

## Coronado names new police chief

Coronado News staff

Longtime San Diego police officer Paul Connelly has been named the new Coronado police chief, filling a post that was vacated when Chuck Kaye retired in January.

Connelly will be sworn in on Dec. 9.

Since Kaye's retirement, and until Connelly takes his new position, Rick Martinez has been acting chief on an interim basis. Andrea McCullough, the city spokeswoman, said Martinez did not apply for the position.

Connelly is a 27-year veteran of the San Diego Police Department where he managed a wide-range

of assignments with increasing rank, from patrol officer to deputy chief of the force of more than 1,700 sworn officers. He will oversee a department of 70 employees and 30 volunteers in Coronado.

Connelly attended Robert

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Paul Connelly will be the new Coronado police chief, effective Dec. 9. Photo provided by the City of Coronado.

## Road to the 2026 Winter Olympics

Nicholas Dunn, a 2019 Coronado High grad, is currently training in Canada to compete for the nation's skeleton team.

BY KYLIE CAPUANO  
The Coronado News

When Nicholas Dunn takes off in a sprint on the ice to push his skeleton bobsled, he's channeling the speed from his days competing for the Coronado High School track and field team – where he received the MVP award in 2019.

As he guides his body onto the sled, the hand-eye coordination of a running back for the University of Oregon takes over.

And, while gliding down an ice track at speeds up to 80 mph, Dunn's body is as relaxed as it is when surfing the waves in San Diego.

Dunn, a 2019 Coronado High grad and former running back for the Oregon Ducks, is currently training in Canada to compete for the nation's skeleton team in the 2026 Milan Winter Olympics.

"This is my first ice sport; I'm actually more of a surfer," laughed Dunn. "It's funny for the water to go into a different state of matter."

### Door opened to a lifelong dream

While Dunn had never competed in skeleton prior to this year, his interest in the sport first began while attending the 2010 Vancouver Olympics with his family.

"They were going so fast down this ice track and they were going sideways, almost upside down, and controlling the sled with their whole body, but they made it seem so effortless," said Dunn. "I always wanted to go fast like that."

Fourteen years later, in a "right place at the right



Nicholas Dunn is a 2019 CHS grad and former running back for the Oregon Ducks. Photo courtesy of Nicholas Dunn.

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Renee Cavanaugh (left) and Fitzhugh Lee (right) are significantly leading in polls for the school board race. Photo of Cavanaugh provided by Renee Cavanaugh. Photo of Lee by Julieta Soto.

## Renee Cavanaugh and Fitzhugh Lee leading in school board race

As of Nov. 15, Renee Cavanaugh and Fitzhugh Lee lead the school board race. Shawnee Barton Merriman and Bill Sandke, with less than 25% of the votes each, have conceded.

BY JULIETA SOTO  
The Coronado News

Unofficial election results this week show Renee Cavanaugh and Fitzhugh Lee significantly leading in polls for the two open

Coronado Unified School District trustee seats.

Cavanaugh, a retired educator who is the only incumbent seeking reelection, and Lee, a retired naval aviator and CUSD parent, had each garnered more than

3,900 votes as of Nov. 15. Cavanaugh has remained the leading candidate at just over 31% with Lee following close behind at just over 29%.

» Continued on Page 9

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this week

22 friday

Each month, the Coronado Public 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 bake with ground Mahleb. The meeting will be held on Zoom on Nov. 22 at 2:30 p.m. The Zoom link will be emailed the day before the event. Register at [cplevents.org](http://cplevents.org).

23 saturday

The Friends of the Coronado Public Library are holding a holiday book and gift sale on Nov. 23 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in front of the Coronado Public Library.

Items for sale include gift items, DVDs, holiday cards, Christmas books, coffee table books and a large selection of books for children, teens and adults.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own bags and credit and debit cards are preferred. All sale proceeds fund library programs sponsored by the Friends of the Coronado Public Library. The sale will be cancelled in the event of rain.

CONTACT US

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

To advertise contact Ad Executive Braeden Stegman at [braeden@numbersix.com](mailto:braeden@numbersix.com)

# Autumn Sonata Concert at the library

Coronado News staff

Pianist Ines Irawati will be performing at the Coronado Public Library on Nov. 22 at 1 p.m. in the Winn Room. Irawati will perform timeless pieces by Chopin, Beethoven and Liszt.

Indonesian-born and San Diego-based, Irawati is an acclaimed soloist, chamber musician and vocal coach. She is a member of the Hidden Valley Virtuosi and a founding member of the acclaimed Aviara Trio. She founded MusiKamar, a music series which brings chamber music performances into smaller and intimate spaces.

Irawati has served as the musical and artistic director of San Diego Opera Young Artist Training Program and has been involved with Bodhi Tree Concerts.

This concert is free to attend due to the support of the Friends of the Coronado Public Library. Doors open at 12:45. Visit [cplevents.org](http://cplevents.org) for more information.



Ines Irawati will be performing at the Coronado Public Library on Nov. 22. Photo provided by Weston Bennett.



Johnny.

PETS OF THE WEEK

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PAWS of Coronado

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## Give the Gift of Relaxation This Season

Help loved ones revitalize their emotional, spiritual and physical health with a gift certificate to the Sewall Healthy Living Center at Sharp Coronado Hospital.

At our tranquil, spa-like destination, guests can receive treatments for more than 40 conditions — including arthritis, back pain and headaches. We offer customized Swedish, hot stone, deep tissue and sports massages, as well as acupuncture and microneedling. Certified massage therapists and licensed acupuncturists incorporate clinical aromatherapy in their treatments.

The Sewall Healthy Living Center also offers personalized weight loss programs to help people achieve their goals.

Gift certificates for all services can be purchased in person or by calling 619-522-3798. Learn more about our services at [sharp.com/healthylivingcenter](http://sharp.com/healthylivingcenter).





# 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

# Response to Brian McNeece and Richard Gersberg

BY LEON BENHAM  
Letter to the Editor

I would like to respond with thoughtful comments to the claims made by Brian McNeece and Richard Gersberg concerning my Sept. 9 article in The Coronado News.

"The Primer on Ocean Sewage," that I authored in a letter to the editor is still the most accurate depiction of our near-shore ocean currents and how contaminated water moves along our coastline.

The first point is to provide the link to a 1976 article, which was missing from my original article.

This study of the Coronado Littoral counterclockwise currents by Douglas Inman is still very accurate and has never been challenged. It shows ocean currents carry treated sewage effluent from the South Bay Ocean Outfall (SBOO) to the shore and then north to Coronado.

In the 1994 court case, *Surfrider vs City of San Diego*, which attempted to stop the construction of the SBOO, experts hired by the city and Scripps Institute testified as follows about likely harm to the environment and bad outcomes to near-shore ocean water quality:

"These currents flow onshore at Imperial Beach and then turn north and flow alongshore for 10.6 miles to Coronado. At this point, they turn and flow offshore to the west for almost ten miles and then to the south to complete the circle."

Expert consultants informed the city that the "potential for onshore transport of the effluent plume was not addressed [in the engineers' study of the outfall]. The selected diffuser site is located on the inshore side of a current gyre that could bring effluent ashore in this area."

Doctors Douglas Irman, Pearn P. Niiler, and Scott Jenkins of Scripps found that sewage discharged from the outfall will rise to the surface in significant quantities, impact South Bay beaches in undiluted amounts, and pose threats of contamination and disease.

The second point is the "Ocean Monitoring Program" (OMP) referred to by McNeece and Gersberg is not well respected by local citizens who have been living with beach closures for 1,010 consecutive days. Time and again local citizens have said "the fox is guarding the hen house."

Why? Because the City of San Diego directly hires these consultants, and it is a direct conflict of interest. There should be an independent third-party testing of the water, and report conclusions



Leon Benham is a member of the International Boundary and Water Commission Citizen's forum and the president of Citizens for Coastal Conservancy, a nonprofit environmental group.

Photo provided by Leon Benham.

one source which would cause this...that source is the 40 million gallons a day that is dumped by the SBOO directly off Imperial Beach. Why is this data being intentionally suppressed?

Simply put, the Gersberg study's exact purpose was to compare the difference in ocean conditions between primary treated sewage outputs and secondary treated sewage outputs from the International Boundary and Water Commission's (IBWC) plant. It was not intended to provide an analysis or statement of coastal currents or flows of tainted sewage along the coast.

The Gersberg data is not relevant to current flows along the beach. It also does not reflect the current amounts of sewage which are present in the environment or coming out of the (Tijuana) River for the last three years.

In closing, most people living in Coronado and Imperial Beach do not recognize the simple fact that the South Bay Ocean Outfall is the major source and cause of ocean pollution (along South Bay beaches). The situation is about to get far worse as the SBOO will go from 25 mgd (million gallons daily) of treated sewage to 120 mgd of treated sewage. This represents a 480% increase in fecal solids and pollution directly to the beach.

This plan to quadruple the dumping of partially treated sewage from Mexico off the shore of Imperial Beach was endorsed by Gavin Newsom and deviates from the plan approved by Congress which appropriated \$300 million to fix the problem. The plan approved by Congress, which was agreed to by Mexico, would send all the sewage 10 miles south of Imperial Beach. So local citizens are asking: Why did our California leaders agree to bring 480% more sewage to Imperial Beach from Mexico?

For McNeece and Gersberg to mischaracterize my article as inaccurate and then say "much progress is underway" is not supported by the facts of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) plan cited above. In fact, if you "follow the science" the USMCA Comprehensive Plan will make things far worse.

Editor's note: Leon Benham and Brian McNeece are members of the International Boundary and Water Commission Citizen's Forum. Richard Gersberg is a Professor Emeritus at San Diego State University. Benham is president of Citizens for Coastal Conservancy, a nonprofit environmental group. This letter has been edited for clarity, style and brevity.

should be made directly to the public.

After 20 years, the program still does not have answers to basic questions put forth by the public. These concerns are as follows.

- The SBOO started dumping in 1998, and since then all the kelp beds and tide pools off Imperial Beach have died off, why?
- The monitoring sites are approximately a half mile west of the SBOO and intentionally give a false picture of the impacts of the SBOO. It's like testing a river upstream of the pollution source.
- The testing of the SBOO effluents should be by the ddPCR test, not the old MPN Test. The DDPCR test is the same test that shuts down our beach. Is this a double standard?
- At the recent presentation by the Monitoring Program, the aerial photo presented to the public was obviously enhanced and "photo-shopped."
- The weekly shoreline water tests show there is a large spike in contamination right off Imperial Beach that is higher than TJ River and higher than the Tijuana Beach... Why? There is only

LISA BENSON



JACK OHMAN

# CORONADO

# The possible outcomes for the vacant City Council seat

After John Duncan's win as mayor of Coronado, his City Council seat now remains vacant. The process to fill this seat is a little cumbersome, so here are the possible outcomes.

BY MADELINE YANG  
The Coronado News

The Coronado City Council has a vacancy thanks to John Duncan's mayoral victory, with an empty seat to be filled either through a special election or by appointment from the new council and mayor.

To fill open seats in the past, the city has held special elections since at least 1973, according to the Coronado Election Compendium dating back to 1966. City Council member Robin Goodenough resigned at the beginning of 1973, resulting in a special election being called to fill his vacant seat.

The most recent special election was in 2009 when Casey Tanaka won his race for mayor and resigned as a City Council member.

Barbara Denny was elected to complete the two last years of Tanaka's term.

A special election would be similar to a regular council election, said the city's communications officer, Andrea McCullough. Candidates would file and provide campaign statements as they normally do. The San Diego County Registrar of Voters would conduct the election, and registered voters in Coronado would select their candidate of choice.

The candidate with the highest number of votes would win.

Rules for filling open council seats are spelled out in California government code 36512(b): "If a vacancy occurs in an elective office provided for in this chapter, the council shall, within 60 days from the commencement of the vacancy, either fill the vacancy by appointment or call a special election to fill the vacancy."

According to McCullough, in the past, a special election was required and would have been held to fill the vacancy. The provision in the city code to fill



The current Coronado City Council will be replaced by a few new members. Staff photo by Madeline Yang.

a vacancy in such a way was repealed in 2021. Now, the City Council can select either option — by appointment or special election.

If the council chooses to fill the seat by appointment, she said, the city code does not specify a procedure. However, municipal eligibility standards require an appointee to be a U.S. citizen and a resident of Coronado who is a registered voter in the city.

Council member Carrie Anne Downey said that filling the third vacant seat would be a three-step process.

First, the City Council would decide if they will fill this seat through a special election or by appointment.

Second, the council members would choose the criteria of who they wanted to appoint.

"The criteria could be as broad as anybody," Downey explained. "They could put it out with no requirements except being a Coronado registered voter ... Or, the criteria would have limits — whatever they might be."

She said the criteria could also just be the candidate that got the third highest amount of votes.

Third, they would vote to appoint whoever that person would be in whatever process they decide to go through.

The only rule the council would have to follow is that the person who fills that spot can't be somebody who is otherwise precluded from serving by the city code. That means that current council member Mike Donovan wouldn't be able to come back as a council member because he has already served two consecutive terms.

However, it does mean that current Mayor Richard Bailey could come back as a council member since his role as mayor doesn't stop him from going back to City Council, and it means that current council member Casey Tanaka could also come back since he has only served one term as a council member.

The council would have to make this choice within 60 days of the vacancy.

For this year's open seat, the decision is scheduled during the Dec. 17 City Council meeting.

In an interview with The Coronado News, Duncan did not comment on whether he favors appointment or special election. He said he does not have any predetermined candidates in mind.

Mark Fleming, who is currently leading in the polls to fill one of the two City Council seats, said he's leaning towards an appointment.

"The cost to the city for doing a special election is something that I hope we can avoid," Fleming said. "As for someone to fill John Duncan's vacant seat, I don't have any specific person in mind at this point. I'm trying to keep my mind open to possibilities and to see who may have interest in it."

Downey declined to comment on the issue.

As of Nov. 15, Fleming was leading with 3,433 votes at 22.55%.

Amy Steward was in second place with 3,010 votes at 19.77%.

Laura Wilkinson Sinton was less than 70 votes behind in a close third with 2,941 total votes at 19.31%.

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# CORONADO



Coach Kurt Hines celebrated his 27th year of coaching and 31st year of teaching this year. Photo by Jillian Hines.

## Coach Kurt Hines shares what it takes to build champions on and off the field

BY ELAINE ALFARO  
The Coronado News

Like many other football squads across the country, the Coronado High School Islanders have a schedule that runs like clockwork: daily practices, workouts, weekly team dinners and games.

They watch film on Monday with a light practice. They train hard Tuesday and Wednesday at full speed. And, Thursday is all about getting their minds right before the game on Friday.

Overall, they have a season-long vision with high hopes for championships and glory.

But, in addition to the on-field vision, the coaches are committed to success in the students' lives both at school and home. And that commitment enhances their play, according to head coach Kurt Hines.

"I think allowing ourselves to make an impact in people's lives and getting to know people on a personal level allows them to free themselves of any external chaos or stress or whatever it may be," Hines said. "I think it allows them to play better because they're not stressed about things that are outside of their control at that time."

Hines said Coronado High coaches don't shy away from the athletes' lives off the turf – from hardships to celebrations and everything in between.

"We had quite a number of people share this current season they're dealing with a lot of things outside of home, a lot of stress with their parents and family lives and dynamics," Hines said.

In high stakes games — like last Friday where Coronado beat Francis Parker — no matter how many plays you run, the mental game can be the students' biggest strength or weakness. Hines shared a story about one of the athletes.

"I had a young man that this past Friday's playoff game, was not in the headspace," Hines said. "You can just tell by his body language."

Rather than pulling him off the field for giving attitude or punishing him at practice the next week, Hines took a different approach.

"Because I've built a relationship with him, I went over to him and I said, 'Hey, how's your grandma?' Right away, he started crying. He's a stud football player. He's one of our starters, but I knew that he had that on his heart for a while"

Hines said recognition of what was weighing on the athlete empowered him to realize what he can control. He chose to play the game and do it to the best of his ability.

"We want to protect our children from negative experiences," Hines said. "I think that's usually done with the best of intentions, but when you're stopping those negative things from happening, we're stopping growth. We're stopping people from find(ing) out what their strength is and pushing through adversity."

Walter Hardy, a junior on the Islanders' football

team, said he's seen the impact of the coaching strategy over the course of the season.

"I feel like it was pretty rocky in the beginning of the season," Hardy said. "There were a lot of people playing their own game, not really seeing the big picture for a team. But these last few games have been really great and everybody (is) playing for one another."

Hardy credits that change in mindset to the coaching.

"Coach Hines really helps us," Hardy said. "Everybody (has an) understanding that they have a role to play. He preaches that a lot, especially to our skill guys."

When they don't have the ball, they still have an impact.

Hines is currently in his 27th year of coaching high school football. He's also a fourth grade teacher.

Hines started his coaching career on the east coast and moved to San Diego a decade ago to be closer to family.

Over the years, he's created a social media presence with motivational videos and tweets.

Whether online or talking with his team, Hines said difficult emotions and the real experiences students face aren't taboo; the team's line of communication and openness pushes against the current football culture that can, at times, be wrapped up in the individual.

"[In] the coaching world, there's so much arrogance," Hines said. "I love everything about football, but I think it's kind of overpopulated with this."

He pushes back against arrogance and an individual mentality, not only in his coaching, but also in the caliber of character he expects from the athletes, according to Hardy.

"He constantly is on us about just acting like we've been there before," Hardy said. "Whenever we make a big play, just hand the ball back to the refs. You don't need to make a big celebration about it, (it's) just strictly business."

Hines noted that there are programs at all levels with good players and coaches who win accolades, yet he still feels they are missing the mark if they're not investing in players' lives outside of football.

"Unless you're really focusing on building those relationships and getting to know the players on a personal level, getting to know what makes them tick and how we can best serve them, we're really missing the mark," Hines said.

That lesson – on the importance of knowing the athlete – was modeled to Hines in his first season of coaching with Mike Beliveau. Hines assisted Beliveau at Souhegan High School in Amherst, New Hampshire. Beliveau was the head coach at Souhegan from 1995 to 2012. In that stretch, the team reached the state championship game 10 times, winning four state championships.

"I was blessed my first year coaching to coach under Mike Beliveau," Hines said. "Mike was someone

that knew the game of football, but he also knew the importance of connecting with the players and building those relationships."

It's something Hines carried on; it's also a main lesson in his book, "Called to Empower."

Written at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020, the book is an exploration of character, mental health, hope and grit through a series of reflections based on Hines' inspirational online posts.

The tidbits of advice on Twitter were transformed into paragraphs with "timeouts" – a section of questions at the end of each chapter meant to challenge the reader to apply what they just read about. Hines' Christian faith played a role in why he wrote this book.

"As I was writing the book, there were countless times – probably every chapter and multiple times – where I'd be praying about the right word to say and how long to phrase things to just reach people on a different level than merely just throwing words together out there," Hines said.

He said the goal for this book is to influence people's views of themselves, their worth and their character.

"If I can make an impact in one person's life or two people's lives – or 100 or 1,000 or whatever it is – that's a life well-lived," Hines said.

Hardy shared that Hines has made it clear the team can come to him through whatever they're navigating. This intentionality is something Hardy needed as he navigated a knee injury recently.

"I think most players are comfortable talking to him outside of football as well," Hardy said. "He's very open to talk with players. When I had my knee hurt, he was very good at helping me work through that, just keeping me focused."

Writing the book didn't come without its own setbacks. Hines said imposter syndrome crept in throughout the process. But that's where his community came in.

"In our society, so often we're told that you're a self-made man," Hines said. "You don't need anyone else. There's people that start to believe that we can do everything on our own; we don't need others. It's completely counterproductive to what I believe."

And it's counterproductive to what Coronado's football team is working on too. The Islanders' season came to a close on Nov. 15 after they lost to Vista High School in the playoffs.

Regardless of the outcome, Hines said he sticks to the "why" behind his coaching.

"Coaching and teaching just fills my cup," Hines said. "I know so many people that make more money than I do, but they feel like they're not making a difference in the world. Yes, they have their homes or more vacation homes or cars or whatever. But for me, I know as long as I get my ego out of the way, I have an opportunity to make a difference each and every morning."

# CORONADO

## Coronado honors 19th Avenue of Heroes with new banners this November

BY KATIE MORRIS  
The Coronado News

This month, Coronado is honoring its 19th group of Avenue of Heroes honorees, adding 16 banners along Third and Fourth streets to celebrate those who have served the nation while calling the city home.

The Avenue of Heroes banners, which stretch from Orange Avenue to Naval Air Station North Island, honor Coronado residents who have served in the military.

“Celebrating our hometown heroes allows the city of Coronado and the community to honor the many men and women who have lived in Coronado before, during, or after their military careers,” City Manager Tina Friend said at the Nov. 2 Avenue of Heroes Ceremony. “The Avenue of Heroes is truly remarkable, and listening to their stories...is profoundly moving.”

The Avenue of Heroes program, introduced in 2014, has honored 277 individuals to date, with banners installed biannually around Veterans Day in November and Memorial Day in May, provided there are sufficient nominations.

The program emerged from a spontaneous act in 2011 when two fallen Navy SEALs were moved to their final resting place. The sight of Fourth Street lined with American flags and a lone Navy SEAL saluting crystalized the street’s identity as a living memorial.

Since its official launch in May 2015, the Avenue of Heroes program has been coordinated by volunteers from the Coronado Historical Association, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2422 and the Third and Fourth Streets Neighborhood Association.



Avenue of Heroes honoree Gerald B. Blanton and family at the Avenue of Heroes Ceremony on Nov. 2.

Photo by Kel Casey.

Their work, sponsored by the City of Coronado, extends from selecting honorees to planning ceremonies and coordinating the design and installation of banners.

With a naval presence dating back to 1917 and a population of more than 36,000 active duty, reserve and civilian workers at Naval Base Coronado, the city’s connection to military service runs deep.

Nominations for Avenue of Heroes

banners are accepted year-round, encouraging families, friends and neighbors to honor veterans or active service members who have been part of the Coronado community.

“The Avenue of Heroes Committee works with the individuals who sponsored the honorees, who provide the biographies.” Andrea McCullough, City of Coronado communications and engagement officer, said via email. “The Committee members

then send that information to the City liaisons for print.”

This November’s honorees included Robert E. Adamson, Frank Androski, Gerald B. Blanton, William Broughton, William L. Calhoun, Clinton J. Coneway, Bart Gardella, Robert R. Morton, Patrick “Murph” Murphy, William “Bill” Parry, Joe Rizza, Jacob J. Rosales, James F. Saxton, Rocky Spane, II, Robert J. Spane and James O. Strickland III.

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# CORONADO

## Preview night for Coronado School of the Arts

Coronado News staff

The Coronado School of the Arts (CoSA), a public school arts conservatory, will host prospective students and families at a preview night on Dec. 3 at 6 p.m. at the Coronado Performing Arts Center.

The preview night is open to all San Diego County students who will be in grades 9-12 for the 2025-2026 school year. In addition, students can begin the audition process by visiting [cosa-sandiego.com](http://cosa-sandiego.com).

“CoSA preview night is an amazing way to learn more about the school, the audition and application process, and get helpful information about each conservatory,” said Shane Schmeichel, director of special projects for the Coronado Unified School District. “Prospective students and families will hear from conservatory chairs and current students in each program, as well as answer questions they might have about the programs and processes.”

CoSA is home to more than 175 scholar artists grades 9 through 12 and provides an intensive, pre-professional arts education to students from Coronado and from all over San Diego County. Students are admitted after an application and audition process.

All CoSA students attend Coronado High School, most of whom spend the first three periods of block scheduling in academic courses, then attend CoSA classes for two and a half hours for arts instruction. With a curriculum designed by professional artists and educators, students are



Pictured here are students in a past performance of Peter Pan by CoSA Foundation's Islander Youth Theater. Prospective families are invited to a preview night for the program. Photo provided by Laura Bueno.

immersed in their chosen specialty in one of six conservatories: Classical and contemporary dance, digital arts (animation, filmmaking, and graphic design), instrumental music, musical theatre and drama, theatre produc-

tion, design and management and visual art.

“We are proud to say that CoSA is growing every year and our students are recognized as the next generation of San Diego-area artists,” said

Linda Edison, CoSA foundation president. “CoSA is such an incredible way for students to get an amazing education at Coronado High School while also following their passion in the arts.”

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# CORONADO

## Alexander Shelley to become Pacific Symphony Orchestra music director for 2026-27 season

Associated Press

Alexander Shelley will become music director of the Pacific Symphony Orchestra for the 2026-27 season following the 35-year tenure of Carl St. Clair.

The 45-year-old will be just the third music director for the orchestra after founder Keith Clark (1979-88) and St. Clair, who started in 1990 and turned 72 in June. St. Clair will become music director laureate in 2025-26.

Shelley will have the title of music director designate in 2025-26 before starting a five-year contract as music director, the orchestra announced Wednesday. He will conduct four subscription weeks in 2025-26, and St. Clair three.

Shelley will lead eight of 12 classical subscription weeks plus special events starting in 2026-27. The orchestra has performed 80-85 paid events annually since the pandemic and has had annual ticket revenue of about \$6.5 million in each of the last two seasons. Single ticket sales set a record last season as subscriptions declined, an occurrence for many U.S. arts organizations.

Born in London to pianists Hilary Macnamara and Howard Shelley, Alexander Shelley has been music director of Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, Ontario, since 2015. He was chief conductor of the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra from 2009-17, and this season began as artistic and music director of Artis-Naples in Florida.



Alexander Shelley will become music director of the Pacific Symphony Orchestra for the 2026-27 season, following the 3 1/2-decade tenure of Carl St. Clair. Doug Gifford/Pacific Symphony Orchestra via AP.

## Coronado names new police chief

» Continued from Page 1

Morris University in Pennsylvania and earned a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, according to a release from the city. He became an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps after college and achieved the rank of captain. In 2019, Connelly graduated from the FBI National Academy, class #275.

"Chief Connelly is an outstanding law enforcement professional with exemplary credentials and expertise," said City Manager Tina Friend. "The chief has demonstrated his commitment to public service over his military and police careers and brings an exceptional breadth of experience to Coronado."

Connelly will have a salary range of \$212,685 to \$252,966, according to the job posting listed by Ralph Anderson & Associates - the executive search firm hired by the city to find a new chief.

McCullough said the recruiter met with key community members and organizations during the recruitment process and then Friend made the appointment.

"I am deeply honored and humbled to be appointed," said Connelly in a city news release. "I want this city to know I am committed to working collaboratively with our officers, community members and city leaders to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, transparency, and accountability. Together, we will uphold the safety and quality of life our residents cherish while continuing to foster positive connections with all who visit and serve in Coronado."

## Renee Cavanaugh and Fitzhugh Lee leading in school board race

» Continued from Page 1

Cavanaugh and Lee shared their thoughts on unofficial election results so far and their plans as trustees for the next four years.

"I feel honored and humbled that so many Coronado voters feel confident in my ability as a trustee," said Cavanaugh on Nov. 7.

"I'm deeply honored to have been selected to fill one of the two open seats ... and am immensely grateful to everyone who supported my campaign," wrote Lee in a Nov. 12 statement.

Shawnee Barton Merriman, a mom of four Coronado Unified students, and Bill Sandke, a former Coronado City Council member, told The Coronado News they conceded. The County Registrar plans to report final certified results by Dec. 5.

"Congratulations to Renee and Fitz," said Barton Merriman in a statement last week. "I wish them the best of luck. I'm grateful for the friendliness they've each shown me. We are lucky that people with so much experience in their respective fields are willing to step up and serve our students."

"It is clear from the results so far that the margin from third to second will not be made up so I strongly believe I will not prevail," said Sandke in a statement issued Nov. 12. "I wish the board, especially front runner Renee, continued success and am hopeful Fitz will complement the board's demonstrated teamwork displayed over the last two years."

### Trustee term plans

"I am glad that the campaigning and voting is over so that I can focus more

on the important work for our school district," said Cavanaugh.

Cavanaugh, a current board member and former president, shared plans for improving communication through her monthly office hours.

"I want to foster a culture of teamwork and trust within our district," she said.

Lee, a self-described conservative, said he ran because he believes the district needs better governance.

"The biggest issue still facing the district is the budget," Lee added. "I look forward to now being able to engage with the district officials not just as a concerned citizen but actually as an elected trustee who's charged with actually helping to govern the direction of the district ... I'm going to try to go the extra mile to be very communicative with the community and especially parents."



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# NAVY

## New commanding officer for USS Charleston



DVIDS - Cmdr. Meghan Gray, center right, relieves Cmdr. Nellie Wang as the commanding officer of the Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Charleston during a change-of-command ceremony held at Naval base San Diego on Nov. 15. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Vance Hand.



Jim Bedinger was honored at Naval Air Station North Island on Veterans day. Official U.S. Navy photo from 2018 by Seaman Jhosua Batres.

## Honoring retired US Navy commander and POW survivor

DVIDS

On Veterans Day, the Center for Security Forces Detachment North Island, traditionally known as SERE West, honored Jim Bedinger, a retired U.S. Navy commander and former prisoner of war.

Bedinger served in the U.S. Navy Reserve beginning in 1963, and earned his commission in 1967. He subsequently earned his wings as a naval flight officer in 1968.

During his naval service, Bedinger completed training as a radar intercept officer for the F4 Phantom II and the F14 Tomcat and served with several strike fighter squadrons. Later, he served at Naval Military Personnel Command, Joint Chief of Staff, and Naval Training Center San Diego.

Bedinger served during the Cold War and fought in the Vietnam War. During a mission, his Phantom jet was shot down. He had to eject and was captured by North Vietnamese forces. Bedinger spent 1,232 days as a prisoner of war in the infamous Hanoi Hilton, where he endured heinous conditions and torture before his eventual release.

Bedinger recently sat down for an interview to discuss his military service, his experience as a POW, and his advice to anyone interested in joining the military today.

**Q: Could you tell us what a radar intercept officer was during that time?**

**Bedinger:** As a radar intercept officer, you were there to help the pilot. You do missile intercept, bomb delivery, and other tactics to help the pilot.

**Q: During the intense, stressful time, what was going through your mind before and when you ejected from your aircraft?**

**Bedinger:** My first concern was, "We have to pull up." I was concerned if we really had to eject or not, and I was waiting for the correct call to eject. The risk to survive was on my mind, thinking about it when my parachute opened."

**Q: How did you keep the faith?**

**Bedinger:** I had a tripod, three great legs of resistance: faith in God, faith in my country, and faith in my family and friends, including my cellmates and fellow POW's. That, in addition to the (military) Code of Conduct.

**Q: Do you have any advice for anyone who wants to join the military?**

**Bedinger:** Joining the military is not a career or a final decision, it's the ability to use your skills to best succeed the most regardless of your beliefs, race, color, or creed, which mean nothing; it is about what you do and how you perform.

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## SPORTS

# CHS girls' tennis wraps up season at CIF Division 3 team tournament

The Islanders were eliminated in the quarterfinals by Clairemont High School after a hard fought three-hour-battle.

BY KYLIE CAPUANO  
The Coronado News

The Coronado High School girls' varsity tennis team wrapped up its season on Oct. 30 after losing to Clairemont High School in the CIF Division 3 team tournament.

Coronado, which stepped into the season with an unconventional squad made up of four varsity returners and a roster full of athletes recruited from other sports, was seeded fifth coming into the Division 3 tournament.

In the first round of the playoff tournament, Coronado defeated Valley Center High School by a score of 12-6 on Oct. 29. Two sets of doubles partners – Lilah Cade and Logan Shapiro, and Brynn Belong and Sam Aldworth – each won three sets, followed by Casilida Sanchez and Josephine Zwierzynski securing two wins. In the singles tournament, Grace Elardo took home two wins and Ella Peterson and Rio Kramer each secured one.

## Islanders eliminated in the quarterfinals

The quarterfinal match the next day was a three-hour-thriller as the Islanders faced up against the Clairemont Chieftains. After a hard fought battle, the match was tied up with a score of 9-9 – Grace Elardo leading singles with two sets, followed by Ella Peterson winning one set, and three doubles duos each winning two sets. After tallying each individual game to determine a tiebreaker, Clairemont

was declared the winner by a score of 80-77.

Despite the loss, assistant varsity coach Beth Elardo said she believes each Coronado athlete played their best tennis of the season during that match.

“[Varsity head coach] Dennis Navarro and I are proud of the players,” said Beth Elardo. “They had a wonderful season and played a very competitive match against Clairemont. Every player on this team was a key contributor this season.”

Clairemont went on to win the Division 3 title after defeating Valhalla High School in the semifinals 10-8 and University City High School in the finals 10-8.

## Eyes set on Division 3 title next year

Grace Elardo led the Islanders in wins this year with an overall record of 45-8, while Shapiro led in doubles wins with a record of 38-17. Both athletes were selected as First Team All-League in the San Diego City Conference, Eastern League for girls' tennis. They each qualified to compete in the CIF Open Division Individual Tournament that began on Nov. 5, but were eliminated in the first round.

Next season, Beth Elardo hopes to see the Coronado girls win the Division 3 CIF Team Tournament and Eastern League conference.

“The positive experiences and teachable moments we had this season are going to fuel the team to come back stronger next year,” said Elardo.



Juniors Grace Elardo (L) and Logan Shapiro (R) posing with their doubles finalist awards from the Eastern Conference Tournament. Grace Elardo and Shapiro went on to be selected for the First Team All-League in the San Diego City Conference, Eastern League. Photo courtesy of Beth Elardo.

From left: Jack Letcher, Gwynne Letcher and Morgan Maske made the All-CIF cross country team. Maske qualified for the state meet on Nov. 30. Photo by George Green.



## Morgan Maske advances to state meet

Coronado News staff

Coronado High School junior Morgan Maske qualified for the state cross country meet in Fresno by placing 11th out of 93 finishers in the Division 4 girls race for the CIF championship meet on Nov. 16.

Maske's time of 19:46 advanced her to the state meet on Nov. 30.

For placing among the top 20 finishers, Maske and sophomore Gwynne Letcher are on the All-CIF team. Jack Letcher also made the All-CIF team by placing 12th out of 124 finishers in the boys' Division 4 race. His time of 16:51 was a personal record by one minute and 20 seconds.

The Coronado boys' cross country team placed seventh among the 21 schools in their division and the girls team placed eighth.

## US track wants to shorten Olympic trials and put them at LA Coliseum

Associated Press

The leader of USA Track and Field cut through confusion surrounding the 2028 Olympic trials, saying the preference is to hold them in the LA Coliseum several weeks before the actual Olympic track meet takes place there.

Max Siegel told The Associated Press on Nov. 14 that the goal is to give U.S. athletes the closest thing to a simulation of the actual Olympics, and that there is no better place to do that than holding the trials in the same stadium as the Games.

He also said plans are for the meet, which traditionally has been spread over 10 days, to be shortened in 2028. Siegel is hoping to have the issue settled by January. Olympic trials usually take place six to eight weeks before track starts at the Games.

“It is no secret that our desire is to have something in the West Coast, and preferably in LA,” Siegel said. “We’re going to do everything that we possibly can to try to have our trials” at the Coliseum.

LA chairman Casey Wasserman in-

jected some uncertainty into the issue over the summer when he said he thought hosting the trials so close to the Olympics “adds a level of complexity to our planning that I’m not sure is best for the athletes.”

The main concern was whether the Coliseum, which also hosts University of Southern California football games and other events, would be ready for a world-level track meet in time for trials. There’s also the issue of resetting the stadium for the Olympics in the month or so after trials.

Asked about LA’s current position, the organizing committee sent AP a statement: “We are exploring the possibility of hosting the 2028 Track and Field Trials at the Coliseum in Los Angeles.”

Holding trials at the stadium where the Olympics are taking place would fit with U.S. Olympics in the past: In 1996, they were held at Olympic Stadium in Atlanta and in 1984, they were at the Coliseum.

USATF has held every Olympic trials since 2008 at Hayward Field on the University of Oregon campus in Eugene, Oregon.



Noah Lyles celebrates after winning the men's 100-meter final during the U.S. Track and Field Olympic Team Trials, June 23, 2024, in Eugene, Ore. AP File Photo/Charlie Neibergall.

## SPORTS

# Coronado football season comes to a close

Coronado News staff

The Coronado High School football season came to a close on Nov. 15 after the team lost to Vista High School 14-11.

The Islanders scored a field goal and Michael Bannon got the touchdown after an over 20-yard pass from quarterback RJ Sanchez. The defense held Vista to 14.

“We had a lot of highs and our fair share

of lows,” said head coach Kurt Hines, “and it wasn’t the ending we wanted, but it was a blessing and an honor to coach these young men, and to do it with the coaches on our staff!”



Ryder Albin (13) makes a catch at the Nov. 15 game against Vista High School. Photos by Kelly Moore.



Senior RJ Sanchez is quarterback for the Islanders.



Head coach Kurt Hines talks to Michael Bannon.



Jack Laudemann completed his senior season on Nov. 15.

## Road to the 2026 Winter Olympics for 2019 Coronado grad Nicholas Dunn

» Continued from Page 1

time” kind of moment, the door to his lifelong dream of competing in the Winter Olympics had opened.

While visiting family in Calgary, Canada this past March, where Dunn is a dual citizen, he decided to work out at the Olympic training center roughly 10 minutes from their house. After going through his lifting routine and doing sprints on the track, he was approached by the Team Canada skeleton coach, who noticed his speed and athleticism.

From there, Dunn was invited to his first push camp – ultimately marking the beginning of his journey to the 2026 Winter Olympics.

### Road to Milan

Since July, Dunn has been participating in push and sliding camps to compete against around 30 prospects for Team Canada.

Each camp breaks down the mechanisms of skeletoning and carefully logs each participant’s stats. At the push camps, Dunn and other prospects hone into the beginning of a skeletoning race where they sprint off and drop onto their bobsled headfirst down a hill, competing for the fastest time. At his last camp, Dunn finished among the top three times for push starts.

After the push camps, prospects advance to the sliding camps – which is where Dunn is currently.

A typical skeleton ice track has around 20 corners. At Dunn’s sliding camps, he and the other prospects begin sledding on the lower corners and work their way up, gradually developing a game plan and familiarity with the track so that, eventually, they may get down the ice track in the fastest way possible.

Dunn is set to compete in his first



Nicholas Dunn pushing his bobsled on the ice track. Photo courtesy of Nicholas Dunn.

competition for Team Canada in December for the Park City North American Cup.

With a long journey ahead of him to the 2026 Winter Olympics, his goal is to take it day by day.

“Eventually, I want to be able to make the sled and me one unit so I

don’t have to think of it as a separate piece,” said Dunn. “Even if it’s just listening to my coach on a specific corner on the track, I’ll get that down. That slowly builds toward the goal of doing my first competition with Canada. After that, it’s bringing down my time and making sure I push faster

“Eventually, I want to be able to make the sled and me one unit so I don’t have to think of it as a separate piece... Even if it’s just listening to my coach on a specific corner on the track, I’ll get that down. That slowly builds toward the goal of doing my first competition with Canada.”

- Nicholas Dunn

and get more comfortable on the sled so I get more ice time.”

While taking two weeks out of each month to train in Canada, Dunn is working toward his graduate degree in chiropractic and a doctorate in Oregon. Those degrees will be completed in 2026 – the same year he will potentially compete in the winter Olympics on behalf of his mom’s home country.

Dunn currently has a GoFundMe set up to assist with training and tuition expenses as he travels to Canada from Portland, Oregon each month in order to balance his athletic and academic pursuits.

# SPORTS

## Los Angeles is on the clock for 2028 Olympics with focus turning to delivery and planning next year

Associated Press

The International Olympic Committee's Coordination Commission wrapped up a three-day visit on Nov. 14 to check out selected venues and track the progress of the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

"We're four short years away," said Casey Wasserman, LA28 chairman and president, who noted the Los Angeles Games are 1,338 days from opening on July 14, 2028.

The commission visited the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, the new Intuit Dome in Inglewood, the Long Beach Convention Center, waterfront and Marine Stadium during its first trip to Los Angeles in two years.

"The venues are absolutely spectacular," said Nicole Hoevertsz, a member of the International Olympic Committee and chair of the Coordination Commission for LA28. "I'm going to highlight this every single time that I come to the city that you have no construction to do, that you have world-class venues. They know very well how to organize big events and big sporting events."

In 2025, the Games plan, the venues and competition schedule, medal event program and athlete quota will be finalized, which in turn will drive transportation, security and ticketing plans.

In 2026, the LA organizing committee will "get into some of the fun stuff," Wasserman said, which includes opening up ticketing and hospitality options to the public, organizing the torch relay, creating a mascot, Cultural Olympiad and volunteer program.

"We cannot wait to host the world," he said during a news conference on the campus of UCLA, which will host the athletes' village.

Wasserman doesn't anticipate any issues working with the incoming administration of President-elect Donald Trump, who was in office in 2017 when Los Angeles won its bid to host and signed federally binding documents for the government to deliver security and transportation for the Games.

"Our conversations with the federal government always involve talking to folks from every party, that's the nature of the world we live in in this



Fans line up at the Intuit Dome before an NBA basketball game between the Los Angeles Clippers and the Phoenix Suns, Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2024, in Inglewood, Calif. AP Photo/Ryan Sun.

country," Wasserman said. "One side doesn't get to dictate everything. It requires cooperation and coordination. We've had great success with both Republican and Democratic administrations, and we have no doubt that will continue."

Wasserman and the LA organizing committee visited Paris to get an up-close view of how the French capital staged the recent Summer Games.

"We spent most of our time touring the back of the house while the competition was going on," he said. "That's where we will learn a lot and see a lot. Producing an event on the field of play I think we have a pretty good handle on. What makes the Olympics unique is everything else."

Cricket is among the new sports at the 2028 Games, as are flag football, lacrosse and squash. A

cricket venue doesn't currently exist in Los Angeles.

"If we can find a place for cricket in Los Angeles, in the region, we will," he said. "If not, it's incumbent upon us to find the best place to produce the best cricket tournament."

Softball and canoe slalom have already been moved 1,300 miles east to Oklahoma City.

"These Games are incredibly focused on LA and Southern California and being responsible and making hosting the Games fit our city and our community as opposed to fitting our city to host the games," Wasserman said, "which is the mistake that has been made in the past and the promise we have made to the city and the community not to make going forward."

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