THE CORONADO NEWS

ONLINE 24/7 @ THECORONADONEWS.COM • FRIDAY, NOV. 1, 2024 • VOLUME 2, NUMBER 37

Coronado's nonpartisan elections don't seem nonpartisan anymore

Coronado's nonpartisan elections have slowly turned into a war between both parties, with political action committees being used to fuel the flames on both sides.

BY MADELINE YANG
The Coronado News

Coronado, known as a friendly and serene island community with nonpartisan elections, has somehow erupted into open combat between Republicans and Democrats, with both sides seemingly relying on political action committees (PACs) to wage their electoral fight.

That conflict, which mirrors the partisan acrimony and cultural warfare going on nationwide, has been compounded with rumors and misinformation amplified on social media outlets and even at a City Council meeting.

According to the San Diego County Registrar of Voters, there are 3,555 Democrats and 4,198 Republicans registered in Coronado as of Oct. 1.

PACs backing (or vilifying) Democrat and Republican candidates have operated behind the scenes in Coronado's 2024 election, with accusations thrown around the city on both sides.

The vitriol reached a level where City Council candidate Andrew Gade submitted a letter to the The Coronado News editor, weighing in on the rise of partisan nastiness.

"There has been a troubling rise in divisive rhetoric this year," Gade wrote. "This kind of partisan politics hinders progress and diminishes our ability to address local issues effectively. Instead of focusing on personal attacks, we should work towards practical solutions for the city that we all love and are deeply committed to."

A federal super PAC

In emails and at a City Council meeting this month, Coronado resident Brad Gerbel – a Republican campaign figure – made a number of allegations about an entity known as the Marvin Lucas SuperPAC. The super PAC, registered with the Coronado City Clerk, has one major contributor, Gail Bardin, a local resident who donated $10,000.

Gerbel asserted that the organization was formed on behalf of U.S. Rep. Marvin Lucas, a North Carolina Democrat, but "is now being revived to meddle in Coronado's local election."

The congressman's office did not immediately respond to inquiries. However, contrary to Gerbel's claim, Bardin said the Marvin Lucas SuperPAC has nothing to do with the representative by that name.

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Patricia Gonsenheim takes a moment to read messages Coronado Public Library visitors have left their loved ones in a Dia de los Muertos book.
Staff photo by Julieta Soto.

Honoring Coronado through Dia de los Muertos

The Mexican community in Coronado has brought together this year's Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) exhibit in honor of the city.

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News

Tucked into a corner of a diorama in the children's section of the Coronado Public Library is a miniature Hotel del Coronado, its iconic red turret set beside two skeletons. Next to it are compadres, or pals, a veracruzano, a native of the Mexican state of Veracruz, and

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A breakdown of Coronado races and state ballot propositions

BY SOFIE FRANSEN
The Coronado News

Editor's Note: The Coronado News will have complete online coverage of election day on Nov. 5. However, community members should not expect to see final election results that day. San Diego County uses the vote center model under the California Voters Choice Act, meaning elections are no longer a one-day event. The Coronado News will cover polling throughout the day, as well as coverage of the first unofficial results posting around 8 p.m. Updates will continue throughout the night and the following days.

There will soon be a shift in leadership at Coronado City Hall and in local schools as the Nov. 5 elections are fast approaching.

Mayor Richard Bailey will term out of his seat at the end of the year, and three candidates are vying to fill that position: current council members Mike Donovan, John Duncan and Casey Tanaka.

Six candidates – Mark Fleming, Andrew Gade, Christine Mott, Amy Steward, Mark Warner and Laura Wilkinson Sinton – are running for two open City Council seats. If Duncan, a current council member, wins the mayoral race and leaves his seat vacant, the council will need to appoint someone to fill that seat or hold a special election.

At the same time, the Coronado Unified School District has two trustee seats up for grabs and four candidates are running for those four-year terms – Shawnee Barton Merriman, Renee Cavanaugh, Bill Sandke and Fitzhugh Lee.

Meanwhile, there are 10 statewide propositions included in this year's ballot that Coronado voters will weigh in on. Here is a breakdown of those propositions:

Prop. 2: Bonds for building schools

With this proposition, the state could borrow $10

» Continued on Page 9

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this week

2 • saturday

From 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Coronado High School main stage theater, the City of Coronado will honor hometown heroes in the Avenue of Heroes ceremony. The program recognizes men and women who currently live, or have lived, in Coronado during their military careers.

Nov. 6 - 10

The Coronado Island Film Festival is taking place Nov. 6-10. This four-day pedestrian-friendly festival offers a slate of more than 80 films cultivated from a diverse selection of genres, plus compelling panels, lively workshops and parties. Purchase tickets at https://coronadofilmfest.com/

CORRECTION

The story titled, "A tennis fee increase, among other recreation facility updates, have been implemented" in the Sept. 27 print edition incorrectly identified Samantha Nelson's role with bid requests, as according to the lawsuit filed by Mario DiLonardo. This information was unable to be verified by the city, so it was removed from the story. The online version of the story is updated to reflect those changes.

CONTACT US

For news tips, story submissions and letters to the editor, contact Editor Sofie Fransen at sofie@thecoronadonews.com or 619-990-8465.

To advertise contact Ad Executive Braeden Stegman at braeden@numbersix.com

Vote Center open at library through Election Day

Coronado News staff

The Winn Room at the Coronado Public Library is an official Vote Center from Nov. 2-Nov. 5 for the Presidential General Election.

The center will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Nov. 2-Nov. 4 and from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on election day, Nov. 5.

Vote Centers offer a full-service voting experience:

- Participants can vote in-person or drop off an already voted mail ballot (sealed inside its return envelope).
- Voters can use a touchscreen ballot marking device to mark selections and print out an official ballot.
- Voters with disabilities can vote independently and privately through the fully accessible ballot marking devices.
- Voters can carry in the official ballot they receive in the mail, check in at the vote center, sign the electronic roster, and cast their official ballot free of its security return envelope.
- The center will provide ballot marking devices for anyone who lost their mail ballot or made a mistake.
- The center provides voting assistance, including in multiple languages.
- Voters can register to vote or update their registration and vote on the same day.

For questions about the Vote Center, contact the San Diego Registrar of Voters at sdvote.com or 858-565-5800.

PETS OF THE WEEK

Meet Lolita and Gomez

PAWS of Coronado

Are you getting Betty White vibes? Because we are: Meet Lolita, a female shepherd who is chatty, sweet and surprisingly spry at 8 years old. She likes to talk about pretty much everything, especially over the excitement of going in her room or the yard to play.

Lolita goes to day foster, and her caregivers feel like she would be a great family member, as she looks for affection and attention from her human friends.

This quiet lady loves to relax, whether it's lounging in a sunny spot or snuggling up on the couch. Lolita's calm demeanor makes her the perfect companion for a peaceful home. She enjoys gentle walks and appreciates the simple joys in life. With her loving nature, Lolita will bring warmth and companionship to anyone lucky enough to welcome her into their family.

Also, meet Gomez. This sweet 1.5-year-old chiweenie has a heart full of love, but his shy nature makes him a little cautious at first.

With his big, soulful eyes and adorable mix of chihuahua and dachshund features, he captures hearts easily. Although he's affectionate and eager to bond, he struggles with separation anxiety, often seeking comfort close to his humans.

Once he feels safe, his playful spirit emerges, and he loves to snuggle up for a cozy cuddle session. With a bit of patience and reassurance, he blossoms into a loyal companion who just wants to be by your side.

All animals at PAWS are spayed/neutered, microchipped, vaccinated and up to date on flea prevention. Adoptions are by appointment only. If you are interested in adopting, please visit pawsofcoronado.org.



Lolita.



Gomez.



Get Vaccinated for Fall and Winter

Protect yourself against COVID-19 and the flu. Staying up to date on vaccines is the most important step you and your loved ones can take to be safe.

The Sharp Coronado Community Pharmacy offers COVID-19 and flu vaccines. Visit **sharp.com/coronado** or call **619-522-3996** for more information.

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OUR STORY

"Once Upon A Time" my son and I were discussing solar systems over lunch. Being licensed electricians, we were familiar with Solar Applications and its advantages.

After conducting a fair amount of research, we determined that Solar Technology had advanced to the point that adding a Solar Panel to the roof of a golf cart could significantly add to the travel range, as well as several other advantages including Green Movement Tax Credits.

I had recently moved to a golf cart community and purchased a cart of my own, after installing the best and most powerful system available, the concept of installing Solar Panels on golf carts was conceived.

We began spreading the word to our friends who owned electric carts and began installing Solar Panels on their carts in our spare time out of our garage in Oceanside, CA. Due to the publicized acceptance and popularity in Beach Communities of San Diego County, we decided to expand the business even further. Many beach cities have permitted the use of golf carts in 35 mph zones and are expanding Bike Lanes to 7 feet wide to accommodate their use.

So, there you have it. There is more to the story and we would love to discuss it with you while we install your Solar Panels on your cart.

We took the concept of Green Solar Energy and put it to practical use to lessen the carbon footprint.

We look forward to meeting you soon.

Richard Stachowicz
Ride All Day Solar Carts
Owner and Coronado Resident



ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Make the Earth Happy. Solar energy is clean. No carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere as it is when batteries are plugged into the wall to charge. Similarly, no fossil fuels are consumed as they are in gas-powered golf carts. The sun's energy is both clean and renewable. With their renewable, clean energy and lack of generated pollution, solar charged golf carts are an Earth-friendly option. You can help ensure that golf courses will be around for a very long time.

FINANCIAL BENEFITS

While it can be costly up front to buy a solar-powered golf cart or convert your existing cart to solar, in the long run, you might save money. You might be eligible for cost incentives offered to people who go solar. Some programs include:

- Federal tax credits
- Federal grants
- State and local utility tax credits
- Rebates

Together, these can help make solar power an affordable option for your golf cart. Additionally, you will likely save quite a bit of money on your electricity bill without having an electric vehicle drawing from your home's electricity supply. Individuals aren't the only ones who benefit monetarily from solar power. When entire golf courses convert their fleets to solar-powered vehicles, they can slash their annual charging costs by about 20 percent. Whether you want to enhance the performance of your golf cart, help the environment, or save money in the long run, you're sure to benefit from changing your power to the sun.

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OPINION

Unfair coverage in tennis fee increase story

BY JOEL MYERS
Letter to the Editor

I was recently made aware of your latest article regarding the tennis fee adjustments, which was shared widely within the local tennis community. Upon reviewing the piece, it seems the coverage presented a one-sided narrative, portraying the changes in a sensationalized manner and casting our management of Coronado's tennis facilities unfairly. I would like to provide some key information that deserves inclusion to ensure a more balanced perspective.

First, several Coronado residents spoke in support of the fee adjustments during recent council meetings, emphasizing their fairness and the positive impact our management has had on the community. This important context was overlooked in your coverage.

Second, an independent study conducted by Next Practice Partners compared Coronado's rates to those of other tennis facilities in the region. Their findings confirmed that, even with the proposed three-year fee increase, Coronado's resident rates would still remain below the average for the San Diego area. Currently, residents pay just $0.63 per person per hour—a rate that has not been adjusted since 2012.

Additionally, the article contained a factual error regarding Sam Nelson's involvement with



Joel Myers is the Coronado Tennis Director. *Photo provided by Joel Myers.*

Impact Activities (now corrected). For the record, Mrs. Nelson was neither involved in the selection process nor part of the recommendation committee for our organization. Sam is highly regarded in the tennis community, and referencing her in the article without conducting proper research or verifying facts reflects a lack of professionalism by the author.

Our contractual agreement with the city, which was approved by the City Council in 2016, allowed us to charge $5 per resident and $15 per non-resident for two-hour court usage. These changes were scheduled for implementation on April 19, 2021, but the fee structure was reversed after just nine days, reverting to a per-court model instead of a per-person one. Council Members Downey and Duncan have acknowledged these adjustments to our contract in recent meetings. Despite rising operational costs, Impact Activities has adhered to the reduced fee structure for the past 3.5 years.

Given the improvements and contributions we've made to Coronado's tennis community, it is disheartening to see Impact Activities portrayed so negatively. Our intention has always been to enhance the community's tennis experience, and we remain committed to that goal.

We hope that future coverage from Coronado News will offer more balanced and accurate reporting.

Joel Myers is the Director of Tennis at the Coronado Tennis Center.

Deploring antisemitic fliers

BY STEPHEN J. MATHER
Letter to the Editor

Coronado is an idyllic place to live that often seems removed from the problems besetting the rest of our nation. A few weeks ago, our tranquility was burst by the presence of a hate group distributing antisemitic fliers near the Middle School.

For many of our neighbors, finding these flyers sparked fear and outrage. The sense of safety living in Coronado was instantly called into question.

The Coronado Council of Churches unequivocally deplores the recent intrusion into our community by this outside group. The dissemination of antisemitic or any hate inspired materials is something the churches in Coronado find disturbing. Such actions are meant to make particular groups feel unsafe and are repugnant to our values as Christians.

We urge all Coronado citizens to show solidarity with our Jewish neighbors and be on the outlook for any reoccurrence of this hate group's violation of our community's tranquility.

Rev. Stephen Mather is a Coronado native. He retired in 2021 as pastor of Coronado Community Church after 47 years of ministry.

LISA BENSON



JACK OHMAN



CORONADO

Final campaign filing numbers for all city candidates

The final campaign documents for all candidates have been filed as of Oct. 24.

BY MADELINE YANG
The Coronado News

With elections just over a week away, candidates have been filing their contributions to their campaign fund, with mayoral candidates John Duncan and Mike Donovan receiving the two highest contributions and City Council candidate Laura Wilkinson Sinton coming in third.

There are three mayoral candidates and six City Council candidates this year up for election on Nov. 5. Depending on who wins the mayoral race, there are two spots up for grabs on City Council, and of course, one spot for mayor as Mayor Richard Bailey terms out at the end of this year.

Council members Duncan, Donovan and Casey Tanaka are running for mayor.

Wilkinson Sinton, Andrew Gade, Amy Steward, Mark Fleming, Mark Warner and Christine Mott are all running for City Council.

The city has a local ordinance that contains stricter campaign requirements than the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) in some areas, according to the city's financial disclosure information. For example, the ordinance prohibits cash contributions and requires campaign donations to be made via credit card or check, and expenditures of $5 or more must be itemized.

Contributions are not allowed to exceed $200 from a single source, but there is no limit on a candidate's personal fund contributions to their campaign. They must report any personal fund contributions totaling $1,000 or more in the aggregate that they make in the last 90 days before an election.

Each candidate has been filing their donations since the beginning of the year. Duncan has received the most contributions at just over $68,600, Donovan at around $29,300 and Wilkinson Sinton receiving just under $21,000.

Warner received the least amount of contributions at a total of $4,700 for the calendar year.

Duncan filed $57,200 in expenditures for the year, Donovan filed $24,000 and Wilkinson Sinton filed $19,200.

Fleming received $16,500 in total contributions, spending just under $16,000 for his run for City Council.

Tanaka received $14,400 for his run for mayor but $4,000 of his campaign fund is surplus from when he last ran for City Council in 2020, and he rolled over the money from that campaign. He spent just around $9,600 for his run.

Steward received just around $13,500, with $3,500 of that total coming from her own campaign account. She filed $9,700 in expenditures.

Gade totaled just over $6,800 in donations. He filed $6,600 in expenditures.

Mott received $5,700, spending $4,400 on her campaign.

Warner received $4,700, filing $4,500 in expenditures.

Campaign finance reports for Coronado school board candidates

Fitzhugh Lee, a commercial pilot, has welcomed over $7,500. Shawnee Barton Merriman is just over $4,000 and Bill Sandke follows third with $1,950.

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News

After school board races conclude in a few weeks, two trustees will be elected to serve four-year terms at Coronado Unified School District. So far, candidate statements show the nonpartisan race does not involve hefty campaign spending.

Fitzhugh Lee leads all Coronado Unified School District candidates in fundraising for the Nov. 5 election, according to campaign financial statements, but more than half of the contributions come from his own pocket.

Collectively garnering more than $6,000, Lee, Shawnee Barton Merriman and Bill Sandke — in that order — received the highest monetary contributions, not including donations from the candidates themselves through Sept. 21.

A fourth candidate, Renee Cavanaugh, filed a short-form statement indicating she does not have a campaign finance committee and does not intend to receive or spend more than $2,000 in contributions.

Candidates filed respective campaign financial statements to meet the Registrar's Sept. 26 deadline that showed Lee's campaign leading with more than $3,000 received, according to the County's Public Access Portal.

In their second pre-election statement, reflecting Sept. 22-Oct. 19 filings, no campaigns reported new personal contributions from candidates.

Sandke, who serves as his committee's treasurer, reported $1,550 in total contributions and the same amount as the ending cash balance in his statement on Sept. 23.

In his second statement, Sandke reported a $118 ending cash balance after $400 in additional monetary contributions. Sandke made $1,832 in total expenditures.

Barton Merriman reported approximately $5,097 in total contributions received with $3,100 of that amount being personal donations.

The largest contributions to Barton Merriman came from two nonprofit leaders.

The leading contribution of $1,000 is from Anne Irwin, a San Francisco-based individual who works as the non-profit director of Tides Advocacy, an organization focused on advancing social justice through policy reform and fiscal sponsorship, according to its website.

Brian Johnson, based in Chicago, contributed $250. According to a Q and A with The Campaign Workshop, Johnson is the CEO of Equality Illinois, an organization that has been fighting for LBGTQ+ civil rights since 2016.

Barton Merriman later reported $2,410 in monetary contributions which, in addition to her previous ending balance, brought in a $6,592 total cash balance. That amount lowered after $5,862 in cash payments resulting in a $730 ending cash balance.

Lee reported $4,393 increased his whole cash balance to $7,070. Following $3,231 in payments made, his ending cash balance is $3,839.

Previously, Lee reported an updated $7,307 in total contributions on Oct. 12 with $4,185 of that being personal contributions. After $4,630 total expenditures in his first statement, Lee reported a $2,677 ending cash balance.



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CORONADO

CDC health survey gathers Coronado beach sewage pollution experiences

A Superfund petition has been submitted to the EPA, and a new federal program will examine water, sediment, and trash samples in the Tijuana River and nearby canyons.

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News



Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer's Superfund request includes hundreds of experiences from county-wide residents about the pollution crisis. *Staff photo by Julieta Soto.*

Federal and local authorities are ramping up their response to South Bay beach contamination from Tijuana sewage with a public survey, a long-term analysis of pollution and a petition to declare the Tijuana River bed a federal Superfund site.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues surveying health impacts, Supervisor Terra Lawson Remer officially asked the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to consider the Tijuana River Valley for Superfund designation.

This request comes the same month the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) shared plans for a separate program to collect water, sediment and trash along the U.S.-Mexico border through samples from the Tijuana River and canyons.

Meanwhile, the county's Health & Human Services Agency announced a new online survey by the CDC to ask beach-goers in Imperial Beach and Coronado about their experiences following exposure to the sewage affected areas.

After gathering testimonials from 500 affected residents, a handful of elected officials across San Diego County joined Lawson Remer in a petition asking yet another federal agency to investigate the Tijuana River Valley for harmful toxins in the soil, sediment and groundwater.

Meanwhile, the IBWC said its program this November will test for contaminants such as bacteria, industrial pollutants, pesticides and metals in collected water and sediment samples.

"This monitoring program honors the commitment we made under the board's time schedule order issued in 2023," said U.S. Commissioner Maria-Elena Giner in a statement. "Combined with $31 million in repairs at the plant, the $600 million expansion we will soon start … and taking urgent actions to ensure zero transboundary flows during the dry season, the IBWC is taking concrete steps towards pollution prevention in the South Bay area."

A solid waste survey will also be conducted, in the program's second and fourth year, for trash in Tijuana's Smuggler's Gulch and Goat Canyon, the IBWC announced.

Open health survey

The CDC has already conducted a survey of households and families spanning South County neighborhoods along the Tijuana River Valley.

Now, according to the County Communications Office a second CDC survey will assess chemical exposures from Oct. 21 through Nov. 22.

Both are key to identifying community needs and prioritizing solutions related to sewage pollution exposure in the area, said a county communications officer in a release dated Oct. 21.

"This community deserves better," said Dr. Ankita Kadakia, the county interim public health officer, in a statement. "By bringing in this federal agency … individuals who live or work near the water have a chance to voice their concerns, their experiences and the impacts to their physical and mental health."

The online survey, also available in Spanish, can be completed using a computer or a mobile device.

Multi-year program

The IBWC said it awarded the San-Antonio environmental firm, EGC-AGEISS Joint Venture, a five-year, $1.9 million contract to conduct work for the Tijuana River Valley Monitoring Program.

This project satisfies a requirement outlined in the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board-issued permit for the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant, reads the Oct. 17 press release from the Commission.

The program is expected to provide answers about how far transboundary flows travel from the U.S.-Mexico border, the circumstances causing pathogens and indicator bacteria to enter the ocean resulting in beach closures, and how transboundary wastewater flows reach the Tijuana River, its estuary and the Pacific Ocean shoreline. The program also will investigate trash pollution generated in Mexico that might flow through the canyon collectors and cross into the valley and estuary.

Frank Fisher, Public Affairs Chief for the IBWC, said the program's data collection, part of the permit requirement, will be transmitted to the regional water board.

City of Imperial Beach Mayor Paloma Aguirre, a cosignatory in Lawson-Remer's petition, said the IBWC's program will limit the monitoring scope to pathogens and solid waste.

"I'm glad that these minute 320 projects, which was signed back around 2012, are finally being funded," Aguirre said in a statement. "I don't see how this effort could interfere with a superfund site designation, but actually complement any data being collected by EPA should the Superfund designation qualify to begin its designation process."

Tijuana River Valley Superfund petition

Lawson Remer announced the submission of the EPA petition on Oct. 24 at a press conference in Coronado.

"We're really hopeful that the Superfund designation can be a new avenue that can get us some of the relief and the help that we need," she said.

> *"This community deserves better… By bringing in this federal agency … individuals who live or work near the water have a chance to voice their concerns, their experiences and the impacts to their physical and mental health."*
>
> **- Dr. Ankita Kadakia, the county interim public health officer**

While county supervisors declined to endorse her letter on Oct. 8, Lawson-Remer announced plans with other colleagues to submit her petition following outreach to gather community testimonials.

Nora Vargas, Chairwoman of the San Diego county Board of Supervisors, who issued a motion delaying the petition requesting community input, issued a statement about the potential declaration of a Superfund site following the announcement of delivery.

"I want community input on decisions that could change the fabric of our community forever," said Vargas. "The declaration of a Superfund site isn't a 'silver bullet' that will solve all of our issues overnight, and in fact, can pose many problems of its own. For starters, many communities surrounding these Superfund sites have experienced dramatically declining property values. It can also create long periods of uncertainty for local residents and businesses, including potential relocation."

Lawson-Remer noted the Superfund petition is intended to determine the presence of long-term industrial contaminants that would need to be cleaned up.

Aguirre, who considers emergency declarations at the state and federal levels of government the only action that will bring swift attention to the issue, pledged full support for recent policies brought by Lawson-Remer.

County could sue

Meanwhile, all supervisors agreed with a Oct. 22 proposal from Lawson-Remer to pursue litigation involving the Tijuana River Valley.

"Taking legal action is another lever we can pull to help address this crisis," Lawson-Remer said in a statement following the board's vote.

The policy directs the chief administrative officer in consultation with county counsel to explore options to file or join existing litigation against any potential responsible parties, including Veolia North America, for damages caused to the valley region, said Lawson-Remer in a release.

The policy continues: "Litigation options should include, but not be limited to, the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act."

The board heard from those in support and against the county's move toward legal action.

Under contract with IBWC, Veolia North America operates and maintains the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Prior to the board's vote to pursue litigation, Adam Lisberg, senior vice president for communications, told the supervisors Veolia has for years recommended additional funding for the plant.

"Scapegoating Veolia's hard-working frontline employees for political theater does nothing to advance real solutions for the people of San Diego County," said Lisberg in a statement after the supervisors' decision. "The root cause of the environmental crisis in the Tijuana River estuary is the decades-long failure of the authorities on both sides of the border to address the surge of unchecked sewage and pollution pouring in from Tijuana in quantities that far exceed the capacity of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant."

Supervisors voted to direct counsel to update the board in closed session every 90 days about potential suits.

Coronado's ballot drop-off boxes open through election day

Voters can use any official ballot drop box in San Diego County.

Coronado News staff

Registered voters in Coronado can now return their ballots for the November Presidential General Election using any official ballot drop box in San Diego County.

This includes locations in Coronado, available until Nov. 5, 2024.

In Coronado, voters can deposit their ballots at two locations: the Civic Center Main Entrance (City Hall), at 1825 Strand Way, and the Coronado Public Library, at 640 Orange Avenue.

The box in front of City Hall is accessible 24/7 until 8 p.m. on election day, Nov. 5.

The box in the library lobby is subject to regular operating hours until Nov. 4. On election day, Nov. 5, it will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The library's operating hours are 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Note that the library will be closed on Oct. 14 for a holiday.

For additional details, voters are encouraged visit to the San Diego County Registrar of Voters and Coronado General Municipal Election websites.

CORONADO

Halloween in pictures



Carnival-style games were set up across the Harvest Hoedown event with the chance to take home prizes. *Staff photos by Kylie Capuano.*



Parents and students of Village Elementary School were encouraged to partake in line dancing in spirit of the country-themed Harvest Hoedown on Oct. 18.



Halloween has already hit the island, with spooky-themed activities running throughout the entire month.



Coronado Fire Department, Coronado Main Street, Coronado Optimist Club and more local organizations made an appearance at this year's Halloween Happenings as the community came together for a Halloween-themed evening.



Local Coronado dance company, Heart2art put on a performance for event-goers at Halloween Happenings.

Honoring Coronado through Dia de los Muertos

» Continued from Page 1

a mariachi dressed in charro, typical cowboy attire, holding a guitar.

In the middle of the scene sits a glowing crown surrounded by colorful skulls, photographs and other Mexican cultural memorabilia. This display is an artistic impression of a Dia de los muertos ofrenda, or altar, an exhibit imagined by Patricia Gonsenheim and brought to life with help from the local community.

Between Oct. 31 and Nov. 2, the Day of the Dead celebration, observed in several parts of the world, honors deceased loved ones through these altars, or ofrendas.

According to the Mexico City Government and its Tourism Secretariat, the Day of the Dead in the indigenous worldview implies the transitory return of the souls of the deceased, who return home, to the world of the living, to live with their families and to nourish themselves with the essence of the food that is offered to them on the altars placed in his honor.

"The Souls of the Dead, the angelitos, which is the young children, supposedly come on November 1st. And then the souls of the older people come on November 2nd. And then November 3rd, everything comes down," said Gonsenheim.

The Day of the Dead celebration's origin is located in the syncretism between the celebration of the Catholic religious rituals brought by the Spanish and the commemoration of the day of the dead that the indigenous people carried out since Pre-Hispanic times, reads the Secretariat's cultural events website.

Having lived in Coronado more than half of her life, Gonsenheim, 65, considers herself an American of Spanish heritage. Born in Mexico and living across both neighboring countries beginning at the age of 14, she shares her experience living in a border city.

Like her daughter, Gonsenheim considers herself a product of that upbringing where two cultures merge together all the time, she said.

For the second year in a row, Gonsenheim has brought to life an altar, inspired by her cultural and artistic background.

"I'm an artist so I painted, I made one of the dresses, the other one I bought, but a lot of the art I did myself," said Gonsenheim. "When I was ready to set it up, I asked the community for help and they were very eager."

For the past three years, Gonsenheim conducted research and visits to other ofrendas to prepare for a display of Mexican representation in Coronado.

"We have seen community members interact with this exhibit in such wonderful ways," said Jacqueline Luna, senior librarian for programs, outreach and marketing. "Many have remarked on how special the attention to detail in the exhibit was and how each time they come in they notice something new. It's always wonderful to see patrons writing in the Ofrenda book's as well. It's heartwarming to see how this exhibit has resonated with so many people in our community."

Visitors to the altar have commemorated their loved ones who have passed away with messages shared inside three notebooks available in front of the altar.



Patricia Gonsenheim shows off the "Dia de los Muertos Ofrenda" exhibit she helped curate at the Coronado Public Library. *Staff photo by Julieta Soto.*

"It's also a way for people to communicate, to say something to that special person that they love," said Gonsenheim. "It's very intimate, it's very sentimental, it's lovely. I love the idea that I'm providing this venue for people to communicate with maybe their loved ones that are not here."

The exhibit is open to all at the library through Nov. 17, accompanied by a lecture from Gonsenheim on Oct 29.

Celebrating Dia de los Muertos

Gonsenheim, who previously worked as a docent for The Timken Museum of Art in Balboa Park for 20 years, said festivities for Dia de los Muertos begin in the week leading up to November with an altar usually set up on Oct. 28.

"You are preparing the whole week before then and, when you set it up, all of the things are supposed to be fresh," said Gonsenheim. "That's why the ofrenda stays up for only three or four days."

For the ofrenda in Coronado, Gonsenheim prepared an explanatory list with numbers that identify more than a dozen elements across the display including photographs, candles and deep-orange to yellow cempasuchil (marigolds, the iconic flower of the Day of the Dead).

Gonsenheim noted that food and drinks that honor a specific loved one are key in any ofrenda set up in homes.

"People ask 'Well what happens to the food afterwards?'" said Gonsenheim. "Supposedly when the souls come, they eat the essence of the food … and then, as a way to honor them, the person that set up the ofrenda, you would eat that food."

Gonsenheim said she hopes families will be encouraged to set up their own ofrenda following her lecture on Oct. 29.

"I hope to bring the community together and have people understand a little bit more about the history," said Gonsenheim. "To get people to start doing that, even the Mexican community that lives here that has never done that."

An ofrenda for Coronado

This year's ofrenda at the library was intended to integrate American and Mexican cultures with the goal of bringing the history of Coronado into it.

"What I wanted to do was create it for Coronado with a Mexican influence," said Gonsenheim.

For this reason, Gonsenheim asked the Coronado Historical Association for pictures of the founders of Coronado and other influential figures.

"That's what the ofrenda is for," said Gonsenheim, "the founders of Coronado … I wanted it to be about the community."

Personal ties

While Gonsenheim has not celebrated the event all of her life, she said moving to Coronado gave her family an opportunity to do so.

Gonsenheim said family members put up their first altar after her daughter learned about the celebration at school and asked if they could set one up.

"This was my first time that I was extremely emotional seeing all the pictures of our dead friends and relatives," said Gonsenheim. "It was not a huge altar, … but it was enough that brought us closer to our dead friends and family. So every time I would walk by, I felt very sentimental."

The Gonsenheim family has continued this tradition for several years now.

Gonsenheim said Dawn Richards from the Coronado Cultural Association initially reached out to her and the idea to bring this Mexican celebration to Coronado was born after the pandemic.

Although there were years of difficulties finding the right space, Gonsenheim said the library is an ideal venue.

"It's bringing … the Mexican culture into Coronado, but it's also respectful of the Coronado founders," she said.

"The display last year was only up for a short period of time and had so much to it that we felt it would be wonderful to showcase it in a larger format this year," said Luna.

The amount of added space shocked Gonsenheim at first but the support to bring it to fruition was immediate.

"When I looked at it, I was floored, I said 'How am I going to fill this space … it's huge,'" said Gonsenheim. "But then ideas started coming and friends started offering things that we could put in there."

One of those pieces is a colorful alebrije, a museum piece, that resembles a flying dragon-like mythical creature that holds significance as the spirit animal that represents a guide for the souls.

Gonsenheim said several families contributed with visual elements and almost a dozen people helped her install the display in early September.

"I think it's really important for us to remember our dead friends and family because that way they don't disappear, they stay alive in our heart, in our minds, and every year that we have an ofrenda you remember them," added Gonsenheim. "It brings you back to your roots. It makes you remember and honor the people that have gone before you."

A breakdown of Coronado races and state ballot propositions

» Continued from Page 1

billion to build or renovate K-12 public schools and community college facilities. According to California's Legislative Analyst's office, $8.5 billion would be reserved for K-12 schools and $1.5 billion is directed toward upper education.

To repay the bond, the state would need to pay an estimated $500 million per year over a 35-year period. The Legislative Analyst Office said the potential effect on local costs statewide is unclear.

Prop. 3: Constitutional right to marriage

While federal courts have said that same-sex marriage is legal, outdated language in the California Constitution from Proposition 8, passed by voters in 2008, says that marriage can only be between a man and a woman.

This proposition would update the Constitution to match what federal courts have said.

Prop. 4: Bonds for climate change

Proposition 4, also known as the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Prevention and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, authorizes a $10 million bond toward climate programs:

- $3.8 billion would go toward drought, flood and water supply, meaning money would be used to store water for future droughts, clean polluted water so it's safe to drink and reduce the risk of floods by capturing and reusing stormwater.
- $1.5 billion would be used to improve the health of forests and reduce the risk of wildfires.
- $1.2 billion would restore coastal areas and protect from rising sea levels.
- $1.2 billion is for land conservation and habitat restoration.
- $850 million would go toward the development of wind turbines off the coast of California.
- $700 million would be used for expanding parks.
- $450 million would go toward protecting communities from extreme heat.
- $300 million would go toward agriculture, specifically for activities that encourage farmers to improve soil health, reduce air pollution and use less water.

It would cost the state $400 million annually for 40 years to repay this bond.

The effect on local governments, according to California's Legislative Analyst's office, would vary.

State funding could replace the funding that local governments would have to pay out of its own for certain projects. Or, it could encourage the governing body to spend more money on larger projects than they would.



Election day is fast approaching. Check out this breakdown of races and ballot propositions. *Staff photo by Madeline Yang.*

Prop. 5: Local bonds for affordable housing

This proposition makes it easier for local governments to fund affordable housing and infrastructure projects. Currently, to borrow money, cities and counties require the support of at least two-thirds of voters. With Proposition 5, that number would be lowered to 55%.

This would make it easier for local governments to approve bonds that would increase the funding available for housing assistance.

If a city chooses to receive a bond, carrying costs would rise for the local government, and in turn, community members would pay more in property taxes.

Prop. 6: Ending forced labor in state prisons

Currently, prison inmates can be required to work as a punishment for crime. This is known as involuntary servitude. The Legislative Analyst's office says that many of these workers are paid less than $1 an hour, but they can also earn "time credits" to reduce their total time in jail.

This proposition would ban involuntary servitude as a punishment for crime. State prisons would not be allowed to punish inmates for refusing to work. However, the measure would not stop prisons from granting people time credits if they choose to work.

Prop. 32: Raising minimum wage to $18 an hour

The current minimum wage in California is $16 an hour. With Proposition 32, it would hike up to $18 an hour by 2026. In 2025, the minimum wage would stay at different levels depending on the size of the employer – $17 where there are 25 employees or less and $18 for any employer with 26 or more employees.

Prop. 33: Extending rent control

A vote in favor of this proposition would mean the state cannot limit the kinds of rent control that local governments enforce, such as putting a cap on how much a landlord increases rent.

A vote against this proposition is a vote to continue allowing the state to limit how local governments enforce rent control laws.

If it passes, rent control laws would likely expand in some communities, meaning some renters would spend less on rent if they are covered by rent control. Other renters would spend more on rent if they are not covered by rent control.

Prop. 34: Revenue from prescription drug program spent on patient care

There is a 30-year-old law that gives health care providers, which are public or private nonprofits who serve low-income patients, a discount on pharmaceutical drugs. They are exempt from paying tax on their revenue.

Prop 34 would establish rules to make sure that providers are spending 98% of their revenue on patient care and if not, enforce penalties.

This proposition is essentially singling out one group, the AIDS Healthcare Foundation.

Prop. 35:
Permanent tax on health care insurance plans

There is an existing tax on certain healthcare plans, such as Kaiser Permanente, based on the number of people they provide coverage to.

According to the Legislative Analyst's office, this tax is expected to bring in $7 billion to $8 billion to the state each year. These excess funds are then used to pay for existing costs in Medi-Cal – the federal-state program that provides health coverage to people of low-income – and to increase its funding.

Since the tax is not permanently approved by California legislature, it will expire at the end of 2026. This proposition would make the tax permanent beginning in 2027.

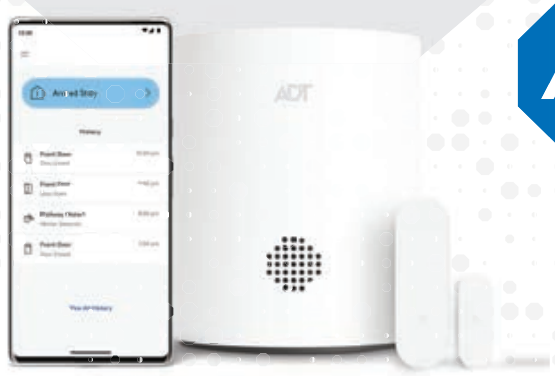
Prop. 36:
Increased sentences for drug and theft crimes

This proposition would reclassify some misdemeanor theft and drug crimes as felonies. This proposal is essentially an attempt to undo Proposition 47, which was approved 10 years ago, and made select theft and drug crimes misdemeanors to reduce prison overcrowding.

Now, this measure would create a new process for drug possession crimes, increase penalties for certain drug crimes and increase penalties for certain theft crimes.

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Coronado's nonpartisan elections don't seem nonpartisan anymore

» Continued from Page 1

Rather, she said, the committee is named for the fictional political consultant in Robert Redford's 1972 movie, "The Candidate," which won an Oscar for screenplay.

"The movie was back in the '70s, so it's like an inside joke for people who are of the '70s and who are political," she explained.

Bardin is a Democrat with a long history of donating to democratic recipients including Harris For President, the Democratic National Committee and ActBlue, according to the Federal Election Commission (FEC).

Gerbel also claimed that the Marvin Lucas SuperPAC had been co-opted to support local City Council candidate Laura Wilkinson Sinton, which would have been illegal according to rules that say super PACs are not allowed to coordinate with the candidates they are supporting themselves.

Bardin scoffed at that allegation, which she described as completely false.

"I have candidates that I wanted to support – not City Council candidates, but school board and board of supervisor candidates," Bardin said. "The City Council is not my issue. All my friends know that the school board is my issue."

Wilkinson Sinton, in turn, accused Gerbel, who has been Coronado Mayor Richard Bailey's campaign manager and treasurer, of mudslinging and running a smear campaign against her and another City Council candidate, Christine Mott.





Elections in Coronado have turned from nonpartisan to a fight between both parties. *Staff photos by Sofie Fransen.*

The Marvin Lucas SuperPAC

Super PACs are independent campaign committees that can raise unlimited funds to advocate for or against political candidates. However, they are not allowed to directly donate to any candidates, and their spending must not be coordinated with the candidates they benefit, according to opensecrets.org.

The Marvin Lucas SuperPAC originally filed with the city on Oct. 11 as a city committee, but on Oct. 22, filed an amendment that they were a county committee.

Bardin's campaign contribution, which is one of two this year to the Marvin Lucas SuperPAC, finances a website known as letmajorityrule.org. According to that website, the nonpartisan organization seeks to "ensure America hears the voice of the majority of voters." Its goals include termination of the filibuster tactic in the U.S. Senate.

The super PAC's treasurer is a man named George Vasilopoulos, an internet marketing specialist and manager for political talk-radio personalities. He was the other contributor to the super PAC, giving $500 in May.

Affiliation with local candidate

In his email and City Council statement, Gerbel noted Wilkinson Sinton's husband, Jon Sinton, worked with Vasilopoulos in the past.

If the super PAC is working with Wilkinson Sinton, Gerbel suggested, that would be a violation of the super PAC laws.

"There appears to be a connection between the principal officer of the super PAC and Laura's husband," Gerbel said to The Coronado News. "Which leads me to believe that this transaction is being done to support Laura Sinton's campaign."

Gerbel is the 78th Assembly District representative on the Central Committee of the Republican Party of San Diego along with Bailey, who also sits on the committee as the caucus chair. While he reported about a SuperPAC getting involved with local elections, Gerbel in the past served as treasurer of a congressional campaign committee that supports similar activity on behalf of Republicans in Coronado municipal elections.

In an email to The Coronado News, Gerbel wrote that "Bardin's actions appear to be an attempt to circumvent these laws … A referral has already been made to the city's Independent Counsel to investigate this potential violation. It's crucial that no single individual is allowed to exert undue influence over our elections in this way."

Bailey said Gerbel is "by far the most knowledgeable person on campaign finance law in Coronado, which is why I found his comments interesting."

City officials declined to say whether an investigation is underway, asserting that any information about the matter is protected by attorney/client privilege.

Wilkinson Sinton is a Democrat who contributed to ActBlue in mid 2024. Her husband, Jon, has a prominent history as a progressive media executive. In 2003, Jon helped found a liberal-leaning radio network named Air America and, in 2011, he started the non-profit Progressive Voices Institute, Inc. with Vasilopoulos.

Wilkinson Sinton said that history allows her husband to do political networking.

"He's had a rich and storied career, you know, in New York and Atlanta, and he knows a lot of people. So, you know, we make introductions to people all the time," she added, including the connection between Bardin and Vasilopoulos.

Wilkinson Sinton accused Gerbel, who complained about injecting party politics into a local race, of doing exactly that.

"Brad Gerbel is a known political operative … He is a partisan who is mudslinging," Wilkinson Sinton said. "We used to have non-partisan politics here … The Republican Party is coming in with a smear campaign trying to paint us as something that we're not."

Bardin said she can't disclose which candidates she's advocating for school board or board of supervisors because of how strict the super PAC rules are about coordinating with the campaign itself.

But, because campaign finance laws put strict limits on how much an individual can donate directly to a campaign, she chose to use a political action committee that allows more flexibility.

"I saw tiny campaign budgets for my candidates, and I wanted to do something more," Bardin said. "And I'm a total newbie. I had no idea who could help me with that."

So, Bardin said, she turned to her friends – specifically, Jon – who recommended the Marvin Lucas SuperPAC.

Bardin told The Coronado News that she is friends with Wilkinson Sinton and Jon, and that she supports Wilkinson Sinton's campaign to run for City Council.

But the money donated to the Marvin Lucas SuperPAC was not for Wilkinson Sinton or any other City Council candidate.

"I knew in donating this money that it'd be posted publicly … What I didn't expect, but I probably should have, is that Brad Gerbel would use it to attack me by spreading innuendos and taking guesses about what I was going to do with the money and who I was going to support," Bardin added.

Community Leadership Coalition

Meanwhile, there is another PAC that is making its rounds on the island and has actually endorsed local candidates.

The PAC is the Community Leadership Coalition, financed in part by Bailey's former congressional committee, where Gerbel served as treasurer. In 2022, the coalition endorsed multiple San Diego candidates as well as current Coronado City Council member John Duncan in his successful run for that office.

The Community Leadership Coalition is a nonfederal general purpose recipient committee, according to their treasurer April Boling, which is often referred to as a PAC, as stated by the Fair Political Practices Commission manual.

The coalition is sponsored by the Lincoln Club of San Diego County – a federal PAC that has a decades-long history of supporting conservative candidates according to the FEC – and has also donated to the Republican Party of San Diego County, with contributions made in 2022 and 2024. The most recent donation by the coalition to the party was on Aug. 21 for $50,000.

One of the Leadership Coalition's biggest contributors in 2022 was Adriana Camberos who donated $20,000 that year. Camberos was convicted in a scheme to distribute fake 5-hour energy drinks in 2017 and subsequently was pardoned in a group of 11th-hour commutations by former President Donald Trump.

She went on trial earlier this month on new charges committing fraudulent schemes just weeks after her sentence was commuted in 2021. According to the San Diego Union Tribune, prosecutors allege that Camberos, 53, and her brother Andres Enrique Camberos, 45, operated a fraud scheme similar to the one that previously sent Camberos to prison.

In 2022, Bailey said he had donated to the Community Leadership Coalition. Bailey's contributions through his former congressional committee totaled $28,000 that year.

The coalition gave just over $4,100 to endorse Duncan that year for his run for City Council.

Gerbel told The Coronado News that he also had contributed to the coalition in 2022, and said his donations were different because they are not a federal PAC, and he never knew where his donations were going.

"(The Community Leadership Coalition) is not a super PAC. When you give to an IE (Independent Expenditure), your contributions are not earmarked. That IE supports many candidates, so I don't even know what that money was used for," Gerbel said.

In a subsequent phone call, Gerbel said he never donated to the coalition. The Coronado News was unable to find records of any donations by him.

However, there are records of Gerbel donating $1,000 to the Lincoln Club, which is a federal PAC, in Sept. 2024, and the Lincoln Club has endorsed Duncan and Mark Warner and Mark Fleming for City Council in this year's election cycle.

The Community Leadership Coalition has also sent out mailers for and against local candidates as well as recommendations on who to vote for.

According to the coalition's campaign statement, filed with the city earlier this month, it spent $2,884 in support of Duncan for mayor, $1,897 opposing Wilkinson Sinton for City Council and $1,255 opposing council member Casey Tanaka for mayor. It also spent $1,897 opposing Bill Sandke for Coronado School Board.

In a voter guide sent to Coronado residents, the Community Leadership Coalition endorsed Duncan for mayor and Amy Steward and Fleming for City Council. On the back of the guide was an "election warning" against Wilkinson Sinton and Sandke.

The cannabis connection

Gerbel also wrote in his email to The Coronado News that Wilkinson Sinton's candidacy has been "riddled with misleading claims," linking a website he made in which he claims to fact check Wilkinson Sinton about many things, including her role as a consultant to the cannabis industry.

During the Oct. 15 council meeting, Gerbel claimed Wilkinson Sinton was "hiding the fact that she is a cannabis entrepreneur," yet at the same time he recognized she has spoken openly about it.

Wilkinson Sinton said she has never tried to hide her role in the cannabis business. In fact, Gerbel's own page – created to fact check Wilkinson Sinton – shows she disclosed that involvement when she applied to serve on two Coronado commissions.

"I am an open book, nothing that I have done has been illegal or unethical," Wilkinson Sinton said. "Anybody can do a Google search and see what I'm up to."

She added that Coronado has strict codes governing cannabis, making it "unlawful to establish or operate a marijuana dispensary, medical marijuana collective, or … any other business establishment associated with any type of commercial marijuana activity within the City," according to Coronado's municipal codes.

Wilkinson Sinton said if she is elected and an issue involving cannabis comes before the City Council, she would recuse herself.

The Mayor's endorsements

There have been a few other endorsements sent out to the Coronado community, including one from RMNNT – a group associated with the controversial Awaken Church and created to influence local politics, according to its website.

RMNNT endorsed Duncan for mayor, Fleming and Warner for City Council. Duncan, Fleming and Warner all said they did not ask for or contact RMNNT for endorsements.

Bailey, who is not running for office, sent out an email endorsing Duncan for mayor, Fleming and Warner for City Council. The current mayor urged voters to reject Wilkinson Sinton and Mott.

In response to the recommendations by the mayor, Mott, who is running for City Council, noted that Bailey's mailer contains a letterhead that resembles the Coronado municipal emblem. On the private Facebook group, Coronado Happenings, Mott complained that the Bailey's personal voter guide for Coronado "features a rip off of the City's seal to give it an air of authority."

Another resident, Mary Sue Anderson, commented, "How can the mayor send out an official-looking document telling voters to vote only for members of his own party?"

Coronado's municipal codes state that "the common seal of the City of Coronado shall consist of the following device: a crown with the inscription, 'City of Coronado, State of California,' arranged in a circle, surrounding the crown."

Bailey's letterhead shows a crown with words arranged in a circle surrounding the crown. It says "51st Mayor" and "Coronado, CA" in the circle.

The codes also say that it is unlawful to "make or use any design which is an imitation of official City insignia or of the design thereof … for any purpose other than for City purposes."

According to Bailey, he's been using that seal for eight years and no one has ever brought up issues with it before.

"It is only sent from my personal email account. I never represent it as official communications from the city," Bailey added.

He said the letterhead is only an issue now because Wilkinson Sinton and Mott do not agree with the contents of the email.

A complaint was filed with Coronado's special counsel, according to Wilkinson Sinton, but the city said any information about the matter would be protected by attorney/client privilege.

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NAVY



This combination of undated photos released by the U.S. Navy shows left to right; Lt. Serena Wileman, a Naval Aviator, and Lt. Commander Lyndsay Evans, a Naval Flight Officer. *U.S. Navy via AP.*

Navy identifies 2 killed in fighter jet crash as aviators from California

Associated Press

The Navy identified on Oct. 22 the two crew members who died the week prior in a jet fighter crash near Mount Rainier as two 31-year-old aviators from California.

Lt. Cmdr. Lyndsay P. Evans, a Naval Flight Officer, and Lt. Serena N. Wileman, a Naval Aviator, died when their EA-18G Growler jet from the Electronic Attack Squadron, known as "Zappers," crashed east of Mount Rainier last Tuesday during a training flight, according to Whidbey Island Naval Air Station.

Evans of Palmdale, California, made history as part of a team of female pilots who conducted the first-ever all-female flyover of Super Bowl LVII on Feb. 12, 2023, to celebrate 50 years of women flying in the Navy, Steve Fiebing, a Navy spokesperson, told The Associated Press.

The first female candidates entered the U.S. Navy flight school in 1973.

"I joined the Navy to serve my country," Evans told the Los Angeles Times. "Serving in the Navy means being part of something bigger than yourself."

Wileman was commissioned in 2018 and joined the Zapper squadron on Washington state's Whidbey Island in 2021. She earned the National Defense Service Medal, Navy Unit Commendation Medal and a Combat Action Ribbon.

An aerial crew located the wreckage the day after the crash at about 6,000 feet (1,828 meters) in a remote, steep and heavily wooded area east of Mount Rainier, officials said.

Navy officials declared the aviators dead on Oct. 20 and said they've switched from search and rescue to recovery operations.

"It is with a heavy heart that we share the loss of two beloved Zappers," said Cmdr. Timothy Warburton, commanding officer of Electronic Attack Squadron 130. "Our priority right now is taking care of the families of our fallen aviators, and ensuring the well-being of our sailors and the Growler community. We are grateful for the ongoing teamwork to safely recover the deceased."

Personnel are recovering debris and planning for the long-term salvage and recovery effort, the Navy said. Gov. Jay Inslee said the Navy asked the Washington state National Guard to "provide 24/7 security at assigned traffic control points." Inslee granted the request.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation.

The first production of the Growler was delivered to Whidbey Island in 2008. In the past 15 years, the Growler has operated around the globe supporting major actions, the Navy said. The plane seats a pilot in front and an electronics operator behind them.

"The EA-18G Growler aircraft we fly represents the most advanced technology in airborne Electronic Attack and stands as the Navy's first line of defense in hostile environments," the Navy said on its website.

Each aircraft costs about $67 million.

U.S. Sen. Patty Murray said she was heartbroken to learn of the passing of Evans, whom she had met at the Naval Air Station last year.

"I am deeply grateful for her courage and sacrifice in service to our country," Murray said in a statement. "She was a leader who broke barriers and made history."

"Similarly, I want to express my deepest condolences to the family and loved ones of Lt. Serena Wileman," she continued. "I am so proud of both of these women for their trailblazing careers — their service has no doubt made a difference, clearing a path for the women who will come after them."

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U.S. Navy Seahawk completes hoisting exercise



A U.S. Navy MH-60R Seahawk assigned to the "Sea Hawks" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 41, which is based at Naval Air Station North Island in Coronado, hovers over a Peruvian Navy submarine during a hoisting exercise off the coast of San Diego on Oct. 21. U.S. *Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Keenan Daniels.*

NAVY



The Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Mobile returns to its homeport in San Diego following a 19-month rotational deployment on Oct. 25, 2024. *U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Vance Hand.*

USS Mobile returns to San Diego

DVIDS

The Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Mobile returned to its San Diego homeport on Oct. 25, following a 19-month deployment.

Mobile participated in CARAT Thailand 2023, a bilateral exercise between Thailand and the United States.

Mobile conducted bilateral operations with the Royal Netherlands Navy in the South China Sea to improve allied interoperability and conduct complex scenarios to improve combined readiness.

"These sailors are returning home to their families with significant operational experience," said Cmdr. David Gardner, commanding officer of Mobile Gold crew. "Given the nature of our minimally manned crew each of these sailors has amassed hundreds of hours of experience in specialized evolutions, both in real-world events and through training while deployed."

Mobile is homeported in San Diego as a part of Littoral Combat Ship Squadron One.

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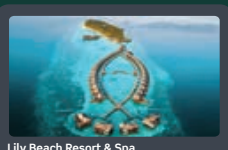
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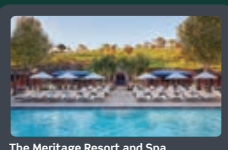
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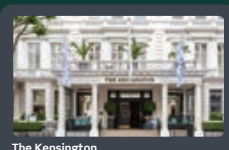
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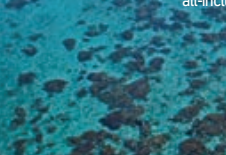

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SPORTS

Elleaire Lyons heads to CIF golf regionals as only Islander, aiming to advance beyond San Diego

The only Islander to qualify for CIF, Lyons enters a field of around 110 top golfers from across San Diego County, with her eye on advancing beyond the regional level.

BY KATIE MORRIS
The Coronado News

Coronado High School junior Elleaire Lyons will represent the Islanders at the upcoming CIF Regional Championships, set to take place Nov. 7 at the Torrey Pines North and Balboa courses.

This is Lyons' third year on the team, her third time attending the CIF Championships and first time as an individual player.

The only Islander to qualify for CIF, she enters a field of around 110 top golfers from across San Diego County, with her eye on advancing beyond the regional level.

"She practices all the time, even when we don't have practice," golf coach Coach Stuart Gordon said.

This year, Lyons' determination paid off. She reached the quarterfinals of the city match play and ranked seventh in city stroke play — both personal achievements that underscore her drive and skill.

Gordon, who has been at the helm of Coronado's girls golf team for a decade, said this season was largely developmental for the team.

Seven of the nine athletes were new to the sport, and the team consisted mostly of freshmen.

"We were really kind of starting from scratch this year, so it was just a new environment … it was really fun to watch the team progression grow," Lyons said.

Among the standout players was Cristina Orvananos, a freshman who joined the team with a differential of 21 — a notable feat for someone who has never played competitively, Gordon said.

Another promising player, freshman Jaden Foy, achieved a differential of 25.

Orvananos and Foy secured top spots at the San Diego City Tournament on Oct. 21, with Orvananos winning the 13-hole tournament and Foy placing eighth.

Though the team faced initial struggles on the course, especially in short-game play, their commitment to practice yielded gradual improvement. Gordon noted that putting proved particularly challenging for the new players.

"At the start of the season, they were four and five putting on some holes," he said, "but by the end, we got it down to two putts."

Their long game, while not traditionally long, showed growth as they became more comfortable on the course.

Reflecting on the team's growth, Gordon pointed to the camaraderie and team spirit that developed among the girls.

Despite being limited in practice time due to crowded courses and a late school start, the players consistently showed up, supporting one another and enjoying the process.



Elleaire Lyons playing for the Coronado High School Islanders. *Photo provided by Elleaire Lyons.*

Their progress as a team was mirrored in their improved scores: while their collective differential started at 103, it had dropped to 94.6 by season's end — a testament to the impact of their dedication and perseverance.

"I'm very proud of my team, and I'm very glad they chose to come play golf this year and get interested in the game," Lyons said.

For Gordon, the season has been a rewarding blend of teaching and witnessing progress.

"I enjoy taking them on," he said. "There's room for improvement, but the more they practice, the better they get."

Coronado cross country team scores personal records at cluster meet

Coronado News staff

The second cluster meet for the Coronado cross country team was on Oct. 15 and several runners scored personal records.

Nathan Ayan was the top runner at 17:55 for the boys' team, which was an 11 second improvement from last season's city conference course.

Vincent Russo was only 10 seconds behind Ayan — a time that was a 20 second improvement over the first cluster meet just two weeks prior.

Jack Letcher dipped under 18 minutes for the first time and scored 38 seconds faster than his time in 2023.

Anton Youngblood scored the biggest personal record of the day after improving his 2023 time by 2.5 minutes.

Oscar Alicandri and Chace Smith also scored PR's for the boys' team.

Meanwhile for the girls' team, Morgan Maske placed fourth in the cluster meet with a time of 20:30 and Gwynne Letcher placed eighth, both with significant improvements over last year's times.



Jack Letcher (left) and Nathan Ayan (right) scored personal records on Oct. 15. *Photo by George Green.*

Registration open for annual Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot

Coronado News staff

The 11th annual Coronado Turkey Trot, presented by the Coronado Unit of Rady Children's Hospital Auxiliary, is set to take place on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 28, at Tidelands Park.

This community-favorite 5K run/walk, which sells out every year, will raise funds for the Pediatric Ophthalmology Department at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego.

Participants of all ages are encouraged to sign up early online, as spots are limited. The course begins at Tidelands Park at 8 a.m.

This year's event features Xavier Marsh, a Coronado High School student, as an ambassador. Marsh was diagnosed with Leber Hereditary Optic Neuropathy, a mitochondrial disease that caused him to lose his central vision at the age of 13.

Despite his vision loss, Marsh continues to live a full life, participating in boy scouts, competing on his varsity cross country and track and field teams and engaging in adventurous activities like mountain biking and skiing.

In addition to supporting a worthy cause, all race participants will receive a participant shirt and an exclusive finisher medal to commemorate their achievement.

"We are incredibly grateful for Rady Children's Hospital and the care they've provided Xavier," says Marsh's mother, Malinda Marsh. "Through this race, we hope to raise awareness and funds for other families facing similar challenges, knowing that anything is possible with the right support."



Coronado High School cross country runner Xavier Marsh will be the ambassador for the 11th annual Turkey Trot this year. Here, he is competing at the first league cluster meet in early October. *Photo by George Green.*



United States' coach Karch Kiraly reacts during a gold medal women's volleyball match between the United States of America and Italy at the 2024 Summer Olympics, Sunday, Aug. 11, 2024, in Paris, France. *AP Photo/Dolores Ochoa, File.*

Volleyball great Karch Kiraly to coach US men at 2028 Olympics

Associated Press

Volleyball great Karch Kiraly, who won the first of his three Olympic gold medals as a member of the U.S. indoor team in Los Angeles in 1984, will coach the American men at the Summer Games when they return to LA in 2028.

Kiraly will switch from the women's program he led to medals in each of the last three Olympics to take over for John Speraw, who coached the men to the bronze medal in Paris before becoming USA Volleyball's president and CEO this month. Speraw called Kiraly, who won two gold medals in indoor volleyball and one on the beach as an athlete, "Team USA's greatest winner."

Kiraly had been the head coach of the U.S. women's national team since September 2012, leading it to the bronze medal at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics, gold in Tokyo and silver this summer in Paris. The Americans also claimed their first world championship in 2014.

Kiraly also was an assistant coach for the women's team that won silver at the London Games.

"For one-quarter of my life, I've poured everything I have into the U.S. women's team," he said. "Now, it's time for new adventures and new challenges."

The U.S. men are ranked No. 3 in the world.

"I am thrilled beyond words at the opportunity to coach the U.S. men's national team," Kiraly said. "I've watched with respect and admiration for everyone in the program as they've pursued excellence, both in training and in competition. This opportunity shines even brighter as I fondly recall the nine seasons I spent as a player with the program."

A gold medalist in 1984 and '88 as part of the U.S. indoor team and in '96 on the beach, Kiraly was named the greatest volleyball player of the 20th century by the International Volleyball Federation.

"All of us at USA Volleyball recognize that our record of success in the sport began when Karch led Team USA to the gold medal in 1984," Speraw said. "I think it is fitting that when Karch steps onto the court at the LA Olympics, he will be competing with the men's team one more time."

SPORTS

LeBron and Bronny James make history as the NBA's first father-son duo to play together

Associated Press



Los Angeles Lakers guard Bronny James (9) handles the ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Minnesota Timberwolves, Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2024, in Los Angeles. *AP Photo/Eric Thayer.*

LeBron James gave his 20-year-old son a pep talk before they rose from the Lakers bench. Amid rising cheers, they walked together to the scorer's table — and then they stepped straight into basketball history.

LeBron and Bronny became the first father and son to play in the NBA together on Oct. 22 during the Los Angeles Lakers ' season opener, fulfilling a dream set out a few years ago by LeBron, the top scorer in league history.

"That moment, us being at the scorer's table together and checking in together, it's a moment I'm never going to forget," LeBron said. "No matter how old I get, no matter how my memory may fade as I get older or whatever, I will never forget that moment."

Father and son checked into the game against Minnesota simultaneously with four minutes left in the second quarter, prompting a big ovation from a home crowd aware of the enormity of the milestone. The 39-year-old LeBron had already started the game and played 13 minutes before he teamed up with his 20-year-old son for about 2 1/2 minutes of action.

LeBron James is one of the greatest players in NBA history, a four-time champion and 20-time All-Star, while LeBron James Jr. was a second-round pick by the Lakers last summer. They are the first father and son to play in the world's top basketball league at the same time, let alone on the same team.

"Y'all ready? You see the intensity, right? Just play carefree, though," father told son on the bench before they checked in, an exchange captured by the TNT cameras and microphones. "Don't worry about mistakes. Just go out and play hard."

Their time on court together was fast and furious, just as LeBron promised.

LeBron, who finished the night with 16 points, missed two perimeter shots before making a dunk. Bronny had an early offensive rebound and missed a tip-in, and his first NBA jump shot moments later was a 3-pointer that came up just short. He checked out one possession later with 1:19 left in the second quarter, getting another ovation.

Bronny didn't play again in the Lakers' 110-103 victory over the Timberwolves.

"(I) tried not to focus on everything that's going on around me, and tried to focus on going in as a rookie and not trying to mess up," Bronny said. "But yeah, I totally did feel the energy, and I appreciate Laker Nation for showing the support for me and my dad."

After the final whistle on the Lakers' first opening-night victory in LeBron's seven seasons with the team, father and son also headed to the locker room together — but not before stopping in the tunnel to hug Savannah James, LeBron's wife and Bronny's mother. The entire family was in attendance to watch history — on little sister Zhuri's 10th birthday, no less.

Ken Griffey Sr. and Ken Griffey Jr. also were courtside at the Lakers' downtown arena to witness the same history they made in Major League Baseball. The two sluggers played 51 games together for the Seattle Mariners in 1990 and 1991 as baseball's first father-son duo.

The Jameses and the Griffeys met during pregame warmups for some photos and a warm chat between two remarkable family lines.

LeBron first spoke about his dream to play alongside Bronny a few years ago, while his oldest son was still in high school. The dream became real after Bronny entered the draft as a teenager following one collegiate season, and the Lakers grabbed him with the 55th overall pick.

"I talked about it years and years ago, and for this moment to come, it's pretty cool," LeBron said. "I don't know if it's going to actually hit the both of us for a little minute, but when we really get to sit back and take it in, it's pretty crazy. … But in the moment, we still had a job to do when we checked in. We wasn't trying to make it a circus. We wasn't trying to make it about us. We wanted to make it about the team."

LeBron and Bronny joined a small club of father-son professional athletes who played together. The Griffeys made history 34 years ago, and they even homered in the same game on Sept. 14, 1990.

Baseball Hall of Famer Tim Raines and his namesake son also accomplished the feat with the Baltimore Orioles in 2001.

In hockey, Gordie Howe played alongside his two sons, Mark and Marty, with the WHA's Houston Aeros and Team Canada before one NHL season together on the Hartford Whalers in 1979-80, when Gordie was 51.

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