

Supervisor, South SD lead Tijuana River Valley Superfund petition

Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer moves forward with a petition to the U.S. EPA after failing to win County board support.

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News

Calls to unlock a long-term pot of funding for the Tijuana River Valley cleanup have stirred local leaders in different directions.

At the Oct. 8 County Board of Supervisors meeting, Vice-Chair Terra Lawson-Remer asked her fellow supervisors to join her in formally requesting

federal Superfund designation for 6 miles of the lower Tijuana River Valley.

When the board declined to immediately back that call, Lawson-Remer announced she will file a petition to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on her own.

In a board letter, Lawson-Remer encouraged the board to safeguard public health.

“The petition should highlight that the Tijuana River crisis involves toxic chemicals and hazardous substances, not merely a sewage issue, underscoring the broader environmental

and public health risks posed by long-standing industrial and chemical pollution,” reads the letter.

In requesting her colleagues to back this request, Lawson-Remer also encouraged the county to allow community leaders and the public to be co-signers, and to share their experiences with toxic contaminants.

“Even after we fix the sewage discharge problem, and even if the air is cleaner to breathe, there could very well be waste buried in the sediment that could bubble up and harm our communities,” said Lawson-Remer. “What this board letter asks my col-

leagues to do today is to support a request to the EPA to come out and do a site inspection.”

Lawson-Remer got support for the petition from some key South County mayors and academics.

“I am here in strong support of the Superfund designation site given all of the pollutants that our communities have been exposed to for years,” said Imperial Beach Mayor Paloma Aguirre. “Please support this item. Don’t delay it, don’t continue it.”

“It doesn’t just smell like hydrogen

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PART III OF III



Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark Pletcher talks outside the federal courthouse about the guilty plea of Leonard Francis, known in military circles as Fat Leonard, on bribery charges involving U.S. Navy officials on Jan. 15, 2015 in San Diego. AP Photo/Lenny Ignelzi.

How the Navy’s ‘Fat Leonard’ scandal reached Coronado

Part III: Three local officers were among those prosecuted – with divergent outcomes – in America’s worst maritime corruption case.

BY DENNIS WAGNER
The Coronado News

In June 2022 trial at the federal courthouse in San Diego, four U.S. maritime officers were convicted in the so-called Fat Leonard case – a decade-long corruption scandal that rocked the Navy.

The men were accused of accepting bribes – lavish meals, sex workers, cash and other perks – from Leonard Francis, a portly Malaysian contractor who provided ship husbanding services to the Seventh Fleet at ports along the Western Pacific coast.

The guilty verdicts were based in significant part on testimony from a one-time Coronado resident, Stephen Shedd, who rose to the level of ship commander before pleading guilty and agreeing to become a government witness.

Jurors failed to reach a verdict, however, on a fifth defendant: former Coronado resident Bruce Loveless, who was one of the Navy’s top intelligence officers prior to his indictment.

After the trial, Loveless’ defense team filed a motion that accused prosecutors of smearing the former rear admiral with

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Read the full series online.

Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera, and tap on the link.

The Islander closes to make room for The Avenue Fish & Oyster Company

The Avenue Fish & Oyster Company is as rooted in Coronado culture as it is in Blue Bridge Hospitality’s signature cuisine.

BY KYLIE CAPUANO
The Coronado News

Those who’ve been on the island long enough will remember 1015 Orange Ave as home to Leroy’s Kitchen & Lounge – an eclectic farm-to-table restaurant that opened in 2011 and remained until the 2020 pandemic prompted vast business and restaurant closures worldwide.

One year after its closure, Blue Bridge Hospitality made room for its next venture – a transition from their former location’s industrial, chic interior into a post-pandemic friendly location: a 60’s to 70’s surf-culture-inspired restaurant with plenty of outdoor space and an approachable menu.

Islander closed after three years in Coronado

The Islander first opened its doors in July of 2021. It was a place for people to stop by for casual beach food, tiki-inspired cocktails, craft beers and the feeling of sitting on the set of a Beach Boys music video.

Now, just three years after the Islander’s opening, the 1015 Orange Ave location will once again be transitioning under Blue Bridge Hospitality’s management. The tiki-themed restaurant’s doors closed on Sept. 9 to make room for The Avenue Fish & Oyster Company, coming as early as January 2025.

“We felt as a restaurant group that we wanted to make a change,” said Matt Sramek, corporate executive chef for Blue Bridge Hospitality. “Blue Bridge has always been more chef-driven and more thoughtful. We just wanted to get back to our roots and source better, higher-end products.”

Blue Bridge Hospitality also manages Stake Chophouse, Little Frenchie, Village Pizzeria and Mootime Creamery on the island.

Inspired by beloved Coronado staples

Created as a nod to the beloved former C&10th Fish Company and named after the locally distinguished corner store The Avenue, its conceptualization is as rooted in Coronado culture as it is in Blue Bridge’s signature cuisine.

Featuring a creative menu that will focus on a carefully curated selection of fish and oysters from around the world, restaurant-goers can expect to dine on a seasonal, fresh menu while sipping on a classic cocktail or wine from their robust selection.

“The menu is not going to have any boundaries,” said Sramek. “We’re going to take influences from

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this week

20 • sunday

Celebrate Oktoberfest with Coronado's own Bavarian band, The Beer Mugs, at 2 p.m. The band plays authentic Bavarian polkas and waltzes using the traditional instrumentation of two clarinets, a trumpet, a trombone, and a tuba.

25 • friday

The Coronado Public Library's Autumn Concert Series takes place on Fridays from Sept. 6 to Oct. 25. Each concert will begin at 1 p.m. in the Winn Room. Doors will open 15 minutes prior to the performance. This year's series will close out with Adrienne Nims.

25 • friday

Each month, the library invites community members to explore different spices used in dishes around the world. Registrants will pick up the monthly spice/herb selection at the library, cook with it, and join other food enthusiasts to discuss what they made and their thoughts about the spice. This month, participants will explore cooking with celery seeds. The meeting will be held on Zoom on Oct. 26 at 2:30 p.m. The Zoom link will be emailed the day before the event. Once registered, participants will receive an email about when they can pick up their sample of spice blend and a couple of recipes. Register at cplevents.org.

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

Annual Halloween Happening to take place on Oct. 25

Coronado News staff

The City of Coronado Recreation and Golf Services will be hosting its annual Halloween Happening on Oct. 25 at Spreckels Park.

From 3:30-5:30 p.m., “ghouls,” “boos” and their families are encouraged to dress in Halloween costumes and enjoy a variety of activities.

Groups from three of the community center’s recreation programs — Heart 2 Art competitive hip hop dance teams, Junior Arts League Willy Wonka performers and Charlene’s Dance Studio hula dancers — will perform in the gazebo.

Additionally, activities will include a life-sized Candyland game, trick-or-treating and a Halloween scavenger hunt at the Coronado Public Library that begins at 6 p.m.

Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Many community organizations will help to make the event possible. They include Coronado Rotary, Safe Harbor Coronado, Soroptimist, Coronado Main Street, Silver Strand and Village Elementary PTO’s, FOCUS, Graham Memorial, Coronado Library, Coronado Police and Fire Departments, The Old Goats and Kids that Care, National Honor Society, Optimist, Jr. Optimist, Octagon, the high school’s Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps and Navy volunteers.



Halloween Happenings will take place on Oct. 25. Image provided by Coronado Recreation Services.

PETS OF THE WEEK

Meet Sage and Bert

PAWS of Coronado

Sage is a sweet and loving female pit-bull weighing in at 58 pounds, with a stunning grey coat that perfectly complements her gentle demeanor.

Known for her affectionate nature, she thrives on human companionship and is always eager to shower her family with love and cuddles.

Sage enjoys long walks in the park, where she can explore and soak up the sunshine, as well as quiet moments at home, where she curls up by your side.

With her playful spirit and warm heart, Sage is not just a pet; she’s a

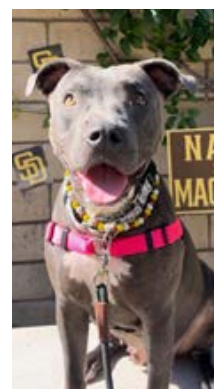
loyal companion ready to fill your life with joy and affection.

Also, meet Bert, the lively and athletic 1-year-old Black Mouth Cur mix who was found as a stray.

Although his background is a mystery, Bert’s charming personality shines brightly. This funny and food-loving pup is always ready to bring a smile to your face with his playful antics.

Bert’s athletic nature makes him an excellent companion for active adventures and fun-filled days.

If you’re searching for a spirited and loving friend to share your life with, Bert is the perfect match. Open your heart and home to this



Sage.



Bert.

delightful dog, and let the adventures begin!

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.



Enjoy Life Without Hip and Knee Pain

Are you ready to get back to an active life, but hip or knee pain is slowing you down? Learn about the latest surgical options at this free webinar presented by Sharp HealthCare.

Hear from a board-certified orthopedic surgeon about advanced treatments, including Mako robotic-arm assisted surgery, available at **Sharp Coronado Hospital**. This type of surgery allows doctors to precisely target joints damaged by arthritis while preserving healthy bone. You can also get answers to questions from our team of experts.

Register now at sharp.com/jointwebinar or 1-800-82-SHARP (1-800-827-4277).

Webinar: Advanced Treatments for Hip and Knee Pain

Tuesday, October 1, 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Link provided upon registration





Never Worry About Charging Your Golf Cart Again

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

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Coronado News invites you to share military service stories

In anticipation of Veterans Day on Nov. 11, Coronado News invites readers to share their military service stories and photos. If you or someone you care about has a story to share, contact sofie@thecoronadonews.com. We would love to hear from you!

John Duncan makes his case to be Mayor of Coronado

BY JOHN DUNCAN
Op-Ed

Editor's note: The Coronado News has invited all City Council and mayoral candidates to submit a first-person article about their background, civic involvement and reason for running for office. We intend to run articles in the order they are received.

I am running to be the next Mayor of Coronado to preserve our quality of life, ensure our ocean and beaches are clean, improve our infrastructure to prevent flooding, and continue the improved stewardship of our city finances that I have championed. It has become abundantly clear that Coronado needs a strong leader and active mayor to advocate for our city.

My wife Peggy and I met in our first year of law school at USD, and we have been married for over 25 years. We love Coronado and are grateful to have raised our four children in our wonderful community.

I practiced law for nearly 30 years, representing financial institutions in complex legal and financial matters. I grew my firm to more than 100 attorneys with 12 offices in ten states. After retiring from full-time law practice, I dedicated myself to serving my community. I currently serve on Coronado City Council, following long standing service on city commissions, nonprofit boards, and a decade of volunteering with youth sports leagues.

Although we proudly consider ourselves a "small town" isolated from regional and state politics, the city is a \$100 million enterprise, immensely impacted by policies from regional agencies and laws from Sacramento. Outside agencies, including SANDAG, have a massively outsized influence and impact on Coronado concerning the most critical issues. Coronado's leader must be a strong advocate to state and federal politicians to continue our progress in solving the Tijuana sewage crisis.

I look at all matters with fresh eyes, not automatically accepting the status quo and not being afraid of the work required to make the necessary



John Duncan is running for mayor in the Nov. 5 elections. Image provided by John Duncan.

changes.

Coronado beaches and environment: I have worked relentlessly to solve the Tijuana sewage issue. I serve on five different organizations that are tackling this problem. I have personally spent hundreds of hours negotiating for federal funding that is currently being deployed to solve the issue. There is still much funding needed and I am passionate to continue the work as your mayor.

Coronado finances and infrastructure: Within the first few months on the City Council, I identified huge problems with our city's investments. After much persistence, \$85 million of your money, taxpayer dollars, was reinvested and is now earning millions more per year – money that we will carefully deploy to solve our problems, such as infrastructure deficiencies and the much needed

rebuilding of our police and fire stations.

Respect at SANDAG: For years, SANDAG paid little attention to Coronado and other small cities. I have worked hard to build coalitions and to stand up to unreasonable mandates and policies. Since I have served on SANDAG's Board as your representative, things have changed dramatically. The "weighted vote" has not been called in over a year. Coronado now has respect from SANDAG, which has a budget of over \$1.5 billion and the authority to implement housing mandates. I will continue to fight for fair treatment.

Coronado history and charm: I have real experience protecting Coronado's history and charm. I served on the board of the Coronado Historical Association and have personally restored four historic homes in our beautiful city. We need to review our Historical Designation Program and ensure it treats homeowners fairly. I have changed the way Coronado and other small cities are treated at SANDAG, and am currently working to revise the criteria for new housing allocations so we will not be overrun with impossible housing requirements that would dramatically change Coronado.

My experience and knowledge has culminated in major successes on critical issues over the past few years, but I am just getting started. I have built strong relationships on a non-partisan basis with representatives from other cities, and our representatives in Washington, DC, which has led to substantial funding and respect.

With strong leadership, we can navigate the current challenges, so that Coronado maintains its special character that makes us proud to call Coronado "home." My hope is that my four children move back to Coronado to live and raise their families after they have completed college. This motivates everything I do. I am grateful for the community's strong response to my campaign and I humbly ask for your vote to be the next Mayor of Coronado.

John Duncan is running for a mayoral seat in the Nov. 5 elections. Mike Donovan and Casey Tanaka are also running.

LISA BENSON



JACK OHMAN

CORONADO

Coronado Island Film Festival returns with Taste of the Fest

BY MADELINE YANG
The Coronado News

The annual Coronado Island Film Festival (CIFF) is returning for its 9th year, and it'll commence as always with the Taste of the Festival Kick-Off Bash before film festivities begin on Nov. 6.

The night will be a celebration of all forms of art, most importantly the 120-plus films that will be shown, but also art in the form of signature dishes from 15 local restaurants and special cocktails from seven beverage vendors.

Carolyn Ayres has chaired the kick-off bash since the beginning, having been an original board member since 2012 when the festival still existed just in the minds of Coronado's creatives.

Ayres says film is something that works for everyone. "Whether you're a toddler or, you know, at the end of your life - every stage of life ... film is an unusual art because it's so good for everyone."

"...Not everyone is captivated by paintings or theater or certain books, but I think absolutely everyone has been to a movie," she adds.

Ayres also loves the relationships this event builds, and says it makes her overjoyed to see other people enjoying the night.

"I think looking at all the happy faces (is my favorite), because I can truthfully say everyone comes together in a town like Coronado, and they just look so happy with the music playing and all of these wonderful little bites of food and the smell and the camaraderie," Ayres says.



CEO and Artistic Director Merridee Book at the 2023 Taste of the Festival Kick Off Bash. Staff photo by Madeline Yang.



The Taste of the Fest Kick-Off Bash returns for its 9th year. Photo provided by Chelsea Van Voorhis.

The kick-off bash will feature pizza from Garage Buona Forchetta, a culinary display by the Loews Coronado Bay Resort's executive chef and 13 other samples showcasing Coronado's rich dining scene.

To complement that dining experience, there will also be a spirits garden with new and returning libation sponsors including Local Motion, Lalo Tequila and Purity Cocktails.

Purity will debut a themed cocktail, paying homage to "The Wizard of Oz," which will close the festival at the Hotel del Coronado in celebration of the film's 85th anniversary.

This year's festival will be diverse and curated, with films from high school students and emerging local San Diego filmmakers, as well as from bigger companies like Amazon MGM Studios and Searchlight Pictures.

Some films to expect at this year's festival include the opening night fea-

ture, "Unstoppable," from Amazon MGM Studios, a sports drama starring Jharrel Jerome, Jennifer Lopez, Don Cheadle and Bobby Cannavale that follows the story of a college wrestler who - despite having one leg - dreams of going pro; "Flow," an animated adventure fantasy that was selected as the Latvian entry for Best International Feature Film at the 97th Academy Awards; and, as a nod to Veterans Day on Nov. 11, "Rohna Classified," a WWII documentary that uncovers classified documents confirming that the large number of casualties in a secret attack was due to non-functioning lifeboats and inadequate lifebelts worn by the soldiers.

CIFF will also host its annual ShortsFest at the Hotel del Coronado this year, featuring 12 creative, provocative and entertaining shorts from local and emerging filmmakers.

"I just can't ever give enough credit

to other people," says Ayres. "The volunteers and the people that come from far and wide to be part of this Coronado Film Festival - (it) just gives me great pride."

Tickets are \$65 and can be purchased for the Taste of the Fest here: <https://www.goevent.com/CIFF/e/2024TasteoftheFestivalKickoffBash>

Information about the Coronado Island Film Festival can be found here: <https://festival.coronadofilmfest.com/tickets/>



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CORONADO

More South County residents to get air purifiers for sewage crisis

San Diego Air Pollution Control District to lead a distribution of air purifiers to an estimated 10,000 households.

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News

San Diego County plans to distribute air purifiers to an estimated 10,000 homes in South County to mitigate the odors caused by sewage flows in the Tijuana River Valley.

The Board of Supervisors at a meeting on Oct. 8 announced it will join an effort led by the San Diego Air Pollution Control District whose plan expands the county's air purifier pilot program, approved in June.

A board letter said the county and district will distribute thousands of air purifiers to communities in the South Bay, including Imperial Beach, Nestor and San Ysidro.

According to County Board Chair Nora Vargas, the pollution control district has identified \$2.7 million in resources, which will be reimbursed by the California Air Resources Board, for the procurement and distribution of these devices.

"I have secured commitments from the U.S. EPA and The California Air Resources Board to support the distribution of air purifiers through the San Diego Air Pollution Control District, ensuring that vulnerable communities receive the support they deserve ... while laying the foundation for long-term, sustainable solutions," said Vargas in a statement.

The district is currently working on logistical efforts, including distribution locations and timelines.

Following residents registering for a randomized drawing, the county distributed a total of 414 devices in August after the county allocated \$100,000 to

provide free air purifiers to homes in areas affected by the sewage odors.

"I am pleased that following our letter to the Board of Supervisors requesting the immediate procurement and deployment of desperately needed air filters, we now have additional ones that will be distributed to those who need them the most: the elderly, children, and immunocompromised," wrote City of Imperial Beach Mayor Paloma Aguirre referring to a Sept. 8 letter to the county and district.

The county's expansion for air purifiers follows a declaration that the air in the valley showed 'no imminent threat' last month, after university researchers said they found concerning levels of dangerous gases along the river.

"My community has been greatly affected by the high levels of Hydrogen Sulfide, permeating Imperial Beach, especially overnight and when the

river is flowing," Aguirre said. "More will be needed but this is a step in the right direction while we await a state of emergency declaration to truly expedite diversion and treatment of the river, our primary source of pollution."

The county announced earlier this month they were to deploy informational sheets to South Bay community residents about a survey taking place Oct. 17-19, the Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response, led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). County and CDC representatives will select random households and interview people face-to-face.

The county expects that this data collection effort will provide results that "inform ongoing efforts to bring more health services, resources, and infrastructure improvements to the affected areas," said Vargas in a release shared by her office this month.

Rotary Club of Coronado honored at STEP's fall social

STEP is a community-funded agency that serves young military and veteran families.

BY KYLIE CAPUANO
The Coronado News

The Rotary Club of Coronado was commemorated as one of three volunteer honorees at this year's Support the Enlisted Project's (STEP) fall social.

STEP is a community-funded agency that serves young military and veteran families facing financial crises in an effort to combat food insecurity, homelessness and risk of suicide. Over the course of 12 years, they have impacted over 250,000 military lives with a 90% success rate by changing their financial behaviors, according to STEP.

By connecting military personnel with financial counselors, they work through obstacles by providing the necessary help - whether it be through therapy or financial support that allows them to restore or retain any basic necessities, such as paying off electric bills or overdue rent.

STEP's services are free of cost to participating families, made possible through volunteer organizations like the Rotary Club of Coronado.

"Coronado Rotary has not only provided us with financial support but they also advocate for us, helping us find additional financial support to



The award ceremony will occur at this year's STEP fall social on Oct. 10. Photo courtesy of Ann Marie Price.

be able to manage more families," said STEP CEO and Co-Founder Tony Teravainen. "They're leaders in the community."

Through donations and fundraising events like their annual Low Tide Ride & Stride - the Rotary Club has been able to raise about \$50,000 for STEP, over the course of about five years.

The cost to guide a military family through STEP's financial program costs around \$2,000, which equates to around 25 families funded through the Rotary Club's efforts alone.

"I've always considered it our obligation to be of service to those who are in need," said Coronado Rotary Club President Pat Starke. "I spent my time in the Army and I'm very fa-

miliar with what it's like to be, for example, a lower-level enlisted person with a family and a child who makes nothing, unable to afford to feed their family or house them. It's tragic but it's a reality of life and it's right up our alley to work with STEP on this."

The Rotary Club has also partnered with STEP in the past for philanthropic projects surrounding the military community, such as when a Coronado-based sailor unexpectedly passed away in 2023 while attempting to combat a carjacking. The two organizations were able to raise over \$20,000 for the sailor's family in order to aid them through the aftermath, including assisting them in getting a new car, paying off bills and providing them with financial counseling.

The Coronado Rotary Club was honored alongside the San Diego Social Venture Partners and the Echelman family.

"When these awards are given out, it's a consequence of the efforts of 250 Coronado rotarians and the work they've done," said Starke. "You throw money at something, you throw effort at something, you think it makes a difference. But when an outside party says you guys have done a good job, it's reaffirming that the efforts we've put forth are actually having a positive impact."

The award was given to the Coronado Rotary Club at the Oct. 10 fall social.

The Islander closes to make room for The Avenue Fish & Oyster Company

» Continued from Page 1

all over the world, whether it be Japan, America, France - all the different flavors of the world are going to support our seafood concept."

Sramek will be working alongside The Avenue Fish & Oyster Company's own personal executive chef, Paul Arias, on curating the dishes. Arias' career in San Diego includes over a decade at The Fishery in Pacific Beach, and time under stewardship of The Lodge's highly acclaimed executive chef Jeff Jackson - who is credited with being one of the pioneers of San Diego's farm-to-table movement.

Set in an interior inspired both by the sea and coastal influences, with feminine, art-nouveau undertones, the restaurant will be swathed in blues, lilacs and seafood greens meant to subtly evoke waves and tides.

Fresh and creative seafood dishes

Situated in the dining room will be an oyster bar with a chef shucking fresh oysters for restaurant go-ers.

Meanwhile, guests can gaze upon the live fire of a wood-burning oven that will cook up dishes like pull-apart rolls and wood-fired oysters, while in the back of the house, courses like whole fish and prawns will be cooked over a wood-burning and charcoal grill to create intricate flavors.

Anything from fileted fish, seafood stew, spiny lobster and soft-shelled crab can be expected to make appearances on the menu as their specific



The Islander officially closed its doors on Sept. 9 after roughly three years in business. Photos courtesy of Blue Bridge Hospitality.

sources come into season. For those not too keen on seafood, there will also be offerings like pastas, salads, a hanger steak, wood-fired chicken and a vegetarian dish to dine on.

On the weekends, The Avenue Fish & Oyster Company will offer brunch, featuring seafood-centric dishes like a smoked salmon benedict that will be cooked on their live fire.

As for pricing, appetizers will range somewhere between \$12-16, oysters around \$25 for a half dozen and main dishes priced around \$30-plus.



The Islander's approachable menu featured casual beach food, tiki-inspired cocktails and craft beers.



The Avenue Fish & Oyster Company's seafood offerings will be sourced from around the world.

CORONADO

New Optimist Club president brings goals for revamped membership and investment in community

BY ELAINE ALFARO
The Coronado News

David Bean said his dedication to volunteering runs in the family. One might say it wasn't learned but runs in his blood.

"My interest in that club really goes back to when I was a kid because my parents were big into volunteering in the community," Bean said about his interest in the Optimist Club of Coronado. "And so I sort of absorbed that from them."

And it's been a life of service. After retiring from 26 years in the Navy and working in the private sector, he still keeps busy in leadership positions, including this new one.

As president, he said he plans to bring greater visibility to the club and continue their work of supporting kids' sports.

The Optimist Club is a volunteer organization that invests funding and support to bring up the next generation of kids.

The club follows the Optimist Creed which states several tenets: "to promote an active interest in good government and civic affairs; to inspire respect for the law; to promote patriotism and work for international accord and friendship among all people; to aid and encourage the development of youth, in the belief that the giving of one's self in service to others will advance the well-being of humankind, community life and the world."

"It really is the guiding light for the club," Bean said.

The club in Coronado accomplishes those goals through a few different events and programs. They support more than 50 youth service projects, such as the annual track program at the middle school and scholarships. They host a variety of fundraising projects, including a pickleball tournament each year. And, they often support the Boy and Girl Scouts on special projects.

While these goals continue to be ambitious, the club's journey hasn't come without challenges. Bean said COVID-19 made a dent in their organization.

"Many social and nonprofit organizations suffered a bit from membership loss," Bean said. "A lot of the members [in the Optimist Club], in fact,



Dan McClure (left), Mike Lavin, Bill Carinder, Dave Bean (right) gather for a photo at a volunteer open house on Oct. 10. Photo by Sofie Franssen.

passed away, from the original group. For a variety of reasons, they were not getting back filled by the same number of people. My principal goal, for the next year, is to enhance and grow our membership, and I think one of the best ways to do that is to be visible in the community."

The club was recently at a volunteer open house fair at Spreckels Center on Oct. 10, engaging with the community and neighborhood. They've partnered with other involved groups, like the Rotary Club to support Coronado and the surrounding neighborhoods.

"One thing we're doing almost immediately is piggybacking with Rotary Club. They form an important part of the community as well," Bean said. "Later this month, we're doing a food drive and I'll be delivering food to the food pantry down in IB. As a community effort, pairing up with them is one way."

Bean said investment in the local community, especially the youth, is needed.

"The need is absolutely there, especially now," Bean said. "There's a lot in the press about budget

concerns for the school, right? Most of that focus is on academic programs, but it has a ripple effect with a lot of these other ancillary programs."

That's where Bean said the club comes in. But more than money, he said the club is also set on spreading a message about the impact of volunteering on both the volunteer and the community.

"It's the knowledge that we are making a difference in the community and seeing that with the different groups, organizations and kids who come to the meetings and explain to us how our donations have made a difference in their lives."

To learn more about the Optimist Club of Coronado or become a member, visit <https://optimist-clubofcoronado.org/>



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CORONADO

Florida has nearly all ballots counted on Election Day, while California can take weeks. This is why

Associated Press

In the 2020 presidential election, Florida reported the results within a few hours of poll close of more than 99% of ballots cast.

In California, almost one-third of ballots were uncounted after election night. The state was making almost daily updates to its count through Dec. 3, a full month after Election Day.

This wasn't unusual or unexpected.

California, the nation's most populous state, is consistently among the slowest to report all its election results. Florida, the third-most populous state, is generally among the first to finish.

The Constitution sets out broad principles for electing a national government and leaves the details to the states. The choices made by state lawmakers and election officials as they sort out those details affect everything from how voters cast a ballot, how quickly the tabulation and release of results takes place, how elections are kept secure and how officials maintain voters' confidence in the process.

The gap between when California and Florida are able to finalize their count is the natural result of election officials in the two states choosing to emphasize different concerns and set different priorities.

How California counts

Lawmakers in California designed their elections to improve accessibility and increase turnout. Whether it's automatically receiving a ballot at home, having up until Election Day to turn it in or having several days to address any problems that may arise with their ballot, Californians have a lot of time and opportunity to vote. It comes at the expense of knowing the final vote counts soon after polls close.

"Our priority is trying to maximize participation of actively registered voters," said Democratic Assemblymember Marc Berman, who authored the 2021 bill that permanently switched the state to all-mail elections. "What that means is things are a little slower. But in a society that wants immediate gratification, I think our democracy is worth taking a little time to get it right and to create a system where everyone can participate."

California, which has long had a culture of voting absentee, started moving toward all-mail elections last decade. All-mail systems will almost always prolong the count. Mail ballots require additional verification steps — each must be opened individ-



This Nov. 4, 2016, file photo shows mail-in ballots being sorted at the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters in San Jose, Calif. AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez, File.

ually, validated and processed — so they can take longer to tabulate than ballots cast in person that are then fed into a scanner at a neighborhood polling place.

In 2016, California passed a bill allowing counties to opt in to all-mail elections before instituting it statewide on a temporary basis in 2020 and enshrining it in law in time for the 2022 elections.

Studies found that the earliest states to institute all-mail elections — Oregon and Washington — saw higher turnout. Mail ballots also increase the likelihood of a voter casting a complete ballot, according to Melissa Michelson, a political scientist and dean at California's Menlo College who has written on voter mobilization.

In recent years, the thousands of California voters who drop off their mail ballots on Election Day created a bottleneck on election night. In the past five general elections, California has tabulated an average of 38% of its vote after Election Day. Two years ago, in the 2022 midterm elections, half the state's votes were counted after Election Day.

Slower counts have come alongside later mail ballot deadlines. In 2015, California implemented its first postmark deadline, meaning that the state can count mail ballots that arrive after Election Day as long as the Postal Service receives the ballot by Election Day. Berman said the postmark deadline allows the state to treat the mailbox as a drop box in order to avoid punishing voters who cast their ballots properly but are affected by postal delays.

Initially, the law said ballots that arrived within three days of the election would be considered cast in time. This year, ballots may arrive up to a week after Election Day, so California won't know

how many ballots have been cast until Nov. 12. This deadline means that California will be counting ballots at least through that week because ballots arriving up to that point might still be valid and be added to the count.

How Florida counts

Florida's election system is geared toward quick and efficient tabulation. Coming out of its disastrous 2000 presidential election, when the U.S. Supreme Court settled a recount dispute and George W. Bush was declared the winner in the state over Al Gore, the state moved to standardize its election systems and clean up its canvass, or the process of confirming votes cast and counted.

Republican Rep. Bill Posey, who as state senator was the sponsor of the Florida Election Reform Act of 2001, said the two goals of the law — to count all legal votes and to ensure voters are confident their votes are counted — were accomplished by mandating optical ballot scanners in every precinct. That "most significant" change means no more "hanging chads" in Florida. The scanners read and aggregate results from paper ballots, immediately spitting back any that contain mistakes.

Florida's deadlines are set to avoid having ballots arrive any later than when officials press "go" on the tabulator machines. The state has a receipt deadline for its absentee ballots, which means ballots that do not arrive by 7 p.m. local time on Election Day are not counted, regardless of when they were mailed.

Michael T. Morley, a professor of election law at Florida State University College of Law, pointed out that Florida election officials may begin processing ballots, but not actually count them, before polls close. That helps speed up the process, especially compared with states that don't allow officials to process mail ballots before Election Day.

"They can determine the validity of ballots, confirm they should be counted and run them through machines," Morley said. "They just can't press the tally button."

Florida takes steps to avoid a protracted back-and-forth on potentially problematic ballots. At the precinct, optical scanners catch some problems, such as a voter selecting too many candidates, that can be fixed on-site. Also, any voter who's returned a mail ballot with a mismatched or missing signature has until 5 p.m. two days after the election to submit an affidavit fixing it. California gives voters up to four weeks after the election to address such inconsistencies.

Supervisor, South SD lead Tijuana River Valley Superfund petition

» Continued from Page 1

sulfide when you're down there either, there's a chemical smell, we've all said it, we all know it," said Paula Stigler Granados, from San Diego State University's School of Public Health.

"This community deserves this," added Granados, who is doing research in the valley as part of The Tijuana River Pollution Task Force, "it's an injustice to not take a deeper look to see how many things are in this environment that could be affecting the public health and the environment in this region."

Following public comment, with hundreds of people writing in to voice their support of the petition, Chairwoman Nora Vargas issued a motion directing the county's Chief Administrative Office to provide a detailed analysis of legal options and funding opportunities — including a potential EPA Superfund designation — within 90 days.

That motion passed with a 3-2 vote, with Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe voting against it.

Vargas claimed to support the spirit of Lawson-Remer's request, but requested more details about the process before formally endorsing it.

"It could take decades before any meaningful cleanup even begins," said Vargas. "The community must be engaged and fully informed on the long-term consequences of a Superfund designation, including potential impacts on property values and local investments. I appreciate the intent behind this proposal and I'm not saying no to this item, but I believe there are other options we should explore that could bring faster relief and greater benefits to those communities."

Shortly after county supervisors declined to endorse her letter, Lawson-Remer announced plans with regional colleagues to submit her petition.

According to Lawson-Remer's office, the call for a Superfund designation has been joined by officials from Imperial Beach, National City, and the Air Pollution Control District, among others.

"I am working with leaders from across the San Diego region who have already expressed to me their support for pursuing Superfund designation, and we are submitting an immediate petition to the EPA requesting a Superfund designation," said Lawson-Remer in a statement. "I hope my colleagues will join us after their report comes back in

90 days."

"I am grateful to the over 350 people who sent in comments in support of Vice-Chair Lawson-Remer's initiative to petition the USEPA to begin the process to designate parts of the Tijuana River Valley as a Superfund site," Aguirre said in an email to The Coronado News.

Last month, Aguirre also requested this designation from President Biden in a letter dated Sept. 24.

"Despite the item being delayed by Chair Nora Vargas, we will move forward without delay and submit the petition ourselves in partnership with highly affected residents who reside at the epicenter of this crisis, in the Tijuana River Valley," added Aguirre. "We know that securing Superfund designation is a long process, but beginning it now is crucial to prevent further delays in remediation efforts, especially in light of our unanswered call for a state of emergency. Our community cannot afford to wait any longer while hazardous chemicals continue to threaten our community."

Lawson-Remer's office said outreach to gather community testimonials has begun and will be submitted with the formal petition to the EPA in a letter that is being drafted in collaboration with local officials.

The EPA confirmed it will review the petition once it is received.

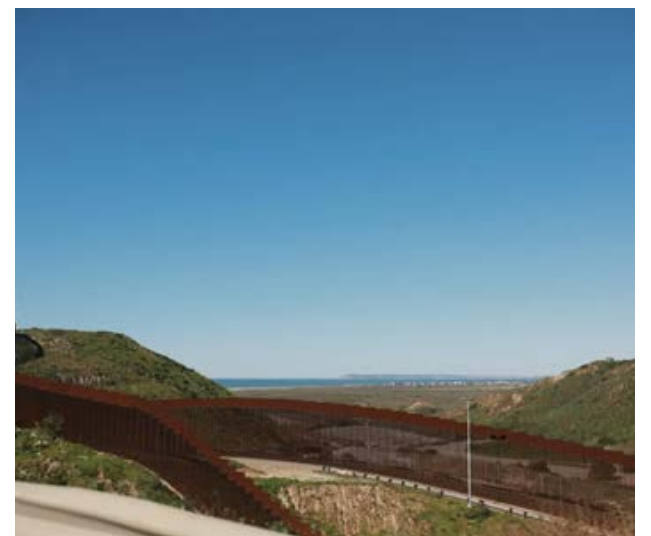
A Superfund designation allows the EPA to clean up contaminated sites, according to the federal agency, and was originally established by Congress as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) more than 40 years ago.

The county document detailing Lawson-Remer's official request to the supervisors says Superfund designation is given to the most toxic and polluted sites in the U.S.

It provides authority and funding to remediate pollution while holding responsible parties accountable with key benefits including federal funding for site investigation, cleanup, and long-term remediation efforts.

Since its inception, the Superfund program has achieved an estimated \$50.3 billion of potentially responsible parties' commitments for site cleanup and reimbursements for the agency's costs spent cleaning up sites, the EPA reports.

The EPA said the Superfund program saw over \$1.3 billion in pre-construction, construction and



The US-Mexico border from Tijuana. Photo by Dennis Wagner.

post construction funding nationally for fiscal year 2023 as a result of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Currently, the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base is the only location in the county designated as a Superfund site. There are more than 1,000 EPA-designated Superfund sites across the nation, including over 100 in the state.

Lawson-Remer's document, as it reads, said a petition is the first step in fast tracking hazardous waste cleanup and holding polluters accountable.

The document also details a five-step process for Superfund designation that includes research, site inspections and a determination of toxic risk factors based on a federal Hazardous Ranking System that a site must score 28.5 or higher in to be eligible for a plan and resources.

Lawson-Remer said the riverbed has been polluted with wastewater, including toxic substances, for 80 years.

"Although we do know that previous studies have found traces ... we don't know what's in there," she added. "We don't have a full picture of what's in the sediment."

"The work to clean up the Tijuana River Valley has to proceed on multiple fronts at the same time," said Lawson-Remer. "All of our conversations to date have been entirely around the sewage and the air, and we have not focused on potential long term contaminants in the soil and the groundwater."

NAVY

USS Ronald Reagan holds change-of-command ceremony

DVIDS

During a change-of-command ceremony in the hangar bay at Naval Air Station North Island on Oct. 3, Capt. Daryle Cardone was relieved by Capt. Dale Gregory as the new commanding officer of the USS Ronald Reagan.

Ronald Reagan, former flagship of Carrier Strike Group 5, arrived in San Diego on Oct. 1 following an Aug. 13 homeport shift to Naval Base Kitsap in Bremerton, Washington. The homeport shift to Bremerton capped Ronald Reagan's nine years of forward-deployed service in Japan.

Rear Adm. Gregory Newkirk presided over the change-of-command ceremony. Also in attendance was Vice Adm. Daniel Cheever, commander of Naval Air Forces.

"To the Reagan sailors, they are the reason I am still doing this after 29 years," said Cardone. "There are many people who put their head on their pillow at night and wonder if what they are doing matters. You don't need to wonder. You are the best of the 1% who proudly volunteered to wear the cloth of our nation and willing to sail the world's oceans and take on our nation's most difficult national security challenges as part of your chosen profession. It is you who provides the credible combat readiness that reassures our allies, our partners, and maintain regional stability. You embody the essence of the ship's motto 'Peace through Strength'."

During Cardone's tenure from October 2022 to October 2024, Ronald Reagan earned the Navy's battle "E" Navy Retention Excellence best in class award.

His leadership saw the completion of its time as the United States Navy's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier, participating in various multi-



Capt. Daryle Cardone, left, commanding officer of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), and Capt. Dale Gregory, prospective commanding officer, share glances following an anecdote by a guest speaker at a change-of-command ceremony in the hangar bay while in-port Naval Air Station North Island on Oct. 3, 2024. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Keith Knisely.

national naval training exercises.

"The presence of any carrier, in this case the Ronald Reagan, in the Indo-Pacific for the years that it was under Cardone's leadership made anyone think twice before crossing any line," said Newkirk. "Cardone, well done to you, the crew and your family for everything."

During the ceremony, Newkirk awarded Cardone with the Legion of Merit gold star for exceptional meritorious conduct and outstanding service during his tour.

Gregory, a native of Boca Raton, Florida, assumed command after previously serving as the commanding officer of USS Blue Ridge and the executive officer of USS Abraham Lincoln. Gregory graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1997 and has more than 2,500 flight hours and 650 carrier landings in F/A-18 aircraft.



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U.S. Navy's Blue Angels fly to San Francisco

The U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, performs aerobatic formation maneuvers during San Francisco Fleet Week 2024 over the San Francisco Bay on Oct. 10, 2024. San Francisco Fleet Week, now in its 43rd iteration, is a time-honored sea service celebration that allows citizens of the Bay Area to witness today's maritime capabilities firsthand. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Leon Vonguyen.

USS Comstock returns to San Diego

DVIDS

The Whidbey Island-class dock landing ship USS Comstock returned to homeport in San Diego on Oct. 8, following a nearly four-month deployment to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations.

Along with its more than 400 sailors, Comstock participated in multiple exercises and operations.

"The sailors aboard Comstock performed their duty in an exemplary manner to support tasking in U.S. 7th Fleet," said Cmdr. Byron Stocks, commanding officer of Comstock. "The mission execution afforded the opportunity to demonstrate joint force capability."

Comstock participated in Exercise Ssang Yong 24. During the decisive action phase of Ssang Yong, Republic of Korea and U.S. conducted large-scale maneuvers from sea and air to showcase the alliance and its capability to carry out combined amphibious operations.

Since 2012, the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps have regularly conducted Ssang Yong to enhance defensive posture on the Korean Peninsula while improving naval and amphibious capabilities.

After Ssang Yong, Comstock transited home to San Diego following a nearly four-month deployment.

USS Comstock is homeported at Naval Base San Diego and assigned to Amphibious Squadron 1.

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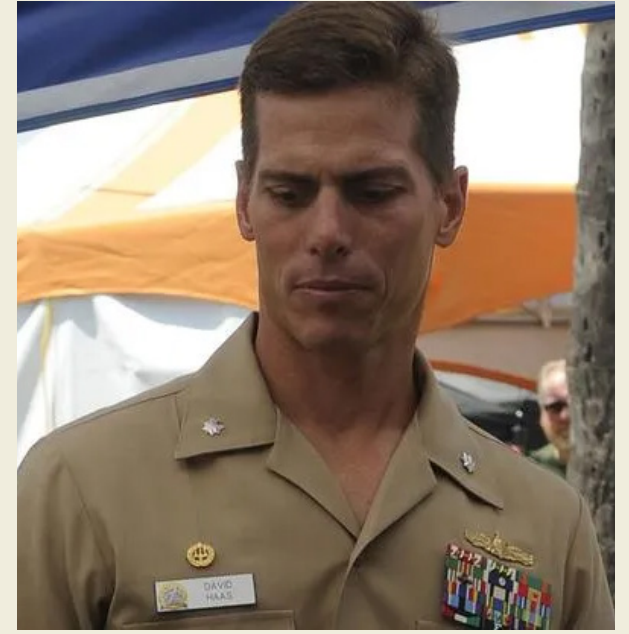
NAVY



Bruce Loveless spent more than 30 years as an intelligence officer. Photo credit to the U.S. Naval Institute.



Leonard Francis, a Malaysian contractor nicknamed "Fat Leonard". Photo credit to the U.S. Naval Institute.



Then Cmdr. David Haas helped Glenn Defense secure a contract servicing the USS John C. Stennis. Photo credit to the U.S. Naval Institute.

How the Navy's 'Fat Leonard' scandal reached Coronado

» Continued from Page 1

"sensationalized claims of 'secrets for sex' despite a complete lack of evidence to support those allegations."

Not one witness had provided a first-hand account of Loveless accepting prostitution services, they contended, adding that the government failed to prove that Loveless participated in – or even knew about – a bribery scheme.

While Loveless received things of value from Francis, the defense concluded, prosecutors lacked a quid pro quo. Amid 14 million documents in the case, they said, Loveless appeared in just six emails – none of which reflected criminal conduct.

The motion argued that an acquittal was warranted.

Judge Janis Sammartino dismissed charges against Loveless in September 2022, prompting defense attorneys to declare he was "completely vindicated." Still, convictions had piled up... And then the Fat Leonard criminal case crumbled further.

'Outrageous' misconduct

In multiple court filings, defense attorneys alleged that Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark Pletcher – the lead prosecutor – had withheld crucial information from defendants.

Among other things, they said, the lead investigator had submitted a false affidavit in a related case, and had urged fellow agents to offer a \$5,000 bribe to a prospective witness.

A special hearing was convened with a finding by Judge Sammartino that government lawyers committed "outrageous" misconduct.

The Justice Department replaced Pletcher and his prosecution team. A slew of motions followed, seeking to dismiss charges not just against officers who were tried alongside Loveless, but for others who already had pleaded guilty.

Instead of felony records and prison, those defendants eventually got misdemeanor convictions. Their punishment: fines of \$100 each.

But Shedd was different. Because he had shown remorse and cooperated with prosecutors, government lawyers argued he should go completely unpunished.

Meanwhile, defense attorneys dropped another bombshell -- alleging that Shedd committed perjury during the trial, and that the move to dismiss charges against him was orchestrated to cover up the magnitude of government misconduct.

In a letter to Sammartino late last year, Todd Burns, counsel for one of the convicted officers, referred to Shedd as a "snitch" and defended the pejorative by saying "the government's preferred, sterile term – 'cooperator' – doesn't do justice to Shedd's rampant dishonesty and trial perjury."

Burns alleged that Shedd "was coached" to lie under oath. He suggested that government attorneys sought to dismiss all charges out of fear that Shedd might "reveal the trial prosecutors' scheme to suborn perjury." Instead of leniency, Burns argued, Shedd should receive additional punishment for dishonesty.

In response, Assistant U.S. Attorney Tara McGrath told Sammartino the allegation was a falsehood based on "distorting and omitting facts."

Shedd's attorney, David S. Wilson, was more forceful. His brief said defense lawyers had launched "an inexcusably vicious attack" on his client, who was so credible that jurors convicted all co-defendants who stood trial, except Loveless. Wilson said the claim of a cover-up was "exquisitely far-fetched," adding, "Had Mr. Shedd perjured himself, the defense cross-examination would have exposed it."

The court apparently took no action on the perjury allegations.

Pletcher did not respond to inquiries. A spokeswoman for the U.S. Attorney's Office in San Diego failed to answer questions or provide comment.

In May of this year, although Shedd already had signed a guilty plea, Sammartino dismissed all



The U.S. 7th Fleet flagship, USS Blue Ridge, returns to Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka on Aug. 20, 2024 after completing a two-and-a-half month scheduled patrol around the Indo-Pacific region. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Alexandria Esteban.

charges against him.

A run for the border

Amid the legal wrangling, Leonard Francis seemingly manipulated the justice system just as he had the military.

Shortly after his indictment in 2013, he took a plea deal and agreed to work with prosecutors. Instead of biding time in jail while awaiting a sentence, however, Francis obtained a doctor's diagnosis of terminal cancer and secured a medical release from incarceration. By September of 2022, he was living under "house arrest" in a \$7,000-per-month Carmel Valley mansion with his girlfriend, children and servants, according to the San Diego Union-Tribune.

That's when Francis, apparently with lax oversight, cut a tracking device off his ankle, caught an Uber to the Mexican border, flew to Cuba and wound up in Venezuela.

Two weeks later, amid a frenzy of media coverage, Venezuelan authorities took custody of Francis and, after negotiations with the United States, returned him to San Diego in a prisoner swap.

Fat Leonard's legacy

More than a decade after initial indictments, the Fat Leonard saga refuses to die.

Francis, whose terminal cancer somehow vanished, is still awaiting sentencing. His physician sent a letter to the court congratulating Francis for a "clean bill of health."

Now secured in San Diego's Metropolitan Correctional Center, Francis is listed as Register Number 45415-298.

From Jakarta to Coronado, the taint of corruption and flawed investigations damaged countless officers and families caught in the maelstrom.

Meanwhile, for the Navy, the whole affair wreaked. Betrayal and enforcement failures were magnified by the service's questionable accountability and transparency.

In his book, "Fat Leonard: How One Man Bribed, Bilked and Seduced the U.S. Navy," Washington Post report Craig Whitlock concludes that the nation's maritime service "did everything it could after Francis pleaded guilty in 2015 to hide the extent of the rot in its ranks and avoid a full public accounting."

Of 685 service members referred for possible military discipline, he reported, outcomes were disclosed for only 19 -- and just five were convicted in court martial proceedings.

According to Whitlock, a fallback position was deployed to rationalize and obfuscate: "In most instances, the Navy excused misconduct on the dubious grounds that its personnel didn't know any better. In case after case, the Navy let people

off the hook ... because they were following the lead of an admiral or senior officer who did the same thing."

Epilogue

In 2021, before charges were dropped against Loveless, he obtained a PhD in leadership from the University of San Diego.

A LinkedIn page identifies him as a director at All American Leadership LLC, an Irvine company that "inspires, empowers, and challenges leaders to create and sustain high performing cultures." Core values include character and trust.

The page also lists Loveless as a senior advisor at Hayes Group International, a Washington, D.C., consulting enterprise that specializes in intelligence, analytics software and customized technology. His name does not appear in the company's list of employees.

Neither the Hayes Group nor All American Leadership responded to inquiries.

David Haas, another former Coronado resident who was caught up in the scandal, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bribery after retiring as a Navy captain.

The San Diego Union Tribune profiled Haas last year, after he was sentenced to prison. "For more than two decades," the newspaper reported, "Haas charted an upward career path ... facing combat in Iraq and Afghanistan as he ascended the Navy's ranks, at one point coordinating the operations of some 100 ships and submarines, 200 aircraft and 40,000 sailors and Marines. But his illustrious career came crashing down..."

According to a federal Bureau of Prisons website, Haas served his time and was released from custody in July. He could not be reached for comment, and his attorney did not respond to inquiries.

Shedd, during an interview with The Coronado News, declined to talk about the damage done to his career and family, or to discuss what he's doing today.

Prior to his arrest, Shedd was overseeing a United States Strategic Command operations center in Colorado with \$25 billion in military assets, according to his LinkedIn page. Currently, that page lists him as a "global operations manager" and a "turnaround leader" in San Diego County, but it does not identify an employer.

Now living in Riverside County, Shedd recalls Coronado as a close-knit community full of drama, where most locals shunned him after the Fat Leonard scandal. He describes himself as "radio-active" to the Navy, and won't even visit the island because it would be so painful.

"From my experience, the impact was termination of many friendships," Shedd said. "It's expected, but very tragic."

SPORTS

Sacred Heart Parish School announces 18th annual golf tournament fundraiser

Coronado News staff

Sacred Heart Parish School (SHPS) announces the return of its annual golf tournament on Oct. 25.

This marks the 18th year of the event and the theme will be the Day of The Dead. Fundraising for this event will be applied towards the school's sports programs, security needs, technology and IT support, and the blacktop beautification project.

Attendees will enjoy a barbecue lunch, 18 fun-filled holes of golf, and a Mexican dinner with a live auction. Guests are encouraged to immerse themselves in the setting of Day Of The Dead by showing out with their best festive golf apparel, makeup and costumes.

There will be prizes for categories like best dressed, longest drive, closest to the pin. The event will be held at the Coronado Golf Course followed by a dinner and party at Feast & Fareway.

"Sacred Heart Parish School provides a safe, Christ-centered environment where clergy, parents

and teachers work together for the benefit of our students," said Principal Erika Rosas. "Our school is a place where the children can grow in body, mind and spirit to reach their fullest potential. With your support we can ensure that every child receives a quality education in a nurturing environment, together we can make a difference."

Tickets for the golf tournament begin at \$250 for an individual golfer or \$1,000 for a foursome. The school is also accepting donations and sponsors for those unable to attend but still wishing to support.

Event organizers with the school said they would like to thank the fundraisers sponsors with the utmost gratitude. Tickets can be purchased: <https://e.givesmart.com/events/ECi/>



[Purchase tickets online.](https://e.givesmart.com/events/ECi/)

Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera, and tap on the link.



Vivian Corder, Legend Van Arsdale, Wyatt Corder and Finn O'Grady sell cookies to golfers at the 2023 Sacred Heart Parish School Golf Tournament to raise money for their school. Photo by Steph Pate Photo.

League competition underway for Coronado cross country

BY CADE CAVIN
The Coronado News

After a busy offseason of training and preparation, the Coronado High School Cross Country season kicked off on Oct. 1 with the inaugural cluster meet of the 2024 season. Coronado High competes in the Eastern League within the City Conference, with the likes of High Tech High School and La Jolla High School.

The meets are held on the 3.11 mile course at Morley field in San Diego, with 144 competitors spanning the various schools in the league. The Islanders had three runners finish in the top 25 in the boys race, with Nathan Ayan finishing 18th with a time of 18:02, Vincent Russo finishing 20th at 18:08, and Jack Fletcher coming in 23rd at 18:21.

The Islanders had impressive showings at the JV level as well, with Austin Litteral finishing with the best time in the boys JV meet at 21:26. Despite impressive personal showing from boys runners on both the Varsity and JV levels, both boys teams were unable to leave victorious.

Conversely, both girls' teams won their meets, led by Morgan Maske's 5th place finish out of 74 runners with a time of 20:26. Gwynne Letcher also finished in the top ten, with an 8th place finish and a time of 21:04. The girl's team is 2-0 this season, while the boys are 0-2.

As the season progresses, all Islanders runners will continue to look to improve in time for the league finals on Nov. 5, and the CIF Championships on Nov. 15.



Austin Litteral from Coronado High school finished with the best time for the JV boys meet at the first cluster meet of the 2024 season. Photo by George Green.

The unconventional roster behind CHS' girls varsity tennis team

After coming into the 2024-25 season with four returning players, the girls were tasked with finding teammates to fill the roster.

BY KYLIE CAPUANO
The Coronado News

After six of the girls on Coronado High School's varsity tennis team graduated last season, the program was left with four returning varsity players for 2024-25 – two of whom have been benched for the season so far due to ACL injuries. This left the few returning athletes in a unique spot: it was on them to fill the roster.

"They went to other teams and were like, 'okay, who has good hand-eye coordination, who has a good work ethic and who is a good teammate?'" said varsity assistant coach Beth Elardo.

The result? A team put together by seven CHS lacrosse players, one softball player and one soccer player.

"I loaned out rackets to many of the kids because they didn't even have rackets," said Beth Elardo. "Some of them didn't know how to serve. They didn't know how to hit a forehand, a backhand, a volley – they didn't know any tennis strategy."

Yet, nearing the end of their season, the girls stand at a 5-7 record as of Oct. 11 as a CIF Division 3 team in the western league, where over 75% of the teams in their conference are ranked as Division 1 or 2 teams.

It was their strategy of recruiting competitive athletes from other sports that Beth Elardo attributes to the girls holding their own against the more experienced teams.

"They already had great athletic skills coming in, they just didn't play tennis, but their work ethic has gotten them to where they all play great tennis," said Beth Elardo. "I mean for the lacrosse girls, the lacrosse stick is like a tennis racket. The ball has to go in the stick a certain way to catch it. It's the exact same concept with tennis – the ball has to hit the racket in the sweet spot."

Junior captain Grace Elardo, committed to play Division 1 lacrosse at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, currently leads the team with a 31-5 record. Sophomore doubles partners Brynn Belong and Sam Aldworth closely trail behind with a record of 23-13. Sophomore Lilah Cade and junior Logan Shapiro, who also compete in doubles, boast over 20 match wins as well.

Senior captain Carlota Peralta, who is one of the two athletes currently out with an ACL injury, attributes the team's bond and work ethic to many of the season wins.

"We were really surprised to see



This year's roster is filled with competitive athletes from CHS' lacrosse, softball and soccer teams. Photo by Beth Elardo.

how the team turned out after try-outs," said Peralta. "I've been on varsity for years and I've never been on a team this bonded. This team is always so motivated to be here; they're always committed at practice; they don't complain about anything; they listen to advice; they're all just good friends with each other."

Currently ranked fourth in the Division 3 league, so far the girls have secured conference wins against Otay Ranch High School, University City High School twice, Granite Hills High School and Mira Mesa High School. Two of their four losses were close games against Canyon Hills and Clairemont, with a score of 8-10 for both.

Last year, doubles team Grace Elardo and Maria Anaya were knocked out in the Division 2 finals by Mater Dei Catholic High School. This year, the team's goal is to win the Division 3 playoffs.

"We all want to play for each other and want to bring out the best in each

and every one of us, so I feel like with that, we're on our way to win," said junior captain Anaya.

The week of Oct. 21 will be a conference tournament where singles and doubles players across the CIF will battle it out for individual rankings. The following week will be the CIF team tournament, where schools will compete for division championship titles. To conclude the season, beginning Nov. 4, the top four singles players and top four doubles players from the conference tournament will compete for their individual titles.

According to Beth Elardo, the girls have their eyes set on battling for a team championship in the CIF team tournament.

"Our motto since the beginning of the season has been 'We is greater than I,'" said Beth Elardo. "We know we're in a tough division, but tough makes us better. I could not be any happier with this team. Their attitudes are wonderful, they're having fun and they work really hard."

SPORTS

Five former employees sue the San Diego Wave and the National Women's Soccer League

Associated Press

Five former employees of the San Diego Wave have filed a lawsuit in San Diego Superior Court accusing the women's soccer club of discrimination, harassment and wrongful termination, among other allegations.

The lawsuit stems partly from claims made earlier this year on social media by former Wave video and creative manager Brittany Alvarado. She was joined by four other plaintiffs in the lawsuit filed on Oct. 7.

The lawsuit names the Wave and the National Women's Soccer League as defendants. It says both the team and the league failed to act on complaints about a toxic workplace culture.

The plaintiffs are seeking compensatory damages for lost wages and benefits and for emotional distress, as well as punitive damages.

One of the plaintiffs, identified by the pseudonym Jane Doe, says in the court documents that she was sexually assaulted by a co-worker. She did not report the allegation to the club or police at the time, according to the lawsuit.

Shortly after reporting to a manager that another employee was "traumatizing" her and that she was struggling with mental health issues, she was placed on leave and later terminated, the lawsuit said.

The lawsuit claims the NWSL investigated complaints against the Wave twice but ultimately nothing was done.

"The safety, health, and well-being of everyone associated with our league is our highest priority. We take serious any and every report of potential misconduct, hire qualified independent investigators to review those allegations thoroughly, and act when allegations are supported by



United States head coach Jill Ellis waves to the crowd as she leaves the field after an international friendly soccer match between the United States and South Korea, Sunday, Oct. 6, 2019, in Chicago. AP Photo/Kamil Krzaczyński, File.

the facts uncovered. We will not comment specifically about an active legal matter," the NWSL said in a statement.

The Wave also sent The Associated Press a statement on Oct. 9 regarding the employees' complaint. "This lawsuit concerns allegations initially raised on July 3, 2024. As this matter is an ongoing legal proceeding, we are unable to comment further at this time," the team said.

The lawsuit does not name Wave President Jill Ellis as a defendant. Ellis filed a defamation lawsuit against Alvarado in July that called the accu-

sations in the social media post both false and "personally damaging."

Alvarado alleged in a lengthy post on X that the workplace was discriminatory and said it took a toll on her mental health.

Ellis, who coached the U.S. national team to World Cup titles in 2015 and 2019, responded at the time by saying that mental health concerns are a priority for the club and it has support measures, including an employee assistance program. She added that when allegations of mistreatment have occurred, the team has investigated.

Coronado volleyball to host Dig Pink Fundraiser

Coronado News staff

The Islander girls volleyball team is hosting a Dig Pink Fundraiser at their Oct. 18 game against University City High School.

The event will raise funds and bring awareness to metastatic breast cancer through live performances provided by Coronado School of the Arts, the middle school choir and the high school dance team. A Buona Forchetta food truck will also be available as a dinner option in the parking lot.

All proceeds will benefit the Side-Out Foundation, a charity that raises awareness and funds for metastatic breast cancer.

"This event is important to CHS volleyball because it is a way to support a disease that has affected so many people's lives who are close to us," said head coach Adeile Ahmu. "As a woman who has breast cancer survivors in my family, this is a small way to recognize all the women (and men) who have been diagnosed, fought and who continue to fight this battle."

Donations can be made at giving.side-out.org/campaigns/20535. The event runs from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and admission is granted by donation.



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SPORTS

Auction for Shohei Ohtani's 50-50 ball is allowed to proceed as legal dispute continues

Associated Press

The auction for Shohei Ohtani's potentially lucrative 50th home run ball has been allowed to proceed as a legal dispute over ownership of the financial proceeds continues.

Chris Belanski was the man who walked out of the stadium with the historic baseball, gaining possession in the left field stands at loanDepot Park in Miami. Max Matus and Joseph Davidov each claim in separate lawsuits that they grabbed the ball first.

Attorney John Uustal — who represents Matus — confirmed on Oct. 7 that all parties involved wanted the auction to proceed.

"The parties have agreed that there's no uncertainty the auction will happen," Uustal said. "There was a certain amount of momentum and reality surrounding our decision. It took some compromise, but we believe it's the best move."

The bidding for the baseball through Goldin Auctions was at \$1.5 million as of Oct. 7, though the winner would pay \$1.83 million for the ball and added fees.

The agreement reached was partly to assure potential bidders that they would receive possession of the baseball without legal action.

Bids are allowed through Oct. 22.

ESPN first reported the updates in the case. Uustal said no new hearings have been scheduled.

Ohtani became the first player in baseball history to hit 50 homers and steal 50 bases, reaching the mark on Sept. 19 with his homer in Miami against the Marlins.

Matus' lawsuit claims that the Florida resident — who was celebrating his



Los Angeles Dodgers' Shohei Ohtani, of Japan, hits a home run scoring Hunter Feduccia during the third inning of a baseball game against the Miami Marlins, Tuesday, Sept. 17, 2024, in Miami. AP Photo/Wilfredo Lee.

18th birthday — gained possession of the Ohtani ball before Belanski took it away. Part of the presentation on Oct. 10 was supposed to be video of the scramble for the ball in the stands.

"Max successfully grabbed the 50/50 ball in his left hand and intended to keep it," the lawsuit stated. "Unfortunately, a few seconds later, defendant

Belanski — a muscular older man — trapped plaintiff's arm in between his legs and wrangled the 50/50 ball out of Max's left hand."

Davidov claims in his suit that he was able to "firmly and completely grab the ball in his left hand while it was on the ground, successfully obtaining possession of the 50/50 ball."

The suit goes on to say that "an unknown fan wrongfully jumped over the railing, jumped onto the Plaintiff and Plaintiff's arm and attacked the Plaintiff causing the 50/50 Ball to come loose and roll into the hands of Defendant Chris Belanski."

Davidov is seeking more than \$50,000 in damages.

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