

BY MADELINE YANG
The Coronado News

The Coronado Island Film Festival is starting to kick off their line of events leading up to their annual week-long festival in November.

On July 12 and 13, the inspiration behind Gidget, the main character in the late 1950s rom-com film by the same name - "Gidget" - will be making an appearance in Coronado.

"Gidget," the 1959 film, tells the story of a girl, also nicknamed Gidget, who wants to surf - but in the 50s, it was a heavily male-dominated sport and girls could only dream of being a surfer. However, Gidget made her dream come true.

And through her, surfing entered female spaces and allowed for the sport of surfing to be enjoyed by both men and women.

But this film isn't just a feel-good story. Gidget is a fictional character based on the very nonfictional person, Kathy Kohner-Zuckerman.

Kohner-Zuckerman was the inspiration for the character after her father, Frederick Kohner, wrote a book in 1957 about her relationship with surfing, which he witnessed unfolding in her teenage years.

That book was the basis for the film and for a documentary on her life.

"It's really how Gidget became this accidental icon," CEO and Artistic Director for the film festival Meridee Book said. "This woman who broke through the barrier in what was a men's only sport and opened



The Coronado Island Film Festival will be happening Nov. 6-10. Photo courtesy of the Coronado Island Film Festival.

the door to female surfers around the world."

Kohner-Zuckerman, now 83, will be attending her first event with the Coronado Island Film Festival on July 12, the Gidget Beach Bash at the Hotel Del, where she will be hosting a pre-screening Q&A before watching the original 1959 movie starring Sandra Dee as Gidget.

The second event will be on July 13, and Kohner-Zuckerman will be attending a screening of the documentary followed by a book signing and a Q&A.

There will only be 200 tickets available for the Gidget Beach Bash event at the Hotel Del, and seating for the documentary screening on July 13 is limited to the seats at the Village Theatre.

Tickets go on sale May 16 on the Coronado Island Film Festival's website with options for both general admission and VIP tickets.



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CORONADO

Coronado Unified finalizes staffing cuts for the 2024-2025 school year

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December that California is facing a \$68 billion deficit. Consequently, the school district needs to tighten its budget for the 2024-2025 school year for what administrators identified as a \$2.3 million deficit.

According to the district Public Information Officer, Maria Simon, if over the summer something changes in the budget and the schools decide to re-fill positions, they can. However, the current layoffs have been finalized.

At the special board meeting, Antrim acknowledged many parents have asked considering the fact that the cutbacks will impact students who benefit from mental health resources:

“If a student is in distress and they need some type of support, need a trusted adult to talk to, what is the timeline for that student to make sure they get spoken to?”

Antrim’s answer: “I am assured that we will still be able to have somebody check in on them that same day on all four campuses.”

Coronado High senior Rafael Roos, the first to earn a State Seal of Biliteracy in Dutch

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classes in Spanish, French and American Sign Language, and administers tests to students in a variety of other languages.

Senior Rafael Roos was the first Coronado High School student to earn a seal in Dutch. According to the district’s kindergarten through 12th grade world languages teacher, Maylen Sullivan, the school has never specifically tested for Dutch before.

“Rafael’s father, Roelof, was the one who identified a testing company who could help us administer the Dutch test,” Sullivan said.

According to Roelof Roos, Rafael has worked on his Dutch language certification for years, and during that process, found out that he would qualify to get his SSB if the school supported it, which CHS did.

When they found out that the official Dutch exam was administered in Anaheim during advanced placement testing, the high school’s language department found another Dutch exam, which was administered on campus.

“It was excellent; we are incredibly grateful to the staff and administrators,” Roelof Roos said. “CHS is clearly at the forefront with its support for biliteracy, and I am sure many other schools will follow in the future.”

Rafael was able to meet the Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands while celebrating Kings Day, a national holiday in Holland, with his family in San Diego on April 27.

The Consul General, Dirk Janssen, hand-delivered a letter congratulating Rafael on receiving the SSB in Spanish and Dutch.

“This recognition is a testament to your dedication and commitment to mastering these languages in addition to English, and it is indeed a remarkable achievement,” said Janssen.

Janssen believes Roos may be the first San Diego student to earn the SSB in Dutch, and he expressed “gratitude to Coronado High School for organizing the Dutch language examination, which has made the achievement possible.”

Information courtesy of CUSD Public Information Officer Maria Simon.



FILE – Visitors take part in the annual Donation Day Parade in Grass Valley, Calif., Dec. 21, 2023. On Tuesday, April 30, 2024, the California Department of Finance announced California’s population increased by just over 67,000 people in 2023. It was the first population increase since 2019. Photo by Elias Funez/The Union via AP, File

California’s population grew in 2023, halting 3 years of decline

Associated Press

The nation’s most populous state is growing again.

California gained population last year for the first time since 2019, according to a new estimate released Tuesday by Gov. Gavin Newsom’s administration.

The net increase of just over 67,000 residents in 2023 — a 0.17% increase — stopped a three-year trend of population decline, which included the state’s first-ever year-over-year loss during the pivotal census year of 2020 that later led to California losing a congressional seat. The state estimates California now has more than 39.1 million residents, easily beating out Texas as the nation’s most populous state.

The Newsom administration had blamed the decline on a combination of increased mortality rates during the coronavirus pandemic, a declining birth rate and a slowdown in legal international immigration caused by the pandemic and stricter immigration rules during President Donald Trump’s administration.

But critics pointed to a surge of people leaving California for other states, interpreting it as residents fed up with high taxes, a large homeless population and a shortage of housing while Democrats have been in power.

More people still left California in 2023 than moved here from other states, but it was far less than previous years. In 2021 — when the coronavirus was still surging and more people were transitioning to remote work — California lost a net 355,648 people because of domestic migration.

In 2023 — with the pandemic

winding down and companies placing more emphasis on returning to in-office workspaces — 91,189 more people moved away from California than into the state. That number is much closer to pre-pandemic trends, according to Walter Schwarm, chief demographer for the California Department of Finance.

“We saw it increase at the beginning of the pandemic because there was a certain amount of individuals who moved out of state associated with the ability to work remotely, but we’ve seen that trend reverse,” said H.D. Palmer, spokesperson for the California Department of Finance.

Meanwhile, growth from legal international immigration — which has been California’s growth engine for decades — rebounded with a net gain of 114,200 people in 2023, or almost back to the same level it was before the pandemic.

“With immigration processing backlogs largely eliminated and deaths returning to long-term trends, a stable foundation for continued growth has returned,” the Department of Finance noted in a news release announcing the estimate.

California’s economy has shown signs of strain recently. The state is in the middle of back-to-back multi-billion dollar budget deficits because of declines in state tax revenue. California’s unemployment rate is 5.3%, which is above the national average and the highest of any state. And the state’s stalwart technology industry has been beset by layoffs as companies deal with a slowdown in investments.

Despite that, the population increased in 31 of California’s 58 counties — including nine of the 10 coun-

ties with populations over 1 million. Los Angeles County — the nation’s most populous with more than 9 million residents — grew slightly by 0.05%, while nearby Orange County grew by 0.31%.

California’s population had been booming ever since it became a state in 1850 as a gold rush prompted a surge of people crossing the frontier to seek their fortune in the West. The state had notable surges following World War II fueled by a burgeoning aerospace industry and again in the 1980s and 90s with the technology boom in Silicon Valley.

By 2019, California was threatening to break the 40 million population threshold. But that milestone never happened as the state began a period of population decline in 2020.

The California Department of Finance releases two population estimates each year: One for the previous calendar year and one for the previous fiscal year, which runs from July 1 to June 30. The estimate released Tuesday was for the previous calendar year, offering an estimate of the state’s population as of Jan. 1, 2024.

California bases its estimate on a number of factors, including births and deaths, drivers license address changes, vehicle registration and enrollment in the government-funded health insurance programs of Medicaid and Medicare.

U.S. Census data released in December showed California with a population of 38.9 million people as of July 1, 2023. The Newsom administration’s estimate is higher, they said, because it includes more updated data from driver’s license changes and tax filings.

Velella velella reach Coronado South Beach

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they can be blown onshore in large numbers.

In a recent social media post, Scripps took to Instagram to share that the Velella is not in the same group as a jellyfish and mostly eats invertebrate zooplankton and the occasional larval fish.

While the Velella sting is not considered dangerous to humans, unlike some species of jellyfish, Scripps since last year advised people to observe, take photos, but refrain from disturbing them.

“The Velella are really at the mercy of the winds more than the currents because they have that sail,” said Kevin Hovel, professor of marine ecology and vice chair of the Department of Biology at San Diego State University.

“If you get really strong winds, you get some storms, you get things like El Niño...then they start to not be able to control where they’re going and they just get stranded. The wind just pushes

them all onto the beach.”

The appearance of Velella on local shorelines occurs annually in the spring.

And what people are seeing is one of two main parts of the Velella velella’s life cycle, the polyp stage, said Hovel.

According to the Oregon Coast Aquarium, each Velella is a colony of individuals (called polyps), divided into separate groups that specialize in feeding and reproduction, while others protect the colony and provide structural support.

Hovel said there are two reasons the Velella are appearing across local shorelines.

“One is that it’s spring and they’re really abundant because you have the water getting warmer, you have the food chain sort of kicking into gear,” said Hovel. “Sometimes in an El Niño year...the currents that normally would move offshore...tend to weaken, and that means that it’s easier for these things to be pushed in onto land.”

According to Hovel, Velellas have floating tentacles that hang down in the water, and sting prey like shrimp and other little floating animals in their open ocean habitats and deep water.

“They’re blue, but when they start to dry up and die, they turn clear, so the clear ones are the ones that have probably been there a little longer and they lose their pigmentation,” said Hovel. “People really can’t be hurt by them too much.”

Scripps experts say Velellas are benign to humans with stinging cells intended for their zooplankton prey that are usually not strong enough to penetrate or harm human skin.

And Hovel agrees that touching the Velella will not harm a person, but he said people may experience irritation if one proceeds to touch their face and sensitive areas like the eyes.

“They don’t have a hard shell except for that one little bit of the sail,” added Hovel. “It doesn’t take long for them to decompose and be broken up.”

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NAVY



May 1, 2024, Electronics Technician 3rd Class Steven Rivas, left, from Carson, Calif., demonstrates systems aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) to James Mendoza, from Little Creek Va., member of the Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV). Abraham Lincoln is currently moored pierside at Naval Air Station North Island. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Apprentice Mario Castro Gamez.

USS Abraham Lincoln completes board of inspection

DVIDS

Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, homeported at Naval Air Station North Island, completed its Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) assessment on May 1.

During INSURV, over 150 inspectors embarked Abraham Lincoln to observe and assess hundreds of spaces, events and demonstrations in port and at sea. INSURV inspectors examined the readiness of multiple warfare areas on the ship, to include

engineering, combat systems and navigation, as well as the habitability and quality of living spaces.

“Congratulations to the Lincoln crew for their outstanding performance on this rigorous inspection,” said Capt. Pete Riebe, Abraham Lincoln’s commanding officer. “Your efforts in ensuring our combat readiness matters, and it does not go unnoticed. You have proven to the Navy and nation that our ship stands ready to go in harm’s way and our systems are ready to conduct the full

spectrum of operations.”

Abraham Lincoln’s successful performance is the result of the crew’s dedicated efforts and preparation. Leading up to INSURV, the crew completed preceding inspections to ensure the ship and crew were prepared.

“We are gathered here today as a team to do the vital preparations for the biggest inspection this ship will face in a three-year period, second only to actual combat, and that’s our combat readiness inspection,” said Lt.

Cmdr. Aaron Mitchem, ship’s security officer and the INSURV coordinator of Abraham Lincoln. “Combat readiness is our mission, so this inspection is incredibly important. I am excited to show the inspectors that are coming onboard how ready we are to answer the Nation’s call, anytime, anywhere.”

Immediately following INSURV, the crew will continue to prepare for ongoing excellence in maintaining combat and mission readiness for the future.



Information Warfare Training Command welcomes new commander

DVIDS

Cmdr. Daniel R. Flemming relieved Cmdr. J. Greg Gabriel as commanding officer of Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) San Diego during a change of command and retirement ceremony.

“I want to personally thank the entire IWTC San Diego team for their hard work, dedication to the mission, and service to our great Nation,” said Gabriel. “Serving as CO of the best schoolhouse in the fleet has been the proudest professional accomplishment in my 21 years of Navy service. As I retire from active duty, I am fully confident in the command’s continued success under the exceptional leadership of Commander Danny Flemming.”

Gabriel assumed command of IWTC San Diego in June 2022. He led 240 military, civilian and contracted personnel in delivering more than 60,000 hours of instruction at train-

ing sites in California, Washington, Hawaii and Japan.

His people-first attitude, proactive management, meticulous ownership, and tireless work ethic led to significant advances across the domain in areas such as curriculum maintenance, instructor professionalism, and process improvement.

“I am extremely grateful for Greg’s mentorship and exceptional leadership,” said Flemming. “IWTC San Diego is renowned for taking care of its people, delivering world-class training, and helping to shape the future of the Information Warfare Community across the Fleet. I appreciate everyone who contributed to the successful turnover process and look forward to working with this remarkable team.”

Flemming, a native of Loganville, Ga, previously served as the Maritime Intelligence Operations Center at Pacific Fleet, and most recently served as the director of intelligence at Naval Special Warfare Group ONE.

LEFT: Cmdr. Daniel Flemming (left) assumed command of Information Warfare Training Command (IWTC) San Diego from Cmdr. J. Greg Gabriel (right), who subsequently retired following 21 years of service. IWTC San Diego, as part of the Center for Information Warfare Training (CIWT), provides a continuum of training to Navy and joint service personnel at sites across the Pacific that prepares them to conduct information warfare across the full spectrum of military operations.

Photo by Kurt Van Slooten.

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NAVY

Historic honor tour in San Diego ends with the welcome of a lifetime

» Continued from Page 1

emotional homecoming at San Diego International Airport reminded participating veterans how grateful the community is for their service.

"We appreciated the San Diego community support and more so, the veterans appreciated it," wrote Holly Shaffner, vice-chair and public relations director. "They truly got the homecoming they didn't receive 50-plus years ago when they came home from Vietnam."

The organization said the flight welcoming U.S. Navy Special Warfare Operators is a first in the 19-year history of the Honor Flight Network. Among the veterans on board was Medal of Honor recipient Michael Thornton.

According to HFSD Chair Julie Brightwell, all of the participants came through Coronado for their training, and more than a dozen others who accompanied them during the weekend were from Coronado.

"These Vietnam combat veterans were finally able to see that the citizens of Coronado, San Diego, and the entire nation are grateful for their service and sacrifice," wrote Brightwell. "What they did has not been forgotten, and over 800 people came to the airport to make sure they know that!"

The last weekend in April marked the reconnection of a lifetime for local and visiting veterans, a trip that reinforced bonds formed among warriors more than a half-century ago.

Vietnam veteran Mike Chase, 77, described the three days in Washington, D.C., as being, "almost like a fraternity party."

Chase, a retired professor, has lived in Coronado for the past 50 years and said he was encouraged to participate by fellow veteran officer Chuck Chaldek.

"It's a moving experience," said Chase. "All you can say is, 'Thank you,' because everybody's there, including little kids."

Chase added that he extended the invitation to his friend and veteran, Leonard Copenrath.

As one of the youngest participating veterans on the tour Copenrath, 72, shared in the gratitude Chase expressed about reconnecting with old pals who share significant life memories.

"It's a brotherhood that just continues. These are relationships you started as very young men through some very hard times," said Copenrath. "It might've been 50 years since the last time you saw them, but that love is still there."

Copenrath, who traveled from Idaho to participate in the trip, said he received more than 50 letters from multiple people as they headed east.

"There probably wasn't a dry eye on that airplane reading those letters on the way to Baltimore," said Copenrath.

Following a weekend of camaraderie and emotions, Copenrath expressed appreciation for the friendly airport receptions he, like Chaldek and other veterans, experienced which helped them heal from bitter experiences they faced coming home from Vietnam amid anti-war protests that sometimes demonized U.S. troops.

"This did not erase those memories, but it will push them way back in our memories so that they're not so easily brought up," said Chaldek. "The people of honor flight were so helpful in changing our thoughts and bringing about those memories so we could put an end to many of them if it is possible to do that."

"The important thing is you took care of your brother seals," said Copenrath. "That's the mantra we were raised (with) in that community and it didn't skip a beat this weekend, and we were still there for each other through all these years."

In fact, after returning home, Chaldek welcomed a fellow participant and his wife to the Vietnam Unit Memorial Monument at Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado.

The monument features a wall of remembrance for the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard personnel who gave



Hundreds of people gather to welcome veterans who served as Naval Special Warfare Operators (SEALs and Boat Crewmen) during the Korean and Vietnam Wars on Sunday, April 28 at the San Diego International Airport.

Photo courtesy of Chuck Chaldek.



According to the fund organization, the Vietnam Unit Memorial Monument in Coronado is dedicated to the 2,564 Navy and Coast Guard men who died in the air, on the land, on the rivers, or at sea in support of Naval operations in the Vietnam War (1960-1975). Staff photo by Julieta Soto.

their lives during the Vietnam War (1960-1975). It also is the home to three restored craft that represent the type of boats used by the "Brown Water Navy" in Vietnam, according to the organization's website. Also displayed are the names of those Navy men who were awarded the Medal of Honor and Navy Cross.

"I rode all of those boats during my three tours of Vietnam," said Chaldek during a recent tour of the Memorial.

Originally from Detroit, Chaldek said he was part of training class 50 and arrived in Coronado in 1968. Following his training that ended in May, 1969, Chaldek was assigned to the Seal Platoon that was part of SEAL Team 1 and deployed to Vietnam.

"One of the reasons that I'm here is three of the people on the wall were in my first platoon and two of them were in our training class," said Chaldek, who retired as the force training officer at Naval special warfare in 1993. "Our personal grief from those who were like brothers to us is nothing compared to what families have to deal with."

For the past 15 years, Chaldek has been part of the Vietnam Unit Memorial Monument Fund, a nonprofit organization working to maintain the memorial for years to come.

Chaldek said that memorial officers and groups of other volunteers

spend days out of the week helping to keep it a space where a variety of people convene. With primary work like mowing occurring on Tuesday and cleaning the boats every third Saturday.

As president of the Memorial Monument Fund, Chaldek said it is his desire to make sure that the families of those people on the wall understand that somebody cares for what they did, where they went and who they were and now more than ever following his honor tour.

"Going on this trip has charged me up," said Chaldek. "If I can give my thinking to other people and help them to understand who those people were and who the people who operated these boats were, that's worth it to me."

And while the Vietnam Unit Memorial is open for all who wish to visit, Chaldek encourages non-DOD visitors requiring an approved escort to visit the Vietnam Unit Memorial website to make arrangements.

"The fact that we're getting things like this in place is a reflection of the passion of a lot of our guys who have served in the teams," said Copenrath. "You got to have the passion. And Chuck's one of those guys. It means a lot."

"It's not just me, it's a whole bunch of other volunteers," added Chaldek who hopes to continue grow-



Naval Special Warfare Vietnam combat veterans who participated in the first flight of 2024 hosted by Honor Flight San Diego received dozens of letters from community members and their families. Photo courtesy of Leonard Copenrath.

ing the volunteer network. "It's up to us to maintain that site so that family members can come and visit there and have good memories again of their family members and friends who did not come home."

For now, another of Chaldek's priorities is to write to all those that took the time to thank him for his service in the bundle of letters he received during the departure and return flight to San Diego.

"It was just amazing to receive that many letters and cards and thoughts from people throughout the country," said Chaldek. "I appreciated their effort to make me feel better."

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SPORTS

Coronado's Chloe Quarles qualifies for CIF state swimming championships

Junior Chloe Quarles not only qualified for the state meet on May 4, but also broke the school's 200-meter IM record.

BY SOFIE FRANSEN
The Coronado News

The high school swim season came to a close for all but one Coronado athlete on May 4 in the CIF-San Diego Section swim finals.

Junior Chloe Quarles not only qualified for the 2024 CIF state swimming and diving championships with her time of 56:58 seconds in the 100-yard butterfly, but also broke her past school record of 57:92 seconds in that event at the CIF finals on May 4.

Quarles said one of her main goals for the 100-butterfly was to get a time that would qualify for the USA Swimming Futures Championships in July.

"I was really excited," Quarles said. "Honestly, I was pretty nervous because I was going for a time for a Futures cut, which is just a different standard for club swimming, so I was really just trying to drop more time because I was super close to it."

She made the cut for the Futures Championships by .01 seconds.

Quarles also shaved off about half a second from Coronado High School's previous 200-yard individual medley (IM) record, which was previously set by Alex Rodman in 2013.

She placed second in the 100-yard fly behind a girl who broke the CIF record. She said she finished about a full-body length ahead of the third place finish.

"I was racing seven other people," Quarles said of her qualifying race. "It was actually really exciting just because it's totally a different atmosphere than any other meet."

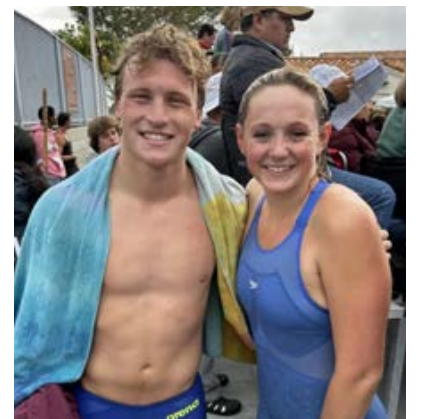
Quarles was an alternate for last year's state finals, so this upcoming weekend will be her first time actually swimming in a state meet.

"It's been really fun," Quarles said of this year's swim season at CHS. "I love the environment; everyone's always cheering at the meets and ...supporting each other."

Quarles' strong performance in the CIF finals follows a season laced with successful accomplishments for both her and the rest of the team.



Chloe Quarles beat her record with a time of 56:58 seconds in the 100-meter fly on May 4. Photos courtesy of Amber Quarles.



Gage Everitt (left) and Chloe Quarles (right) were both 100-meter fly champions in the San Diego City Meet.

Other notable performances at the CIF finals on May 4:

Boys relays:

- In the boys 200-yard freestyle relay, David Abdul Samad, Gage Everitt, Spencer Williams and Ryan Mondzelewski placed third.
- In the boys 200-yard medley relay, Boone Barnum, Luca Morocco, Gage Everitt and David Abdul Samad placed eighth.
- The boys 400-yard free relay team (Ryan Mondzelewski, Spencer Williams, Jake Walker, Luca Morocco) had an eighth place finish.

Boys Individual swims:

- Gage Everitt finished in first place for the 100-yard fly and finished second in the 100-yard back.
- David Abdul Samad finished 12th in the 100-yard free.
- Ryan Mondzelewski placed 16th in both the 50-yard free and the 100-yard free.
- Luca Morocco finished 11th in the 200-yard IM.

Girls Relays:

- In the 200-yard medley relay, Jillian Stachowicz, Kate Hutcherson, Harper Gilbert and Chloe Quarles placed 6th.
- In the 200-yard free, Chloe Quarles, Kate Hutcherson, Jamison Everitt and Megan Ledgerwood placed third.
- In the 400-yard free, Jamison Everitt, Mirren Fallon, Megan Ledgerwood and Jillian Stachowicz placed 9th.

Girls Individual Swims:

- Kate Hutcherson got fifth place in the 50-yard free.
- Jamison Everitt placed 12th in the 200-yard free and 10th in the 100-yard fly.
- Jillian Stachowicz finished 13th in the 200-yard IM and 11th in the 100-yard breast.
- Caraline Wastilla placed 16th in the 500-yard free.

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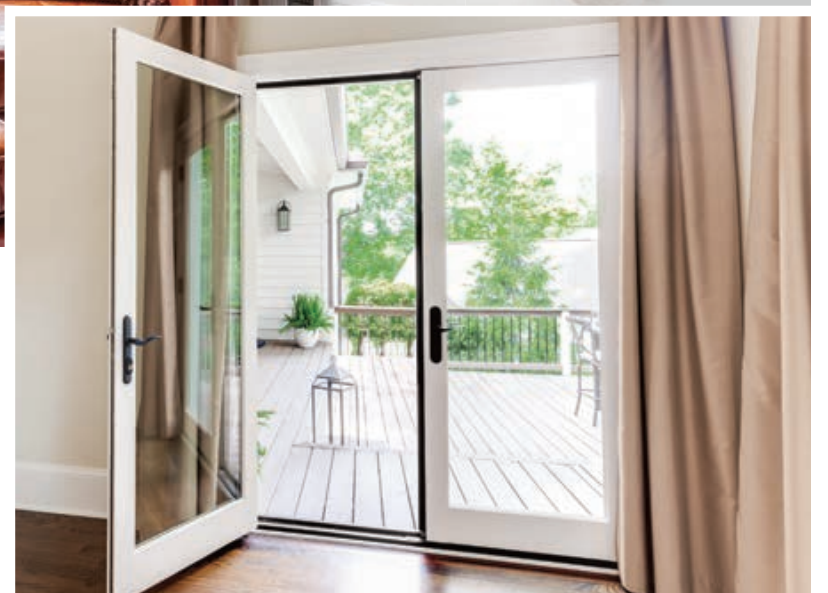
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SPORTS

Coronado High track compete at the Dick Wilkins Championships

A number of Coronado High School athletes competed at the Dick Wilkins Frosh/Soph Championships, with many of them placing in the top ten in the overall event.

BY MADELINE YANG
The Coronado News

The Coronado High School Islanders were in action at the April 27 Dick Wilkins Frosh/Soph Championships, held at Del Norte High School in San Diego. The meet features the top 18-27 freshman and sophomore track and field athletes in each event in the San Diego CIF section.

This meet was separated into two sections: the invitational section which include the top nine seeded athletes in the evening, and an open section which include the remaining qualifiers in the daytime.

This applies to track events, as all field events were considered invitational events. In this meet, all athletes compete against other athletes of the same grade level.

The Islanders were led by multiple standout athletes in different events, including Nathan Ayan who finished fifth overall in the invitational 800-meter run and Summer Little who placed seventh overall in the open 100-meter dash.

Ayan notched a personal record (PR) and the meet was his first time clocking a time under two minutes. This performance also ranks him as No. 2 in the city league, behind Islander teammate Rafael Roos. The Islander 800-meter runners currently rank 16th and 30th in the entire San Diego CIF section.

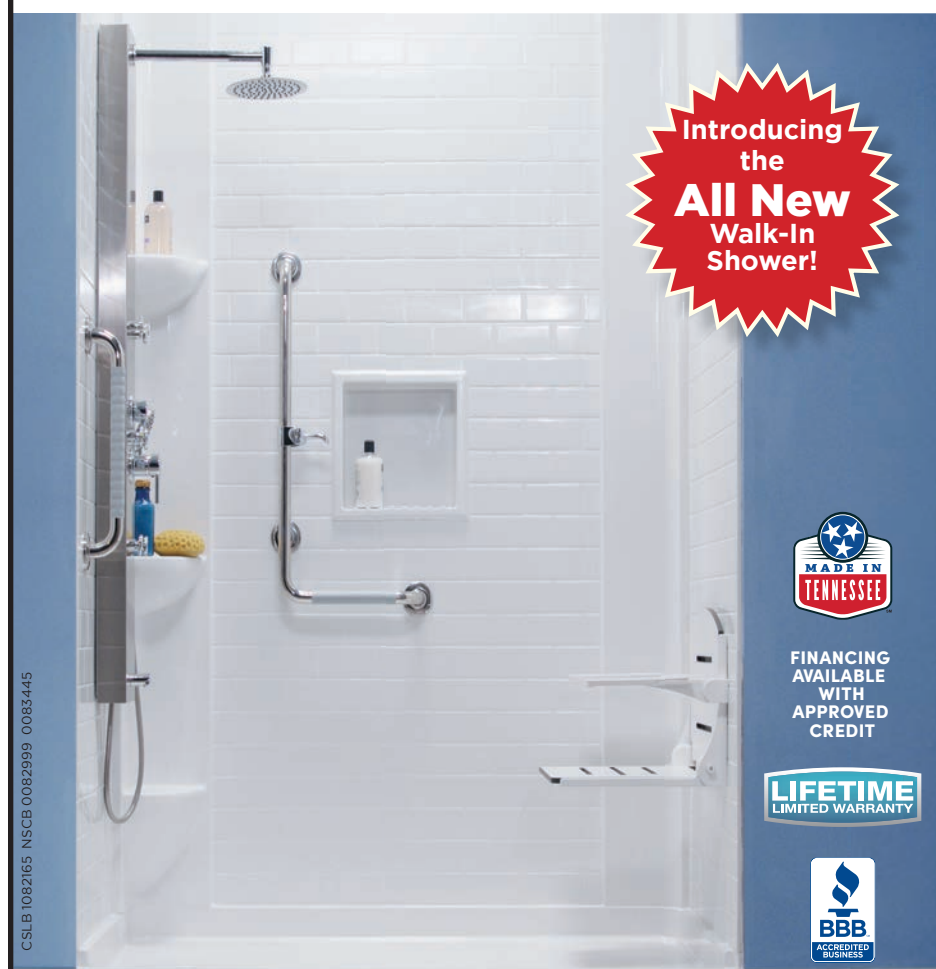


Davin Collins (left) ran the 100, 200, and 4x100 relay at the Frosh/Soph meet on April 27.

Photo by Dennis McClanahan.

Other notable finishes

- Freshman Xavier Marsh placed second in his heat and finished third overall in the open 400-meter dash, clocking a time of 55.30 seconds.
- Sophomore Summer Little placed third in her heat and seventh overall in the open 100-meter dash, clocking a time of 13.36 seconds. Little is currently ranked ninth in the city league in this event.
- Sophomore Micaela Gistaro placed 12th and 10th overall, respectively, in the open 200- and 400-meter dash events. Her respective times were 27.18 seconds, which was a season best, and 63.16 seconds, a PR. Gistaro is currently ranked 10th and eighth in the city league in those respective events.
- In the field events, freshmen Aiden Roberts finished fifth in the high jump with a leap of 5'5". Roberts is currently ranked fifth in the city league in this event.
- Trey Stallworth finished 12th in the long jump with a leap of 17'9.50".
- Sophomore Noah Voltin finished 18th in the triple jump with a leap of 37'6".
- Finally, Sophomore Davin Collins did triple duty. He ran a leg on the sophomore boys 4x100-meter relay, where they finished second in their heat and 11th overall with a time of 47.09 seconds. He was accompanied by Mason Gibbs, William Heyen and Voltin.
- Collins went on to place 11th overall in the open 100-meter dash with a time of 11.52 seconds. He also placed sixth overall in the 200-meter dash, with a time of 22.93 seconds. Even though his 200-meter time was wind-aided, this was his fastest fully-automatically timed 200-meter performance.
- Collins is currently ranked second in the city league in the 200-meter dash.



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SPORTS

PADRES ROUNDUP

Arraez traded from Miami, Darvish off injured list

Associated Press

Luis Arraez had four hits and an RBI in his first game after being traded from Miami, and the Padres routed the listless Arizona Diamondbacks 13-1 on May 4.

The Padres made a massive deal before the game, acquiring Arraez from the Marlins along with nearly \$7.9 million in a trade for four players. The two-time batting champion didn't join his new team until about 3:30 p.m., but wasted no time in producing, going 4 for 6 while scoring two runs.

"Clearly an amazing approach and I can see why he is the rightful moniker of 'The Sprinkler,'" Padres manager Micke Shildt said. "You're talking about he's an artist being able to put the ball in the whole field. That was that was a sight to behold. What a talent."

Arraez wasn't the only San Diego player seeing the ball well at Chase Field.

Jurickson Profar had a two-run homer in the seventh inning among his four hits and Kim followed with a three-run shot. Manny Machado had three RBIs and Michael King (3-3) allowed six singles in six innings for San Diego's season-high fourth straight victory. The Padres had 18 hits.

"I absolutely love him," King said about Arraez. "He's a sparkplug who's a really tough out and just finds the bases. It's going to be really fun to see him with the guys we have behind him."

Jake Cronenworth's grand slam against the Reds

Jake Cronenworth hit a tiebreaking grand slam in the seventh inning and Jurickson Profar had four hits for the San Diego Padres, who beat the Cincinnati Reds 6-2 on May 1 to take two of three in the series.

Cronenworth hit his third career grand slam and the second for the Padres this season. It came after Tyler Wade opened the inning with a bunt single over the head of reliever Fernando Cruz (1-2), followed by Profar's single and Fernando Tatis Jr.'s walk. Cronenworth connected to right on the first pitch he saw from Cruz.

Profar, re-signed in the offseason to a \$1 million, one-year contract, extended his hitting streak to



San Diego Padres' Jake Cronenworth, right, celebrates with teammates Fernando Tatis Jr., left, and Jurickson Profar (10) after hitting a grand slam during the seventh inning of a baseball game against the Cincinnati Reds, Wednesday, May 1, 2024, in San Diego. Photo by Gregory Bull/AP.

eight games. He had a two-run single in the fourth.

The Padres got six strong innings in a bounce-back performance from Joe Musgrove and ended a six-game homestand with two victories. They were swept by the Philadelphia Phillies and then lost the opener of this series to extend their season-high losing streak to five games.

"It's huge, after a rough series to start the homestand and come back and beat a really good team in Cincinnati," Cronenworth said.

Darvish earns first win off injured list

Yu Darvish earned his first win of the season, pitching five shutout innings after coming off the injured list, and Manny Machado hit a three-run double as the San Diego Padres beat the Cincinnati Reds 6-4 on April 30 to halt a five-game slide.

Darvish (1-1) was in command throughout his outing, giving up three hits and no walks while striking out three.

"Obviously, you are in there trying to get us out of the funk, so that is the mentality — let's stop the losing streak right here," Darvish said through a trans-



San Diego Padres' Luis Arraez scores on a base hit by Manny Machado during the first inning of a baseball game against the Arizona Diamondbacks, Saturday, May 4, 2024, in Phoenix. Photo by Matt York/AP.

lator. "Overall, the ball was coming out right. I had pretty good command for the most part."

The Padres scored four times in the fifth to take a 5-0 lead. The rally was keyed by Machado's bases-loaded double to right-center with none out off starter Nick Martinez (0-2), who pitched for San Diego the past two seasons.

"Bad execution to the wrong guy," Martinez said. "That's kind of been my thing this year. Some bad luck and the bad pitch, four runs. It's frustrating, but part of the game. I just have to keep going."

San Diego's first run came in the third when Jake Cronenworth singled in Fernando Tatis Jr., who doubled.

The Padres also loaded the bases with no outs in the first, but Martinez was able to wiggle out of the jam without allowing a run. Martinez lasted five innings, permitting five runs (three earned) and six hits.

"We had our chances to even score some more runs. Those are some opportunities we need to capitalize on. But, it was great all around," Cronenworth said. "(Darvish) looked great. It didn't even look like he took any time off."

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