

## EPA will not investigate Tijuana River Valley for Superfund designation

An Environmental Protection Agency official reiterated the federal agency's decision in a March 14 letter addressed to Imperial Beach Mayor Paloma Aguirre.

**BY JULIETA SOTO**  
The Coronado News

In a video posted on Instagram on March 18, Imperial Beach Mayor Paloma Aguirre hastily rips a letter in half while standing beside the Tijuana River, watching fetid foam flow past atop the murky waters – the source of an ongoing cross-border sewage pollution crisis.  
“This is being aerosolized, it’s going into people’s

homes, into schools... You can’t even breathe,” Aguirre tells the camera as she points to the foam.

The letter she tore up, dated March 14, informed Aguirre that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency maintains its decision to not investigate the lower Tijuana River Valley for Superfund designation.

Local officials earlier this year asked the federal

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Heavy rain and flows bring detergent and sewage into the Tijuana River in 2023. Staff photo by Madeline Yang.



WARSHIP PRESENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

PHILIPPINE SEA (Feb. 14, 2025)  
Sailors conduct flight operations on the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson in the Philippine Sea during Pacific Steller 2025 on Feb. 14.

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Nate Jordan.

## Hegseth sends 2 carriers to the Middle East

Associated Press

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, in a rare move, is beefing up the Navy warship presence in the Middle East, ordering two aircraft carriers to be there next month as the U.S. increases strikes on the Yemen-based Houthi rebels, according to a U.S. official.

It will be the second time in six months that the U.S. has kept two carrier strike groups in that region, with generally only one there. Prior to that it had been years since the U.S. had committed that much warship power to the Middle East.

According to the official, Hegseth signed orders on March 20 to keep the USS Harry S. Truman in the Middle East for at least an

additional month. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss ongoing military operations.

The ship has been conducting operations in the Red Sea against the Houthis and was scheduled to begin heading home to Norfolk, Virginia, at the end of March.

» Continued on Page 10



The Coronado News heard some fun stories from the community about jokes pulled around town on previous April Fools' Days. Staff photo by Madeline Yang.

## Celebrating April Fools' Day in Coronado

April Fools' Day is celebrated worldwide, and Coronado is no exception. Here are some of the island's pranks over the years.

**BY MADELINE YANG**  
The Coronado News

April Fools' Day is just around the corner – and so might be a sneaky practical joke.

Whether it's a prank call, a stolen car hoax or a snake that got loose, the island has some ideas on how to make someone's heart stop.

There isn't a definite answer to

when April Fools' started or how this comedic celebration began, but there is some lore dating back to the renaissance days in Europe, according to a blog posted by the Library of Congress.

But the history regarding this day seems to have to be taken with a grain of salt as one historical telling

» Continued on Page 9

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# this week

## 31 • Monday

Children are welcome to attend a spring storytelling session by Aunt Li-Anne at 2:30 p.m. in the Winn Room of the Coronado Public Library.

## 1 • Tuesday

Those interested in gathering wildflowers for the wildflower booth at the Coronado Flower Show, which takes place on April 12-13, can join a workshop at the Coronado Public Library at 6 p.m. on April 1 to learn about identifying wildflowers. The training will be led by Mitchel Beauchamp, the biological consultant for the Coronado wildflower booth.

## 3 • Thursday

The Coronado Democratic Club invites community members to its general meeting on Wednesday, April 3 at 6 p.m. in the Winn Room of the Coronado Public Library. The event will feature a presentation by Arcela Nuñez, a dedicated educator and community organizer who immigrated from Mexico at the age of twelve and overcame significant challenges to become the first in her family to attend college. She will lead a discussion titled "Empowering Community Through Education."

## 4 • Friday

Local musicians Marelle and Brianna Grace, fresh off their nominations for this year's San Diego Music Awards, will perform a spring serenade concert at the Coronado Public Library at 1 p.m.

### CONTACT US

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

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

### THINGS TO DO

## City of Coronado to plant trees for Arbor Day

Coronado News staff

Join the Coronado Public Services Department on Saturday, March 29 for Arbor Day.

City employees will be planting trees throughout town, and tools and instructions for planting will be provided for those interested in joining.

Volunteers should arrive at Spreckels Park, at 601 Orange Ave., by 8:30 a.m. and bring gloves and tree planting shoes.

For more information, call the Public Services Department at (619) 522-7380.

## CELEBRATE ARBOR DAY IN CORONADO

**PLANT A TREE IN CORONADO!**  
**Saturday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**8:30 a.m. at Spreckels Park**  
 (Orange Avenue & Sixth Street)  
*Families, individuals and groups are welcome to participate!*  
 Sponsored by the City of Coronado  
 For more information call the City of Coronado Public Services Department at 619-522-7380.

<b>8:30 a.m.</b>	Sign-Ups & Refreshments for everyone	Tools and City staff instruction will be provided
<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	Planting demonstration & Tree assignments	Bring gloves & tree planting shoes
<b>9:15 a.m.</b>	Plant trees in Coronado!	Planting sites will be provided at check-in
<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	Certificate awards	Invite family & friends!

The City of Coronado will be planting trees for Arbor day on March 29. Photo taken from the city of Coronado's website.



### PET OF THE WEEK

## Meet Taylor

PAWS of Coronado

On a sunny day, you might find Taylor lying on her back in the grass, paws to the sky and a look of bliss on her face as a human friend indulges her with belly rubs. She is the embodiment of love and affection. Taylor is a social butterfly with a penchant of making human friends—ask any of our staff!

Meeting her, it may surprise you to learn how hard her life has already been. Emaciated, dehydrated and at full term with a pregnancy, she was in rough shape. Taylor had some trauma to her left eye and her right ear had been ripped. After a challenging labor, her puppies were born. Sadly, after fighting distemper, only one of the puppies survived. Taylor was quarantined for several weeks, and when she was cleared, her left eye needed to be enucleated.

Despite the challenges of her past, the love she has to give is boundless. Taylor is very human friendly, enjoys walks, loves toys and balls. She is adaptable and ready to bring her positive energy to any loving home.

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 Taylor or other pets, please visit [pawsofcoronado.org](http://pawsofcoronado.org).

Meet Taylor, the pet of the week. She's at PAWS of Coronado and is looking for her forever home. See all adoptable animals. Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera, and tap on the link. Graphic/photo provided by PAWS of Coronado.



## 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](http://sharp.com/jointwebinar) or 1-800-82-SHARP (1-800-827-4277).

Webinar: Advanced Treatments for Hip and Knee Pain

Tuesday, April 8, 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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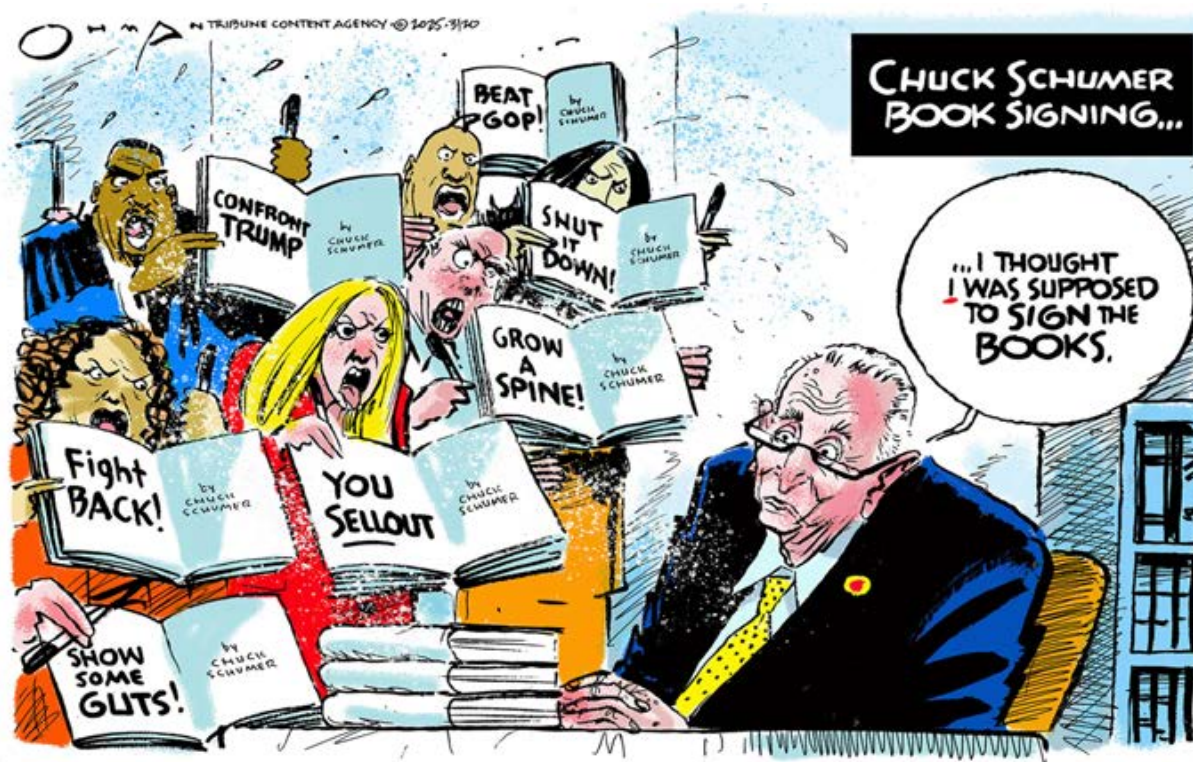
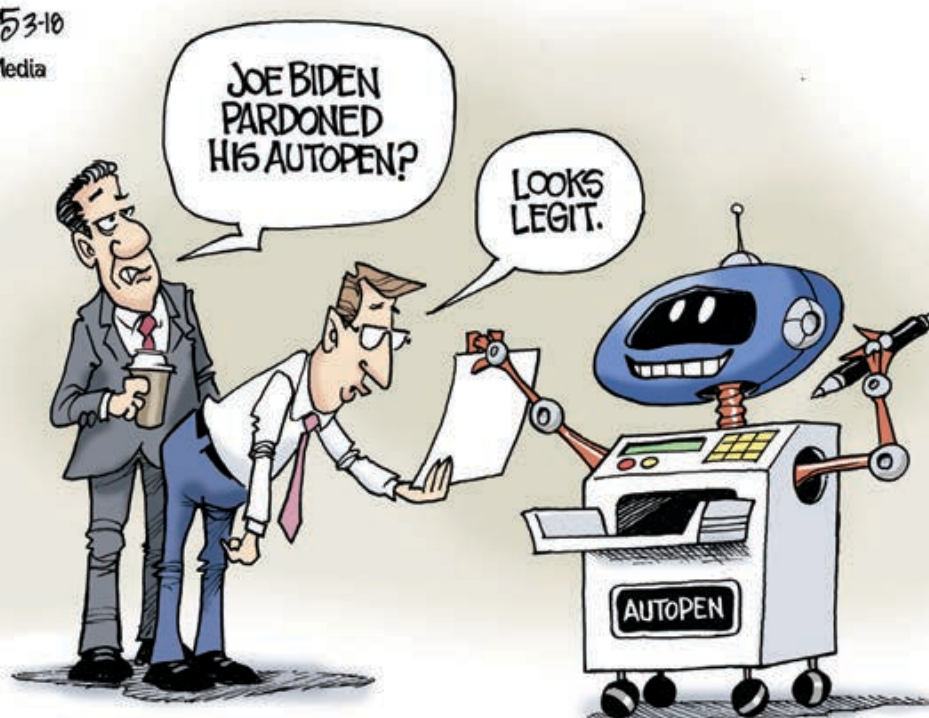
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# OPINION

Lisa Benson  
Counterpoint Media

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# CORONADO

## Coronado Yacht Club plans \$18.5 million revamp, adding public access and new facilities

Its clubhouse, a repurposed World War II women's barracks acquired through government surplus, has long defied its intended impermanence, said Ken Wilson, the club's commodore.

**BY KATIE MORRIS**  
The Coronado News

The Port of San Diego has given the green light to begin the environmental review process of a major redevelopment at the Coronado Yacht Club.

The project, if it goes forward, would include demolition of the existing clubhouse, parking lot and landscaping to make way for a modern, two-story, 17,000-square-foot clubhouse, a dedicated youth sailing school center and infrastructural enhancements aimed at securing the club against encroaching tides.

Additionally, the club plans to expand public access, incorporating a six-foot-wide promenade and a waterfront viewing platform.

Nestled along the tranquil waters of Glorietta Bay, the exclusive club has been a fixture of the local community for nearly eight decades.

The club membership is limited to 650 and at capacity, according to the club's website. When slots open, applicants are not eligible unless sponsored by a current member at the highest level.

Its clubhouse, a repurposed World War II women's barracks acquired through government surplus, has long defied its intended impermanence, said Ken Wilson, the club's commodore.

Now, the club seeks to bring its facilities into the twenty-first century with an \$18.5 million redevelopment project, an investment that will be borne by the club and donations.

"We've been trying to get to this point for well over 20 years," Wilson said. "For our future, it means con-

tinuing to be able to be a part of the community and show off San Diego Bay to people from Coronado, San Diego County and beyond."

"We think it's important to provide that access to the public to an area that they've not had access to since we've been on that land since 1947," Wilson said.

In 2023, Matthew Herron, a Coronado resident and lawyer, filed suit against the Coronado Yacht Club and the Port of San Diego, claiming the club unlawfully restricted public access to its property.

That October, a San Diego County judge dismissed the case.

Herron, who filed an appeal this January, argues that a 2018 California Coastal Commission ruling supports public access, while the club and port maintain there is no legal requirement to allow it.

Wilson said the yacht club's youth sailing program — one of the largest in the nation — welcomes some 450 junior sailors each summer, roughly half of whom have no affiliation with the club.

Currently operating out of a makeshift facility — a double-wide trailer — the commodore said the program will benefit from upgraded classrooms, expanded storage space and dedicated offices for instructors.

Wilson noted the yacht club's open-door policy for community organizations and its support for the Coronado High School sailing team, which is housed on the club's property free of charge.

The club also hosts a range of regattas, including the Sharp Hospice Care Benefit Dinner and Regatta — an an-



Conceptual rendering of the new youth sailing school and clubhouse. Photo provided by the Coronado Yacht Club.

nual event that last year raised over three-quarters of a million dollars for hospice care.

Historically, efforts to modernize the club have been met with resistance from the California Coastal Commission, the state agency tasked with protecting public access to the shoreline. A 2011 proposal faced rejection after the commission opposed diverting a public walkway around the club's buildings rather than preserving its waterfront path.

The latest plan has been developed in collaboration with the Port of San Diego and the Coastal Commission, incorporating considerations for public access, environmental sustainability and sea level rise mitigation.

Commissioner Frank Urtasun, Coronado's appointee to the Port of San Diego Board of Port Commissioners, said the redevelopment project is a poster child for the port's broader vision of providing access to the waterfront.

"A lot of tenants that have leaseholds on the waterfront have concerns with allowing the public to walk through their property, but

the Coronado Yacht Club has found a way, by grade separation, to allow the public to come in and walk along this line," Urtasun said.

The commissioner said the project is subject to a multi-layered approval process.

"The Coronado Yacht Club has to appease both the Port of San Diego, as the landlord of this property, and the Coastal Commission, which has authority over land use matters on state tidelands. The port alone doesn't get to approve a project like this."

Wilson said a study found that the club's leasehold sits less than half a foot above the current mean high tide level. The redevelopment envisions elevating the site by three to seven feet and reinforcing the shoreline with a seawall or riprap barrier.

With the environmental review process now underway, Wilson said the timeline for construction remains uncertain, as the project must clear the California Environmental Quality Act process and secure a new lease agreement with the port. The current lease is set to expire in December 2028.

## Discover Coronado continues its hotel assessment into 2026

Tourism on Coronado has gone down due to competing hotels and local renovations, however Discover Coronado's assessment on the hotels should continue to bring money to the island's tourism district.

**BY MADELINE YANG**  
The Coronado News

Local hotels have seen a decrease in staffing and tourism, but Discover Coronado plans to continue levying assessments on the Marriott, Hotel del Coronado, Loews and Glorietta Bay Inn as they have done in the past.

A report presented at the March 18 City Council meeting by Todd Little, the executive director of the Coronado Tourism Improvement Districts (CTID), outlined tourism performance concerns and stated possible challenges Coronado might face in the future.

The CTID, also known as Discover Coronado, is a municipal entity created by the council to provide supplemental funding to market and promote tourism on the island.

The district wants to continue to levy assessments for the fiscal year 2025-26, collecting a total of \$2.175 million from the Marriott, Hotel del Coronado, Loews and Glorietta Bay Inn. They will decide to continue to levy two 0.5% assessments on April 15.

It is an assessment that the four resorts impose on themselves to improve the desirability of the destination.

The council approved the annual report and management plan from



The Hotel del Coronado, alongside other hotels on the island, will continue to be charged taxes to the Coronado Tourism Improvement Districts. Staff photo by Katie Morris.

the CTID advisory board and adopted a resolution declaring their intent to continue levying assessments.

According to Coronado's municipal code, the assessments will be collected monthly by the hotels based on two separate one-half percent surcharges on the gross room revenues for each occupied room per night for the previous month.

Little said staffing and tourism at the local hotels have been a little low due to hotel renovations, like the over \$550 million expansion at the Del, as well as a new accommodation that opened across the bridge, the Gaylord Pacific Resort and Convention Center in Chula Vista, a \$1.35 billion project with 1,600 rooms.

"The entire industry is strugg-

ling simply because there's just not enough people who want to go to a hotel and work, they like to sit on their computer at home and work virtually," Little explained.

He also said renovations at the Hotel Del have decreased the amount of guests that are able to stay on the island.

But Little said he is confident that the lull is temporary because the new rooms and renovations will offer more opportunities to welcome guests and "level things off pretty quickly."

Mayor John Duncan did note that despite the years of construction at the Hotel Del, the transient occupancy tax, which is set at 10%, revenue for the city has maintained at a significant amount. Duncan speculated

this partially could be because of supply and demand increasing prices and therefore causing an increase in the tax of the room.

Little said he is concerned that competition from the Gaylord has already been attracting employees and visitors that might've gone to Coronado hotels.

"They're going to hurt us mostly on the labor side," Little said.

Another factor he is worried about is the new federal administration.

"I'm a little concerned about the tariff conversations that will hurt our international travel from Canada and also from Mexico," Little expanded. "I'm worried about border waits for those employees of ours that cross the border every single day."

# CORONADO

## The free summer shuttle will be returning to Coronado this year — but the Island Express won't

Coronado had two free shuttle services last summer, but only one will return this year, the free summer shuttle, while the on-demand electric shuttle service's future is uncertain.

**BY MADELINE YANG**  
The Coronado News

The Island Express will not be returning to Coronado this summer to provide on-demand electric shuttle services, but the free summer shuttle will be available.

The Island Express pilot program ended in December and on March 18, the City Council unanimously voted to direct city staff to come up with a feasible financial proposal before making any final decisions on whether to continue the service.

This was an experimental program that introduced six electric mini shuttles and two electric transit vans for free door-to-door drop-off service on the island.

It ran on Coronado from June 4 to Dec. 4, 2024 and was operated by Circuit Transit, a ride-share company that has focused exclusively on electric shuttle services for over a decade.

The Island Express provided a total of just about 30,000 rides, averaging around 163 rides per day with 90% of the rides occurring within the residential Village area and 10% in the Cays.

The financial proposal, as requested by council members, will include an analysis of ride fares and resident versus nonresident fees, request for proposal (RFP) options and other concerns brought up by council members.

### The Island Express

City Manager Tina Friend said that designing a plan for the program and having a RFP would take upwards of six months, leaving it to be potentially implemented in the summer of 2026 if approved.

Richard Grunow, director of community development, suggested that if the city were to continue this program past the pilot, there are some potential cost saving options.

It cost the city just over \$561,000 to run the Island Express for six months. That included a call center to request a ride and wrapping for the vehicles.

One cost-saving option would be to charge for the service.

Even though the service was free to those in Coronado, it cost the city about \$7 per passenger to ride within the Village and \$29 if traveling to and from the Cays.

The fare models suggested charging riders a range from \$1 per ride to



The Island Express, a free door-to-door service will not be returning to Coronado this summer. Photo taken from Discover Coronado.

\$5 per ride.

“The other thing to keep in mind is, the more you raise fares, you're probably going to depress ridership to some extent,” Grunow pointed out.

Another explored option was to work with local hotels, since the Hotel del Coronado and the Marriott were among the main pick-up and drop-off locations.

“The program was intended to be for the citizens, but somewhere along the way, we switched it up and they started servicing the hotels,” said Carelyn Reynolds, president of the Coronado Cab Company, during public comment.

Many of the council members agreed, stating that staff should look into working with the hotels to get financial support.

“The hotels should pay,” Council member Amy Steward said.

### The free summer shuttle

The city has another ride service running in the summers, the free summer shuttle, and it has been in use since 2013, running every year except in 2020 due to the global pandemic.

The City Council voted 4-1 to continue the free summer shuttle service this year, with Steward being the only member against the idea.

In 2024, it ran an abbreviated schedule from July 1 to Labor Day – it normally starts up on Memorial Day – and had its best ridership since the pandemic, even with the Island

*“They kind of have different customer bases, they serve different needs ... In some ways they complement, in other ways they're probably drawing from the same pool of passengers.”*

- Richard Grunow, director of community development

Express as a competitor service.

Providing this service would cost the city around \$156,000 for the 2025 season. In 2024, it gave around 847 rides per day and cost the city about \$2 per passenger.

However Steward, who voted not to revive the free summer shuttle program this summer, said that in observing the bus, she didn't see many people utilizing it, sometimes seeing no one on the bus that day.

“You see these numbers, but it doesn't correlate with my personal observation,” Steward said.

She also said the buses were too big

for Coronado's streets and getting rid of them would clear up greenhouse gases emitted into the air.

Grunow pointed out that there was a difference between the Island Express and free summer shuttle; the former is a door-to-door service using smaller vehicles while the latter follows a fixed route using large, municipal buses.

“They kind of have different customer bases, they serve different needs,” Grunow said. “In some ways they complement, in other ways they're probably drawing from the same pool of passengers.”

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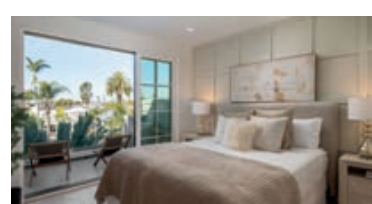
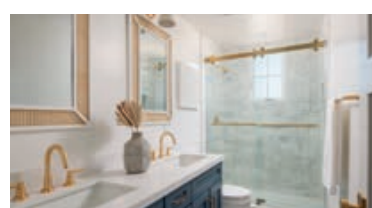
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# CORONADO



Father Joe's Villages' thrift store in Hillcrest, 1457 University Ave., is accepting donations. Donations are also accepted at Sacred Heart Parish in Coronado. Photo courtesy Father Joe's Villages.

## Need to do spring cleaning? Donate items at Sacred Heart Parish

Father Joe's Villages is hosting a 45-day bin drive throughout San Diego County to benefit its thrift stores.

**BY JULIETA SOTO**  
The Coronado News

Father Joe's Villages is accepting new or gently-used goods to restock thrift store locations, with all the revenue going towards transforming the lives of unhoused individuals and families in San Diego.

Sacred Heart Parish, at 655 C Ave., is among 15 drop-off bin locations accepting donations through April 18.

Clothing, jewelry, books, household goods, accessories, electronics

and other donations are also being accepted at Father Joe's Villages' four thrift store locations.

"Generous individuals who donate clothing, furniture and household goods ensure we can continue to provide quality programs to those in need," said Deacon Jim Vargas, president and CEO of Father Joe's Villages. "By choosing to donate or shop at our stores, you are choosing to support your local community and make life-changing programs accessible to our neighbors."

The thrift stores also offer online shopping at the Father Joe's website.

Learn more about how Father Joe's Villages supports families experiencing homelessness by visiting <https://my.neighbor.org/>.

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# CORONADO

## Student classic film series presents 'Lifeboat'

Coronado News staff

The Coronado Island Film Festival's 2025 student classic film series will screen Alfred Hitchcock's 1944 classic, "Lifeboat," on March 30.

Featuring an ensemble cast including Tallulah Bankhead, John Hodiak, William Bendix and Hume Cronyn, "Lifeboat" takes place entirely on and around a 36-foot lifeboat adrift at sea.

In it, seven American and British survivors of a torpedoed ship,

along with a lone German survivor, struggle against the sea, the elements, and one another to stay alive.

Hitchcock is known for his gripping "edge of your seat" thrillers, and was the creative force behind more than 50 feature films. "Lifeboat" not only limited its setting, but is distinctive in being one of a very few Hitchcock and Hollywood films lacking any musical score. Loosely based on a short story by celebrated author John Steinbeck,

the film's dramatic narrative examines themes of authority, leadership, political culture, honesty, morality and justice.

The screening, free and open to the public, will take place in the Winn Room of the Coronado Public Library at 1 p.m.

The complete 2025 student classic schedule and reservations are available on the CIFF website under the "Year-Round" dropdown tab. All student classic film screenings are free.

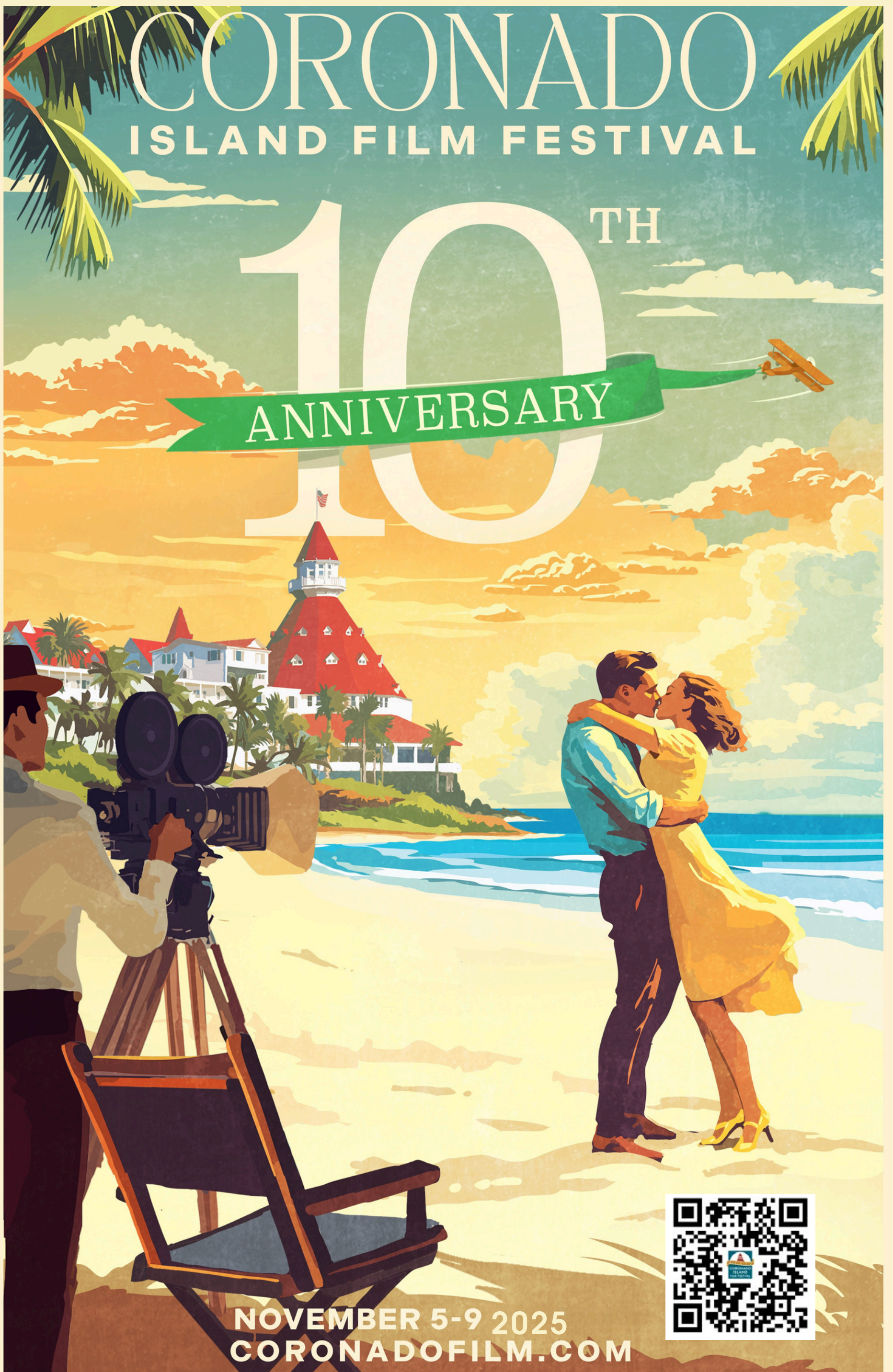


The Coronado Island Film Festival's student classic film series continues with "Lifeboat." Photo provided by the Coronado Island Film Festival.

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# CORONADO ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL

# 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



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# CORONADO

## Coronado reinstates Ad Hoc subcommittee to work on ocean water quality

The Ad Hoc Ocean Water Quality subcommittee will start up again on April 1 to deal with the ongoing cross-border water pollution.

**BY MADELINE YANG**  
The Coronado News

The City of Coronado formed a temporary committee known as the Ad Hoc Ocean Water Quality subcommittee in April 2023 to address the cross-border sewage pollution, and on March 18, the council decided to revive the committee for another year.

Starting April 1, Mayor John Duncan and Council member Mark Fleming will serve on the subcommittee. Duncan has been a member of the committee since 2023, along with Coronado's former mayor, Richard Bailey.

The Ocean Water Quality subcommittee worked to achieve essential improvements for the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant and other wastewater infrastructure.

"I think the subcommittee is one of the best things this council has done to address this issue," Council member Kelly Purvis said at the



**The Ocean Water Quality subcommittee will start up again on April 1 to deal with the ongoing Tijuana sewage crisis.** Staff photo by Madeline Yang.

March 18 City Council meeting.

However, the council did discuss the option to rotate out who attends advocacy meetings to lobby Congress.

Council member Carrie Anne Downey suggested having the members of the subcommittee rotate with the other members on the council so each council member can bring their own personal experiences to advocacy meetings in Washington, D.C.

She said every council member

who has direct experience with the contamination would be helpful when making the advocacy trips.

"It may be worthwhile rotating when we want to bring out that story," Downey emphasized, referencing a personal anecdote about the sewage-contaminated waters from Council member Amy Steward.

The motion did not include rotating members out, however Duncan said he is 100% open to it.

## EPA will not investigate Tijuana River Valley for Superfund designation

» Continued from Page 1

agency to review the Tijuana River Valley for its eligibility as a Superfund National Priority List site under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).

In response, the agency said their decision has not changed, contending that Superfund designation is "not warranted due to ongoing projects and investments that will address the underlying cross-border pollution challenge."

"While EPA has been involved in some of these proposed actions and plans to continue this engagement alongside our federal, state and local agency partners, the report does not contain new information that would warrant changing EPA's Superfund-related decision as stated in our Jan. 3, 2025 letter," Cheree Peterson, acting regional administrator, said in the letter addressed to Aguirre on Friday.

### Superfund denied

San Diego County Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer and local South Bay leaders submitted an initial Superfund designation request, including testimonials from 500 affected residents, to the EPA on Oct. 24.

The EPA concluded that a preliminary assessment to determine if the Tijuana River Valley qualified for Superfund designation was not warranted, pulling data from a 6-year-old study, according to a Jan. 3 letter written by Michael Montgomery, the division director of the EPA's Superfund and Emergency Management System.

In that letter, Montgomery specifically cited a study by the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) – from 2018 – that tested for the level of contaminants in channels of the river basin.

"... None of these contaminants exceeded EPA's regional screening levels for human health in residential soil and are commonly associated with urban stormwater runoff at these concentrations," reads the letter.

The Superfund program "is geared towards dealing with hazardous



**Sewage and trash fill the Tijuana River Valley in 2024.** Courtesy of the Prebys Foundation.

waste, not human waste," Montgomery told the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on Jan. 8.

That same month, Zeldin agreed to review the denial of Superfund designation and consider whether a different judgment should be reached.

Aguirre wrote a letter to Zeldin, then EPA administrator-designate, asking him "to put those words into action."

Zeldin was sworn in as the EPA's 17th Administrator on Jan. 29.

### EPA will not budge on prior decision

In early March, Aguirre sent a second letter, asking for re-evaluation.

"I am asking you, as the new leader of the EPA, to authorize a new review into the Tijuana River Valley's eligibility for Superfund status and further EPA action, incorporating the new data from the CDC's jarring new report into consideration," Aguirre wrote on March 3.

While Zeldin did not respond to inquiries about the EPA's final decision to deny Superfund designation, he told The Coronado News the agency would ramp up efforts with agencies on both sides of the border to face the crisis head on.

"Mexico must fully honor its commitment to control their country's growing pollution and sewage impacting the United States," Zeldin said. "The time when excuses, delays, or exceptions are tolerated is over."

In her letters, Aguirre referenced a Jan. 6 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and County of San Diego,

which found that 77% of South Bay residents consider the Tijuana River Valley pollution and ocean sewage a threat to public health in the region.

"Fully, 71% of residents surveyed believe their tap water is unsafe and nearly 50% of households reported a health symptom caused by the sewage crisis, including headaches, nausea, asthma and lung pain. I'm attaching that report to this letter," added Aguirre.

Peterson addressed both letters and the study in the March 14 letter.

"EPA is keenly aware of the negative impacts that your city has suffered for too long, and please know that our agency is firmly committed to the infrastructure fixes that will provide a lasting solution," Peterson said.

### EPA invited to visit IBWC plant

The IBWC and EPA began daily calls with Mexico in March to get updates on an international collector project following excessive flows entering the U.S. via the Tijuana River due to multiple unforeseen construction issues, according to Dr. Maria-Elena Giner, U.S. commissioner of the IBWC.

In a March 18 letter, congressional leaders invited Zeldin to visit the IBWC's South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant in the Tijuana River Valley.

"I look forward to visiting the border in the near future to view this issue firsthand, meet with elected officials, and ensure permanent solutions are urgently implemented to stop years of Mexican sewage impacting the U.S." Zeldin said in a statement.

## Celebrating April Fools' Day in Coronado

» Continued from Page 1

has ultimately been revealed to be an April Fools' prank in itself.

A Boston University professor made up a story about the origins of the holiday that ended up being published in the Associated Press in 1983, and it apparently had the country fooled, according to the article.

But regardless of its birth story, people have participated in this day for possibly centuries, and not just in the United States, as its alleged history suggests. This is a worldwide celebration of trickery and funny business – and in some countries, lasts more than just the first day of April, says a CNN story.

While The Coronado News won't pull any phony headlines, it can definitely reveal some people who might: so you might want to read this one in case you know any of these jokesters.

### Pranks around town

Lucero Mancilla, a 13-year-old at Coronado Middle School, has had her fair share of stunts with her older brother. When she was eight, she used his fear of spiders against him.

"We took little tiny spiders and we covered them in glow in the dark spray, and we put them all over his room," Mancilla said with a small smile as she retells the story. "And then we hid in there and when he walked in, he screamed and we sprayed, kind of like this confetti all over him."

She's done another prank related to creepy-crawlers, this time to her uncle, which she plans on repeating this year.

They own a snake, and it lives in their garage, Mancilla explained. When she was younger, they pretended their snake had gone missing.

"My uncle, he's terrified of snakes, he's coming over on April's Fools'. My idea is just to hide the snake in my older brother's room and scream when he comes home, 'The snake is missing!'" Mancilla laughed.

Her friend, Michaela Connors, also a Coronado Middle School student, had a similar story of her mom pranking her with a large arachnid.

"It was this giant spider, and my mom put it on the fan so when I turned it on, it dropped down ... and it came down on me and I screamed so loud," Connors said.

Other pranks reported by the community didn't relate to common phobias.

Josh Crabtree, whose son is stationed on the island, said that 10 years ago, his wife, Tiffany, and family pranked him into thinking he was getting a new truck.

"They were calling me up, telling me that she was going to buy me a truck, and then she was there to buy it. My brother-in-law was in on it. The kids were in on it. And I got home and it was, like, total April Fools'. No truck," Crabtree said with a joking sigh.

He has a truck now, though. He just got one. "Finally," he said laughing.

Their family also seems to have a theme with their pranks.

Just last year, Crabtree and Tiffany had gotten their other son, Aiden, a car for his 16th birthday. And they had been planning this prank for a couple weeks.

"We were like, we can't figure out the title, there's an issue with it ... and we told him it was a stolen car," Tiffany said as Aiden jumped in.

"And the police were coming to take it," he chuckled, recalling the practical joke.

Other tricks around the island were more calm – prank calls, baby powder in the hair dryer and fake emails.

And some people said they don't participate, leaving the antics and mild heart attacks to other people.

Whether you're a prank puller, a prank receiver or prank observer, April Fools' Day will definitely not go unnoticed on Coronado this year.

# NAVY

## Prestigious medal awarded to Fleet Readiness Center Southwest officer

DVIDS

Cmdr. Matthew J. Ostrye received the Meritorious Service Medal for his distinguished service at Fleet Readiness Center Southwest from April 2019 to May 2025.

Ostrye's leadership directly contributed to the successful repair and delivery of 30 Navy and Marine Corps aircraft by a workforce of more than 4,700 military and civilian personnel.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ostrye spearheaded the development of the command's Contact Tracing Team, enabling the readiness center to exceed production goals by nearly 10%.

As a test pilot to the E-2/C-2 program, Ostrye flew over 1,130 hours in 320 sorties.

The award was presented on behalf of the President of the United States by Rear Adm. J.B. Hornbuckle, Commander, Fleet Readiness Centers, in recognition of Ostrye's superior performance, professional excellence and 20 years of devoted service to the Navy.



Cmdr. Luis Rivera, commanding officer of Fleet Readiness Center Southwest, presents the Meritorious Service Medal to Cmdr. Matthew Ostrye for exceptional service in multiple leadership roles. Photo by Janina Lamoglia.

## Coronado Fire Department gives compression training to sailors

DVIDS - Brian Standing, fire division chief at the Coronado Fire Department, left, explains the proper form for giving chest compressions to sailors and civilians assigned to Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet on Mar. 13. The Coronado Fire Department has been conducting training on giving chest compressions to increase community awareness and ability to handle emergency situations.

U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Claire M. Alfaro.



## Hegseth beefs up warship presence in the Middle East and will have 2 aircraft carriers in the region

» Continued from Page 1

And Hegseth has ordered the USS Carl Vinson, which has been operating in the Pacific, to begin steaming toward the Middle East, which will extend its scheduled deployment by three months.

The Vinson, whose homeport is Naval Air Station North Island, is expected to arrive in the region early next month. It had been conducting exercises with Japanese and South Korean forces near the Yellow Sea and the Sea of Japan and was slated to head home to port in San Diego in three weeks.

The presence of so much U.S. naval power in the region not only

gives commanders additional ships to patrol and launch strikes, but it also serves as a clear message of deterrence to Iran, the Houthis' main benefactor.

The Houthis have been waging persistent attacks against commercial and military ships in the region. The Houthi rebels attacked more than 100 merchant vessels with missiles and drones, sinking two vessels and killing four sailors, from November 2023 until January this year. Their leadership described the attacks as aiming to end the Israeli war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Hegseth's move shifts the Vinson and its warships away from the Indo-Pacific region, which the Trump ad-

ministration has touted as its main focus.

Instead, this bolsters the latest U.S. campaign against the Iran-backed Houthis. U.S. ships and aircraft launched a new intensive assault against the militant group, including a barrage of attacks over the weekend that continued into this week.


President Donald Trump, in a marked departure from the previous administration, lowered the authorities needed for launching offensive strikes against the Yemen-based Houthis. He recently gave U.S. Central Command the ability to take action when it deems appropriate.

President Joe Biden's administration had required White House ap-

proval to conduct offensive strikes such as the ones over the weekend. It did allow U.S. forces to launch defensive attacks whenever necessary, including the authority to take out weapons that appeared to be ready to fire.

Biden went to two carriers in the region for several weeks last fall. Then-Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin had ordered the Roosevelt to extend its deployment for a short time and remain in the region as the USS Abraham Lincoln was pushed to get to the area more quickly. The Biden administration beefed up the U.S. military presence there to help defend Israel from possible attacks by Iran and its proxies and to safeguard U.S. troops.



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## SPORTS

# Standout sprinter Lauren Gilhooly clinches first place in 100-meter dash

Coronado News staff

The Coronado High School track team was again led by standout sprinter Lauren Gilhooly, who took first place in the 100-meter dash at the Don Jones Bronco Invitational on March 15, clocking a leading wind-legal time of 11.92 seconds in the San Diego CIF section.

Gilhooly also ran a leg on the victorious women's 4 x 100-meter relay. She was joined by junior Micaela Gistaro, junior Summer Little and sophomore Maya Wilson. This is the first time this quartet has competed this season and they defeated a strong Steele Canyon High School squad, who had previously clocked the second fastest time in the San Diego CIF section this year.

Other top finishers on March 15 meet were Gistaro, who placed sixth overall in the women's invitational 400-meter run. She clocked a time of 59.75 seconds. This time currently ranks her ninth overall in the San Diego section.

Junior Nathan Ayan finished ninth in the men's invitational 800-meter run. This was the season's best for Ayan, and the first time he has dipped under two minutes this season. His time also currently ranks him 16th in the San Diego section.



Maya Wilson hands off to Summer Little for the anchor leg of the 4x100 relay. Photo by Phil Grooms.



Former San Diego Padres pitcher Jake Peavy speaks during his induction into the Padres Hall of Fame during a ceremony before a baseball game against the Texas Rangers Friday, July 28, 2023, in San Diego. AP Photo/Gregory Bull, File.

## Former Cy Young Award winner Jake Peavy returns to Padres

Associated Press

Jake Peavy, the 2007 NL Cy Young Award winner and member of the San Diego Padres Hall of Fame, has joined the team as special assistant to CEO Erik Greupner.

Greupner said the three-time All-Star will assist multiple departments and serve as a team ambassador.

"I'm incredibly appreciative of this opportunity to reunite with my Padres family," Peavy said in a statement. "San Diego has always held a special place in my heart. I'm a Padre through and through— from the moment I was drafted by the team until this very day, and I can't wait to work alongside this talented group and contribute in any way I can to the success of this great organization."

Peavy, inducted into the team Hall of Fame in 2023, won 19 games with a 2.54 ERA and 240 strikeouts in his Cy Young-winning season. He was 92-68 with a 3.29 ERA and 1,348 strikeouts in 212 starts with the team from 2002-09.

Peavy was selected by the Padres in the 15th round of the 1999 amateur draft. He also pitched for the Chicago White Sox, Boston and San Francisco and retired after the 2016 season with a 152-126 record and 3.63 ERA over 15 seasons.

## Padres' Yu Darvish to start season on injured list with elbow inflammation

Associated Press

San Diego Padres right-hander Yu Darvish will start the season on the injured list because of inflammation in his right elbow, manager Mike Shildt said on March 21.

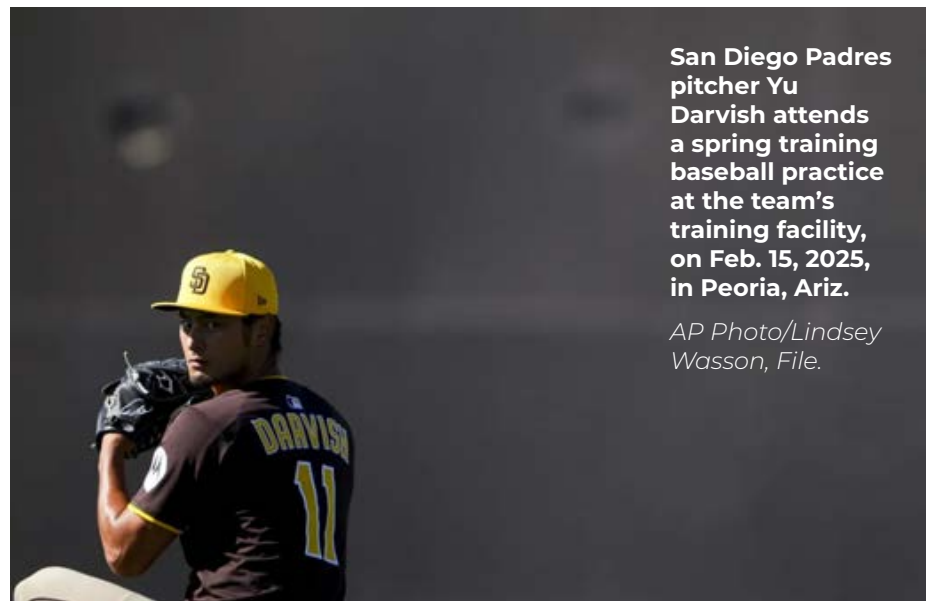
Shildt said there is no timetable for Darvish's return but the team is confident Darvish will be back in the rotation following rest and a ramp-up period.

Darvish made a pair of spring training starts but was shut down after the second, a four-inning, 54-pitch outing against Kansas City on March 13.

The Padres decided to have him back off his throwing program after he played catch a couple times.

Kyle Hart, Stephen Kolek and Randy Vasquez are candidates to fill Darvish's spot in the rotation behind Michael King, Dylan Cease and Nick Pivetta.

Darvish is 110-88 with a 3.58 ERA in 12 major league seasons after pitching for the Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters in Japan's Pacific League from 2005-11. The 38-year-old had Tommy John surgery on March 17, 2015, and returned to a major league mound on May 28,



San Diego Padres pitcher Yu Darvish attends a spring training baseball practice at the team's training facility, on Feb. 15, 2025, in Peoria, Ariz.

AP Photo/Lindsey Wasson, File.

2016.

He had back, neck and elbow problems last season and was on the restricted list for personal reasons from early July to late August. He won three of four starts in September and was 1-1 with a 1.98 ERA in two starts against the Los Angeles Dodgers in the NL Division Series.

Darvish came to the major leagues in 2012 after agreeing to a \$56 million, six-year contract with the Texas Rangers. He was traded to

the Dodgers in July 2017, became a free agent after the World Series and signed a \$126 million, six-year deal with the Chicago Cubs. Darvish was dealt to San Diego after the 2020 season and in February 2023 agreed to a contract with the Padres that added an additional \$90 million in guaranteed money for a total of \$108 million over six years.

His 2023 season ended in late August because of a bone spur in his right elbow.

## Chargers sign tight end Tyler Conklin to 1-year deal

Associated Press

The Los Angeles Chargers signed veteran tight end Tyler Conklin on March 21.

His agent Mike McCartney said on social media that it's a one-year deal.

Conklin is one of four players at his position with over 50 catches and 400 receiving yards in each of his last four seasons. Over his seven-year career, he has 263 receptions for 2,544 yards and 11 touchdowns.

Conklin spent the last three seasons with the New York Jets. He had a career-high four TD catches last season, including the 500th TD pass of quarterback Aaron Rodgers' career.

Conklin played his first four seasons with the Minnesota Vikings, who drafted him in the fifth round in 2018.



New York Jets tight end Tyler Conklin (83) carries the ball in the second half of an NFL football game against the Cleveland Browns, Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023, in Cleveland. AP Photo/Sue Ogrocki, File.

## SPORTS

# Pochettino believes US has time to fix its problems after crashing out of CONCACAF Nations League

Associated Press

Mauricio Pochettino offered an Americanism after the United States' second straight dismal loss in the CONCACAF Nations League.

"If we would be today in this situation in one year time, for sure, I will tell you, 'Houston, we have a problem, no?' SOS," the Argentine coach said after the 2-1 loss to Canada in the CONCACAF Nations League third-place match.

The U.S. hadn't lost a competitive match to its northern neighbors on U.S. soil since 1957 and it hadn't lost back-to-back matches to Canada since 1980 and '85. But after Pochettino's team followed up its surprising 1-0 defeat to Panama on March 20 with another clunker, the coach didn't seem worried and tried his best to radiate optimism and problem-solving acumen.

"It's all a process we need to change, and I don't want to say that I'm happy — don't take me wrong," Pochettino said. "But if (there's) something negative about (a) result, something to learn, it's better now, because I think we have time."

The defeats took place at SoFi Stadium, where the U.S. plays its World Cup opener on June 12, 2026.

"We were not able to discover and to try and extend our strategy to the team, the capacity to play another way," Pochettino said. "I think we have time. I prefer that that happened today, and not in one year."

The U.S. is 5-3 since the arrival last fall of Pochettino, the longtime Tottenham boss who also worked at Paris Saint-Germain and Chelsea. It's difficult to discern any areas of progress for this modestly talented roster



United States head coach Mauricio Pochettino celebrates with fans after defeating Panama in an international friendly soccer match, Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024, in Austin, Texas. AP Photo/Rodolfo Gonzalez, File.

under its new coach, but Pochettino believes his brief tenure has been useful for identifying the problems he'll need to solve in the next year.

"I am (a) very optimistic and positive guy," Pochettino said. "Even when I'm angry and really upset and really disappointed, I want to find the positive thing that we can take from these two games. Who knows? No one knows how we are going to arrive to the World Cup, and then to perform. For sure, (the Nations League result) is not going to affect. If it is going to affect, it is in a positive way, not negative."

The Americans looked neither sharp nor competitive against Panama, and they improved only slightly against Canada. They had one moment of offensive success when Tim Weah and Diego Luna did the hard

work to set up a first-half goal by Patrick Agyemang, who has scored in three of his first four national team appearances, but the U.S. had far more moments of frustration.

The Americans also had just enough moments of defensive disorganization to cost them dearly. Although the U.S. back line was a bit patchwork due to injuries, the defenders couldn't stop Canada's Jonathan David before he fired home the eventual winning goal in the second half.

The U.S. didn't get much out of captain Christian Pulisic, the AC Milan star. Pulisic came off in the 69th minute against Canada.

"Now all we can do is go and be an example at our clubs every day, be the best we can be," Pulisic said. "That's how the national team is, and

*"It's all a process we need to change, and I don't want to say that I'm happy — don't take me wrong ... But if (there's) something negative about (a) result, something to learn, it's better now, because I think we have time."*

- Mauricio Pochettino, United States head coach

then when we come back, of course some things need to change, and we need to improve. We're going to look back and see what that is. I don't have all the answers at the moment."

Pochettino will get only a few more training camps and one more tournament before the World Cup. That tournament is the 2025 CONCACAF Gold Cup — and even that won't be a full-team experience, since a few players will be with their pro teams at the simultaneous FIFA Club World Cup.

For all their flaws, Pochettino doesn't publicly doubt his players' burning desire to fix things before their World Cup moment next year. Pulisic and the other American leaders all say they'll work to find the solutions to the multiple problems facing them in the ensuing 15 months.



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# SPORTS

## LA Olympics head says 2028 games will be a catalyst for rebuild. Count on Kendrick Lamar too

Associated Press

After deadly fires devastated much of Los Angeles, organizers of the 2028 Olympics told the IOC on March 20 how the city will rebuild with help from the Games.

Count on Kendrick Lamar, too, to be part of “the greatest show on earth” in three years.

“The rebirth, the rebuild, maybe reimagining LA 2.0 — and the Olympics as a catalyst for all those things — we think is really part of our ethos,” organizing committee chairman Casey Wasserman told The Associated Press.

“You can’t have a natural disaster at that scale in a city as big and as important as Los Angeles and not have it be part of your core philosophy going forward,” he said in an interview before giving sports leaders an update at the International Olympic Committee’s annual meeting.

Lamar would be a globally popular part of the opening ceremony on July 14, 2028, after his stunning halftime show at the Super Bowl last month.

“Fortunately in my day job I represent Kendrick Lamar,” said Wasserman, who heads an international talent and promotions agency. “He is truly an LA icon so I think it would be a pretty fair bet that Kendrick will be involved in the Olympics in Los Angeles in some way.”

The wildfires in January have reset the daily life and global perception of the city.

“Everyone loves a comeback story,” Wasserman told IOC members on Thursday.

Olympic venues and operational



Casey Wasserman, chairman of the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics organizing committee, speaks during an interview to the Associated Press in Costa Navarino, western Greece, Wednesday, March 19, 2025. AP Photo/Thanassis Stavrakis.

plans escaped serious damage.

“From purely an Olympics perspective we got very lucky. That’s not the most important thing,” Wasserman told the AP on Wednesday. “What’s important is helping people get back into their homes, get back settled, get back with their lives.”

### Olympic athlete visas

Another expected challenge for LA organizers is ensuring athletes, officials and fans from every Olympic team feel welcome and safe going to the United States in what shapes to be a turbulent future for the world.

“Irrespective of politics today, America will be open and accepting to all 209 countries for the Olympics,”

Wasserman said.

“LA is the most diverse city in the history of humanity and we will welcome the people from around the world and give them all a great time.”

Updating IOC and sports leaders on March 20, Wasserman said his team made “significant strides” with President Donald Trump’s administration, which has security obligations for the Olympics and subsequent Paralympics.

“I have met with President Trump and his team both prior to his inauguration and again last month,” the LA Olympics leader said. “We have a regular cadence across all federal agencies with leadership from the president to make sure that these

Games deliver for all our constituents.”

The U.S. visa program — and current restrictions for more than 40 countries who should compete in LA — was the subject of a sharp question from IOC member Ingmar de Vos, the equestrian official who leads the collective group of Summer Games sports bodies. De Vos cited a “red list” ban on travel to the U.S. from 11 countries.

“I don’t anticipate any, any problems from any countries to come and participate,” Wasserman replied, noting the U.S. State Department has a “fully staffed desk” to help prepare.

“In my many conversations with President Trump and Secretary (Marco) Rubio they understand the scale and complexity required to deliver these Games, the access required for not just athletes but for delegations, and the incredibly short time frame on which to do those.”

Wasserman insisted “with all due respect to FIFA,” visa issues for the Olympics are more complicated than for the World Cup in men’s soccer which the U.S. is co-hosting next year with Canada and Mexico.

His audience included IOC member Gianni Infantino, the FIFA president who has closely aligned himself with Trump.

IOC member Gene Sykes, also president of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, promised his city and nation will “extend warmth and respect” to all visitors.

“The recent tragic wildfires tested our community,” Sykes said, “yet they illuminated our resilience and determination.”



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