

OP-ED

Remembering Navy SEAL Charlie Keating

BY PAUL COOVER
The Coronado News

Editor's Note: This first person article is a Memorial Day tribute to Special Warfare Operator 1st Class (SEAL) Charles Keating IV, who was killed in action in Northern Iraq on May 3, 2016. He was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross in 2017 for his extraordinary heroism.

It is the fall of 2004, and I am standing in Gladstein Fieldhouse at Indiana University with the Hoosier cross country team. I am one of eight freshmen on the team; another is a young man from Arizona named Charles Keating. We call him "Charlie" for short.

Our coach, Robert Chapman, brings us together and reads an obituary of a Hoosier alumnus who had recently died. His time at Indiana is noted in the opening lines.

The running we are doing here, Chapman explains, will become part of our life's story, which we will share with others on this team. We should take a moment, he says, to appreciate the opportunity to be part of an athletic tradition that builds bonds for life.

With that, we are out the door on a run through Bloomington, building the bonds we heard described, but do not yet understand.

It is almost 12 years later, on May 3, 2016, and I am in Coronado reading Keating's obituary. After leaving college, he became a Navy SEAL, and deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. He was killed in action in Iraq as part of a quick reaction force, supporting local fighters battling the Islamic State.

In the obituary, Charlie's time at Indiana is featured prominently, and I think back to coach Chapman's words in Gladstein. I take another moment to appreciate the friendships I created at Indiana (IU), most notably with Keating. Keating and I were close even in college partly because we shared a connection to the West Coast. Despite both choosing IU for our college

» Continued on Page 4



The author, Paul Coover, and Charlie Keating hold shovels at the annual Urt hole digging competition in Coronado, 2014. Photo by Kris McMillan.



Doug St. Denis presents "Happy Family," a painting displayed at the Coronado Public Library. Photo provided by Doug St. Denis.

Brush strokes by a Coronado artist celebrate life in the 92118

Doug St. Denis is a painter based in Coronado whose work is featured in a summer-long exhibit

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News

In the week leading up to her 88th birthday, on May 10, which also happened to fall on Mother's Day this year, Doug St. Denis restocked her inventory

of paintings.

Inside the Coronado home she designed with her late husband, St. Denis sketched eight squares onto a 2- by 4-foot birch plywood panel.

She plans to replicate the bookshelf a couple meters away from a round coffee table she has recently painted, as well as another artwork of the red-orange tulips from April's Coronado Flower Show with her zebra print sofa in the background.

"I just love painting," said St. Denis.

» Continued on Page 9



People walk and bike on Orange Avenue on May 14. Photo by Michelle Armas.

Coronado life expectancy nearly six years higher than county average

BY MICHELLE ARMAS
The Coronado News

Coronado residents live longer than their neighbors in the rest of San Diego County, with an average life expectancy of 87.2 years – nearly six years higher than the countywide average, according to 2024 data.

Public health officials say the difference is determined by factors such as: stable in-

comes, health insurance, education levels and life in a community where walking to errands, the beach or public spaces is part of the daily routine.

"I think the residents of Coronado should be extremely proud," said Dr. Sayone Thihalolipavan, a public health officer with the County of San Diego. "Those upstream drivers of health are things like education, economic stabil-

ity, income, employment and housing – things like that all contribute to our well-being."

According to the county, about 65% of Coronado residents age 25 and older hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 43% countywide. Approximately 96% of residents have health insurance, compared with 94% across the county, and the

» Continued on Page 8

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Opinion/Letters 4
Local News 6-9

Military 10
Sports 12-15

this week

24 • Sunday

The Coronado Ferry Landing is slated to host a free weekend concert on May 24 featuring The New Catillacs at 2 p.m.

24 • Sunday

Coronado Promenade Concerts launches its 56th season on May 24 in Spreckels Park with an opening summer concert featuring the Coronado Concert Band at 4:30 p.m. and Busted Spurs at 6:30 p.m.

24 • Sunday

Breakthrough Workshop Theatre presents "The Terezín Promise," a powerful play about the Holocaust set in the final days of the Terezín concentration camp. This staged reading is presented free of charge at the Coronado Public Library at 3 p.m. on May 24.

27 • Wednesday

The Coronado Public Library's Best of the Best Book Club meets regularly on the 4th Wednesday of each month to discuss books that have won major awards.

Discussed at the May meeting will be the winner of the 2021 Newberry Medal, "When You Trap a Tiger," by Tae Keller — an uplifting story that brings Korean folklore to life as a girl goes on a quest to unlock the power of stories and save her grandmother.

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



Calling all local artists — enter the 2026 4th of July t-shirt art contest

Coronado's annual 4th of July celebration is right around the corner, and to celebrate the city's sense of community, The Coronado News is hosting an Independence Day t-shirt art contest.

Residents of all ages are invited to submit their original artwork for the chance to have it featured on a t-shirt that will be distributed on the 4th of July.

The only requirement? It must capture the essence of Independence Day in Coronado — whether that's the parade celebration, firework display, or array of other patriotic activities on the island.

The submission deadline is 12 p.m. on Wednesday, May 27. Along with a free t-shirt and having their artwork featured on shirts distributed on the 4th, the winner's piece will be published online and in The Coronado News' print edition.

Contest guidelines

Deadline: Artwork needs to be submitted to newsroom@thecoronadonews.com by 12 p.m. on May 27.

Guidelines: Artwork will be judged based on its ability to capture the essence of the 4th of July in Coronado, whether that's the parade, leap frog event, concerts, fireworks, etc. All ages are welcome to enter the contest.

Mediums: Accepted mediums are drawings, paintings and digital artwork.

Format: Artwork must be submitted in a JPG, PNG, PDF or TIFF format, meaning artists should take high-quality photos of their hand-drawn artwork or paintings to submit, and graphic design concepts can be entered as a PNG or PDF.

The artist's signature needs to be included in the artwork itself, not as a separate file.

Prize: The winning artist will receive a free t-shirt with their very own work featured on the front, and the piece will be published in one of our print editions.

For any additional questions, email sofie@thecoronadonews.com or call (619) 990-8465.

PET
OF THE WEEK

Meet Ginger

PAWS of Coronado

Ginger, a mom of six recently-adopted puppies, is up for adoption at PAWS of Coronado.

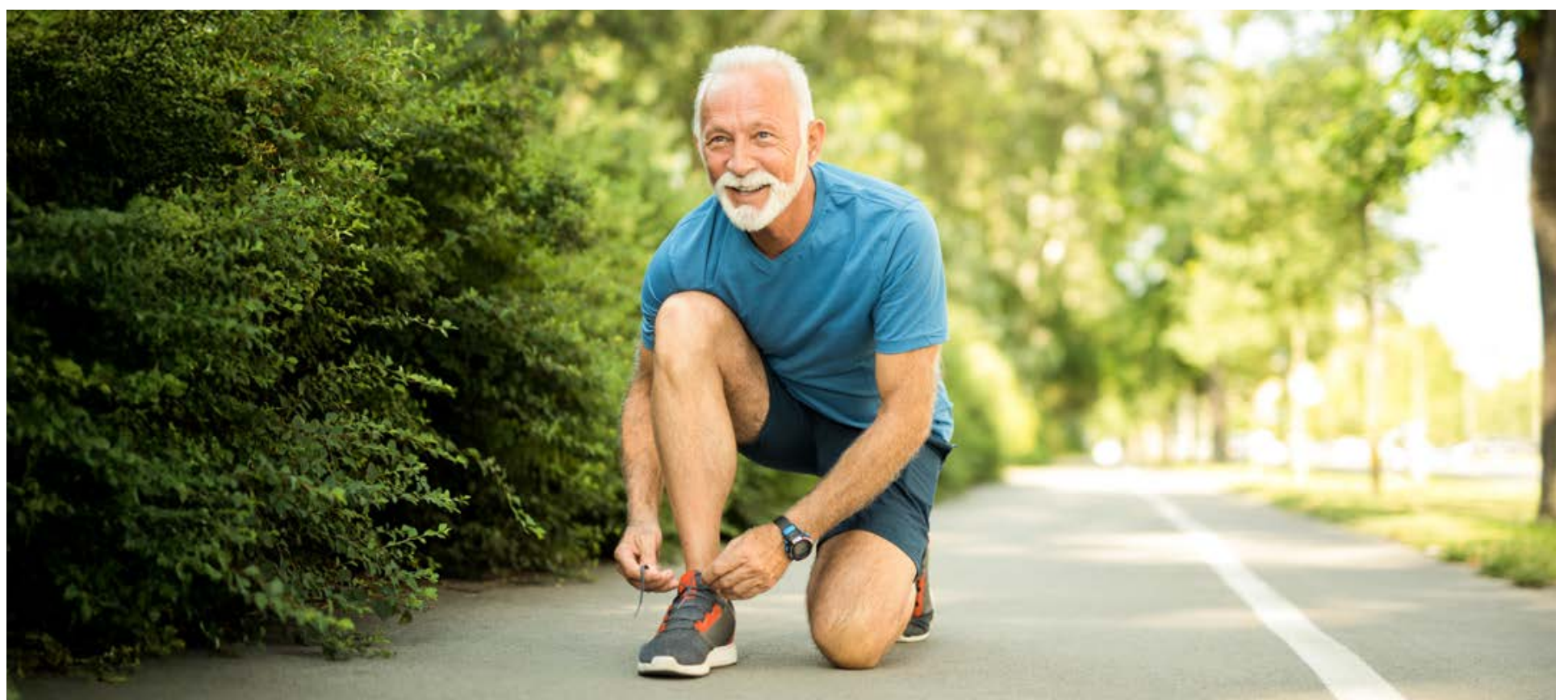
Staff members at the non-profit, which provides adoption and rehabilitation services to animals, said that Ginger is gentle, and would do best as the only dog in a home.

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 Ginger or other pets, please visit pawsofcoronado.org.



Meet Ginger, 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.



Don't Let Joint Pain Slow You Down

Whether you are strolling on the beach or kneeling to tie your shoes, chronic joint pain and stiffness can make any activity difficult. If you are looking for relief from hip or knee arthritis, attend a free webinar presented by Sharp HealthCare. You will learn about nonsurgical treatments, joint replacement surgery, and physical therapy to help you safely recover from treatment. A board-certified orthopedic surgeon will talk about leading-edge surgical options available at Sharp Coronado Hospital, including Mako robotic-arm assisted surgery.

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OPINION

Op-Ed: Remembering Navy SEAL Charlie Keating

» Continued from Page 1

athletics careers, I was from San Diego. Charlie was from Arizona, but would spend summers in Coronado with his family, and was later stationed there during his SEAL career. When I enlisted in the Navy and was subsequently assigned to a command aboard Naval Base Coronado, Charlie and I would see each other frequently, sharing life updates and swapping college stories.

In the tragedy of Charlie's loss, I finally understand the significance of the bond we formed.

I question if I did enough to honor that relationship. I wonder if I always will.

Another 10 years pass and it is 2026. I am standing at Rosecrans National Cemetery, kneeling at Charlie's grave, which I have never been able to bring myself to visit until now.

When Charlie was killed, I was still on active duty in the Navy, working as a mass communication specialist, a rate I chose based on the degree in journalism I received while at Indiana. I worked as the Navy photographer for Charlie's memorial, as well as the events surrounding it, until the burial itself at Rosecrans, at which point I stayed back in deference to the Keating family's privacy.

The emotions and weight of Charlie's life and death were so enormous that I remained reverent toward his tombstone for the

next decade. I am braver this year, because I am accompanied at Rosecrans now by a different version of Charlie's family: his IU teammates. Five of us from the cross country team, as well as his best friend from his freshman year dorm, have come back for the 10th anniversary of Charlie's passing. All six of us stand now at Charlie's tombstone.

Though it is not yet 10 a.m., we each crack a Budweiser – Charlie's favorite beer, which we call "Bud Heavy" to distinguish it from "Bud Light" – as homage to Charlie's aversion to half-measures in life. We re-live college memories. Some stories evoke tears. Most prompt laughter.

By all accounts, Charlie loved being a SEAL, and died as he lived, leading teammates he loved. But we knew him as a jovial running partner and loyal friend, with endless energy, forever focused on being present with family and friends.

One story in particular stands out. When I completed my initial Navy training and was stationed in

Coronado, Charlie was one of the first people I contacted. I had just met my soon-to-be wife, Sam, and took her to meet Charlie in Mission Beach for a surf session. On our drive over, Sam asked me how we would find Charlie if he was

wearing a wetsuit and didn't have his phone. As soon as she asked, a figure appeared in the distance, surfboard in hand, barefoot and bare-chested, running between cars down the center of rush-hour on Mission Boulevard. It was Charlie, no longer a gangly distance runner, now a combat-proven Navy SEAL, as gregarious and carefree as ever, excited simply by the prospect of seeing an old college buddy and his new fiance.

For Sam, it was a perfect introduction to Charlie, and it is also the way I will always remember him. Charlie was resolutely authentic, oriented toward his friends and family, and those character traits, I believe, are why so many people from so many parts of his life were able to form such strong connections with him. It is

why his legacy remains powerful even now.

On the eve of the 10th anniversary of Charlie's death, several of our IU teammates flew into San Diego early and met me at San Diego High School, where I now work as an athletic director and teacher. Most days, it feels far removed from my days as an athlete or sailor – the times I felt closest to Charlie. But on this day it brought me closer to Charlie than anything else ever had.

I am now coaching a small group of athletes who work hard enough, and are aspirational enough, to form bonds with each other similar to the ones we had been fortunate enough to build at Indiana. The blend of generations – former athletes past our primes, meeting young athletes not yet into theirs – brought me back to that moment in Gladstein Fieldhouse.

I was able to share the experiences of one cross country team, and the bonds we created, with two of my current athletes, and in so doing, bring that story to what felt like its full conclusion.

We should take a moment, I told my athletes, to appreciate the opportunity to be part of a tradition that builds bonds for life. I knew for sure that it was true.

I finally felt as though I was doing my part to honor Charlie's life.

I told my students about Charlie, and I tried not to cry, and I knew that in the ways that matter, he will live forever.

I told my students about Charlie, and I tried not to cry, and I knew that in the ways that matter, he will live forever.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

This does not represent the values of Coronado

BY DEAN MALTZMAN

Letter to the Editor

Editor's note: This letter is in reaction to an article published in the May 8 print edition about Donatello Bonasera and his plans to build a home in the Coronado Cays with a jet fuselage on the roof.

Dear editor,
As a resident of this island who has lived both in the Village and the Cays, I felt deeply disappointed

reading your recent article regarding a fellow Coronado resident and his family.

I have known the family personally for years. I always viewed your paper as a source of constructive community journalism – one that informed residents about meaningful local matters with professionalism and balance. What I read in this article, however, felt very different. Rather than focusing on architecture, or legitimate public issues, the piece came across as an unneces-

sarily personal attack on a resident who is investing in Coronado, creating jobs, and contributing to the community.

More importantly, the tone and direction of the article could reasonably be perceived by many readers as reflecting prejudice and racism toward a family that has simply wanted to live privately and peacefully within this community. That is not what Coronado should represent, nor what this country stands for.

To be honest, after reading this piece, it made me question whether I even want to continue reading this paper. Journalism should inform, unite, and present balanced facts – not fuel negativity, division, or personal targeting within our own community.

I sincerely hope future reporting returns to a professional, respectful, and balanced standard worthy of the residents of Coronado.

Dean Maltzman is a Coronado resident.

How to be a part of The Coronado News:

- Submit a news tip
- Capture a cool photo of Coronado and send it in for publication consideration
- Respond to an editorial or a news story by writing a letter to the editor

All submissions can be sent to newsroom@thecoronadonews.com

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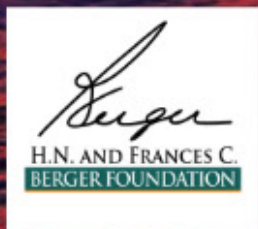
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CORONADO

MOUTHFUL!

Lobster West brings the East Coast to Coronado

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

BY MICHELLE ARMAS

The Coronado News

Lobster West is a fast-casual lobster restaurant on B Avenue. But don't be mistaken: This isn't any West Coast lobster. This lobster comes from the biting, rugged Atlantic waters off the East Coast. And instead of ending up in some posh Upper East Side seafood restaurant, it's served to people with tan lines and flip-flops.

The menu revolves around three sea catches: boiled deep-sea red crab, steamed Maine lobster and steamed North Atlantic bay shrimp. Most of the menu features a playlist of samplers, rolls, bisques, salads and mac and cheese incorporating one of those three shellfish.

I ordered one Classic crab roll and one Classic lobster roll with a side of slaw — \$24 for the lobster and \$19 for the crab. (The Boss was advertised as having 50% more meat, while the Epic doubled the meat at \$40 for the lobster and \$29 for the crab.)

The lobster roll — faded patinas of rusty orange and brilliant red weaving with pearl whites — showed evidence of the massive Atlantic claws already chucked. I took one bite and immediately felt the difference from the tougher lobster I was used to. This one had large, fleshy morsels that were sweet and delicate.

The red, boiled meat was fatty and fun to eat. Inside the butter-soaked brioche was a light layer of mayo, and on top, the pulled-apart shellfish was sprinkled with celery salt and pepper. Simple, letting the lobster speak for itself. The quantity was a bit scant and made me wish I had gone for the size with more meat, as it was gone in about



The Lobster Roll Classic, the Crab Roll Classic and a side of House Made Slaw was served at Lobster West in Coronado on May 14.

Staff photo by Michelle Armas.

three bites. And, unfortunately for my wallet, a new love was unlocked. Next stop: Cape Cod.

Maine lobster, thanks to those icy waters, is supposed to be the fleshiest, sweetest and densest lobster you can find. It's a contrast to California spiny lobster — a leaner, smaller variety often served spicy and seasoned, thrown into a taco rather than a brioche roll.

The crab roll followed the same format — an already buttery brioche smothered with more butter, hugging cold, pulled-apart crab unfurling in the center. Celery salt, pepper and a slice of lemon sat on the side to squeeze over it.

The crab, an Atlantic variety, had smaller pieces to bite into. It was even sweeter and more delicate than the lobster, as if the sugars and fats were concentrated into tiny shreds of white meat. A drizzle of lemon juice and the punchy

celery salt triggered a sense of nostalgia I couldn't describe, as if I had been to the coasts of Maine myself. Alongside the crunchy slaw, it was a dish for an endless summer.

According to Lobster West's website, owner Kim Locker couldn't find a lobster spot as good as the ones that marked her upbringing in New York and her travels along the eastern shores of the U.S.

Enter Lobster West, which maybe had a better ring to it than Lobster East? When I went in, it wasn't a room full of tables with empty shells cluttering white tablecloths, people cracking and picking buttery tails while dressed in bibs. Maybe this was just a stereotype I've seen in the movies. (Cue Kate Hudson in "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days.")

Inside, bright red tables fill the interior and outdoor patio. When

diners order, they receive a number for their table. Overall, the impression leaned more toward a fast-casual chain than a New York seafood restaurant or rugged Maine lobster shack. I found myself wishing for some resemblance of the East Coast, perhaps darker wooden tables, weathered textures or fishing nets that could better capture the feeling of a fisherman's life at sea.

That said, a lobster cage and a panoramic photo of a port cling to the walls alongside magazine articles praising the chain's restaurant in Encinitas. They have a third location in La Jolla as well.

Lobster West is open daily from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. It is located at 1033 B Ave. #102, Coronado, CA 92118.

Contact: michelle@thecoronadonews.com

What is on the ballot for Coronado voters?

June 2 marks the primary election in California, with many races affecting local voters

BY JULIETA SOTO

The Coronado News

Voting is underway for the gubernatorial primary to succeed Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom in January, and for a host of other elective offices affecting Coronado.

Town residents can drop off their ballots outside of City Hall through Election Day. There is another drop-off location at the Coronado Public Library, which also hosts a voting center.

The governor serves as California's chief executive officer, overseeing most state departments and agencies. The elected official also proposes new laws, appoints judges, approves or vetoes legislation, submits the annual state budget to the legislature, and mobilizes and directs state resources during emergencies.

Among more than 60 candidates for governor are two dozen Democrats, over one dozen Republicans and over 20 expressing no party preference.

According to the 2026 Primary Elections Voter Information Guide, the two candidates receiving the



An official ballot drop box is open through Election Day, June 2, near the entrance of Coronado City Hall at 1825 Strand Way. Staff photo by Julieta Soto.

most votes will move on to the general election.

Other offices under contention in the primary election include lieutenant governor, secretary of state, controller, treasurer, attorney general, insurance commissioner, state Board of Equalization District 4, United States representative, state Senate, and state Assembly.

The sample primary election ballot includes candidates for the 50th Congressional district of California, which includes Coronado.

In addition to Scott Peters, the Democrat incumbent, they are: Steve

Cohen, Republican, a television news consultant; Lucinda KWH Jahn, no party preference, an event technician supervisor; Joseph "Joe" Shea, Libertarian, a retired math teacher; Tim Arnous, Democrat, a father; and Aishwarya "Sparky" Mitra, Democrat, a research fellow.

The ballot lists (incumbent) Tasha Boerner, Democrat and California state Assemblymember, and Trinity Hannaway, a Republican taxpayer advocate, as candidates for 77th California Assembly District, which includes Coronado.

Non-partisan offices on the ballot include judges to five superior court offices—No. 11, No. 18, No. 31, No. 32, No. 34. The ballot has 10 candidates for State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The four candidates for San Diego County Treasurer-Tax Collector are: Joel Anderson, San Diego County Supervisor; Victor Roy, retired service director; Larry Cohen, appointed Treasurer Tax Collector in San Diego County; and Shirley Nakawatase, businesswoman, treasurer and certified public accountant.

Voting options

Registered voters in Coronado can vote in the June 2, 2026 gubernatorial primary at any of the county's voting centers beginning May 23.

A voting center in the Winn Room, inside the Coronado Public Library at 640 Orange Ave., opens 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. from May 30 through June 1. It opens 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day, June 2.

According to the Secretary of State's website, vote-by-mail ballots must be postmarked no later than June 2.

The city's website says mail ballots must be received by the Registrar's Office within seven days of the election. A voter's signature is required for the mail ballot to count.

A drop box near the entrance of Coronado City Hall at 1825 Strand Way, is available 24 hours through June 1, and closes at 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Through June 1, the drop box inside the library is open Monday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The library and drop box will be closed on May 25 in observance of Memorial Day.

The Coronado voting center and library drop box will open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day.

According to the Registrar, voters can track their mail ballot online.

To learn more, visit: <https://www.sdvote.com/>.

Attention, Coronado Art Collectors and Art Enthusiasts



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Contest: Vote for '2026 Best of Coronado News'

SPONSORED CONTENT

The voting window is now open for the first ever "Best of Coronado" competition, hosted by The Coronado News. The voting period is open through June 5. The goal of the "2026 Best of Coronado News" is to highlight the businesses in the 92118 zip code that make our island town unique.

Eateries, small businesses, hotels, professionals, general services – you name it, there's a "Best of" category for it, with a total list spanning 100 different categories.

Support your favorite local businesses by voting for them to receive a "Best of" award at <https://bestofcoronadonews.voterfly.com/>.

Nominees are either located within the 92118 zip code or demonstrably serve the 92118 community. Eligibility is verified through the business license database, social media presence and official websites.

Winners will be chosen by the individuals who fill out the online voting ballot. Each person may vote once per category through June 5.

VoterFly uses automated software to detect and prevent fraudulent voting practices. If a business is caught "stuffing ballots" or circumventing security measures, their votes will be flagged and removed.

This competition is meant to be enjoyable for all participants, bringing awareness to the enterprises that make Coronado a thriving community. The contest is driven by community input, as the winners are ultimately chosen through online voting.

For more information and an outline of competition rules, visit <https://bestofcoronadonews.voterfly.com/>.

Editor's note: This is an advertisement feature from The Coronado News

BEST OF CORONADO NEWS 2026

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SCAN TO VOTE

THE CORONADO NEWS

CORONADO

Water authorities announce zero transboundary flows during Mexico's sewer system repairs

The U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission said pumps in Mexico are back online

BY JULIETA SOTO
The Coronado News

The U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) on May 16 said Mexico completed emergency repairs to a major sewage line that conveys wastewater in Tijuana.

In a May 15 post to X, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the unexpected leak and forced shut down of pump stations along the border resulted in millions



A leak in the Parallel Gravity Line began emergency repairs on May 14, which were completed on May 16. Photo by IBWC.

of gallons of wastewater flowing into the Tijuana River.

The commission said several pump stations went offline and flow from the Tijuana sanitation system was sent to the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The commission reports the facility treated the increase with no problems.

“No transboundary flows were reported, due in large part to the proactive actions of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to make sure Mexico took all necessary steps to prevent sewage from leaking into the United States,” said the IBWC in a release about the repairs.

According to the EPA, Mexico be-

gan rehabilitating a major conduit – the Parallel Gravity Line – last November, and construction is expected to be completed in July, part of an agreement signed by Mexico and the United States last year.

On May 14 the commission told South San Diego residents to expect stronger odors in the Tijuana River Channel, beach closures and health risks if untreated or partially treated wastewater reaches U.S. waters.

As of May 17, the Silver Strand Shoreline remains closed while the Coronado shoreline is under advisory.

For updated beach quality information, visit: <https://www.sdbeachinfo.com/#>.

Contact: julieta@thecoronadonews.com

Coronado life expectancy nearly six years higher than county average

» Continued from Page 1

city's median household income is about \$148,000, compared with roughly \$106,000 countywide.

Coronado's walkable streets, access to parks and strong local resources often come up in conversations with residents about quality of life.

“It's very easy to walk around,” said Sandra Capano, 80, who has lived in Coronado since 1997. “I walk to the beach, the library and ferry landing. I think that adds to longevity.”

She added that community programs help residents as they age.

“The senior center has so much going on – current events, exercises, all kinds of things,” Capano said. “Something to keep your mind active.”

That sense of connection is part of

what residents say makes the island feel sustainable.

“I like the fact that we support the community and businesses,” said Judy Bresser, who has lived on the island for two years. “We stay on the island to buy everything.”

Just across the bay, however, conditions are different. Communities in the South Bay, including National City, rank among the region's most socially vulnerable, according to a study.

Those areas face overcrowded housing, limited transportation and higher poverty levels – factors that can make it harder to recover from emergencies or maintain long-term health.

The contrast is reflected in life expectancy as well. In some inland and South Bay communities, residents live nearly 10 fewer years, on average, than

those in Coronado.

For health officials, those differences highlight the fact that longevity is not evenly distributed.

When asked whether Coronado's outcomes could be replicated elsewhere, Thihalolipavan said policy plays a central role.

“How do we make sure people have housing, health care and support systems?” he said. “These are policy-level discussions about how we set people up for success.”

“Cities do have leverage,” he added. “They can regulate tobacco retailers, zoning, housing and support schools.”

While life expectancy data is based on mortality records and does not directly account for environmental exposure, experts say a crisis like the Tijuana-San Diego sewage does raise

questions about environmental health and long-term impacts on well-being in coastal communities.

“We just use death data to do the life expectancy analysis, so it doesn't factor directly, but that's not to say it doesn't indirectly,” Thihalolipavan said.

He said researchers are still studying long-term exposure risks tied to pollution from the Tijuana River, including hydrogen sulfide and industrial waste.

“I think it definitely impacts the environment and access to beaches and parks,” Thihalolipavan said. “If you live next to a park but you're worried about air quality because of the Tijuana River, then having access is different from actually being able to use it.”

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Brush strokes by a Coronado artist celebrate life in the 92118

» Continued from Page 1

“It’s when I feel most alive.”

Born into a Navy family in Coronado, where she lived off and on growing up, St. Denis said she has always been creative.

“My life has been this incredible journey, it’s like an adventure,” she added. “I have a really wonderful childhood and a very close family. Painting is just an expression of that, and I feel so blessed.”

St. Denis, whose civic engagement includes being the founder of the Coronado Island Film Festival, shares her life through her painting.

“Someone who sees my art, I want them to relate to it and find joy in it,” she said. “The good things worth painting are right in front of us.”

Remembering Dale

Flowers and greenery narrowly line the entrance of St. Denis’ home where sunlight and natural breezes flow into the space.

This was the intention when the one-story ’50s house was remodeled. The architects are St. Denis and her late husband, Dale, who died a decade ago.

She said the best thing for her artistry was meeting Dale, who she describes as the most creative person, in 1976.

They traveled the world together and he inspired her to go back to school and get a degree in architecture. She said his influence extends to grandchildren who enjoy careers in design, architecture, photography and film.

“I feel his presence here and his support,” said St. Denis. “I just feel I’m so filled with it and it comes from everything around me. It comes from him. It comes from the house that we designed. ... It’s in the air, it’s an energy and it’s not going to go away.”

Pots created by the couple can be found alongside photos and paintings of her three children, Coronado High School graduates who are now adults, and 11 grandchildren.



Doug St. Denis is named after her great uncle whose portrait she displays in her home. Staff photo by Julieta Soto.

“It’s really fun having a family of artists,” said St. Denis. “And when we’re working on something we send pictures back and forth.”

Her eldest daughter, Corinne Lynch, and son, Larry Baldauf, are painters. Terry Curtin, her youngest daughter, who also lives in Coronado, designs gold and silver jewelry with unique stones.

St. Denis said she named them after relatives, a tradition her family carries.

“There were no girls in my family and my joke is ... I came along and they didn’t know what to do with me so they named me Douglas Howard Mustin,” said St. Denis. “My son’s

daughter ... she’s now pregnant due in October with a little girl and she’s naming her Douglas.”

Capturing happiness

St. Denis said she cannot remember a time when she was not painting, but got serious about the craft during her time in Carmel in the early 1960s.

“I went through experimenting with different styles ... But I always come back to Van Gogh and Matisse and those are the two that really, really influenced me,” said St. Denis.

As a young mother, St. Denis said, she grew up with her children and art was a big part of it.

“My kids said, ‘Other people get nostalgic when they smell cookies cooking. We get nostalgic when we smell oil paint and turpentine because it’s like our childhood,’” said St. Denis. “It was just a part of our life.”

In 2016, St. Denis transitioned to painting on plywood which she loves because the wood shows through and becomes part of the painting, she said.

“As an artist, I’m always learning, trying to experiment with new things and trying not to always fall back on stuff that I know works for art,” said St. Denis.

It was inside the home exuberating family and artistry that St. Denis painted a piece decades ago that now hangs inside the Coronado Public Library, through Aug. 3.

The piece depicts five cousins — Curtin, Baldauf, Lynch, Tom and Carolyn Mustin — celebrating the Fourth of July in Coronado. It’s accompanied by a poem, authored by St. Denis.

“I see happiness. I see great great days, sunshine, everyone in town, ... fireworks at night, swimming in the ocean, all the things that make life wonderful,” said St. Denis.

The painting is part of an exhibit featuring the artwork of nine local artists who are members of the Coronado Art Association.

Tina Christiansen, also a Coronado artist and volunteer for the nonprofit organization, said “It’s a Beautiful Day” was selected as the theme for this year’s exhibit, and the paintings on display are from portfolios of member artists.

Christiansen said the association, founded in 1952, sponsors an open air public art exhibit at Spreckels Park, across from the library, on the first and third Sunday of every month.

To learn more, visit: <https://www.coronadoartassn.com/>

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SCAN ME

MILITARY

Hegseth gets bipartisan grilling on rising costs of the Iran war and Trump's end game

Associated Press

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth faced tough questions on May 12 from Republican and Democratic lawmakers about the Trump administration's end game for the Iran war, the conflict's rising \$29 billion cost and its impact on diminishing U.S. weapons stockpiles.

While the Pentagon chief softened his tone from hearings before Congress nearly two weeks ago, notably avoiding the same pointed criticism of lawmakers, he got far more pushback from members of his own Republican Party about the levels of U.S. munitions used in the Iran war and President Donald Trump's intense criticism of traditional allies for not taking part in the conflict.

"I take issue with the characterization that munitions are depleted in a public forum," Hegseth said. "That's not true."

Even as he insisted that the U.S. military has plenty of missile defense systems and other munitions for the Iran war or future conflicts, Hegseth told House and Senate lawmakers overseeing defense spending that the Trump administration is working to ramp up production of weapons.

Pentagon officials also told lawmakers that the cost of the Iran war has risen to about \$29 billion, the vast bulk of which — roughly \$24 billion — is related to replacing munitions and repairing equipment but also includes operational costs to keep forces deployed. That is up from the overall total of \$25 billion that Pentagon comptroller Jay Hurst revealed nearly two weeks ago. He said the updated estimate does not include the cost to repair or rebuild U.S. military sites damaged in the region.

Republicans tout the importance of American allies

Hegseth faced notable pushback from Republicans on the Trump administration's straining of relations with longtime allies, with Kentucky Sen. Mitch McConnell telling Hegseth, "NATO is the most important military alliance in world history."

"It seems to me that a lot of the European countries think that we're reducing our influence there, they're sort of on their own," said McConnell, the GOP chairman of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on defense.

Trump has assailed NATO allies and others for not helping reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global shipping corridor, or otherwise offering more support, saying he plans to pull thousands of troops out of Germany in the coming months.

Oklahoma Rep. Tom Cole, the Republican chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, voiced his concerns in a separate hearing, saying, "America First has never meant American alone."

"American power is most effective when it's exercised in concert with like-minded nations who share our interests and our values," Cole said.

Hegseth gets bipartisan pushback on munition stockpiles

The hearings before the powerful House and Senate Appropriations defense subcommittees spanned four hours as they reviewed the Trump administration's 2027 military budget proposal, which calls for a historic allocation of \$1.5 trillion.

The discussions quickly veered into the handling of a war that appears locked in a stalemate as higher fuel prices pose political problems for Republicans in the midterm congressional elections.

California Republican Rep. Ken Calvert, the House subcommittee's chair, asked about the impact of the Iran war on military funding as well as weapons stockpiles drawn down from the conflict.

"Questions persist about whether we are building the depth and reliance required for a high-end conflict," Calvert said.



Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Dan Caine arrive to testify at a House Appropriations subcommittee budget hearing for the Department of Defense, Tuesday, May 12, 2026, in Washington. AP Photo/Alex Brandon.

Minnesota Rep. Betty McCollum, the defense subcommittee's ranking Democrat, pressed Hegseth on whether the military has a plan to draw down troops in the Middle East if Congress passes so-far-unsuccessful efforts to end the Iran war.

"We have a plan to escalate if necessary," Hegseth said. "We have a plan to retrograde if necessary. We have a plan to shift assets."

He said he would not reveal any next steps publicly. Noting repeated questions from lawmakers over weapons stockpiles, Hegseth said the concerns have been "unhelpfully overstated" and "we have plenty of what we need."

He said the defense industry has been told to "build more and build faster," blaming the military industrial base's inadequate capacity on previous administrations and U.S. aid to Ukraine in its war with Russia.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies has painted an alarming picture of U.S. stockpiles of munitions, including interceptors that can defend against incoming enemy missiles on land and sea.

The think tank said in an April analysis that American forces "expended more than half of the prewar inventory" on four key weapons systems and that rebuilding to adequate levels for a possible war with China "will take additional time."

Trump administration faces pressure from the economic impact of the Iran war

Trump is facing increasing pressure from the economic shocks of Iran effectively closing the Strait of Hormuz, where 20% of the world's oil normally flows. The U.S. military in turn has blockaded Iranian ports and the two sides have traded fire, with American forces thwarting attacks on their warships and disabling Tehran-linked oil tankers.

Republican Sen. Susan Collins, chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, questioned whether the Trump administration anticipated Iran's closure of the strait, which has surged gasoline prices.

Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the president is briefed with carefully considered military options.

"It seems to me that there's been a different plan almost daily of, with dealing with this problem, which is why I ask," said Collins, who joined Democrats last month in a failed vote to halt the conflict and is facing a tough reelection fight.

Democrats in both hearings repeatedly questioned what the cost of the war would be, from repairing damaged military installations in the Middle East to the rising fuel prices.

"You're spending families' hard-earned tax dollars on a war that many strongly oppose, and you're forcing

people to pay more at the pump," said Sen. Patty Murray, a Democrat from Washington state. "And yet you're not even providing a real breakdown for the cost of this war."

Hegseth responded rhetorically: "What is the cost of Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon? And the fact that this president has been willing to make a historic and courageous choice to confront that it comes with cost — and we recognize that."

Delaware Sen. Chris Coons, the ranking Democrat on the Senate's

subcommittee, repeatedly asked how the Trump administration will reopen the strait to commercial shipping.

"If we control it, how do we reopen it?" Coons pressed Hegseth in a tense exchange.

Hegseth responded defensively, saying the senator was being disingenuous and ignoring the "incredible battlefield successes."

Coons shot back that he was worried that "you've achieved a series of tactical successes but are on the verge of a strategic loss."

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SPORTS

Coronado High swim team delivers strong performances at CIF Championships

Coronado News staff

The Coronado High School Islanders swim team closed out its season at the CIF San Diego Section Division II Championships on May 9, delivering standout performances and several memorable finishes.

Competing among 31 Division II teams, the Islander boys earned a 7th-place overall finish, while the girls placed 14th.

Leading the way was senior Gage Everitt, who captured the CIF Division II title in the boys 100-yard freestyle with a time of 45.69 seconds. His performance secured him a lane at the CIF State Championships in Clovis. This was his fourth consecutive year competing at this level.

Everitt also led the boys 400 freestyle relay team alongside Devin Ertekin, Quint Richardson, and anchor Luca Morocco. The quartet finished third overall and earned a state consideration qualifying time. The relay narrowly missed the final state cut-off by just three-tenths of a second.

Cedrick Tolentino placed 7th in the boys 200 free-



Gage Everitt, middle, placed first in the 100 free. Photo provided by Leigh Everitt.

style with a 1:47.91 and later added another 7th-place finish in the 500 freestyle. Santi Garcia Rojo also scored in the distance events, finishing 6th in the 500 freestyle and 11th in the 200 individual medley.

Ertekin sprinted to an 11th-place finish in the 50 freestyle and added a top-10 performance in the 100 butterfly. Morocco posted strong swims in both the 200 individual medley (9th) and 100 breaststroke (11th), while Russell Richardson contributed key points in the backstroke events and medley relays.

On the girls side, Jillian Stachowicz got a 7th-place finish in the 100 butterfly and a top-10 performance in the 100 breaststroke. Kailyn Cornell added a strong swim in the 100 backstroke and helped lead both girls relay teams.

The girls 200 medley relay team of Cornell, Stachowicz, Mirren Fallon, and Baleri Garces placed 12th overall, while the same group returned in the 400 freestyle relay to finish 11th in a highly competitive field.

Information submitted by Leigh Everitt.



Jason Heyward. AP Photo/David Zalubowski, File.

Jason Heyward joins the Dodgers as a special assistant in baseball operations

Associated Press

Jason Heyward is back in baseball less than two months after retiring as a player.

The 36-year-old five-time Gold Glove outfielder has taken a job with the Los Angeles Dodgers, one of the six teams he played for during his 16-year MLB career. He announced his retirement at the end of March.

Heyward will be a special assistant in the baseball operations department.

"I'm excited for Jason to be back in the organization," manager Dave Roberts said. "I do know that he's going to do some stuff with the affiliates, which is great. He's got the clubhouse part covered, so part of it is working with the front office guys and getting to see the other side of things and how it operates and he's going to be very helpful for his growth and also for the organization."

Heyward spent two seasons with the Dodgers, winning his second World Series title in 2024. He then played one season in Houston and his final season was in San Diego before retiring. He had earlier stops in Atlanta and St. Louis. He's best known for his time with the Chicago Cubs, winning the World Series in 2016.

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SPORTS

Los Angeles is ready for the World Cup. The playing surface? Not just yet

Associated Press

With just under 30 days to go until its first match, Los Angeles is ready with transportation and food for the World Cup. The playing surface? Not just yet.

The U.S. men open at SoFi Stadium (to be known as Los Angeles Stadium) against Paraguay on June 12, the first of eight matches to be played at the NFL stadium in Inglewood.

The field was all dirt on May 12.

That changed on May 13, when sod arrived after a 1,600-mile trip in refrigerated trucks from Washington state. It was installed over two days.

"This surface is the players' stage," said Otto Benedict, senior vice president of facilities and campus operation for SoFi Stadium.

Construction on the field began April 13 after the stadium hosted a Monster Jam event in which 12,000-pound trucks competed in racing, skills and freestyle competitions.

The stadium modified the field shared by the NFL's Los Angeles Rams and Los Angeles Chargers in two phases. Auxiliary space and wider dimensions were created by removing corner seats to meet FIFA specifications, and a sophisticated irrigation system was installed to maintain the grass.

"To be the place where the energy first ignites, where the home crowd gets to set the tone for the rest of the tournament is a responsibility we don't take lightly," Benedict said.

Construction, landscape, grass and engineering crews were applauded by local World Cup organizers and community ambassador Magic Johnson, who pointed out his suite where he'll be watching.

"When you think about the financial impact it's going to have on Los Angeles, it's going to be amazing," said Johnson, who is a co-owner of LAFC in Major League Soccer and the Washington Spirit of the National Women's



A general view shows SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, Calif., Tuesday, May 12, 2026, during a media event for the upcoming FIFA World Cup soccer tournament. AP Photo/Jae C. Hong.

Soccer League.

Already coming down was signage advertising the stadium's usual sponsors.

Tours of the stadium during the tournament are being sold for \$86.50. Still available are premium seating, suites and hospitality packages.

Fans can choose from a variety of food and drink options. Among the items on display Tuesday was salsa verde aguachile with lime marinated shrimp, kettle cooked crispy pickles, stone fruit panzanella, spiced lamb rack, smoked salmon mousse, petite beef burgers, tune poke and aged ri-

beye cap with bordelaise and mashed potatoes.

Desserts include a World Cup trophy made of chocolate mousse, raspberry, chocolate crunch and chocolate sponge and a soccer ball filled with vanilla mousse, peach, strawberry crunch and vanilla sponge.

Metro debuted special edition TAP cards featuring three FIFA-themed designs, 17 country-specific designs, four FIFA collector cards, including a light-up card, and a collector's box.

"We want to provide a system that is safe, fast and fun," Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins said.

Metro is working with 11 other transit lines in the region to offer direct-to-stadium bus service for \$3.75 roundtrip from 15 park-and-ride lots in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Reserved parking lots range in price from \$55 to more than \$100. Fans can access 300 dedicated buses to every match in an effort to avoid disrupting service to Metro's regular riders.

The official FIFA Fan Festival will be held June 11-14 at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum with big screens showing games. Ten fan zones around Los Angeles County will host activities and watch parties.



The Islander boys' 4 x 800 team added the All-CIF title to the All-League title they won at Central League Finals to advance to the Section Championships on May 23. From left to right: Nathan Ayan, Derick Ritter, Andrew Buck, and Vincent Russo. Ayan and Russo also advanced to the section championships in the 800-meter run. Photo by George Green.

Coronado High track has medal-winning performances at Division 3 Finals

Coronado News staff

Coronado High School's track and field team was led by medal-winning performances from the boy's middle-distance squad at the San Diego CIF Division 3 Championships on May 16.

Senior Nathan Ayan placed second in the 800-meter run with a personal-best of 1:55.32. He was followed by senior Vincent Russo, who placed fourth in a personal best of 1:57.40. Senior Andrew Buck narrowly missed the medals, finishing eighth with a personal-best of 2:01.99.

Ayan, Russo, and Buck teamed with senior Derick Ritter to win the 4x800 relay title in 8:26.51.

Other Islander medalists included senior Summer Little, who placed third in the girls 100-meter dash; senior Micaela Gistaro, who finished fifth in the girls 200-meter dash; and junior Maya Wilson, who took fifth in the girls 300-meter hurdles.

Senior Spencer Reidarson earned two medals, placing third in the boy's triple jump and fifth in the boys 300-meter hurdles with a personal-best of

42.86.

The boys 4x400 relay team of senior William Heyen, Reidarson, Russo, and Ayan also earned a medal, placing sixth.

The top two finishers in each event automatically advance to the 2026 San Diego CIF Section Championships at Mt. Carmel High School on May 23. In addition, the next 12 best performances across all divisions also qualify. The Section Championships determine qualifying spots for the California State Championships, scheduled for May 29 and 30 in Clovis, California.

Veteran tight end David Njoku signs with LA Chargers after 9 seasons with Browns

Associated Press

Veteran tight end David Njoku agreed to a one-year deal with the Los Angeles Chargers on May 11.

Njoku spent the first nine seasons of his NFL career with the Cleveland Browns, earning one Pro Bowl selection while catching 384 passes for 4,062 yards and 34 touchdowns. He is second in Browns franchise history to Ozzie Newsome for catches and TDs among tight ends, but he became a free agent in February.

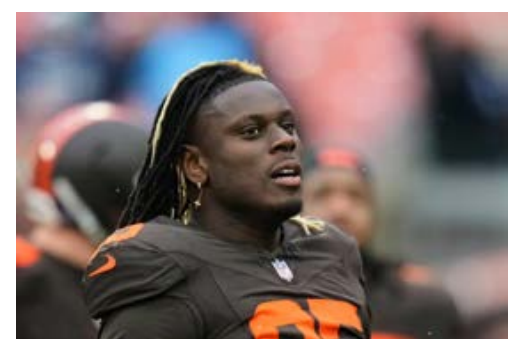
Njoku missed significant parts of the past two seasons with injuries. He had 33 receptions for 293 yards and four touchdowns while appearing in 12 games last season.

Njoku could be a major contributor for the Chargers, who are rebooting Justin Herbert's offense under new offensive coordinator Mike McDaniel.

Three tight ends caught at least 15 passes in McDaniel's offense with the Miami Dolphins last season. The Bolts' only major contributor to the passing game as a tight end last season was rookie Oronde Gadsden, the fifth-round pick who had 49 catches for 664 yards and three TDs.

Veteran receiver Keenan Allen is still on the free-agent market, but starting receivers Ladd McConkey and Quentin Johnston are returning to the Los Angeles passing offense that ranked 18th in the NFL last season despite another strong effort from Herbert, who earned his second Pro Bowl selection.

Los Angeles went 11-6 for the second straight season under head coach Jim Harbaugh but also lost in the first round of the playoffs for the second straight year.



Cleveland Browns tight end David Njoku.

AP Photo/Sue Ogoe, File.



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SPORTS

What might LeBron James do next? He has plenty of options for next season and beyond

Associated Press

LeBron James has options.

He could stay with the Los Angeles Lakers. He could decide to join another team. He could even retire and end the longest career in NBA history. He knows all this.

He just doesn't know the answer.

"I don't know what the future holds for me, obviously," James said.

His 23rd season ended on May 11 when the Lakers were eliminated by the Oklahoma City Thunder. At 41, James likely doesn't have many years left to play — if any. And now he'll start the process of figuring out what he wants to do, what his family wants him to do and what's best for all parties involved.

Dwyane Wade, James' longtime friend and former teammate, was on the Amazon Prime broadcast of Game 4 of the Thunder-Lakers series as an analyst. And when the conversation turned to what James is going to do, he had some thoughts.

"That's the question," Wade said. "And I think if we all know LeBron James, he's going to take some time off and go drink some wine, go yacht a little bit around the world. He's going to spend some time with his family. He's going to sit down and try to make the best decision for the James family at the end of the day.

"And then from there, you've got to look at the picture of the Lakers," Wade continued. "LeBron, Year 24 coming back next year if he does, he wants to play for something. So, are they in a position that he can play for something and compete for something?"

Salary will be another issue. He made nearly \$53 million this sea-



Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James stands on the court in the closing minutes of Game 4 in a second-round NBA basketball playoffs series against the Oklahoma City Thunder, Monday, May 11, 2026, in Los Angeles.

AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill.

son. He could command somewhere around \$60 million next season if he wanted. If he gives a team a discount to preserve flexibility, he could certainly afford to do so.

Wade doesn't seem to think that's likely.

"History shows that Mr. James ain't taking a lot of discounts, right? I don't think no one knows," Wade said. "I think one of the things that him and his entire team have been great at is

they hold their cards close to their chest. Decisions are made by LeBron, and they all respect it. And they wait on him to decide what he wants to do."

A look at some of what James' next moves could be (and for purposes of this exercise, the realities of the salary cap, the aprons, tax ramifications and whatever James will command in salary if he decides to keep playing do not apply):

Retirement

This one doesn't seem likely even though James posted the lowest scoring average of his career — 20.933 points per game, down a teeny-tiny sliver from his 20.937 average as a rookie. Another made free throw this season would have been enough to keep this season's average from being his worst.

The pessimists, or the anti-LeBron crowd, can say — accurately — that his numbers are declining. They are. He averaged 30.3 points in 2021-22, and his per-game scoring average has fallen in every season since, going to 28.9 in 2022-23, 25.7 in 2023-24, 24.4 last season and 20.9 this season.

Of course, his role has changed as well and that has some effect on the numbers. James spent much of this season as the Lakers' third option behind Luka Doncic and Austin Reaves and did so happily.

Stay with the Lakers

To be fair, this wasn't a bad season. Getting ousted in Round 2 by the overwhelming favorite to win the NBA title — the defending champion, too — isn't exactly a collapse, and Doncic not being able to play because of injury almost made the outcome expected.

The Lakers have the seventh-best record in the NBA during James' eight seasons there. Not great, not bad. But the playoffs, even with the run to the bubble championship in 2020, have not been to James' expectations.

The Lakers went 32-31 in playoff games during these last eight seasons, and remember, 16 of those wins came in the bubble. Since then, the Lakers are just 16-26 in playoff games.

Good enough? It wouldn't seem so. The Lakers will have to give James reasons to stay. It's simple as that.

Return to Miami

James' jersey will sway from the rafters one day in Miami, assuming he ever actually retires and allows such tributes to finally take place. And there's no question that James still holds many people within the organization — Pat Riley, Erik Spoelstra and more — in high regard.

But it's not like James has unfinished business in Miami. He became

a champion in Miami; two of his four titles were won with the Heat. He'd be welcome, of course, but it's hard to envision James saying Miami would be the place for his final act.

Return to Cleveland

Northeast Ohio is home and will forever be close to James' heart. He's still (and forever will be) beloved there, and whatever anger existed over him leaving in 2010 was washed away forever when he delivered Cleveland's NBA title in 2016.

Time healed all wounds. If James wants to go the sentimental route, he might go home again. It would likely be contingent on the Cavaliers finding a way to keep a roster that's capable of contention.

He takes his talents to New York

The Knicks have tried and failed before to land James.

They have some serious selling points right now — among them, a good team and Madison Square Garden. That's a place James has always revered.

The bright lights of New York wouldn't scare him off. Then again, wherever James plays, the lights will be bright there, too.

Pair up with Stephen Curry again

James won Olympic gold in Paris in 2024 with Steve Kerr coaching and Stephen Curry starring at the end.

The respect James has for Curry is off the charts, and he's often raved about Kerr as well. Kerr's coming back to the Warriors, and you know Golden State will do anything it can to give Curry one more chance at a title.

Bear in mind, it's highly improbable that this would ever work financially. But if James wants to play there, the Warriors will surely find a way.

The wild scenario: James and Wemby?

The greatest scorer ever teaming up with the game's most prolific defensive player in San Antonio?

Now that would be fun.

James is one of the people who dubbed Victor Wembanyama as an "alien" and did so with the utmost of respect. James is unlike anyone the league has ever seen, and Wembanyama might be thought of in the same way.

And even though Gregg Popovich doesn't coach the Spurs anymore, he's still there and James has always had the utmost respect for the NBA's winningest coach. James would be accused of ring-chasing if he tried this one, but then again, he knows detractors won't like anything he does anyway.



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