



FANTASTIC LIGHTS



Photographer Michael Campbell used a drone to take these incredible shots of two beautifully decorated homes in Loire Valley. (Above) Andrew James used many colors to light up his home on a corner of Rue Parc. (Below) Luke Vinci said he was inspired by James' masterpiece, so he decided to illuminate his own home on Rue Finisterre. Vinci said the response from his sons made the effort worthwhile.



THE STRONGEST MAN

By John Gregory

Scripps Ranch High School Head Football Coach Marlon Gardinera led his team to an incredible 12-1 season, but his story is much deeper.

Gardinera is a reluctant head coach who simply coaches because he loves his sons and wants to spend more time with them while he fights ongoing medical conditions. Gardinera coached his son Nicholas in Pop Warner from flag football through the eighth grade.

"When I applied for the job at the high school, I really just wanted the freshman job be-

See **STRONGEST MAN**, Page 20

A mission to impact lives

By Dave Kensler

Fitness Quest 10 founder Todd Durkin has a favorite word which permeates his approach to business and life.

"My life's mission is how can I impact and change lives," he said.

Back in January 2000, when he founded Fitness Quest 10, there was little evidence to suggest he would accomplish that mission let alone have much of an impact.

"I had just finished grad school at SDSU where I met my future wife, Melanie," he explained. "We decided to stay in San Diego. She got a job as a teacher at Southwest Community College and I had this dream to change lives with a fitness studio in what was then the sleepy town of Scripps Ranch."

There were, however, some glaring challenges.

"I had no clients. No money. No business plan," Durkin said. "I had very little business acumen."

Yet, he knew one thing: his dream was to offer an alternative to the popular approach to fitness at that time which involved big box gyms with lots of equipment. Instead, he wanted to provide people with a personalized approach to training, working out and generally improving their overall well-being.

"It was a scary time in my life. I was just trying to survive in order to pay bills," he said.

Fast forward 20-years and Fitness Quest 10 has been recognized nationally as one of the pre-

See **FITNESS QUEST**, Page 2

Newtopia owners tap into success

By Ken David

Scripps Ranch's Newtopia Cyder will soon mark its third anniversary and, by all accounts, the company's early years have brought the sweet taste of success.

Opened in January 2017, the company's 10045 Carroll Canyon Road location is both a hard cidery and a tasting room with seating available indoors and on an outdoor garden patio.

Jennifer Hays Moreno co-founded Newtopia with her husband, Rick Moreno.

"I like wine, my husband is a beer guy, so cider is called a 'compromise,'" Jennifer said. "We wanted it to be successful, but we're surprised at how successful it's been and how quickly."

Rick is interested in distilling, Jennifer explained, but since spirits take a while to make, he started brewing cider with future plans to move into making spirits. Friends in the craft brewing business let him know when he was onto something special.

"My husband knows a lot of beer guys, so we started taste testing with beer guys who are in the indus-

try, who have their own companies," she said. "They said, 'You need to do something with this.' That was when the business aspect was born."

They came into the business at a time of growth. According to the research firm Ibis World, hard cider was the fastest growing alcoholic beverage industry in the United States between 2013 and 2018, with a total 2018 revenue of \$510 million. Research indicates America's love of hard cider goes back to the first English settlers. Europe's history with the drink goes back to

See **NEWTOPIA**, Page 3

Durkin maintains drive to help others

FITNESS QUEST

Continued from Page 1

mier facilities of its kind and Durkin has become a highly regarded and highly sought fitness trainer by numerous professional athletes.

Durkin has appeared on national television programs and has been featured in national magazines. His popularity grew even more when he appeared as a trainer on NBC's popular fitness show "STRONG." In addition, he founded and runs the Durkin IMPACT Foundation which raises and awards scholarship funds to deserving student-athletes that are college-bound, and to families that have faced tragedy.

"I started out as a one-man operation," he explained. "Today, we have 42 teammates including instructors, trainers, massage therapists and administrative support."

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly in this day when the mentality is often expansion equals success, Fitness Quest 10 remains in the exact location as it did 20-years ago, 10006 Scripps Ranch Blvd. – albeit with some physical expansions over the years, taking over



Todd Durkin encourages clients during a workout at Fitness Quest 10. (courtesy of Fitness Quest 10)

nearby space from businesses that left.

Durkin has also stayed away from franchising and licensing, which are two of the more common strategies used for growth.

"A mentor of mine asked me whether I wanted to build one facility or hundreds of facilities," Durkin recalled. "I told him I wanted to build one great one where people from anywhere can come and be impacted in a positive way."

One of those ways has come in an unexpected fashion. When fires touched the Scripps Ranch community, Fitness Quest 10 became a

place for people to gather.

"In times of community challenges, we have become a sanctuary for residents to come and share what is happening – an opportunity to take a break and reflect on what is going on," he explained.

The facility is also a sanctuary for Durkin himself, who has taken around 40 trips this year to all over the U.S. to China, Europe and Australia. Yet, he remains tied to the community.

"When I am in town, I am at Fitness Quest 10 nearly every day," he said.

He can also be seen on the sidelines of Scripps Ranch High School football games where he is a volunteer coach. Two of his three children attend the high school. Throughout the years, he and his wife have remained very active in a wide range of community events.

Yes, if you go to Fitness Quest 10, you may see him there working with a famous athlete from the NFL, MLB or some other sport, but Durkin believes he has succeeded not because of working with star athletes but rather because he keeps Fitness Quest 10 focused on the residents of Scripps Ranch.

"Over half our members are over the age of 50," he stated. "They are hard working mothers and fathers, kids from the local schools. Many of my favorite stories are not about the rich and famous, but rather community members who have achieved a fitness goal they never imagined possible or overcame an illness or hard time in their lives."

Even today Durkin keeps his dream alive by helping others dream, too.

"You only grow as far as you go," he said. "The person who is healthy has a thousand dreams. The person who is unhealthy has only one dream; to get their health back."

Visit fitnessquest10.com.

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Dr. John and his family are Scripps Ranch residents.

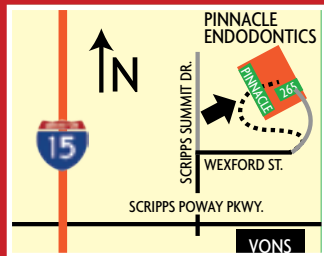
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Newtopia produces crowd pleasing cider

NEWTOPIA

Continued from Page 1

Medieval times and the first recorded reference dates to Roman times. Newtopia's spelling of cider as "cyder" is the old spelling and a nod to the drink's ancient roots, according to Jennifer.

"We use Old World processes to make modern cider," she said. "We are orchard to glass. It's very natural. No unnatural ingredients, no unnatural products – and that's not something you're going to get from most of the other (hard ciders)."

The company gets apples



Newtopia Cyder combines old-world processes with new flavor combinations to make modern cider for a growing market. (photo by @paramorerobert)

from several growers who produce apples specifically for them, including doing specialty crushes of specific apple varieties. Future plans call for Newtopia to start its own apple growing operation. Jennifer said special blends and collaborations with San Diego's active craft beer brewing scene are among the things that set Newtopia's Cyder apart from others.

"Like I said, my husband's a beer guy so we've done a lot of collabs with breweries in San Diego, Los Angeles, Coachella, some other places. Not a lot of cider places, if any, are doing collabs with breweries," she said. "The other piece is that we were the first cider house to open in San Diego proper. So, we

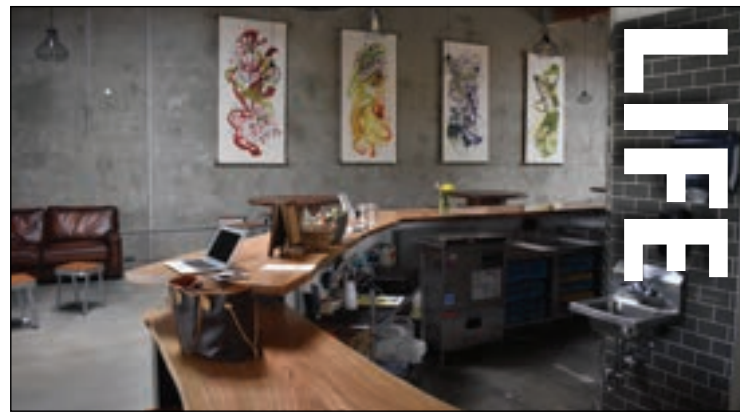
set the bar for what we think is crowd-pleasing cider. To us, that means different varieties all the time."

Newtopia's four flagship ciders include the India Pale, a mosaic dry-hopped cider; a Belgian Saison cider called Belgian Pineapple; Semi-Sweet, an off-dry cider with hints of eucalyptus and hibiscus; and Wyld, a cyder described as funky, sweet and sour.

Jennifer said popular flavors in their ever-evolving menu of specialty ciders include the chai-spiced Chai Me A River, and the tropical influenced Banana Applebun.

At the 2019 San Diego International Beer Competition, Newtopia took home four medals in cider categories, including a gold for Chai Me A River.

Jennifer reports Newtopia was producing 1,200 barrels annually by the end of their second year and are now up to 4,500 barrels. She said they plan to expand production to the 6,000 barrel-per-year rate in the next year. They have also increased distribution to bars and restaurants with the help of



Newtopia Cyder's 10045 Carroll Canyon Rd. Scripps Ranch location includes both cider production facilities and a tasting room. (photo by John Gregory)

Karl Strauss Brewery's distribution business.

"It's on tap all over the place. We have about 300 accounts in San Diego County," Jennifer said. "Karl Strauss is distributing our cider now throughout San Diego County, Inland Empire, Riverside and the Temecula area."

Take-home Newtopia Cyder is also available for purchase in the tasting room, and online in 32-ounce growlers and in four-packs of 16-ounce cans.

The Scripps Ranch tasting room hosts a number of recurring events, including Trivia Tuesdays, live music on Friday evenings and a

dog-friendly special on the third Sunday of each month. The company also has a tasting room in San Marcos at 250 North City Drive.

Moreno said tasting room events for each week are posted every Monday morning on Newtopia's website. As Scripps Ranch residents themselves, connecting with the local community is important.

"We really try to be as community oriented as we can, so we do a lot of donating here in Scripps," she said. "We live in Scripps, so it's really important to us to make sure we're contributing to the community efforts here."

Visit drinknewtopia.com.



Digging right in to the Kokedama plant project at the November Scripps-Mesa Garden Club meeting are Louise Badham along with Jackie and Marty Brown. (courtesy photo)

Looking forward to new planting season

By Denise Stewart

Scripps-Mesa Garden Club celebrated the close of the 2019 gardening season with a pumpkin potluck and a Kokedama project at the November meeting. The Garden Club is now on hiatus for the holiday season, but will be back at their gardening hobby early in the spring planting season. The members will resume regular meetings in the new year.

Master gardeners, professional growers and experienced local plant lovers will make 2020's meeting calendar a busy and informative one. Trips to local gardens, exploration of successful gardening practices and presentations by gardening experts will offer enjoyable learning experiences to backyard farmers.

Monthly meetings at the Scripps Ranch Library's Community Room occur on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. Members of our community are welcome to contact Bob Gale at rgale1943@gmail.com for more information about the club.

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Welcome Club celebrates holidays

By Denise Stewart

The Welcome Club of Scripps Ranch is winding up the year with a festive December. Starting with a Gadabouts lunch at a UTC restaurant on the fifth, members enjoyed a colorful holiday season partying, exchanging gifts, dining and dancing.

On the ninth, the regular monthly meeting at the Community Center featured a gift exchange which is a holiday tradition with the club. Along with holiday treats, members enjoyed opening surprise presents.

A few days later, the ladies will gather at Karen Reilly's home for a Christmas Coffee Klatch. Norma Brownwell and Janet Weigel will be co-hosting the event and helping out with the spread of seasonal brunch goodies. Coffee Klatches have become a club favorite over the years.

The Country Club of Rancho Bernardo will be the spot for the annual Welcome Club's Holiday Dinner/Dance. Once again, Scripps Ranch's favorite DJ, "Yo" Rider, will be back by popular demand.

For several years, Operation Holiday Joy, conducted by the San Diego Armed Services YMCA, has been the beneficiary of Welcome Club's generous spirit. By giving once again, the Welcome Club's members are supplying toys and funds to help make military families' holidays happier.

Welcome Clubbers usually take a little time out from social activities in January to recover from their dynamic Decembers. However, this year the group will gather for a general meeting on the second Monday of the month for an artistic experience led by MaryAnn Harper and Dorothy Mildice. The event will feature stone painting with lots of ideas and materials supplied.

The year 2019 was a special year for the 35-year-old Scripps Ranch Welcome Club. With a new outreach program, the club has attracted many new members and is now including 153 women in its circle of friends.

Should Welcome Club sound like a friendly, new outlet for your social life for the new year, visit scrippsranchnewelcomeclub.com. There, you will find more information about the club as well as the contacts you can make with officers who will welcome your inquiries.

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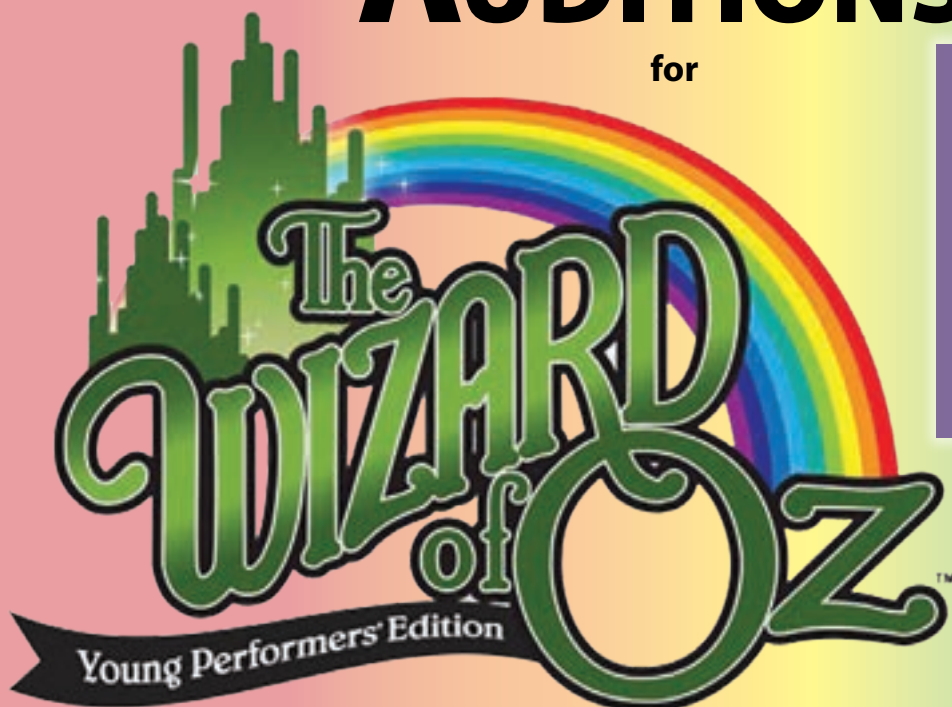


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SCRIPPS RANCH TREE LIGHTING

The Scripps Ranch Tree Lighting at Jerabek Park on Dec. 1 was an inclusive event in which multiple holidays were represented. Above, Girl Scouts visit with Santa. Below, Scouts deliver a load of items collected at the event to U.S. Marines for the Toys for Tots Drive. The bake sale earned nearly \$400 for the Girl Scout Share fund. Coffee was donated by Starbucks on Aviary Drive. The event was a joint effort between Girl Scout Troop 3102 and the Scripps Ranch Civic Association. (courtesy photos)



Holiday season events

'THE NUTCRACKER'

Dec. 13-15, 22-23

The Scripps Performing Arts Academy in conjunction with the Scripps Ballet Theatre will perform Tchaikovsky's Full-Length Ballet "The Nutcracker." The production includes numerous performers from Scripps Ranch. Performances will be Dec. 13 at 10 a.m.; Dec. 14 and 15 at 2 p.m. at the David and Dorothea Garfield Theatre, 4126 Executive Drive. Buy tickets at bit.ly/32xeEmH. In addition, the Scripps Performing Arts Academy will present an abridged version at the Nutcracker Holiday Tea on Dec. 22-23 in The Elizabeth Ballroom at The Fairmont Grand Del Mar, 5300 Grand Del Mar Court. For tickets to the Nutcracker Holiday Tea, call (858) 314-2020.



holiday classic – an unabridged, somewhat unhinged version of "The Nutcracker." Includes many dancers from Scripps Ranch. Shows are Saturday, Dec. 14 at 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Dec. 15 at 3 p.m. in the Joan B. Kroc Performing Arts Center, 6611 University Ave. Buy tickets at mixednuts.brownpapertickets.com.

MLK COMMUNITY CHOIR

Dec. 15

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Choir will perform in the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library Center on Sunday, Dec. 15, at 2:30 p.m. The program will include traditional and contemporary spirituals and gospel music as well as some spirituals of the season. There is no charge for the concert, sponsored by Scripps Ranch Friends of the Library (SRFOL), although donations are appreciated.

See **HOLIDAY EVENTS**, Page 6

'MIXED NUTS'

Dec. 14, 15

The Lynch Dance Institute presents "Mixed Nuts" holiday dance performance. Enjoy this bold twist on the



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Holiday hours!

Dec. 22: 10am-3pm
Dec. 23: 10am-6pm
Dec. 24: 10am-4pm

Dec. 25-Jan 2: Closed for family time
Jan 3: Re-open for regular hours

Warm holiday greetings

We, the publishers of Scripps Ranch News, offer our most sincere holiday wishes to all our readers and followers.

We truly enjoyed creating this handcrafted community newspaper for you this year. This publication and its associated digital media network have provided a substantial number of stories about Scripps Ranch residents that would have otherwise gone unnoticed. It seems the natural evolution of this paper has allowed us to bring you the local insiders' view of the real Scripps Ranch. Essentially, Scripps Ranch News is telling the stories about you, the residents, as they happen – and the people in these articles are amazing.

We strive to provide a quality product that this community deserves. We are

always open to learn your views. In fact, approximately 85 percent of our ideas for stories have come from you, our readers. We truly hope we have earned your respect and trust. Furthermore, extensive plans are underway to expand coverage and upgrade methods of providing even more, detailed news about your community.

There are numerous reasons to be grateful as we enjoy the holiday season and head into 2020. We have formed so many wonderful relationships with people in Scripps Ranch and look forward to meeting more of you in the next year.

Again, we thank all our friends, neighbors, readers, advertisers and everyone who has supported us and sent the many kind words of encouragement and appreciation.

Have a wonderful holiday and a prosperous New Year!

John & Jacqueline Gregory,
Publishers



MLK Choir set to perform Dec. 15

The Martin Luther King, Jr., Community Choir San Diego is scheduled to perform on Sunday, Dec. 15, beginning at 2:30 p.m. in the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library Center.

Under the direction of Pastor Ken Anderson, this accomplished ensemble will perform traditional and contemporary spirituals and gospel music, including some spirituals of the season.

This concert of inspirational and uplifting music is part of the monthly "Pleasure of Your Company" music series sponsored by the Scripps Ranch Friends of the Library.

There is no charge for the concert, although donations



The Martin Luther King, Jr., Community Choir San Diego is planning to perform gospel music and some spirituals of the holiday season in the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library Center on Sunday, Dec. 15, at 2:30 p.m. (courtesy photo)

are appreciated.

Meet the singers at a complimentary post-concert reception.

Scripps Miramar Ranch Library Center is located at 10301 Scripps Lake Drive

across from Miramar Lake. Overflow parking is available on Meanley Drive off Scripps Ranch Boulevard. Call (858) 538-8158 or visit www.srfol.org for more information.

HOLIDAY EVENTS

Continued from Page 5

COLLECTION FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Dec. 18

Scripps Ranch resident Victoria Muschek and her family collect and package hygiene items for homeless students in an annual holiday drive. They are collecting items such as small bottles of shampoo,

small soaps, toothbrushes, toothpaste, etc. The items will be sorted, packaged and delivered to the San Diego-based nonprofit Monarch School, a school for this city's homeless students. Items may be dropped off at Chile Peppers restaurant, 10299 Scripps Trail, through Dec. 18. For questions, contact Victoria Muschek: bmuschek@san.rr.com.

WINTER WONDERLAND

Dec. 19

Celebrate the season with the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library at this holiday event for kids and families on Thursday, Dec. 19, at 3:30 p.m. No registration is required.

LUNCH WITH SANTA

Dec. 20

Enjoy a hearty lunch, cookie decorating, crafts and a chance to talk and take a picture with Santa himself from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20. Tickets cost \$15 per child; ages 1-10. Tickets are on sale through Dec. 13 or until sold out. Tickets can be purchased only at the recreation center during registration hours. Call (858) 538-8085 to confirm tickets are still available prior to arriving. Scripps Ranch Recreation Center, 11454 Blue Cypress Drive.

BECKY'S GIFT TOY DRIVE

The Becky's Gift toy drive provides presents during the holiday season to families affected by cancer. New, unwrapped toys for children ages 1-16 are now being collected. Gifts will be delivered to four cancer centers in San Diego. Becky's Gift collects unwrapped new toys for children 1-16 years of age. Gift cards are also accepted. Gifts can be dropped off at Scripps Rock Dental, 12112 Scripps Summit Drive, Suite C.; St. Gregory the Great Catholic School, 15315 Stonebridge Parkway; or contact Christie Jackson at christie@jacksonlane.com or Becky Walton at becky-walton@san.rr.com and they can pick the gifts up. Visit [facebook.com/BeckysGift](https://www.facebook.com/BeckysGift) or beckysgifts.org.

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A member of the Scripps Ranch High School Falcons Corps and Color Guard leaps gracefully during a halftime performance at a Falcons football game. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

SCRIPPS RANCH IN PICTURES 2019



Macie Kinne of Scripps Ranch High School appears to be soaring in a girls basketball game against Serra High School. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Scripps Ranch High School boys soccer player Cameron Toerien gets an accidental kick to the face during competition last season. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

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Scripps Ranch High soccer player Abigail "Abby" Stewart keeps her eye on the ball during a 2-0 victory over La Jolla High on Jan. 11. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

SRHS Falcons basketball player Andy Manso draws a crowd as he heads to the hoop during a 51-52 loss to Mira Mesa on Feb. 8.

Gideon gives a kitty kiss to Silas, a mini Australian shepherd. The two were the stars of "Puppy Love," a feature about new pets in Scripps Ranch households. (courtesy of Shannon Higgins)



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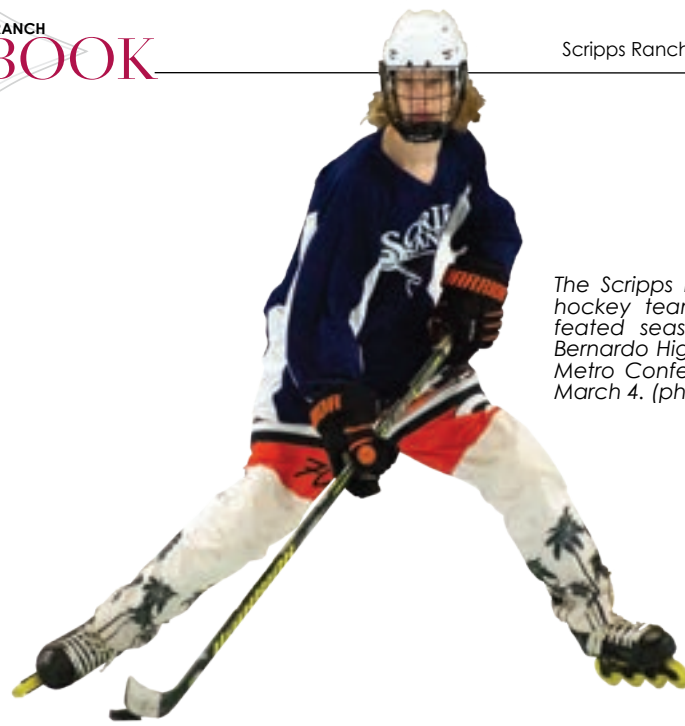
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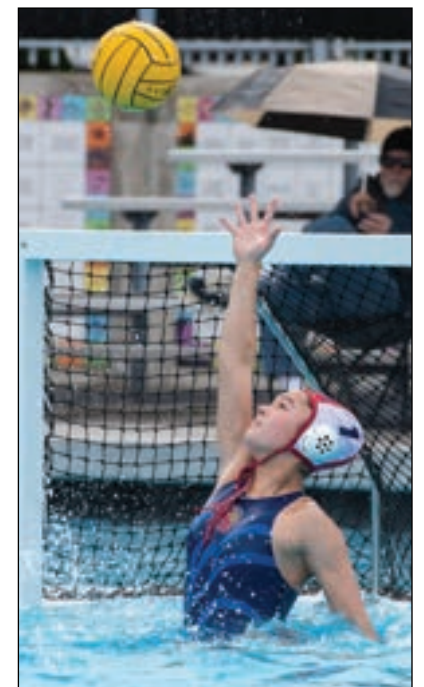
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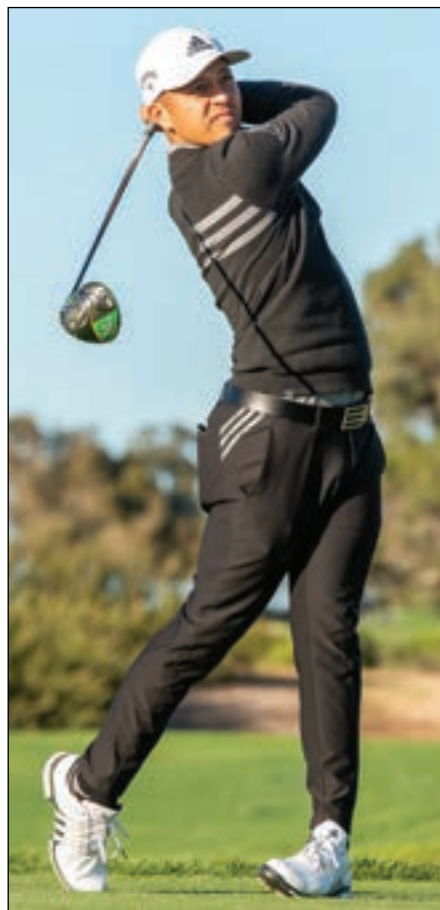
The Scripps Ranch High School roller hockey team completed an undefeated season by beating Rancho Bernardo High 9-6 to win the 2019 CIF Metro Conference Championship on March 4. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Scripps Ranch High softball player Victoria Denosta makes contact as the team won the Cougar Classic tournament. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



SRHS girls water polo player Sarah Nakahara defends against a shot on goal in a 4-7 quarterfinal loss to University City High in CIF San Diego Section Girls Water Polo playoffs. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Xander Schaufele, a former golf standout at Scripps Ranch High, made a sensational showing at the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines Golf Course. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Scripps Ranch High School swimmer Ty Konold makes waves as he competes in the annual Ironman Relays on April 6. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Samuel Young and Natalia Maggio performed in the production of "Return Engagements" during Scripps Ranch Theatre's 40th anniversary season. (photo by Ken Jacques)



Elise Gaudreau (left) and Regan Cox of Brownie Troop 3985 sell cookies on Red Cedar Drive. (photo by John Gregory)



Mason Bowen surveys the field intensely during SRHS boys lacrosse early season action. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



This Scripps Ranch Lacrosse Association player demonstrates excellent form as she sticks with her opponent. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



The SRHS girls lacrosse team defeated La Jolla to capture the CIF Girls Lacrosse Championships Open Division title on May 18. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Scripps Ranch Women's Club scholarship winners and their mothers attending a special dinner included (from left) Lisa Nguyen, Haley Nguyen, Anna Smith, Sara Smith, Michele He and Feng Liu He. (courtesy photo)



The Scripps Ranch High School softball team captured the CIF San Diego Section 2019 Division I Softball Championship. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Students wore colorful garb representing many cultures at Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary School's International Night. (photo by John Gregory)



A participant in the parent/coach home run derby swung away during the Scripps Ranch Little League BBQ and Movie Night. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

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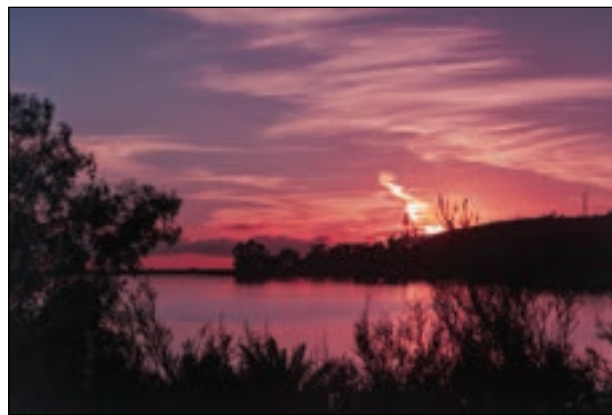
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"Moon Over Sunset Ridge" at Montaubon Way (photo by Daniel Zhou)



Backyard bird (photo by Trung La)



Miramar Reservoir (photo by Rahul Dhameja)



Lake Miramar (photo by Dave Hernandez)



Sweet Willow Way (photo by Emma McIntosh)



Pop Warner Football at Scripps Ranch High School (photo by Claire Sugishita of Sproutography)

2019 PHOTO CONTEST

The winner of the 2019 Scripps Ranch News Photo Contest is Lisa Shadburn. This year's contest featured a wide array of beautiful photography submitted by some very talented photographers. Congratulations to all entrants. We, at Scripps Ranch News, are proud to showcase your work, and thank you for sharing your wonderful photos.



North side of Spruce Grove Avenue between Semillon (photo by Harvey Rogoff)



With all the rain last winter, this bougainvillea went crazy in Stonebridge Estates (photo by Patrice Subalak)



Trail between Red Rock and Ironwood (photo by Joanne Sturch)



Cynthia Collins, owner of Collins Family Jewelers, and her five daughters at her surprise party thrown by husband Bill Collins to celebrate her birthday at the Crown Pointe Clubhouse. (submitted by Cynthia Collins)



Miramar Lake (photo by Patlis)



WINNER: Lisa Shadburn is the winner of the 2019 Scripps Ranch News Photo contest for her shot of Naomi Shadburn playing softball in a pink tutu in Cypress Canyon Park. (photo by Lisa Shadburn)



Hummingbird in backyard feeding at the honeysuckle flowers (photo by Sandeep Dhar)



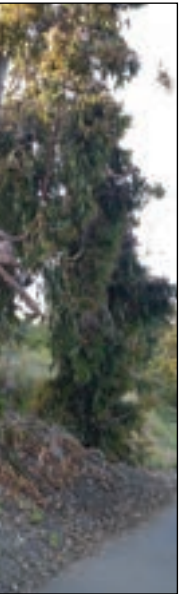
Taken in backyard on Birch Bluff Avenue (photo by Frank Ficano)



"Magic Cloud Lake" (photo by Richard Danziger)



Taken in backyard on Birch Bluff Avenue (photo by Frank Ficano)



(photo by Simon)



Beautiful hawk taking flight from his perch in backyard palm (photo by Dorian Sailer)



Miramar Lake at sunset, looking west (photo by Monica Hampton)

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Bob Dingeman, known as Mr. Scripps Ranch because of his extensive activities as a civic leader in this community, passed away May 4. He was a decorated soldier in the U.S. Army, retiring as a colonel before moving to Scripps Ranch and leading the Scripps Ranch Civic Association for many years. He accomplished so much for this community the San Diego Unified School District named Dingeman Elementary School in his honor when it opened in 1995. (photo by John Gregory)



Scripps Ranch High held commencement ceremonies for the class of 2019 on June 12 at the Jenny Craig Pavilion on the campus of the University of San Diego. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



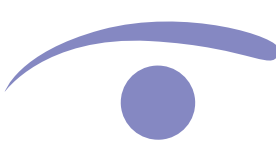
A seemingly endless stream of runners filled the street in the Scripps Ranch Old Pros' annual Fourth of July Run & Ride. (photo by John Gregory)



The Scripps Ranch High girls track team won the CIF San Diego Section Division 1 Track and Field Finals on May 18. Later, the team won the 4x100 Relay State Title. (courtesy photo)




The Mighty Untouchables performed in Hoyt Park for Scripps Ranch Symphony in the Park's concert series on June 9. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



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Lorelei and Sienna Fleizach on their first day of school. (by Marisa Fleizach)



The Scripps Ranch Fourth of July Parade brought out thousands of spectators and participants for this annual event on a sunny day. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

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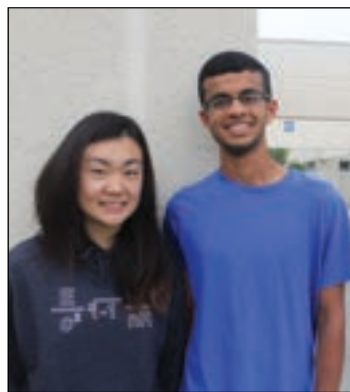
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Jayne Gomes – Scripps Ranch resident since 1970



Alex Costello earned the title of international master of chess. (courtesy photo)



SRHS senior class officers (from left) Amber Almond, Grady Dok and Alexandra Kotsos planned the senior prom. (photo by Tracey LoVuolo)



Michelle He and Ashwin Kumar were Scripps Ranch High's valedictorian and salutatorian. (photo by Laura Hogan)

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Maddie and Matthew staffed their freshly squeezed orange juice stand. (by Sean Powell)

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Naha Yalamanchili won the Scripps Mesa Fireworks T-Shirt Design Contest. (courtesy photo)

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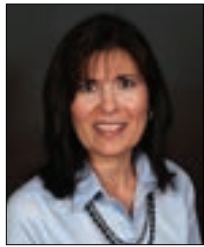
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Tyler Fields scores a touchdown against Fallbrook High in an early season SRHS victory. The varsity football team won 12 straight games without a loss before succumbing to La Jolla in the CIF Division III championship game. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



The SRHS varsity field hockey team earned its second consecutive CIF San Diego Section Open Division Field Hockey Championship. (photo by John Gregory)



Kaylin, Ava and Ella Moritz were ready for Halloween. (by Rachel Moritz)



Twenty-four high school seniors were among Scripps Ranch Girl Scouts gathered for a bridge ceremony on June 9. (photo by John Gregory)



Drummers from the SRHS marching band helped inspire the varsity football team before a game. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



The Scripps Ranch High School Falcons Corps and Color Guard continued to place high in band competitions. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



SRHS cheerleaders seem to be everywhere, performing routines and keeping spirits high. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



The Girls on the Run program at Miramar Ranch Elementary School helps girls develop confidence and learn about giving back to their community – and train to run a 5k. (courtesy photo)

Girls on the Run

It's about giving back, being a good citizen

By Bella Ross

Girls on the Run at Miramar Ranch Elementary School may sound like it's all about running, but head coach Erin Patel assures that's not the case.

"The program isn't a running program," Patel said. "Yeah, we run a 5k in the end, but it's mostly focused on just developing confidence in the girls and also teaching them that giving back to their community is a big part of, you know, being a good citizen and a good human."

The club, which has about 15 members between third and fifth grade, is split into two important parts. The first part of its meetings focus on issues important to young girls, such as negative advertising, self image and how to be a good friend. For the second portion, girls are sent to the track where they are encouraged to meet personal running goals, Patel said.

Although most girls aren't able to finish a 5k at the start of the program, Patel said the most growth happens in their development as charitable humans. This semester, the group voted to put together "busy bags" for kids in the hospital.

"We have enough stuff, I believe, to make 90 bags and so the bags will be filled with little things just to keep you busy if you're, like, in your hospital bed and you can't move around that much," Patel said.

Beyond just helping others, Patel said, the girls must learn about themselves as well.

She said a lecture about gossip was particularly impactful. As a mother who

doesn't have a girl in the third-to-fifth-grade age range, Patel said she was shocked to learn about the pervasiveness of this issue.

"I think by the time that they had asked all their questions and we had talked about everything that was concerning them, we were almost out of time for

See **GIRLS ON THE RUN**, Page 18

Series brings college counselors to SRHS

By Bella Ross

For longer than most people on campus would know, Scripps Ranch High School was not open to college admissions counselors.

That changed when the school's principal, Nicole DeWitt, arrived and decided to seek some help in that area in the summer of 2018, soliciting the assistance of Ginger Colletto, a parent of two Scripps Ranch High students.

"The goal was to bring in colleges on the campus because they hadn't had any colleges visiting with the students at Scripps Ranch High for a really long time," Colletto said. "I have no idea as to the last time that they allowed any college admissions counselors on campus."

With Colletto's help, the Wednesday College and Career Series was born.

Colletto spent the summer working alongside a woman named Maureen Roadman, from the post-high school guidance group Explore Solutions, to put together a weekly program that would assist students in their college and career searches during the



Ginger Colletto (center, in burgundy) spearheads the Wednesday College Series at Scripps Ranch High School in which college counselors visit to explain their programs to students. (courtesy photo)

school's lunch period.

Now, the program has become a well-known program on campus, bringing in 87 colleges to the school's library so far this semester. Although some meetings only feature one representative, others have reached up to 40, Colletto said.

"The goal really is just to expand the kids' horizons, you know, for them to realize that there's a lot of dif-

ferent options out there and that there's a lot of schools out there that really are interested in getting the kids from Scripps Ranch High because they are just truly a remarkable group of students," Colletto said.

She said past meetings have featured schools such as the University of Washington, George Mason University, Miami University

See **COUNSELORS**, Page 18

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"Dorothy in Wonderland" cast members are (back row, from left) Jadelynn Doan as Glinda, Rohan Balam as Scarecrow, Enzo Kublinski-Kopp as Tin Man, Anoushka Majumder as Dorothy, Juliana Shadburn as Toto, Haruto Umlauf as Caterpillar, Vaness Xu as White Rabbit, Angela An as Alice, Sammy Ippolito as Queen of Hearts, (front row) Eric Min as Lion and Lilandra Witt as Tiger Lily. (photo by Lisa Shadburn)

Dingeman actors present 'Dorothy in Wonderland'

When Oz meets Wonderland, Dorothy and Alice must avoid the Queen of Hearts and find their way home. A white rabbit goes rushing by, late for an appointment, a scarecrow attends a mad tea party and a newly courageous lion chats with a disappearing Cheshire cat. Dingeman Elementary School fourth and fifth grade students from Mr. Saguil's and Ms. Morioka's

classes will show that two worlds can magically fit together in the charmingly funny musical "Dorothy in Wonderland" on Wednesday, Dec. 18 at 6:30 p.m. in the Dingeman Elementary Multi-Purpose Room.

This marks Dingeman Elementary School's 22nd annual musical performance. The performance is free to attend, with donations graciously accepted to help offset production costs.

COUNSELORS

Continued from Page 17


and UCLA as well as local options like UC San Diego and San Diego State University. Colletto also brings in career representatives including some from the City of San Diego, and engineers from the phone case company Otterbox.

One of Colletto's main goals for the program is to bring in a diverse selection of schools, no matter the size of their campus. She said she hopes students will take advantage of the opportunity to ask representatives specific questions about each campus.




One of the biggest things students should consider asking college counselors is the cost of attending their school, Colletto said.

"I think in the past we've only looked at our own state schools and now we're finding that a lot of the schools out of state are giving a tremendous amount and merit scholarships, making it affordable for kids to go out of state and be able to get out in four years," she said.

Although only students are allowed to attend the Wednesday series, Colletto said parents are encouraged to visit the College Corner with their kids, a webpage she compiles with information about post-secondary education options. Visit bit.ly/2LoF7NG.



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GIRLS ON THE RUN

Continued from Page 17

that whole lesson and our lessons are like an hour and 15 minutes," Patel said.

At this point in the year, the girls' 5k was just around the corner. They were scheduled to complete the run at Crown Point in Mission Bay on Dec. 9 alongside about 500 other girls from other Girls on the Run chapters in San Diego, Patel said.

In a recent practice 5k, the girls left no doubt that they would kill it at the main event, Patel said.

"They all completed the practice 5k," she explained, adding that she was pretty confident that the "girls would do great."

Patel said the club won't be returning in the spring because many of the girls will be participating in other sports, but she is planning on bringing back the group next fall.

"I know a couple of girls in third grade are already talking about next year like, 'I want to do this next year. I want to do that,'" Patel said. "So, we definitely will be doing it again next year."

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A swarm of Falcons defenders descend upon a La Jolla player. (photo by Justin Fine)



Riley Merrigan turns the corner against La Jolla. (photo by Justin Fine)



SPORTS

Falcons wind up amazing season

By John Gregory

The 2019 season for the Scripps Ranch High (SRHS) varsity football team was historic. The team was undefeated in all 10 of its regular season games and won two CIF San Diego Division III playoff games before losing to La Jolla High 10-17 in the hard-fought championship game Nov. 30.

While SRHS defeated La Jolla 17-7 earlier in the season, the Vikings brought a much-improved team featuring tough defense in the championship game. The contest was close, but the Falcons could not generate enough scoring to top the Vikings.

Still, Scripps Ranch players provided an amazing season for the entire community. The Falcons football team had never been undefeated in an entire regular season before. The best previous record was 8-4. SRHS won its league. The last time the team won a league title was 1994. This is the first time the SRHS football team has been to a CIF championship game.

Falcons Head Coach Marlon Gardinera described how proud he was of the team, emphasizing the team's high academic achievements, as he always does. He was asked to mention some of his individual players:

He started with senior Mehki Shaw, a team captain, second-year starter playing receiver and cornerback, and a 4.0 student. Shaw was named All-City League Defensive Player of the Year.

"He's a phenomenal young man. He is the most talented, most dedicated, most humble football player I have ever coached," Gardinera said. "He's just an amazing young man. He's a pillar on this team."

Nicholas Gardinera, Marlon's son, was named All-City League Offensive Player of the Year. He was rated the number 4 running

back in the county before the championship game for rushing yards, accumulating 1,693 rushing yards, 24 rushing TDs, 8 TDs in two playoff games and 2 receiving TDs. He has a 4.20 GPA.

The coach said quarterback Luke Durkin was critical in making split second decisions on run-pass options. His GPA is 4.42.

"Hard working. Incredible leadership skills. Game management," Gardinera said in describing Durkin. "He reads the field and gives us the better option."

Josh Boamah is a 6-3, 240-pound defensive lineman who runs the 40 in 4.5 seconds.

"He's one of the strongest

kids on the team, one of the most athletic kids on the team. He probably will have a choice of 25 colleges to choose from in terms of scholarships," Gardinera said.

Incredibly, Boamah didn't play football until this year. He played tuba in the band.

Kicker Matt Killam was named All-City League Special Team Player of the Year. He has a 4.42 GPA and is expected to get a scholarship.

Gardinera also highlighted tight end Mikey McGibney, who he described as a Division I-type college player.

"He is the lynchpin to our offense," Gardinera said. "He makes every critical block necessary for us to have the run game that we do."

Ethan Nicholas heads downfield with Vikings in pursuit during the CIF San Diego Division III Championship Game. (photo by Justin Fine)

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Young basketball team shows promise

By Laura Hogan

With a strong defense, the Scripps Ranch High School (SRHS) girls basketball team is hoping for a winning start to the new season.

The team will begin league play on Jan. 14 with a game at Christian High School, but has a busy schedule of games and tournament play in the meantime. The players will seek a repeat performance of last year's winning 14-7 season despite a heart-breaking loss in last year's California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Division 1 semi-finals against Bonita Vista High School. The team is helmed by James Stewart, head coach and retired U.S. Marine.

"I'm very excited about this year and the possibilities of this team. With an average player height of about 5-9 or 5-10 – we're not tall but we're not small either," Stewart said.

Stewart, in his 12th year of coaching at SRHS, noted the potential of the team beyond this year as the young team consists of three seniors, two juniors, two sophomores and three freshmen.

"Even though we're fairly young, we start our program in the summer where we focus on player development. By the time we get to the official start of basketball, we are ready to go – we're in shape," he said.

Stewart said the team should be highly competitive this year given the depth of the team's bench, the ability to score and their remarkable defense. He said some of the players to watch closely are Kayla Williams and Macie Kinne, juniors and All-League players, as well as Amanda Kramer, sophomore. Stewart said Kinne is a very polished player. Williams averaged 14 points a game last season and Kramer averaged seven points a game.

Stewart said one of the greatest strengths of this team is its defense and the players' ability to work together.

"Since I've been at Scripps, we have been a neighborhood team; all of our girls come

from Scripps Ranch. It's very rare that we get girls from outside of Scripps Ranch. This year, with the exception of two girls, every player was born in Scripps. We are a community team, and I am pretty proud of that. To have the ability to field a team that's highly competitive from one area is great," Stewart said.

The girls basketball program has a longstanding tradition of excellence both on and off the court. Stewart said over the course of his 12 years with the program, the players have maintained an average GPA of 3.8, which is a testament to their focus and hard work.

Stewart encouraged the community to come out and cheer on the talented and highly skilled team.

The next game is at home against Westview High School on Dec. 11 with a scheduled 7 p.m. tip-off. Then, the Lady Falcons will play Poway High on Monday, Dec. 16, at home with a 7 p.m. start time.



Scripps Ranch High football coach Marlon Gardinera is flanked by (left) son Nicholas Gardinera and (right) quarterback Luke Durkin. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

STRONGEST MAN

Continued from Page 1

cause I wanted that team one more year to help them transition into high school," Gardinera said.

But, the high school offered him the varsity job. The secret to his success as a coach was to "raise the bar," he said. His quest for excellence was highlighted by a commitment to academics.

"If you have a C, you don't need to practice football, you need to practice school," he said.

Gardinera has been successful even though he is afflicted with ailments that would crush a normal person.

"I have what's called amyloidosis. The amyloid protein in my body mutates. Wherever it mutated, it destroyed," Gardinera explained. "The

first place it went was my hands and feet, so I have peripheral neuropathy."

Peripheral neuropathy is pain from nerve damage, which Gardinera has in his hands and feet every moment of every day.

Then, doctors found he had stage 2 chronic kidney disease. In December 2007, he was told he had a year or two to live because the amyloid protein would destroy his heart. In June 2009, he had a liver transplant to "simply reset the clock," Gardinera said.

In 2013, because of medication to stop his liver from rejecting, he caught a "bug," which turned to pneumonia, which turned to sepsis. His heart stopped and he was legally dead for a few minutes, he said. Then he had total organ failure. He was in a coma for eight days before finally pulling through.

"When you've been told you have a year or two to live and then you actually die, you cherish the time you have with your kids," Gardinera said. "I did not want to be a high school head coach. What I wanted was to be around my sons as long and as often as possible. So, I took the responsibility because I know what it takes, and I know what type of culture I want my sons to experience in their high school years."

Gardinera noted that he also treats the other 90 kids in his program the same, as if they are his sons as well.

He said that the drugs he must take to keep his body from rejecting his liver will eventually cause cancer. In addition, he learned he has stage 4 chronic kidney disease last month.

"I will likely be on dialysis and need a transplant at some point," Gardinera said.

Still, he won't let his diagnosis get in his way.

"I'm alive and I'm living to the fullest," he said. "That certainly is what makes time mean so much to me."

This is why Marlon Gardinera is the strongest man.

To read the full story, visit ScrippsRanchNews.com and click on the News page.



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Coach expects another successful season

By Dave Kensler

Since Scripps Ranch High School first opened in 1993, there has been one head coach for the girls soccer team. That coach is Larry Pernicano – and his expectations are high for yet another successful season.

‘The athleticism of girls today is far above what it was when I began coaching.’

—Larry Pernicano

“Every year I have coached, we have made the CIF playoffs and I expect we will do it again this year,” he stated. “We have been ranked in the top 10 for the past 15-years and I believe that will continue as well.”

Despite losing seven starters from last year’s team, Pernicano likes the fact that about one-third of this year’s team are freshmen.

“We have eight freshmen and I really liked their attitude and energy in the tryouts. They are eager to learn and play,” he explained.

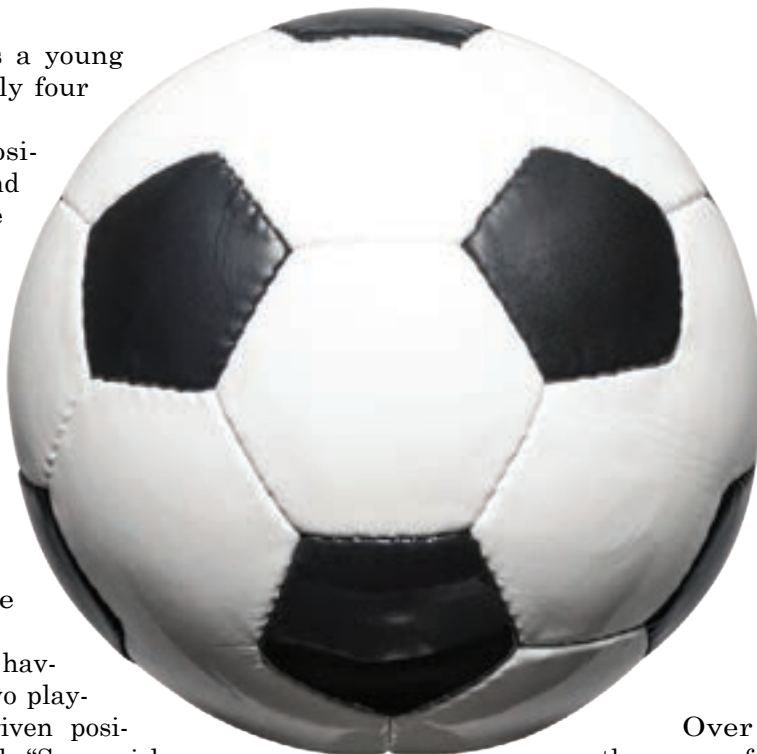
“Overall, it is a young team with only four seniors.”

While 10 position players and a goalie are on the field at one time, there are a total of 23 girls on the team and Pernicano has developed a system for how he likes to structure the team.

“I believe in having at least two players for any given position,” he noted. “Some girls can play more than two positions, but two girls per position is the minimum. You should always have players on the sidelines who can play each position.”

Even then, as every high school coach knows for any sport, every year players graduate and move on and new players arrive.

“Every year you have to create a new team in some way,” Pernicano said. “That means some girls also need to learn new positions as well to help the team.”



Over the years of coaching, as girls high school sports have evolved and grown, there is one change that stands out more than others, according to Pernicano.

“The athleticism of girls today is far above what it was when I began coaching,” he stated. “Back then, the girls could be technically sound with soccer skills, but they were not often athletic. I have girls on the team now who work out and train seven days a week. They are athletes.”

To build a team today requires

girls who make both the soccer and athletic commitment to the sport.

“Our season is 23-games in eight weeks, or about three games a week,” Pernicano said. “That is a lot of games in a short time span. It takes about six games for a team to get its chemistry and learn to play with and trust each other.”

Most coaches believe improvement and learning how to win comes in part from losing and Pernicano is no exception. However, he has a unique approach in which he lets the girls put on their coaching hats.

“We play to win but when you lose, you learn what you need to work on to get better,” he said. “At halftime of a game, most coaches begin by telling the team what they are doing well and what needs to be better. I do the opposite and listen. I ask the girls to tell me what they think is going well and not so well. And you know what? Most of the time they are right.”

Pernicano appears to be heading into another season in which a lot of things will go right, and the winning traditions of the team will continue.

“By the time CIFs come around, we will be ready,” he said.

The girls varsity soccer team is scheduled to play Mira Mesa High at home on Monday, Dec. 16 at 6 p.m. The team is scheduled to play Steel Canyon High at home on Tuesday, Dec. 17, with a 6 p.m. starting time.

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T O W N H O M E S



Hot Cocoa Cookie Cups are perfect for parties and gatherings. (copyright Hershey's)

Hot Cocoa Cookie Cups

(StatePoint) Whether you're hosting a party, or you just want to bring some joy and sweetness into your home, experts say that flavors evocative of the season will be sure to please friends and family alike. To get inspired, check out special seasonal editions of your favorite ingredients. For example, Hershey's Hot Cocoa Kisses were so popular last year that most stores ran out of them by Thanksgiving. You can also incorporate them into this easy recipe for Hot Cocoa Cookie Cups:

Ingredients:

- Brownie bites
- Marshmallow fluff
- White, ready to spread frosting
- Miniature marshmallows
- Mini Pretzels
- Hershey's Kisses Hot Cocoa with Marshmallow Chocolates

Directions:

- Buy brownie bites at your favorite bakery
- Add marshmallow spread equal parts marshmallow fluff and fluffy white ready-to-spread frosting and top with miniature marshmallows.
- Use 1/2 small pretzels for mug handle
- Top off with a couple of Hot Cocoa Kisses

More holiday recipes and tips can be found at hersheys.com.

Tips for hosting holiday houseguests

You'll likely know of any special considerations you will need to make for individual guests, but if you aren't sure, ask in advance. For older guests, be sure the floor is free of tripping hazards and that walkways are well-lit. For families, offer a room away from noise so small children can sleep undisturbed at their regular bedtimes. Anticipating and accommodating allergies, dietary restrictions and mobility issues can help keep guests healthy, happy and safe during their stay with you.

Better bedding

Whether you are hosting one guest or many, it's important to ensure that everyone under your roof has a comfortable place to sleep. Thanks to the latest updates in air mattress technology, that's easier than ever these days. Before the holidays, get equipped with compact, high-quality air mattresses – which are a must-have for travelers who need to pack a car compactly, as well as hosts who want to store guest bedding between uses. One such option is the



A full holiday house does not need to be overwhelming. With a few considerations, you can create a joyful holiday experience for you and your houseguests. (StatePoint)

Intex PremAire ThermaLux airbed with Fiber-Tech interior construction, which inflates in 4 to 5 minutes. Made from a Microcell contour top designed to insulate in cold weather and absorb moisture on warm nights, it even contains a USB port for charging and built-in storage for cords and small personal items. Other models from Intex – which come in various sizes and supports – offer

such luxuries as headboards, raised bed heights and plush air pillowtop systems.

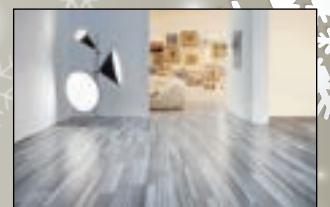
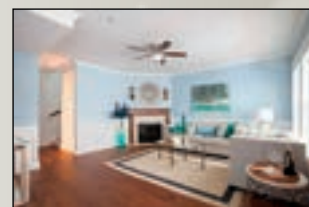
A stocked bathroom

Not only will a well-stocked bathroom help avoid last-minute trips to the store, it will make guests feel comfortable and welcome upon arrival. You'll always want to provide a set of linens for each guest, as well as shampoo, conditioner and

soap in the shower. Having a few additional items on hand – disposable razors, cotton swabs, combs, toothbrushes and toothpaste – is a nice touch. For many reasons, guests often arrive without certain essentials. Maybe they forgot an item at home. Maybe TSA made them toss something in the trash. Whatever the reason, you'll want to prepare for this common occurrence.

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Thank you to all of our 2019 clients for another successful year!

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Gourmet kitchen features double island, granite counters and walk-in pantry. Great room includes built-in media center. Large master suite. No Mello Roos.

Wishing you a joyous holiday season with peace and cheer in the new year!

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13521 Caminito Mendiola	\$2,150,000
4117 Lymer Drive	\$1,725,000
11416 Fairwind Court	\$1,565,000
13792 Mar Scenic Drive	\$1,540,500
5215 Pacifica Drive	\$1,535,000
1112 Santa Madera Court	\$1,475,582
671 Ida Avenue	\$1,462,500
10350 Rue Mont Grenoble	\$1,370,000
12280 Semillon Boulevard	\$1,300,000
15887 Atkins Place	\$1,260,000
852 Genoa Way	\$1,085,000
7806 Doug Hill #13	\$1,065,000
11439 Cypress Woods Drive	\$917,000
15883 Lesar Place	\$879,000
1158 Cambria Way	\$845,000
5575 Lesa Road	\$789,000
3762 Crete Street	\$755,900
8909 Scorpius Way	\$739,000
21730 Deer Grass Drive	\$699,900
2007 Countrywood Court	\$670,000
12914 Carmel Creek Drive #16	\$665,000
1856 Palisades Drive	\$650,000
4245 58th Street	\$616,000
12215 Buckskin Trail	\$600,000
3705 Clairemont Mesa	\$517,000
2423 Longstaff Court	\$480,000
427 9th Avenue #1101	\$449,000
255 Salinas Drive #151	\$415,000
4201 Paseo De Paz	\$415,000
11016 Via Parma	\$330,000
1095 Shadowridge Drive #127	\$275,000
9255 North Magnolia Avenue #279	\$214,000
TOTAL	\$40,413,381



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