

San Diego wages increase: Will Coronado follow?

BY MICHELLE ARMAS
The Coronado News

In September, the San Diego City Council voted to raise the city's minimum wage for certain hospitality workers to \$25 an hour over the next four years, with the first increase taking effect in July 2026.

With Coronado serving as a

major tourism hub — and many of its hospitality workers commuting from San Diego — the neighboring city's decision raises a key question: Will Coronado follow suit?

The ordinance applies to hotels with 150 guest rooms or more, as well as amusement parks, event centers and zoos. San Diego City Council member Sean Elo-Rive-

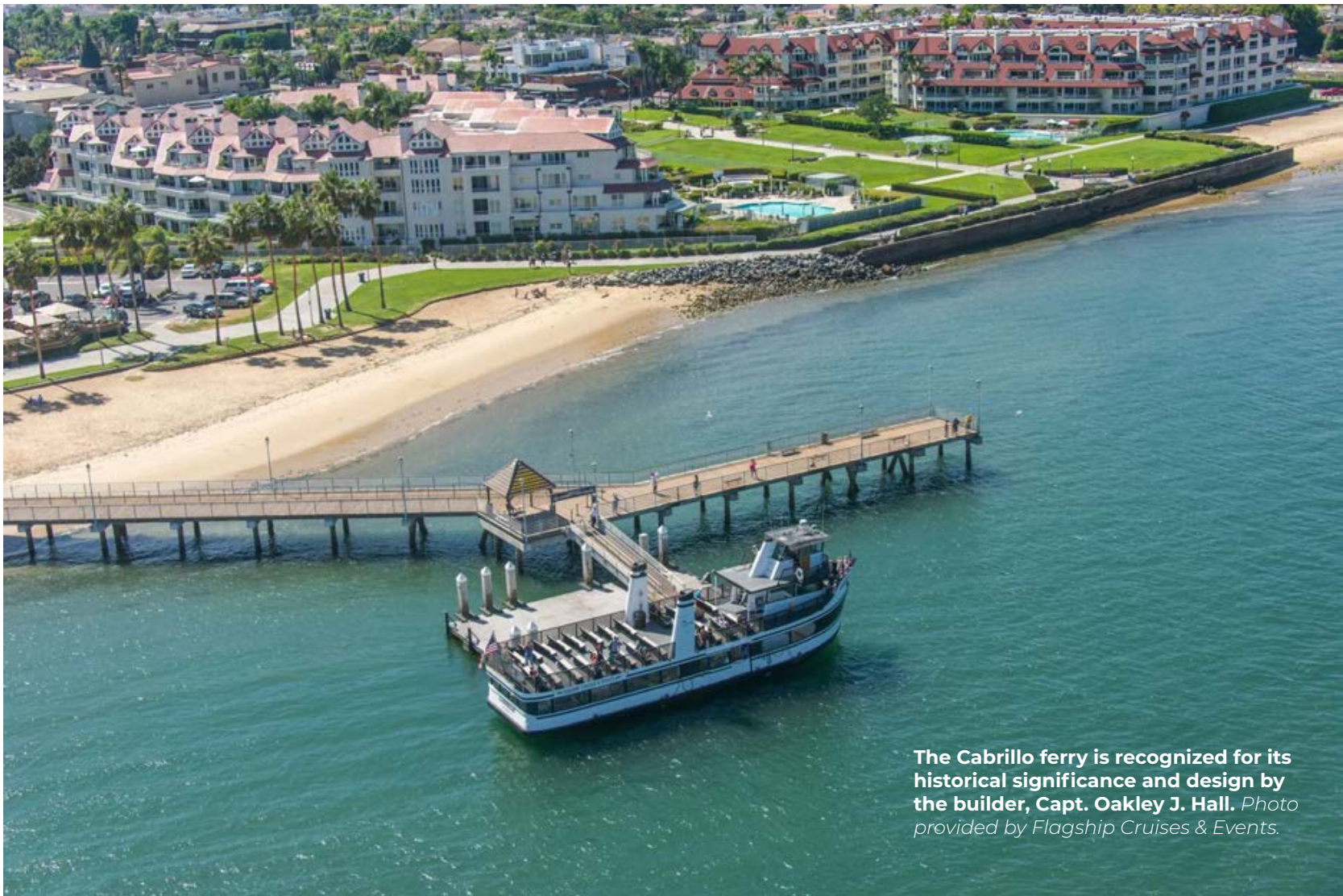
ra, who introduced the proposal, said the measure was intended to help hospitality workers keep up with rising living costs and remain in the city where they work.

When asked whether Coronado would consider a similar wage increase, Mayor John Dun-

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A hospitality front desk employee works at Hotel del Coronado on Jan. 21, 2026. Photo by Michelle Armas.



The Cabrillo ferry is recognized for its historical significance and design by the builder, Capt. Oakley J. Hall. Photo provided by Flagship Cruises & Events.

San Diego ferries listed in National Register of Historic Places

Flagship Cruises & Events, in its second century of business, operates water vessels that connected the region

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News

The Interior Department has recognized the Silvergate ferry dating back to the World War II-era, along with another San Diego ferry, on the National Register of Historic Places.

Recognition means the Silvergate (built in 1940) and the Cabrillo (built in 1964), are worthy of preservation due to their cultural, architectural and maritime significance.

The Silvergate, which runs from downtown San Diego to Coronado, is known for its “distinctive silhouette and warm wood detailing,” according to the company.

The company says the Cabrillo is historically recognized for its period of significance between 1964 and 1968 when it operated as an excursion vessel during the post-war maritime recreation boom in San Diego. The ferry also is recognized for the

historical significance of its designer and builder, Oakley J. Hall, founder of San Diego Marine.

“These ferries are more than boats,” says Brad Engel, president of Flagship Cruises & Events, “they are living history.”

The National Park Service administers the National Register of Historic Places.

The park service's designation comes at a time when the company continues to operate the Silvergate and the Cabrillo and moves toward replacing the now historic

» Continued on Page 10

Coronado city council reiterates guidelines to support federal law enforcement

Support for local police cooperating with federal officers was a point of contention at the city council meeting as cities nationwide take stances on recent ICE activity

BY MADELINE YANG
The Coronado News

Amid a nationwide controversy with the Trump administration's actions on immigration and deporta-

tion, Coronado City Council kept its long standing legislative policy on the city's relationship with federal law enforcement agencies, but did reiterate its support for local, state and federal law enforcement.

In a meeting Jan. 20 about legislative policy guidelines, the most contentious issue concerned the Police Department's cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers, more widely known as ICE.

Council member Mark Fleming wanted to support legislation requiring local police to fully cooperate with federal officers and agents.

“I feel that ... locally, we should not be restricting legal federal law enforcement activity,” Fleming said. “In my mind, this should not be anything that is debatable.”

Coronado resident Carolyn Rogerson expressed her agreement with Fleming during the meeting.

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this week

30 • Friday

This weekend only, Coronado School of the Arts Musical Theatre and Drama will perform the murder mystery farce, *Clue*, at the Coronado Performing Arts Center. Performances run at 7 p.m. on Jan. 29, Jan. 30 and Jan. 31. Matinee performances are scheduled for 2 p.m. on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1. Purchase tickets at cosafoundation.org/tickets.

4 • Wednesday

The Coronado Public Library, in partnership with the Coronado Island Film Festival, presents Film Forum Coronado, taking place the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the library's Winn Room. Film expert Ralph DeLauro provides a brief introduction to each film and leads a discussion afterwards, often including pointers about how lighting or camera angles contribute to a scene's mood or propel the story. The film presented on Feb. 4 is "Yellow Rose."

5 • Thursday

The John D. Spreckels Center is scheduled to host an open house for available jobs with Recreation and Golf Services on Feb. 5 from 2 to 5 p.m. Recreation and Golf Services is currently hiring for a variety of flexible, part-time positions, including aquatics, day camps, and youth programs. Applicants can submit applications, learn about available roles and interview on site. For details, call 619-522-7342 or visit governmentjobs.com/careers/coronado.

CONTACT US

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

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

Spreckels Center expands Zumba class offerings

Coronado News staff

Responding to growing demand, the John D. Spreckels Center is expanding its offerings to host Zumba Gold on Saturday mornings at 1019 7th Street.

The 10 a.m. low-impact dance fitness class will be taught by certified instructor Marg Stark, who lives in Imperial Beach after a decade in Coronado. The class accommodates working folks and adults of all ages who want to start the weekend on the dance floor.

"Zumba Gold is easier on the joints than regular Zumba, with no pivots or jumps, but it features all the fun of Latin and pop rhythms and simple choreography," says Stark. "It's often called 'exercise in disguise' cause it feels like you're at the club — only you can do it without staying up late or heading downtown."

The class emphasizes community, getting together for special occasions and doing flash mobs around town. Last year, together with Sue-Allen Villalva's Zumba class, the group performed at the Coronado Film Festival's beach screening of "Mamma Mia" and at Coronado MainStreet's Small Business Saturday events.

Participants should wear sneakers and bring a water bottle to class. Walk-ins are \$17, but registering for the monthly session drops the price to \$12 for Coronado residents. Register online at <https://ca-coronado.civilec.com/> for Saturday classes.

For more information, contact Marg Stark at marg@starkbrandstory.com.



Marg Stark, the Zumba instructor, offers dance classes in Coronado. Photo provided by Marg Stark.

PET OF THE WEEK

Meet Teddy

PAWS of Coronado

Teddy, a mixed-breed dog, is up for adoption at PAWS of Coronado.

Staff members at PAWS of Coronado, a non-profit that provides adoption and rehabilitation services to animals, said that Teddy is past the puppy stage at about 3 years old, but is still young enough to enjoy adventures.

Those interested in adoption can visit www.pawsofcoronado.org. Fostering, donating and volunteering are other ways to support the organization.

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 Teddy or other pets, please visit [pawsofcoronado.org](https://www.pawsofcoronado.org).



Call us at: (619) 435-8247

PAWS OF CORONADO

Meet Teddy, the pet of the week. He's at PAWS of Coronado and is looking for his 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.

Get Vaccinated Close to Home

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

The Sharp Coronado Community Pharmacy offers COVID-19 and flu vaccines. Located next to Sharp Coronado Hospital, the pharmacy is open 7 days a week. We accept almost all health insurance, including TRICARE.

Visit sharp.com/coronado or call 619-522-3996 for more information.



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LISA BENSON



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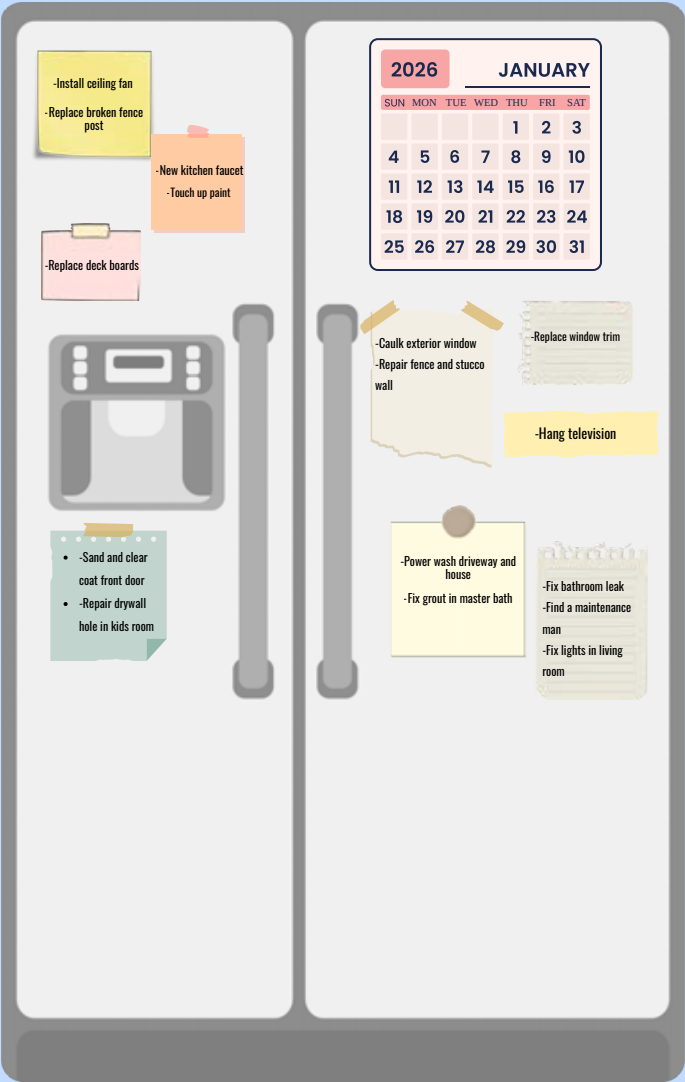


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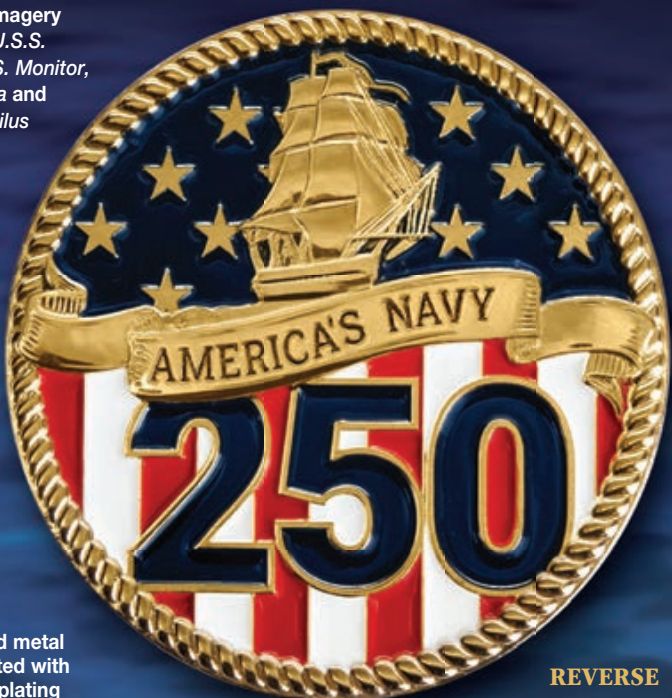
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CORONADO

MOUTHFUL!

Night & Day Café: A countertop time capsule

Welcome back to Mouthful! with Michelle, a review column exploring the eateries shaping Coronado's food scene

BY MICHELLE ARMAS
The Coronado News

There's something about American diners: burnt coffee in a clunky mug and those little creamers where you peel the plastic off the top. They're inviting yet unassuming, something of a civic religion to the elderly, nostalgic for a time when people still flipped through print newspapers at their tables and dusted ashes into saucers.

I often ate at a diner with my family in the small town where I grew up: Tehachapi, nestled between the Central Valley and the Mojave Desert, where horses outnumbered people and the only fun thing to do was go to the local country club pool. In town, the diner I loved was Kelcy's, and at seven, I would hurry my dad inside for chocolate chip pancakes and fresh-squeezed orange juice.

Night & Day Café, on Orange Avenue fits squarely in this genre — but, like many restaurants in Southern California, it is as Mexican as it is American. The restaurant has been open since 1927, originally as D and D Café, and in 1954 it became Night & Day Café because it ran 24/7. Today, it remains open until 1 a.m. on Fridays and 2 a.m. on Saturdays. Since 1996, ownership has passed through several members of the Esquer family.

When I sat down, the server, Cassandra, had a smile pasted on her face, bantering with customers, refilling coffees before you could see the bottom of your mug and happily telling me about the restaurant. She said each owner has added a unique touch, but the mom-and-pop atmosphere has been kept alive, and the original decor preserved.

Sitting at the counter, I immediately felt invited. Not one, but two people started a conversation with me — maybe because I was taking photos, or maybe because they were born before 1960 and were not glued to their phones — but either way, it made me miss a time when folks at countertops exchanged small talk. “I’ve been coming here for 15 years and haven’t had one bad meal,” a regular told me.

The open griddle caught my eye immediately, composed of “low stools and a 100-year-old flat-top grill, along with the 125-year-old iron hood that was salvaged from an old ship,” according to the restaurant’s website. I was enamored with the way the chef fried eggs alongside bell peppers and tortillas. He kept rhythmic tempo, feeding a full counter and a few stragglers at the outside tables.

I watched him make my machaca, a dish originally from northern Mexico made of shredded carne seca — dried, salted beef with a semi-spicy rub — coaxied into scrambled eggs with green bell peppers, onions and tomatoes, usually paired with beans, rice and corn tor-



A server at Night & Day Café passes out plates on Jan. 21, 2026. Photos by Michelle Armas.



The machaca plate at Night & Day Café on Jan. 21, 2026.

tillas. I became obsessed with this dish after having it for the first time in October, when I visited Doña Estrella in the Valle de Guadalupe — but that restaurant has a Michelin star for its machaca, so my standard was high.

When I bit into it, I was reminded of that experience in the Valle: salty beef, crunchy peppers, fluffy eggs, fresh salsa, earthy tortillas. The meat spoke the loudest: smoky, savory, and addictive. They offered green and red salsa to add spice — mellow roasted peppers with a tiny kick, which I didn’t mind on a slow Wednesday morning. Overall, I was happy to pay for something I probably couldn’t make at home the way I could eggs and bacon.

I dabbled in the beans and rice — beans silky, rice plump, giving the juices somewhere to settle and make the dish last. The cabbage and dressing were the most boring part and not es-

pecially fresh. I wished for more crispness to balance the smokiness of the rest of the plate, but even so, I left satisfied. I washed it down with my over-roasted coffee, which reminded me of Doña Estrella’s café de olla. I slightly wished I were sipping one, but perhaps they opted out because they’d have to fully commit to the Mexican identity and this place was very much both Mexican and American.

I carried on with my meal, getting fuller and more satisfied by the second, watching as the people began to pour in and fill the sidewalk tables, even on a weekday.

That is until I saw the French toast come out. The man next to me, the one bantering with the server, ordered it. And even after I was slumped over from my machaca, I began to drool. I asked if Cassandra could slip me one slice to try instead of a whole order, and she smirked and said, “of course” as if it’s something to be expected. I think you may know from my previous reviews that I always get dessert.

The French toast was warm and golden on the outside, fluffy and custardy on the inside, butter melting into the syrup like silk. I took a full bite, and everything glided together on my tongue.

Night & Day Café is located 847 Orange Ave, Coronado, CA 92118. It is open on Sunday 7 a.m.-10 p.m., Monday 7am a.m.-8 p.m., Tuesday through Wednesday 6:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Friday 6:30 a.m.-1 a.m. and Saturday 7 a.m.-2 a.m.

Contact: michelle@thecoronadonews.com

City Council reviews and approves legislative policy guidelines regarding e-bikes and offshore oil drilling

Coronado City Council discussed dozens of legislative policy guidelines that will pave the way for lobbying legislation for the next year

BY MADELINE YANG
The Coronado News

Coronado will push state and federal lawmakers to develop e-bike safety legislation and oppose offshore oil drilling along San Diego County’s coastline in 2026 under legislative policy guidelines adopted Jan. 20 by the City Council.

City Council approved over 20 pages of documentation noting the city’s position on dozens of situations including e-bikes, traffic concerns and

offshore drilling.

The e-bike legislation would support rules and regulations on electric bikes and motorcycles within city limits.

Coronado’s regulations for e-bikes and other motorized mobility devices, including electric scooters, skateboards and hoverboards, took effect on Jan. 3, 2025. The ordinance provides for fines of up to \$25 if violated.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, state traffic laws and vehicle codes govern e-bikes’ operation on streets and bikeways, placing them under state and local control.

At the request of Council member Mark Fleming, the city added noise camera technology to its priority

list, in addition to photo radar. Noise cameras are roadside systems used to detect and photograph excessively loud motorcycles and other vehicles.

The council also addressed offshore drilling in response to a Trump administration announcement that it will open the Pacific coastline, including California, to oil leases.

The city’s original guideline noted that the council would oppose measures that includes any San Diego County coastal area in the lease/sale program until environmental protection is assured.

On Jan. 20, council members agreed to take out the latter part of that sentence, with it now reading: “...oppose legislation which includes any San Diego County coastal areas in the lease/sale program.”

City Manager Tina Friend gave a report on the guidelines that set the city’s official position on different legislative issues. These guidelines have been established for several years now, according to Friend, and come up every year for approval and changes.

This document is used as a framework when contacting members of the U.S. Congress or other agencies about matters affecting the city.

Even though the guidelines exist, Coronado can still have another opportunity to make a position statement on a specific issue if brought to a meeting, according to a staff report from a meeting in December.

Contact: madeline@thecoronadonews.com

CORONADO

‘People are really mad’

First-ever parking fees at San Diego’s Balboa Park draw anger

For decades, parking lots at San Diego’s Balboa Park were packed, with lines of drivers snaking through lanes in search of a rare open spot.

On Jan. 21 several lots were half empty, while people lined up behind kiosks to pay newly imposed parking fees.

This month San Diego city imposed the first parking fees for the century-old cultural site, provoking confusion and contempt. Museums reported that visitation dropped 20% immediately, vandals defaced the meters and San Diego County mayors urged the city to reverse the unpopular policy.

“The negative impacts paid parking on Balboa Park have been immediate and they have been measurable,” Jessica Hanson York, executive director of the Mingei Museum and president of the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, which represents the park’s museums, said at a press conference. “Our visitors are feeling it and our cultural institutions and our museums are feeling it across the park.”

San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria has said the parking fees will provide stable revenue for the park and its museums, and help close a city budget gap of roughly \$300 million this fiscal year and \$110 million next year.

“Mayor Gloria, with the support of the city council, made the difficult decision to put the program in motion last year to create a dedicated source of funding so that Balboa Park, the city’s crown jewel, remains a special space for future generations,” Dave Rolland, a spokesman for Gloria, said in a statement to CalMatters. “We understand this is a major change, but it is a necessary one.”

Instant backlash

The parking program got off to a rocky start. The city’s current estimates for parking revenue this year are now about a quarter of its original goal. Meanwhile museum directors warn that lost admission fees could far outweigh the gains, as the new fees hinder access to the park.

“I think we’ve always looked at parks of our city and region as a little more sacred than a way to balance the budget,” said Jim Kidrick, president and CEO of San Diego Air & Space Museum.

Even free days took a hit. On Tuesdays the park offers free admission to select museums for San Diego County residents. This month, participation dropped 25 percent compared to January last year, making it the lowest “Free Tuesday” attendance in a decade, said Judy Gradwohl, president and CEO of the San Diego Natural History Museum.

Park staff and volunteers are exempt from fees, but they have to park in distant lots. Museum officials said that’s a safety issue for staff who work nights and a burden to volunteers.

“My volunteers are almost exclusively senior citizens, and they bring trains and tools and everything that they use daily to operate the layouts,” said Michael Warburton, executive director of the Model Railroad Museum. “It’s a challenge for them to bring all these things, and then find a place to park.”



FILE - Riders pass the California Tower in Balboa Park during a cycling race May 15, 2016, in San Diego. AP Photo/Gregory Bull, File.

The San Diego City Council is feeling the pressure. Two council members who voted for the program now call for suspending resident parking fees. Councilmember Stephen Whitburn, whose district includes the park, voted against parking fees, arguing they would discourage families, students and seniors from visiting. He’s redoubling his opposition now.

“People are missing out on the enjoyment and cultural enrichment of the park, and the museums are losing revenue that pays for their exhibits and staff,” Whitburn said in a statement to CalMatters. “I would like to see the city council come to a consensus on repealing the fees and restoring free parking in Balboa Park.”

Lawrence Frank, a professor of urban studies and planning at UC San Diego who studies transportation policy, thinks the change is inevitable. Frank, who studies negative health effects of car culture, said the new parking fee system could deter driving and encourage public transit and walkability around the park.

“It’s reasonable,” he said. “It’s comparable to what’s done elsewhere. It’s not unique. What’s unique is to provide it for free.”

San Diego is not alone in revisiting policies for free park access. Last summer the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted to impose parking fees at Golden Gate Park to raise money for its Recreation and Parks Department. Meanwhile, the Trump administration eliminated free admission to national parks on Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Juneteenth, while adding President Donald Trump’s birthday to its calendar of fee-free days.

The crown jewel of San Diego

San Diego set aside 1,400 acres for Balboa Park in 1868, to create an urban space similar to New York’s Central Park, dedicated a decade earlier. In 1915, Balboa Park hosted the Panama-California Exposition, and its iconic Colonial Revival architecture took shape with sprawling plazas, Spanish arches, carved facades and Moorish tiles.

The park now hosts 17 art, science and history museums along with the San Diego Zoo. They range from the San Diego Natural History Museum with mastodon and megalodon skeletons and the San Diego Air & Space Museum featuring an Apollo command module and historic aircrafts, to the San Diego Museum of Art and

the free Timken Museum of Art, showcasing European old masters.

Smaller venues such as the San Diego Model Railroad Museum and international cottages cater to specific hobbies or cultures, while performing arts groups, a bridge club and lawn bowling offer recreational activities.

It’s also a meeting place for thousands of San Diegans who walk, picnic or sightsee every day.

“I see people walking their dogs, pushing their babies and meeting up with friends for coffee,” Hanson York said.

The traditionally free parking has been a draw, Joyce Miller, a San Diego resident and volunteer with San Diego Police Department, said at the park

“When we patrol here, everyone who talked to us said it’s the best place to go because the parking’s free,” Miller said. “It’s such a plus for us in San Diego and such a good tourist attraction.”

The park’s maintenance and operations are paid through the city of San Diego’s general fund, but Gloria wanted to create a direct funding stream.

He originally proposed a plan that he estimated would bring in \$11 million for the current fiscal year. The city council revised that upward to \$15 million, then scaled back the timeline and fee structure, leading to a revenue estimate of \$2.9 million this fiscal year.

‘People are really mad’

Museum directors chafe at news that parking revenue won’t be added to the park’s budget – at least this year – but will backfill general fund expenditures, so the city can use that money for other purposes.

Parking meters cost \$2.50 per hour and day rates range from \$5 to \$16. It’s less than commercial lots, which can cost upwards of \$30 per day in San Diego. But for people who visit Balboa Park weekly or even daily, it’s excessive, critics complain. It adds insult to injury for people reeling from inflation, and for San Diego city residents it’s piled onto new trash fees, water rate hikes added to the already high cost of living.

San Diego has regularly ranked among the most expensive housing markets in the country, and a recent analysis found that only 1.6% of San Diego homes are affordable for the typical household. Gas prices in California are about 50% higher than

the rest of the country and San Diego prices as of Jan. 23 were 20 cents higher still, at an average of \$4.40 per gallon, according to AAA.

In San Diego city, voters narrowly approved a measure to charge homeowners for trash pickup, which was historically paid by the city. But the eventual cost – \$43.60 – was at least 50% higher than earlier estimates of \$23 to \$29 per home. Meanwhile city residents can expect water rates to rise 14.7% next year and 14.5% in 2027.

In another source of contention, the council approved a tiered fee structure, with lower rates for San Diego city residents and full fees for everyone else, including people in other parts of San Diego County.

A group of mayors from other cities protested that Balboa Park is a regional resource.

“I’ve been to Balboa Park my entire life, and it’s a regional asset,” San Marcos Mayor Rebecca Jones said. “Parks should be free. The people that utilize parks the most are the people that really need them, people who live in multi-family housing.”

Visitors arriving at Balboa Park fumed about the new fees.

“I despise it,” said Caden Mays, a kinesiology student at San Diego State University. “So many of the exhibits are free, it’s a shame to make parking cost.”

The chaotic roll-out of the parking fees only added to public animosity. Kidrick, of the Air & Space Museum, described the program as ill-conceived and “autocratic.”

“Somebody must have done an internship for six months with ACE parking,” he said.

San Diego city residents had trouble signing up for the local discount, and many visitors struggled with glitchy parking kiosks that gave confusing instructions, rejected credit cards or bounced users back to the start page as they tried to pay.

In retaliation, vandals defaced at least 10 pay stations by spraying foam sealant into card and coin slots, said Officer Terrell Totten, a spokesperson for San Diego Police Department. Those cost \$400 each to repair.

In other incidents people smashed the pay station screens, spread green paint on them and smeared feces on one, he said.

What’s next?

Frank said the city could get public buy-in on the fees, but only if it invests the money in park programs and access, such as public transit to the site.

“It seems highly reasonable to me that parking be charged, but there should be some accountability for the use of the money to make sure that it benefits the park and the public,” he said.

He acknowledges he’s in a minority. Neighbors have walked away from him when they hear that he agrees with charging for parking at Balboa Park.

“These people are really mad about it,” he said. “Really, really mad.”

To soften the blow for regular users, San Diego has offered yearly passes at \$150 for city residents and \$300 for other park visitors.

This story was originally published by CalMatters and distributed through a partnership with The Associated Press.



The Shores Median Design SR-75 project will be adding two improvements, adding an additional \$1.6 million to the project cost. Photo taken from Coronado TV.

Improvements added to Shores median project

BY MADELINE YANG
The Coronado News

Coronado City Council members have approved \$1.6 million in additional landscaping along State Route 75 to make the median corridor more appealing.

The project upgrades to the highway corridor initially were approved during fiscal year 2019-20, but the council decision Jan. 20 provides for additional work.

According to a staff report, this

project adds to aesthetic landscaping along SR-75, which comes up the Silver Strand into Orange Avenue and over the Coronado Bridge.

The original areas for improvement stretch from Pomona Avenue south to Avenida de las Arenas. The additions extend the project farther south to Rendova Road, with new landscaping and a widened median.

The original proposal was approved at a total cost of \$1,440,000. With the two new additions, the

project budget would require \$1.6 million in additional funding.

Council voted unanimously to approve the additions.

“I think we’re all thrilled for this project to move forward,” Council member Amy Steward said at the meeting. “And I’m really excited for our friends at the Shores who have been waiting years for this project.”

Contact: madeline@thecoronadonews.com

CORONADO

Grand opening of SunCoast Market Co-op scheduled for Jan. 31

Coronado News staff

After years of community planning, organizing, fundraising and build-out, SunCoast Market Co-op will celebrate the grand opening of its full-service, community-owned grocery store with a celebration and ribbon cutting on Jan. 31 at 600 Palm Ave., Suite 107, Imperial Beach. The festivities will run from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., with guest speakers — San Diego Supervisor Paloma Aguirre and Imperial Beach’s Mayor Pro Tempore Jack Fisher — scheduled for 9 to 9:30 a.m. The event will also feature giveaways, food samples and music. Created by and for South County residents, SunCoast Market Co-op is a community-owned grocery store opening with a “hybrid” store model. It combines natural, organic, local and specialty foods with mainstream, value-priced staples, along with culturally-specific products from many traditions. SunCoast will also offer fresh produce, bulk, bakery, deli grab-and-go items, a hot food bar and salad bar.



The SunCoast Market Co-op is hosting a grand opening on Jan. 31. Photo provided by SunCoast Market Co-op.

“This opening represents the power of people coming together to meet a shared need,” said Kim Rivero Frink, board president of SunCoast Market Co-op. “Every shelf, product and decision reflects community

input and ownership. This is more than a grocery store; it’s a shared investment in our local economy and food system.” Unlike conventional grocery stores, co-ops are owned by the com-

munity they serve. Members have a voice in how the store operates. Food co-ops often prioritize local farmers and producers, fair wages, ethical sourcing and environmental responsibility.

San Diego wages increase: Will Coronado follow?

» Continued from Page 1

can and Council member Amy Steward declined to comment. Council members Mark Fleming, Kelly Purvis and Carrie Downey did not respond to requests for comment. Minimum wage increases have not appeared on a Coronado City Council agenda in the past year. According to a June 2025 budget report from the City of San Diego, a single adult without children in the region would need to earn \$30.71 an hour to meet basic living costs. A household with two working adults and two children would need \$35.72 an hour. Coronado’s cost of living is even higher. Housing expenses are approximately 367% above the national average, according to the Economic Research Institute, which ranks Coronado among the most expensive cities in the country. Bridgette Browning, president of Local 30 of Unite Here, said the union represents workers at Hotel del Coronado and Loews Coronado Bay Resort only and because of that, their wages are better. “Union workers make good money, they’re almost making \$30 an hour,” she said. She said workers in Coronado would like to earn higher wages, but the union has not pushed for a wage increase in Coronado because most workers cannot afford to live in the city and therefore cannot vote, limiting their political influence. “I mean, I’ve never seen them (Coronado) do pro-worker legislation in the 25 years I’ve worked for the union. Unless the City Council wants to make a big change, it wouldn’t make sense to try to push this in Coronado,” she said. “Hotels are big income generators, they’re doing very well and at least in the city of San Diego they’re highly subsidized by the tourism marketing district. I think if we’re going to spend more than \$50 million of tax money subsidizing an industry, they should be creating good middle-class jobs,” she said. Todd Little of Discover Coronado declined to comment, and the Coronado Chamber of Commerce referred questions to David Spatafore, owner of Blue Bridge Hospitality, which operates several Coronado restaurants. He said most of his employees earn minimum wage plus tips. Spatafore said some restaurants adjust wages to remain competitive with San Diego employers, but Blue Bridge Hospitality uses a tip pool system that includes kitchen staff so em-

ployees can earn significantly more than minimum wage. “We looked at two of our guys in December that make pizza. [They] make \$37 an hour,” he added. “That’s pretty good.” He said mandated wage increases contribute to rising costs for businesses. “It’s a vicious cycle,” Spatafore said. For his businesses, higher labor costs could lead to reduced hours or layoffs. “Last year we had to eliminate a couple of our salaried positions within our company, which just puts pressure on everyone else,” he said. Spatafore said he is exploring hybrid self-ordering systems, though he believes they detract from the dining experience. “That’s a pretty dismal experience,” he said. “The only people that win in these increases in minimum wage are the government, because they take a percentage of payroll tax to the government, which rises as wages rise.” Research on the economic impacts of minimum wage increases has produced mixed results. One analysis by Oxford Economics, commissioned by the San Diego County Lodging Association, projects negative economic effects from a \$25 an hour minimum wage for hospitality workers. According to the study, jobs supported by visitor spending will decrease by 1,200, and jobs supported by construction spending will decrease by 500, for a total direct job loss of 4,100. When employers are required to pay higher wages, some seek to cut costs in other ways, including reducing hours, raising prices — such as hotel room rates — or limiting services. In some cases, businesses may delay or cancel construction projects, which can reduce construction job opportunities. However, a Berkeley study released in Sept. 2024 states that wage increases do not always lead to job loss. In the press release, economics Professor Michael Reich said researchers found that “a carefully implemented” minimum wage “can raise worker pay without reducing the number of jobs or substantial consumer cost burdens.” In 2023, under the FAST Act, California raised the minimum wage for fast food workers to \$20 an hour. The increase took effect April 1, 2024. Some Coronado hospitality workers interviewed said they were satisfied with their current pay, citing tips, job stability, location and clientele. Others expressed concern about wages and said they were unaware Coronado would not be included in

San Diego’s increase. At the Ocean Club, a restaurant at Hotel del Coronado, hostess Chloe Razook said she earns minimum wage and does not receive tips. She commutes daily from downtown San Diego and described traffic from the naval base as “a mess.” Upon learning the wage increase applies only to San Diego hospitality workers, Razook said, “Oh my gosh, I didn’t know Coronado wasn’t included in that. Hotel Del is the most popular hotel so I feel like we should be included in that.” Shannon Upton, an employee at Veranda, another Hotel del Coronado restaurant, said she earns \$23 an hour plus tips and has worked there for two and a half years. She lives in Imperial Beach and commutes daily. “The Hotel Del pays us higher than minimum wage and the island’s beautiful too. Everybody’s really nice, everybody’s always in a good mood,” she said. Angel Gonzales, a back server at

The Henry, commutes from City Heights and earns the current minimum wage, plus tips. He said he prefers working in Coronado to downtown San Diego or City Heights because of the people and the location. When asked how he would feel if San Diego’s hospitality minimum wage increased to \$25 an hour, Gonzales said, “It would be enticing,” but added that he is currently content with his job. Elizabeth Moriarty, a beach attendant employed by Boucher Brothers, a third-party vendor at Hotel del Coronado, said she would not work in San Diego even with higher wages because she does not want to give up working on the beach. She said summer tips help offset the hourly wage. Moriarty did not disclose her hourly pay but said it exceeds the minimum because she is a supervisor. Contact: michelle@thecoronadonews.com

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CORONADO

Astronauts say space station’s ultrasound machine was critical during medical crisis

Associated Press

The astronauts evacuated from the International Space Station say a portable ultrasound machine came in “super handy” during the medical crisis. During their first public appearance since returning to Earth, the four astronauts refused to say which one of them needed medical attention and for what reason. It was NASA’s first medical evacuation in 65 years of human spaceflight. NASA’s Mike Fincke said the crew used the onboard ultrasound machine once the medical problem arose Jan. 7, the day before a planned spacewalk

that was abruptly canceled. The astronauts had already used the device a lot for routine checks of their body changes while living in weightlessness, “so when we had this emergency, the ultrasound machine came in super handy.” It was so useful that Fincke said there should be one on all future spaceflights. “It really helped,” he said. “Of course, we didn’t have other big machines that we have here on planet Earth,” he added. “We do try to make sure that everybody before we fly are really, really not prone to surprises. But sometimes things happen and surprises happen, and the team was

ready ... preparation was super important.” The space station is set up as well as it can be for medical emergencies, said NASA’s Zena Cardman, who commanded the crew’s early return flight with SpaceX. She said NASA “made all the right decisions” in canceling the spacewalk, which would have been her first, and prioritizing the crew’s well-being. Japanese astronaut Kimiya Yui said he was surprised how well all the pre-flight training paid off in dealing with the health concerns. “We can handle any kind of difficult situation,” Yui said. “This is actually

very, very good experience for the future of human spaceflight.” Joining them on what turned out to be a 5 1/2-month mission — more than a month shorter than planned — was Russia’s Oleg Platonov. They launched last August from Florida and splashed down in the Pacific off the San Diego coast. Welcoming them back to Houston were their replacements, who aren’t due to launch until mid-February. NASA and SpaceX are working to move up the flight. “We were hoping to give them hugs in space, but we gave them hugs on Earth,” Fincke said.

Coronado city council reiterates guidelines to support federal law enforcement

» Continued from Page 1

“It is incumbent upon all of us to explain to our children that you respect the laws, you respect the local police, you respect the federal police,” Rogerson said. However, some council members and residents of the island countered that Coronado should not get involved in such political matters, and that it could potentially divide the city to adopt a policy regarding the ICE operations. “I do not see that we need to add this, in any way, shape or form,” Council member Amy Steward said. “This may end up putting undue burden on our law enforcement ... We are nonpartisan, this is what we do. I don’t want to polarize our community.” Coronado resident Steven Phillips also objected to Fleming’s proposal. “We know what the laws are, the folks

know what the laws are, and those laws are standing,” he said. “I think it’s above our paygrade to be doing something like that.” Historically, Coronado has cooperated with federal agencies anyway, Council member Carrie Anne Downey told The Coronado News. She noted that municipal police have helped federal agents when boats came ashore carrying undocumented immigrants. “In the past, we’ve had people who were being smuggled, and they would all disband somewhere around Coronado. Border Patrol asked us to find those people,” Downey explained. However, in 2018, the California Values Act, or Senate Bill 54 (SB54), set limits on state and local law enforcement participation in ICE activity, which the Coronado Police Department follows, according to Lea Corbin, the Police Department’s public affairs officer.

Under SB54, police are restricted in what information, assistance and cooperation they can give to ICE. The law protects victims and witnesses of hate crimes from being detained or reported to immigration authorities solely because of immigration status, which helps people report hate crimes without fear of deportation. In addition, it prohibits California police departments from using their resources “to investigate, interrogate, detain, detect or arrest persons for immigration enforcement purposes.” During the Jan. 20 meeting, Council member Kelly Purvis said she would advocate wording that outlines the city’s support of local, state and federal police, but she wouldn’t go any further than that because it would only “cause a lot of problems in our community that we don’t have, because we all understand that the laws are important, and we abide by them, and we’re supportive of our law

enforcement officers.” Downey explained to The Coronado News that the city’s guidelines have always supported federal law enforcement, but she said that the council decided if Fleming was concerned about not having wording in there that supported federal agencies, they would reiterate the city’s policy. Other council members expressed their advocacy for Coronado’s Police Department and following federal law, but wanted to stay away from explicitly stating any guidelines between municipality agents and government activity, and all approved the changes. In the end, Council agreed to adopt a legislative policy that says: “Support local, state and federal law enforcement.”

Contact: madeline@thecoronadonews.com



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We Bring Good Energy.



San Diego ferries listed in National Register of Historic Places

» Continued from Page 1

vessels with fully electric, zero-emissions ferries set to launch in 2026.

Flagship says it remains dedicated to preserving the region's working waterfront and maritime history, including the stewardship and active operation of historic vessels such as the Silvergate and Cabrillo.

"The Silvergate and Cabrillo have carried millions of passengers across San Diego Bay and have stood as constant witnesses to the city's growth and transformation," said Engel. "We are honored to see their legacies recognized at the national level."

Decades-long ferry service

According to the Coronado Historical Association, Flagship Cruises & Events was formerly called the Star & Crescent Company.

The company began ferry service to Coronado's North Island Naval Air Station in 1918 at a cost of 5 cents per ride, earning the nickname of "Nickel-Snatcher" through the 1940s.

The association says the company dates back to the late 1800s as one of the first operational ferry services in the region around the same time as the San Diego-Coronado Ferry Company.

By 1915, the Star & Crescent Company operated a 16-boat fleet providing transportation between Point Loma, Imperial Beach and the Coronado Islands.

In 1941, the company launched the Silvergate to manage an increased load of passengers to the Naval Air Station.

The present day Silvergate pays homage to a 19th century ferry.

The Silver Gate, built in Coronado, provided ferry service around the same time as the opening of the Hotel Del Coronado in 1888. It was "one of the first propeller-driven ferries on the west coast" but it was short-lived and soon became a decommissioned ferry, anchored near the Hotel and served as a clubhouse,



The Silvergate ferry has serviced passengers traveling between San Diego and Coronado for decades. Photo provided by Flagship Cruises & Events.

theater, dance hall, and a church on Sundays, according to a city report.

Decades later, tapping into a name that maintained a presence in community minds, the company rolled out the Silvergate (1940) at a time when ferry transportation remained a popular means to reach the City of Coronado.

Between 1969 and 1987, the company paused the operation of the ferry due to a state ban of the service within a 10-mile radius of the San Diego-Coronado Bridge's toll crossing.

According to the association, the Cabrillo was designed in 1964 by Capt. Hall (1878-1967), the company's owner at that time.

The association says Hall expanded the company's services to include whale-watching tours, narrated harbor tours, nighttime dinner cruises, dining and dancing cruises on the bay, tugs, shipbuilding and petroleum acquisition in the region as well as sport fishing excursions.

The association says the Cabrillo is Hall's last tangible legacy. Initially used for excursion cruises like harbor tours, the Cabrillo was extended bringing the total length to 88 feet in 1968. The company transitioned the Cabrillo to ferry service in 1987.

That year, on July 1, the company resumed its passenger service after the bonds for the San Diego-Coronado Bridge were paid off.

"These vessels represent an irre-

placeable part of our maritime heritage, serving as reminders of an era when ferries were the primary way of connecting people, commerce, and culture across San Diego Bay," said Vickie Stone, curator of collections at the Coronado Historical Association, in a statement. "The preservation of these two ferries will ensure that future generations can appreciate the craftsmanship, innovation and civic importance that these boats embody."

To learn more about Flagship Cruises & Events' historic ferries, visit: <https://www.flagshipsd.com/>.

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The PROSTITUTION MYTH

Sex trafficking? Not in America’s Finest City.

The UGLY TRUTH

According to the FBI, traffickers are exploiting people here every day.

The underground sex trade in San Diego prostitutes as many as 8,100 local women and girls every year, generating over 800 million dollars in annual revenue. And because prostitution and sex trafficking can occur at private homes, hotels, casinos and fake massage parlors, it’s happening more often than you think. And doing more damage than most of us can imagine.



Get the facts at TheUglyTruthSD.org

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NAVY



Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit North Island staff are receiving a stricken MH-60 helicopter from the Helicopter Sea Combat Wing. Photo by Chief Petty Officer Jack Waldo.

Stricken helicopter from Naval Air Station North Island used for training

DVIDS

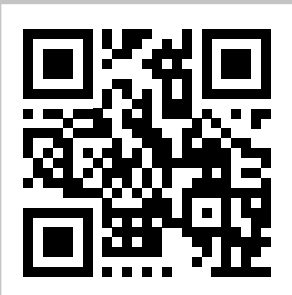
Staff from the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit (CNATTU) North Island in Coronado accepted a stricken MH-60S helicopter from the Helicopter Sea Combat Wing at Naval Air Station North Island earlier this month. The aircraft, which has been declared to never fly again, will be used as a full-scale instructional platform to support aviation maintenance training across multiple ratings and pipelines. “This new addition to our training systems demonstrates our ongoing commitment to excellence in aviation training and ensures that our sailors and marines are equipped with the skills they need to perform at the highest level when they return to the fleet,” Cmdr. Robert Kersey, CNATTU North Island commanding officer, said.

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SPORTS

Coronado Valentine’s Day Run to be held at Tideland’s Park

BY CADE MICHAELSON
The Coronado News

KOZ Events is hosting another Valentine’s Day Run this year for Coronado residents. The event will be held on Sunday, Feb. 15, at Tideland’s Park.

The event is meant for runners of all ages and skill levels, whether that’s fast, individual runners, or kids participating with their families.

There are three different distances for runners to participate in: the 10K, 5K and one-mile runs. According to a press release from KOZ Events, the 10K is meant for more competitive, experienced runners, the 5K is for “runners and walkers of all paces,” while the one-mile is for those looking for a short, enjoyable run, or those running with kids and families.

Each group starts at Tideland’s Park, with the one mile doing a loop in the park, the 5K runners going to the Coronado Golf Course pro shop and back and 10K participants running around Glorietta Bay, to the Glorietta Bay Park, and back.

Also included at the park is live music, food, costumes, finisher medals and awards for various age groups.

Every participant receives a long sleeve race shirt with heart designs and has the option of renewing their



Runners cross the finish line at the 2025 Coronado Valentine’s Day Run. Photo courtesy of Carrie Panek.

wedding vows for free at the start line, before the run begins. Runners also have the ability to register as either an individual or couple, and can even wear bibs showing their relationship status.

The one-mile run starts at 7:30 a.m. and is promptly followed by the 5K and 10K, which start at 8 a.m.

For more information and to register for the race, visit valentines-day10k.com. Prices vary by race.

CHS ROUNDUP

Islander sporting events this week

BY CADE MICHAELSON
The Coronado News

It’s another busy but balanced week for Coronado High athletics, as each team has two games this week. All games are high stakes at this point, as the regular season is almost finished and all games this week are against league opponents.

3 • Tuesday

Islander girls’ soccer starts the week on the road against league rival Patrick Henry. JV plays at 4, varsity follows at 6 p.m.

CHS boys’ basketball is also on the road at Canyon Hills High School. Games tip at 4 and 5:45 p.m.

Girls’ basketball is the lone Coronado team at home, also facing Canyon Hills. Game times are the same time as the boys: 4 and 5:45 p.m.

Islander girls’ water polo opens its week facing Mission Bay High School. Games are at Brian Bent Memorial Aquatics Complex (BBMAC) with varsity leading off at 3:30 and JV starting at 4:30 p.m.

4 • Wednesday

The only Coronado team playing is boys’ soccer, with a home match against Kearny. Game times are 4 and 6 p.m., with JV playing first.

5 • Thursday

For its second game of the week, CHS girls’ water polo is at BBMAC again, this time playing Patrick Henry. Games are at 3:30 and 4:30 p.m.

Girls’ soccer plays its only home game of the week against Point Loma High School. Games start at 4 and 6 p.m.

6 • Friday

CHS boys’ soccer ends its week on the road against Patrick Henry. Game times are the same as usual: 4 and 6 p.m.

The JV basketball teams are on the road at Hoover High School. The girls play at 4, boys tip at 5:45 p.m.

The CHS varsity basketball teams end the week with a doubleheader at home against Hoover, with tip-offs at 6 and 7:45 p.m.

Contact: cade@thecoronadonews.com

QB Diana Flores hypes flag football ahead of its 2028 LA Olympics debut, now an open book on subject

Associated Press

Quarterback Diana Flores has won world titles and MVPs on the flag football field. She’s starred in Super Bowl commercials to promote her sport, too.

This, though, confirmed just how far-reaching women’s flag football has become — Kansas City Chiefs standout Patrick Mahomes once referred to her by name and mentioned her being a QB.

Game simply respects game, especially one on the rise.

Flores, the signal caller for the reigning world champion Mexico squad, is doing all she can these days to build up the sport ahead of flag football making its Olympic debut at the 2028 Los Angeles Games. It’s quickly catching on, too, with the NCAA recently adding flag football to its Emerging Sports for Women program. Nebraska announced it would be the first power conference school to add flag football as a varsity women’s sport, with competition beginning in the spring of 2028.

The 28-year-old Flores is an open book on the subject. She just authored “Flag Football For Dummies,” which breaks down everything from the rules of the game to her involvement (she started at 8 against much older players) to what it takes to be elite (“leadership is the backbone of a successful quarterback,” she wrote).

“I just want to grow awareness of the sport, the importance of the sport for boys and girls, and how it can change lives, help open those doors and opportunities,” Flores said in an interview as she prepares to cover the Super Bowl on Feb. 8 for TUDN, a Spanish-language sports network. (The book) challenged me in ways I’ve never experienced before. It’s just a huge opportunity for me to pour all the love and passion I have for the game to others.”



FILE - Diana Flores, quarterback and captain of the Mexican national flag football team, stands on the sidelines before an NFL football game between the Dallas Cowboys and the Baltimore Ravens, Sept. 22, 2024, in Arlington, Texas. AP Photo/Jeffrey McWhorter, File.

The stats reflect the growth of an NFL-backed sport: There were 267,000 girls aged 6 to 17 in the U.S. that participated in organized flag football in 2024, according to USA Football. It’s an increase of 39% since 2020.

Flores is one of the most decorated players to take the flag-football field, guiding Team Mexico to back-to-back World Games gold medals and winning the MVP in 2022. She was recently honored as the 2025 Game Changer Award recipient by the Women’s Sports Foundation.

Her commercial during the 2023 Super Bowl, titled “Run with it,” was a popular hit.

It starts out with reporter Erin Andrews talking to Flores, in uniform, and suddenly reaching for her attached flags. Flores looked surprised and juked to avoid the maneuver before bolting out of the stadium. Flores runs through parking lots, down sidewalks, over rooftops and through a hotel, with NFL players such as Sauce Gardner, Jalen Ramsey, Cam Heyward, Aidan Hutchinson and Davante Adams in pursuit. Tennis great and women’s sports advocate

Billie Jean King played a role in throwing a key block with a car door.

It was all part of promoting the game, with the end of the commercial featuring USA Football quarterback Vanita Krouch running alongside Flores in the street. Both were offensive coordinators of the 2023 Pro Bowl game.

So, how many times has Flores seen that commercial?

“I don’t even have the count,” Flores said with a laugh. “That’s been one of the most amazing moments of my life. It was the first time flag football was showcased in a big platform like that.”

Flores patterns her QB style after an array of players, ranging from Peyton Manning to Lamar Jackson to Joe Burrow and Mahomes. And it was meeting Mahomes a little while back that opened her eyes to her sport’s soaring popularity.

“I was doing an interview with (Mahomes) and introducing myself and before I even finished my sentence he was like, ‘Oh, yeah, Diana, you play flag football and you’re a quarterback, too,’” Flores recounted. “I didn’t expect that to happen.”

SPORTS

Why Colton Herta is leaving IndyCar for junior series F2

Associated Press

Colton Herta is well aware it sounds insane to leave IndyCar, where he's one of the series stars and the veteran driver at Andretti Global, and walk away at age 25 with seven full seasons on his resume.

All to move to the United Kingdom and race in F2, a junior season loaded with teenagers trying to make it to Formula 1.

But for Herta, the decision wasn't all that difficult: if he's a bust this season driving for Hitech TGR, he can return to IndyCar. If he's a success, he should be the first American driver by 2027 on the new Cadillac F1 team.

An ownership change at Andretti, where Dan Towriss and the TWG Motorsports conglomeration now own the IndyCar team outright as well as the Cadillac F1 entry that debuts this season, created the opportunity.

Herta has always wanted to be in F1 but had failed to obtain the Super License points required for him to participate in the series. Towriss figured out a path to get him there by spending a year in F2.

"This goes all the way back to the Andretti period, where we were talking about bringing Colton over, and Colton showed a lot of promise," Towriss said of some simulator work Herta did to gauge his skills.

"Next thing you know, he's, he's on the SIM for Red Bull, and at the time, he was part of our IndyCar team," Towriss continued. "Next thing I know, his manager showed me a contract from Red Bull Racing, you know, and I had to convince Colton to say no to Helmut Marko and stay in IndyCar, which is a pretty daunting task."

Towriss approached Herta's father, Bryan, with the idea of Herta doing a season in F2 to learn the tires and the tracks and gain the Super License. He told Bryan Herta it was the clearest path to getting Herta into a Cadillac

seat as the team attempts to become a true American organization, and if Herta wasn't interested, then Towriss "didn't want to hear another word about F1."

Herta took some time to ponder it and decided he has nothing to lose. Towriss hired Will Power as Herta's replacement on a multi-year deal. Andretti driver Kyle Kirkwood recently received an extension and former Indianapolis 500 winner Marcus Ericsson is in a contract year.

"Colton is taking this huge risk to be in a very solid place," Towriss said. "He's going to learn tracks and tires and show that he's got what it takes to be in Formula 1."

The gamble

Herta, who became IndyCar's youngest race winner in 2019 when he won at 18 years, 11 months, and 25 days old, understands he's probably going to be one of the oldest drivers in F2. He participated in the young driver test following Abu Dhabi and noticed quickly he was a man among boys.

"I did not feel like a young driver at that test," Herta said.

He accepts it is going to be a struggle at times and that many people don't understand why he is even making the move. But his early career path was F1 before he returned to the United States to compete in IndyCar and never let the European dream die.

"When they came to me, I was like, 'They want me to do what? They want me to go to a junior series? Then what will happen?'" Herta told The Associated Press. "At first it seemed like a lot and I have the opportunity to win every week in IndyCar and win titles."

"But then I decided this can be a very interesting arc in my career. I think it's great if it gets me to Formula 1 and I would be incredibly grateful I took the leap. I think a lot of people feel it would be embarrassing if I



FILE - Colton Herta prepares to drive during qualifications for the Indianapolis 500 auto race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Indianapolis, May 17, 2025. AP Photo/Michael Conroy, File.

fail, but I don't care what everybody thinks or if its going to tarnish my career. And the thing that many people don't understand is I can come back to IndyCar — I do want to end my career ultimately as an IndyCar driver."

What about the Indianapolis 500?

Herta has an open racing schedule in May when F2 has no races scheduled and, if he can get it worked out, he'd like to run the Indianapolis 500 in May.

It's not so cut and dry even though the same group owns the IndyCar and Cadillac team, and Herta is expected to participate in some F1 free practice sessions this year.

But the biggest hurdle is that Andretti fields Honda in IndyCar and the Cadillac program is run by rival General Motors. It would take an agreement between the manufacturers, sponsorship for the entry and a commitment from Herta to step away from F2 for nearly a month to drive a completely different race car than the one he's trying to learn to

further his career.

"Obviously I want to do it, but I want to make sure it doesn't take away from any of the main stuff I am doing," Herta said. "If I get the chance, I will do it."

What's first on his schedule?

Herta is still in the United States awaiting the visa he needs to relocate to England. But he's specifically in Florida at Daytona International Speedway for this weekend's Rolex 24 at Daytona.

Herta will be racing a Cadillac for Wayne Taylor Racing — also owned by TWG — with a chance to win his first overall title in the most prestigious endurance race in the U.S. In eight previous appearances in the twice-round-the-clock race, Herta has a pair of class victories.

Herta will be the endurance driver on the team with full-time IMSA competitors Jordan Taylor and Louis Deletraz.

"I love this race, this and Indy I want to do every year that my schedule can make it work," Herta said.

Super Bowl 60 is set and it's a rematch from 11 years ago: Patriots vs. Seahawks

Associated Press

Drake Maye vs. Sam Darnold. Two stingy defenses. A second-year head coach vs. a veteran coach in his second act.

Super Bowl 60 is set and it's a rematch: The New England Patriots vs. the Seattle Seahawks.

The Patriots will seek their NFL-record seventh Super Bowl victory when they face the Seahawks on Feb. 8 at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, Calif.

Led by Maye, coach Mike Vrabel and a stifling defense, the Patriots are back in the Super Bowl for the first time since Tom Brady and Bill Belichick won their sixth ring together seven years ago.

The Patriots (17-3) beat the Denver Broncos 10-7 in the AFC championship game to advance to their 12th Super Bowl.

Darnold, Mike Macdonald and a suffocating defense have led the Seahawks to the big stage for the fourth time in franchise history. They're seeking their second Lombardi.

Darnold, a No. 3 overall pick in 2018 now with his fifth team, played one of his best games to lead the Seahawks to a 31-27 victory over the Los Angeles Rams in the NFC title game. He threw for 346 yards and three touchdowns with no turnovers.

"That doesn't matter to me," Darnold said about the doubters he's proven wrong. "I just come to work every single day with these guys. These guys in the locker room, that's what it's about to me, man. The way we've come to work ever since April in OTAs, training camp, one day at a time and we're here. We did it."



Seattle Seahawks wide receiver Jake Bobo (19) celebrates with quarterback Drew Lock (2) after the NFC Championship NFL football game against the Los Angeles Rams, Sunday, Jan. 25, 2026, in Seattle. AP Photo/John Froschauer.

It was a wacky finish when Brady and the Patriots beat Russell Wilson and Pete Carroll's Seahawks 11 years ago.

Brady threw four TD passes and rallied New England from a 10-point deficit to win the fourth of his seven rings when Malcolm Butler intercepted Wilson's pass from the 1-yard line to secure a 28-24 victory on Feb. 1, 2015. Seattle fans still lament why Marshawn Lynch didn't get the ball on a handoff at the 1.

"We did not care," Macdonald said about coming into the season as underdogs in the NFC West behind the Rams and 49ers. "It's about us. It's always been about us and what we do and now we're going to the Super Bowl."

Maye scored on a 6-yard touchdown run in the second quarter in Denver after a critical turnover by Jarrett Stidham, who made his fifth career start filling in for injured Broncos quarterback Bo Nix.

"The Pats are back, baby," Maye said. "Now, gotta win one."

Playing through a snowstorm in the second half, Maye only threw for 86 yards and ran for 65. Stidham had 133 yards passing and one TD, one interception and one costly fumble.

The 23-year-old Maye, a finalist for AP NFL MVP and Offensive Player of the Year, will become the second-youngest QB to start a Super Bowl behind Dan Marino. He's the fourth second-year QB in the past seven years to lead his team to the NFL title

game. Patrick Mahomes (2018) won it while Joe Burrow (2021) and Brock Purdy (2023) lost.

Vrabel, who won three Super Bowls as a linebacker for the Patriots in the 2000s, turned the team around in his first season as coach. New England went from 4-13 last year under Jerod Mayo to 14-3.

Vrabel is trying to become the first person to win a Super Bowl as a head coach and player for the same team. Tom Flores, Mike Ditka, Tony Dungy and Doug Pederson won Super Bowls playing for one team and coaching another.

"I can't tell you how proud I am to be associated with these guys and this organization," said Vrabel, who is a finalist for AP NFL Coach of the Year. "I won't win it. It'll be the players that'll win the game, I promise you. It won't be me that'll win it and I promise you I'll do everything that I can and our staff to have them ready for the game."

No team has played in the Super Bowl more than the Patriots, who are 6-5. They're tied with the Pittsburgh Steelers for the most wins.

It's been a long road back to the top for New England, which came off consecutive four-win seasons and only had one winning season after Brady's departure in 2020.

The Patriots have averaged just 18 points per game in the playoffs, the fewest by any team to make the Super Bowl since the 1979 Rams, who averaged 15. New England's defense has allowed just 26 points in the three games, an average of just 8.7 per game. The only team to allow fewer points in three playoff games before a Super Bowl appearance was the 2000 Ravens, who gave up 16.



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SPORTS

Chloe Kim rediscovers love for Olympics

Will an injury derail quest for a 3rd straight gold medal?

Associated Press

Chloe Kim's third run to the Olympics started with the usual questions: How will she handle the pressure? Can she enjoy the journey? How does being famous elevate or diminish the experience? And, of course, will she win her third straight gold medal?

Now, comes one that nobody saw coming: Will America's best snowboarder, one of the major attractions of next month's Milan Cortina Games, even make it to the halfpipe? If she does, will she be anywhere near 100%?

A shoulder injury during training has turned the buildup to the Olympics into a scramble for the 25-year-old Kim, whose catalog of tricks outclasses everything else in this high-risk, high-reward sport.

"Obviously, I'm really disappointed that I can't snowboard until right before the Olympics, which is going to be hard," Kim said in a recent update on Jan. 13, four weeks before the start of the women's halfpipe contest. "I haven't gotten nearly the amount of reps that I would have liked, but that's OK."

The question of Kim's health will hover over the one of the marquee contests of the Olympics and over the result itself.

If she wins, it will mark another stunning accomplishment for the California kid who took over the halfpipe 10 years ago — a smiling 15-year old who loved the mall, her dog Reese and the first day of any month because that's when her mom paid out her allowance.



FILE - Chloe Kim, of the United States, jumps during the women's halfpipe finals at Phoenix Snow Park at the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, on Feb. 13, 2018. AP Photo/Gregory Bull, File.

If she doesn't — and someone like Gaon Choi of Korea or Sena Tomita of Japan wins — well, that might be chalked up to the best snowboarder not being at full strength.

"To some level, I think (the shoulder) is something that will be in her mind if she does decide to compete,"

said Shaun White, the three-time gold medalist who dealt with big injuries in the lead-up to his last two Games. "But, also, she's in a league of her own trick-wise."

Kim knows the Olympics are the gold standard of her sport

For everything she has accomplished — the record eight Winter X Games golds, the three world championship titles and the tricks she does that nobody else even attempts — the Olympic gold medal is the benchmark in this sport. For Kim, gearing up to take her game up another notch every four years makes the mental gymnastics almost as difficult as the physical ones.

It's a reality that a few years ago forced her to restart her search for joy in a sport that, over time, has turned into something different than fun and games.

"When you have the level of fame that she has reached, it gets to be a lot more like a job," said her long-time coach, Rick Bower. "Some of that love you had when you were younger gets lost a little bit. One of the biggest things she's worked on over the last few years is just finding that spark of why she actually does this."

Scattered among her dozens of social-media posts that show her peddling products, heading to the gym, talking about her driving acumen and making matcha was a revealing take on why she keeps going out there.

"I feel like I love the adrenaline and the pressure I feel when I am snowboarding," she said. "I find it very rewarding, too. There's nothing that can compete with the feeling of accomplishing something you once thought was impossible, and pushing yourself and being able to see the result of all your hard work."

Her career is full of those moments.

Last January, Kim became the first woman to land a double-cork 1080 in a competition (that's two head-over-heels flips while spinning 360 degrees).

She is approaching the 10th anniversary of the date when she became the first woman to do back-to-back 1080s, three spins in one jump above the pipe.

In 2024, during a victory lap at the Winter X Games, she added a half spin to her 1080 and became the first woman to pull off a 1260.

She had tried, and failed, to pull off a 1260 at the 2022 Olympics in China.

In a world that only Kim and a few others can understand, that had

no impact on her winning the gold medal — she did that easily with her second-best run — but made all the difference in how she viewed the day.

"It's unfair to be expected to be perfect," she said that day, "and I'm not perfect in every way."

More than the gold medal, Kim said, she found her joy in the quest for progression, the favorite word of any great snowboarder. Nobody has progressed women's snowboarding more than she has over the past decade.

"You're going to see someone designing a whole new run that's never been done before," said Kelly Clark, the 2002 Olympic gold medalist who befriended Kim when she was starting out. "There's a creativity and individual expression that makes it so cool."

Risks on the halfpipe are mental as much as physical

Creativity and progression come with risks. The best, after all, are supposed to win. By not playing it safe, Kim puts that in jeopardy. Clark, who has Olympic gold and two bronze, is among the rare few who can relate to what the current Olympic champion is feeling.

"I didn't find it very sustainable when you did things for external purposes," she said. "If you did things just because it was an Olympic year, I usually found that involved a lot more pressure."

If these musings sound familiar — about Kim struggling with fame, struggling to rekindle her love of snowboarding, struggling with it all — they are. In 2018, about a month after winning her first gold, she conceded fame was different from what she imagined.

It included everything from paparazzi following her, to fans watching her eat in restaurants to an ugly spate of anti-Asian trolling that has been a steady, disturbing throughline over the career of a California native whose parents are Korean.

Heading into 2022, Kim opened up about her own mental-health challenges, especially in the furor of the pandemic. The disease originated in China, which led to a backlash against people of Asian heritage.

"I experience hate on a daily basis," Kim wrote in a 2021 essay published on ESPN.

Her feelings heading into these Olympics might have been summed up best in one of her rare interviews: "I just want to go back to loving it again," she told Harper's Bazaar last summer.

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