

CHAMPIONS! SRHS field hockey

The Scripps Ranch High School varsity field hockey team defeated archrival Serra High 2-1 to win the CIF San Diego Section 2019 Open Division Field Hockey Championships on Nov. 16 at Scripps Ranch. This is the second consecutive year the varsity field hockey team has captured the CIF San Diego Championship. Earlier in the season, Scripps Ranch lost to Serra on Oct. 9, but defeated them in the last game of the season to capture the Western League title in overtime on Nov. 4.

See story on page 17.

UNDEFEATED!

The Scripps Ranch High School (SRHS) varsity football team continued its outstanding season with a 42-7 quarterfinals victory over West Hills High School on Nov. 15 as it drives toward a CIF Section Championship. A packed house witnessed the Falcons add to this year's undefeated record, now at 11-0. Scripps Ranch is scheduled to play in a semifinal game against Central High School at Scripps Ranch, 7 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 22. See quarterfinal game photos on page 19.

While the SRHS varsity football players have gained well-deserved attention, they are not the only Falcons with an undefeated season:

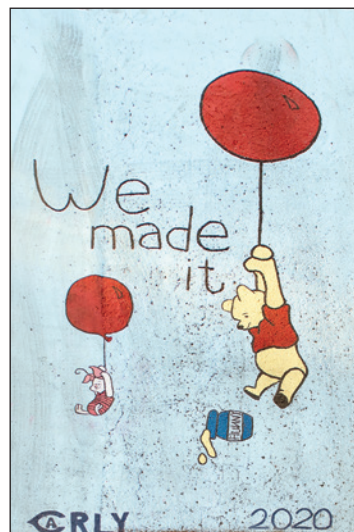
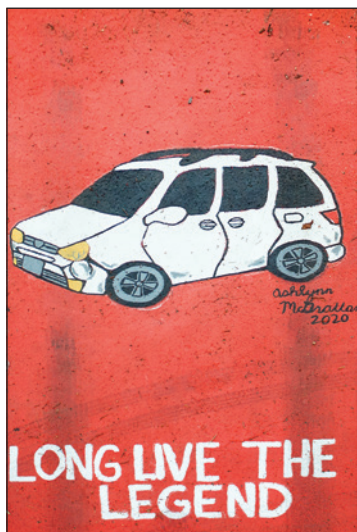
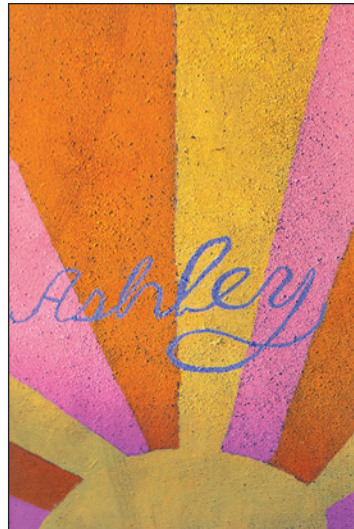
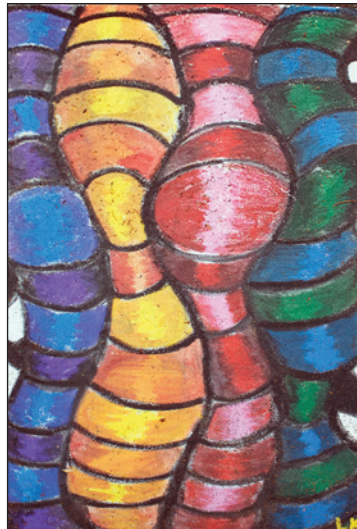
JV field hockey

The Scripps Ranch High field hockey program is one of the best in the country and, from the looks of things, this dynasty will continue. The reason is that the school's junior varsity field hockey team was not only undefeated this season, it was unscored upon! The team's record was an incredible 29-0-1. The lone tie was against rival Serra High earlier in the season. That game ended 0-0. However, the Lady Falcons avenged that loss with a 1-0 victory against Serra in the last game of the year. The SRHS JVs also won three JV tournaments.

JV football

The Falcons JV football team was also undefeated, with a 9-0 record. Led by quarterback Alex Zappia, a

See **SRHS SPORTS**, Page 16



COLORFUL PARKING SPOTS

Many seniors at Scripps Ranch High School were busy in late October painting and coloring their new parking spaces for the 2019-20 school year in one of the school's parking lots. These students won bids for their parking spaces during an annual auction that raises funds for senior activities throughout the year at the school. Seniors were able to purchase their own parking spaces and personalize them with their artwork in this colorful school tradition.

Photos by Ralph LoVuolo

Holiday traditions

Yannis Pihás shares meal advice and a recipe

By Laura Hogan

Yannis Pihás, the popular owner of Yanni's Bar and Grill in Scripps Ranch, has been celebrating Thanksgiving in the States since he immigrated from Greece in 1985.

"I immigrated to the United States about 34 years ago. My background is in economics, but when I came here, I could not speak English. As I was going to school, I started working in a kitchen as a prep-cook," Pihás said. "As my English improved, I became a server, then a host, then a maître d', then a wine steward, then assistant manager and then manager."



Yannis Pihás

Pihás explained that he worked as a restaurant hotel manager when he evaluated both the amount of time and effort put toward his work when he made the decision to open his own restaurant in 1994 in Los Angeles. Pihás and his wife, Denise, moved to San Diego in 2001 and eventually opened Yanni's Bar and Grill.

For Pihás and his wife, the holidays are a time to bring family together and celebrate the gifts given to them year over year. Pihás, who learned how to cook from his mother and grandmother in Greece, said that a traditional festive meal would include lamb and turkey.

"One of our longest standing traditions is to have a fantastic meal with a large group of family and friends. We make lamb, turkey, pan seared chicken breasts, mashed potatoes and stuffing – traditional American fare," Pihás said.

When asked if he had any tips for creating the perfect turkey, Pihás said there is nothing better than giving it lots of time to

See **TRADITIONS**, Page 14

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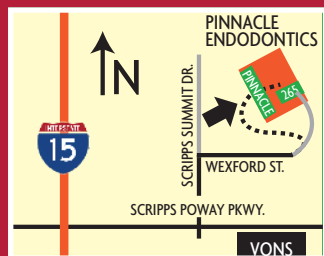
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Volunteers clear yard of debris

An eager group of community volunteers showed up the morning of Nov. 3 to help clear the backyard of a longtime Scripps Ranch resident as she continues her journey to overcome and recover from cancer.

Volunteers of all ages pitched in during phase I of a plan to rebuild the area which had become overgrown and untenable.

Sandra Dougherty, owner of the property and mother of two sons, is in her second bout with breast cancer. She also lost her husband to cancer. Through all of these challenges, the backyard of her home fell into disrepair and she no longer had the energy or the means to fix the situation.

But longtime friend Maria Mikus is heading an effort to rebuild the yard in two phases to make it a place for Dougherty and her sons to thrive.

The effort brought out a sizeable crew, including Scripps Ranch High School boys basketball coach Brian Keiser (varsity) and coach

See **YARD**, Page 3



A sizeable crew of volunteers – including Scripps Ranch High School boys basketball coaches Brian Keiser and Brock Flint, along with some of their players – helped clear the backyard of a Scripps Ranch Resident who is overcoming cancer. (courtesy photo)



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Rotary Club holds holiday drive

This holiday season the Rotary Club of Poway-Scripps is holding a supply drive for Corazon de Vida, a nonprofit organization supporting orphanages near Tijuana.

Club members heard about the organization when one of its board members, George Perez of Orange County, made a presentation in the summer. Rotary Club members are scheduled to visit the orphanage in December.

The needs of the orphanage are simple, but when housing children of various ages, these items are much needed. Those willing to help are encouraged to bring items listed to the locations below.

Needed items include: toilet paper, bleach, dish soap, liquid detergent, cooking oil, heavy duty mops and brooms, large heavy duty trash bags, feminine products, baby wipes, shaving razors, shaving cream, diapers sizes 4 and 5 only, body lotion, hair gel, sun block lotion, hair ties for girls, Pine Sol type cleaners, lunch juice boxes, breakfast nutrition bars. There is also a need for Smart & Final and Costco gift cards.

Note that they cannot accept candy, shoes or clothing.

In Scripps Ranch, drop off locations are at the office of Edward Jones – David Parker, financial advisor, 9968 Hibert St., #102; and Chase Bank, 9994 Scripps Ranch Blvd.

Collection sites in Poway are at Walter Andersen Nursery, 12755 Danielson Ct.; Dr. William Racicot, DDS at 13206 Carriage Road, #105; and Campo Creek Winery at 13538 Poway Road.

Donations will be accepted through November. Learn more about Corazon de Vida at: corazondevida.org.

Annual effort underway to supply hygiene kits

Once again, Victoria Muschek and her family are spearheading an annual holiday effort in Scripps Ranch as they begin collecting and packaging hygiene items for homeless youth in San Diego.

Toothpaste, hotel-size toiletries, soap and toothbrushes are most welcome for donation. The family then sorts and packages the items – with the help of a few volunteers – and delivers them to the Monarch School for their students who are then able to shower and groom themselves each day.

“The donations and support of this program is what I love about Scripps Ranch. My friends and neighbors believe in taking care of the community around you,” Muschek said. “As President Kennedy said, ‘To those whom much is given, much is expected.’ We have a great responsibility to put out a hand and help somebody else up. I hope in some way this program does that for the San Diego homeless community.”

Last year, the project went from 500 kits in 2017 to 800 kits. This year those involved are trying to surpass 1,000 kits. That will supply enough kits for Monarch School students for 12 months.

The Muschek family began this tradition after Thanksgiving eight years ago when they started collecting products such as toothbrushes, shampoo and Band-Aids to put together “hygiene kits.” The family began handing out the bags to homeless people on the street, but decided to partner with San Diego’s nonprofit Monarch School, which is dedicated to helping homeless students.

“Your support helps transform the lives of homeless youth every day here at Monarch,” said Erin Spiewak, chief executive officer of Monarch School. “Your contribution empowers homeless students to succeed in school and life.”

Donations this year will be accepted through Dec. 18. Chile Peppers restaurant, 10299 Scripps Trail,



A volunteer sorts donated items for the annual drive to collect and deliver personal hygiene kits to Monarch School in downtown San Diego. (courtesy photo)

will again be the collection point for dropping off the donated items.

To learn more about Monarch School, visit monarch-school.org.

For questions regarding donations or to coordinate a pickup of items, contact Victoria Muschek at bmuschek@san.rr.com.

YARD

Continued from Page 2

Brock Flint, along with some of their players on Nov. 3.

The volunteers did such a thorough job of clearing the area, and it made such a difference, that Dougherty’s two sons were able to enjoy playing soccer together in the backyard for two hours that same afternoon – something they had not been able to do for a very long time.

This was just the beginning of this grassroots community effort. Any monetary donations can be made to the GoFundMe page: bit.ly/2OPm3KX. To volunteer or donate plants, skills or materials, contact Maria Mikus at mariamikus@yahoo.com.

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FOOTBALL



Scripps Ranch High School head football coach Marlon Gardinera speaks to his players following a recent victory. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Coach Marlon Gardinera said he insists that his players put academics first. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

Football coach insists academics come first

By Ken David

Undefeated this season, the Scripps Ranch High School football team's on-field success is on display for everyone to see. Less obvious, but also a source of team pride, is the team's academic success. A recent grade check showed the team's average GPA to be 3.71.

The high marks are the result of hard work by the student athletes and the prioritization of academic success by head football coach Marlon Gardinera.

"A high school coach doesn't just coach football," Gardinera said. "As a matter of fact, I think it's about 25 percent of my job."

Now in his third year as head coach, Gardinera played baseball at Oklahoma State and football at Mission Bay High School. He's the father of two sons in local schools, one being Falcons running back Nicholas Gardinera. With experience as both a student athlete and a father, Gardinera said he created a "school first" policy because success in sports can be fleeting.

"Football is fun, sports are fun, but they're temporary," Gardinera said. "Very few people get to do them for the rest of their life, and even then, the rest of your life as a professional (football player) is, on average, five years."

He brought that same idea to the Falcons football team.

"The goal when I got here was that I want to prepare these boys for life," Gardinera said. "The idea was using the lessons football teaches to make sure these kids were successful on and off the field for the next step in their life,

whether that's a trade school, college or the military."

Of course, winning on the field was also important.

"I wanted to bring the academic excellence we've grown to love at Scripps Ranch to the football field. But the football players couldn't suffer academically as a result of that," he said.

Putting his ideas and ideals into motion, Gardinera started by raising the bar on the required GPA to be on the Falcons team to 3.0, higher than the CIF minimum of 2.5.

"We don't need average," he said. "If you have a C, any C, you don't need to practice football; you need to practice school. And we're serious about that."

The other parts of the approach include mandatory study hall time, weekly grade checks by the coach and, when needed, improvement plans.

"If a kid has a C, we don't throw them off the football team. We put together a plan immediately to get that C up," he said. "That typically includes study hall and peer tutoring. I and other coaches will also ask, 'Have you met with your teacher? How often?'"

Additionally, teachers pitch in to help students develop planning and notetaking skills. Sometimes students help each other, as in the case of older students who have already taken the classes and therefore know what needs to be done.

"We throw everything at it to get the kids' grades up, to improve study habits and get them right," Gardinera said.

Some players still struggle. "When I realize or can identify that effort is a part of it, I remove them from football," the coach said. "Some kids are allowed to practice, but they can't play. Some, because they're not

See FOOTBALL, Page 6

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Marching band advances to CSBC championships

The Scripps Ranch High School Falcon Corps and Color Guard advanced to the CSBC Championships after finishing seventh in the semi-finals on Nov. 16 at Yorba Linda High School.

The championships will be held at Huntington Beach High School on Nov. 23.

Earlier, Scripps Ranch High qualified for the semi-finals when it earned a Division 5A second-place award at the California State Band Championship (CSBC) Field Tournament held at San Clemente on Nov. 9.

On Nov. 2, an abundance of color, pageantry and music resonated from the main athletic field on the Scripps Ranch High School campus as the Falcon Corps and Color Guard hosted its own tournament.

The entire event was an impressive spectacle. Marching bands adorned in a multitude of colorful uniforms performed and paraded for those in attendance.

Schools with marching bands scheduled to participate included Classical



The SRHS marching band tournament culminated with a colorful awards ceremony. (photo by John Gregory)

Academy High School, La Costa Canyon High School, West Hills High School, El Capitan High School, Grossmont High School, Valhalla High School, Castle Park High School, Desert Mirage High School, Redondo Union High School and Scripps Ranch High School.

The Scripps Ranch High School Falcon Corps and Color Guard wrapped up the performances with an

exhibition of the band's routine called "The Tortured Mind." The Falcons marching band demonstrated excellent mastery of musical adeptness while in motion.

The event culminated with an awards presentation featuring leaders of the Scripps Ranch High marching band and color guard presenting trophies to leaders of winning bands, complete with extravagant ceremonial salutes.



The Scripps Ranch High Marching Band and Color Guard performs its "Tortured Mind" routine. (photo by John Gregory)



A night of color and pageantry resulted as the Scripps Ranch High Marching Band and Color Guard hosted a tournament Nov. 2. (photo by John Gregory)



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High school students to travel abroad

By Laura Hogan

Local high school students will have the opportunity to go on a tour of Europe. Danika Baptista, Scripps Ranch High School educator and Education First (EF) tour director, is preparing a tour for local students who can participate.

The tour will take place in the summer of 2021 and will include visits to Ireland, England and Scotland. Baptista was inspired to host an

'You're really getting your money's worth as all of the excursions are included in the cost.'

—Danika Baptista

EF tour after participating in her own trip after her senior year of high school.

"It sparked my interest and love of traveling. My trip also led me to study



Danika Baptista is preparing a tour to Europe set for summer 2021. (courtesy photo)

abroad in college where I really grew as a person," Baptista said. "When I was contacted to host a tour, I immediately said yes because the experience was so inspirational and life changing. I really wanted to bring the same opportunity to the students in Scripps Ranch."

The trip to Europe will include a number of excursions in each city. These excursions include visiting Blarney Castle, a trip to Stonehenge and guided tours in all of the cities at sites like the Tower of London.

"There's not a whole lot of down time, but there are a lot of opportunities to see the culture and the sites. You're really getting your money's worth as all of the excursions

are included in the cost of the trip," Baptista said.

There is a 1 to 6 chaperone to student ratio for the tour. The total cost of the trip is approximately \$5,000 for a 17-day tour. This cost includes air fare, accommodations, meals and experiences for the duration of the tour. The cost is the main reason for the year and a half planning period. Parents can plan for the trip financially with the extra time allotted. Students also have the ability to fundraise for their trip. Parents are able to save \$200 by registering for the trip before Nov. 22.

The EF tour cost also includes an emergency protection plan. So, if a student needs to pull out of the trip at the last minute, funds will be returned.

Baptista hosted an informational session on Nov. 14 at Scripps Ranch High School.

If parents are interested in having their student participate in the tour and were unable to make it to the informational session, they can email Baptista directly at dbaptista@sandi.net.

FOOTBALL

Continued from Page 4

using their time wisely and haven't made school a priority, they don't need football. They need school. That's why we're there."

Gardinera also meets with counselors and teachers to discuss student progress, and he's always on the lookout for any behavioral issues that may arise.

"We tell the kids early on: if you wear our gear, if you wear that jersey on Friday, you represent us all," he said. "Every decision you make, your choices, your behavior, it reflects on all of us, and we won't tolerate anything but your best."

In academic efforts, the comradery of teammates has also provided strong motivation.

"It's the brotherhood," the coach said. "They are their brother's keeper and they don't want to let each other down. They don't want to miss out."

Gardinera believes the work ethic instilled by high academic requirements has definitely shown on the football field, where the team has come back from 2-8 and 6-4 records in previous years to this season's 10-0 record in the regular season.

"If you can convince a kid that school comes first, that details matter, that hard work matters, that time spent matters; if you can convince them of that, the hope, the goal, the purpose is that they transfer that work experience to everything," he said. "As I think everybody can see right now, they're translating doing everything right to the football field. Hard work is hard work, whether it's football or studying for a big exam."

The team's success on the gridiron and in the classroom earned Gardinera Chargers Coach of the Week honors recently, which included \$1,000 for the Falcons football program.

"If you're on the right track and the culture is going in the right direction, you're going to get better," Gardinera said. "It really just culminated all at the same time."

School break begins

All Scripps Ranch students attending public schools in the San Diego Unified School District will begin Thanksgiving break at the end of class Friday, Nov. 22. School will not be in session Nov. 25 through 29. Classes will resume Monday, Dec. 2.



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Scripps-Mesa Garden Club members created hanging kokedama. (courtesy photo)

Garden Club: kokedama, pumpkin delights

By Denise Stewart

Our local Scripps-Mesa Garden Club celebrated the end of the 2019 growing season with a plant craft known as kokedama. Using their own plants and some materials supplied by the club, members created hanging ornaments for their patios.

At the same November meeting, the group also shared pumpkin appetizers, soups, breads and desserts to honor the Thanksgiving holiday. It was the last meeting of the club for this calendar year.

Scripps-Mesa Garden Club will resume its regular meeting schedule on Jan. 28 at 6 p.m. in the Community Room of the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library. The new year promises a variety of programs and speakers, according to out-going leader Bob Gale. Members of the community who enjoy gardening are invited to join the club.



Enter the Scripps Ranch News 2019 Photo Contest

Do you have a colorful or exciting photo you took in Scripps Ranch this year? Here is your chance to show it off. Scripps Ranch News is holding its first Scripps Ranch News Photo Contest.

Entries will be published in the December issue of Scripps Ranch News and posted on ScrippsRanchNews.com.

It's easy to enter: Email a photo taken in Scripps Ranch in 2019 to info@scrippsranchnews.com. Photos must be high-resolution, at least 300 dpi. Include the name and address of the photographer, as well as the date and location the photo was taken.

Rules: All photos must have been taken within the 92131 Zip Code area of Scripps Ranch within the year 2019. No Photoshop or alterations allowed.

Deadline: entries must be submitted by Nov. 22, 2019.

Prizes include gift certificates to Yanni's Bar & Grill.

Send entries to info@scrippsranchnews.com.



On Nov. 11, USN Commander Dan Cain of Scripps Ranch delivered a tribute to all military veterans who have served their country. The ceremony took place outside the Mira Mesa Senior Center next to the Veterans' Memorial Wall. (photo by Greg Hoxsie Photography)

Veterans' Day ceremony offers heartfelt tribute

By Denise Stewart

A commemorative ceremony honoring all women and men who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States took place at the Mira Mesa Senior Center's Memorial Wall on Veterans Day. Scripps Ranch resident USN Commander Dan Cain delivered remarks saluting those who have protected this country from adversaries and those who served during times of peace. He

was followed by retired Navy Captain Chris Oleas in paying tribute.

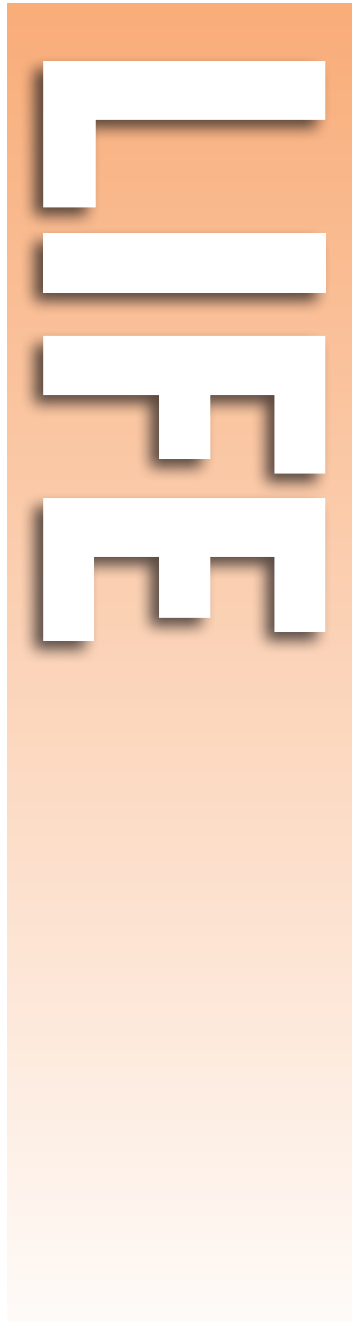
Among others offering tribute were Congressman Scott Peters, Assemblyman Todd Gloria, San Diego city councilmembers Barbara Bry and Chris Cate.

The Veterans' Day ceremony was organized by Mitz Lee, director of the Mira Mesa Senior Center, and her staff of volunteers. The emcee was Fidencio Pampo, USN, retired. Mira Mesa High School JROTC Honor

Guard performed the traditional flag presentation followed by Charisma Ursua singing the National Anthem. Pastor Roger Whitmore of The Summit Church delivered the Invocation.

The ceremony concluded with a Salute to Our Fallen with Roy Zanni of Bugles of America playing "Taps" and Charisma Ursua singing "God Bless the USA."

A luncheon provided by the Mira Mesa Senior Center volunteers followed the ceremony.



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Chris Ramos, Jordan Struck and Tracy Pendergast (by David Hebble)



The Moorjani family visits the inspiration for their costumes.



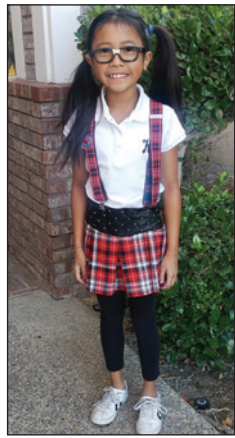
Bill and Cynthia Collins' grandchildren (by Cynthia Collins)



Lucas as Batman, mother Dolly as Forky and Austin as Antman (courtesy photo)



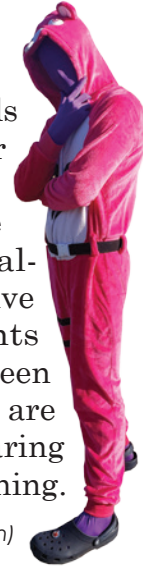
Samantha Nocella is an adorable little witch. (by Kimberly Nocella)



Nine-year-old Kamryn is a cute little nerd. (by Catherine Sablad)

HALLOWEEN 2019

Scripps Ranch neighborhoods were filled with laughter and excitement as children donned scary, pretty, cute and funny costumes on Halloween night. It was a festive evening and some residents went all out with their Halloween decorations and treats. Here are a few photos from readers sharing images of the memorable evening.



Heath "Champ" Logan (by Brook Logan)



Friends dressed up as "girls" for Jerabek's Halloween parade. (by Kate Brigger)



Kaylin, Ava and Ella Moritz are decked out for Halloween. (by Rachel Moritz)



Audrey and Jocelyn are "The Shining" twins. (by Amie Lyons)



Darlene Fiero enjoys Halloween festivities with son Jackson Fiero. (by Deborah Clark)



Peter and Shannon Horton with children, Aaron, EJ and Judah. (courtesy photo)



Judah, EJ and Aaron Horton make wild animals adorable. (by Shannon Horton)



Paula Telles poses before paddling into school. (photo by Cathy Telles)



The Schulze Family: Casey, Heather, Kelly and Taylor. (by Heather Schulze)



Hoffman family: Cinderella, a mouse, The Incredible Hulk and Spiderman. (courtesy photo)



Eighty-one-year-old David Medina relishes Halloween. (by "his favorite daughter" Brook Logan)



The Powells: Sean, Maddie, Matthew and Dani. (by Danielle Elbaz)



The Kuroses as Oompa Loompa, Willy Wonka, Aly the blueberry and Violet Beauregard. (courtesy photo)



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SUPPORTING SCRIPPS RANCH

Coffee Klatch brought goblins, fun crowd

By Denise Stewart

The Scripps Ranch Welcome Club's monthly Coffee Klatches always bring out a warm group of ladies, but October's Halloween gathering drew the largest coffee crowd in the club's history. The hostess and newer club member, Mary Rea, has long enjoyed a reputation for her holiday décor, and the ghosts, goblins and witches that adorned her home attracted an enthusiastic throng of Halloween revelers.

JoAnn Farmen, Sandy Desmond and Emma Rotella, all co-hostesses at the Halloween Coffee, contributed to the delicious brunch buffet laid out on Mary's colorfully adorned dining table. Mary's husband, Lou, manned the coffee machines and kept the brew perking during the morning feast. The pleasant weather enabled the ladies to enjoy their friends outdoors among the artistically arranged potted plants and Halloween trimmings on Mary and Lou's patio.

We all had fun trick or treating on Halloween as kids, but this was a most delightful adult celebration of the day. It is events like this that have grown Welcome Club's membership to the greatest number in its 35 years in Scripps Ranch.

November's Welcome Club calendar has 22 events slated for members to select from. Walking on local trails, venturing to nearby beach hikes, playing bunco, pitch or bridge, making crafts, discussing books, celebrating birthdays, attending a play at the Scripps Ranch Theatre, and visiting a holiday treasure with lunch following, all made the event-filled month something to look forward to.

Members learned at the regular meeting about how the challenges created by natural disasters are met by a team of dedicated professionals from a talk by Doctor Jake Jacoby, emeritus professor of Emergency Medicine. Dr. Jacoby detailed the Disaster Medical Assistance Team's role in helping those people affected by recent climactic disasters in Texas and Puerto Rico.

Coming in December, most of the usual routine activities will be offered. In addition, the special seasonal highlights will include the annual Holiday Party at the regular club meeting on the ninth at the Community Center. A Holiday Coffee Klatch on the 12th will be



The Scripps Ranch Welcome Club's Halloween Coffee Klatch team includes (from left) Emma Rotella, Sandy Desmond, hostess Mary Rea, JoAnn Farmen and Denise Stewart. (courtesy photo)

hosted by Karen Reilly at her home. The Holiday Dinner-Dance with the club's favorite DJ at the Country Club of Rancho Bernardo is planned for the 15th.

Should you want to learn

more about this fun-loving group known as the Welcome Club, check out the website at scrippsranchwelcomeclub.com. You will find contact information and a "Welcome to the Club."

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Everyone is invited to the tree lighting

The entire community is invited to the annual Scripps Ranch Tree Lighting Ceremony and Toy Drive at Jerabek Park on Dec. 1 from 3 to 5 p.m.

Local Girl Scouts have been busy planning the event which will include a craft activity for kids, a bake sale, hot chocolate, singing, a short program, a visit by Santa and, of course, the tree lighting.

Those planning to attend are encouraged to bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to the Toys for Tots program.

The event will begin at 3 p.m. with a fun craft for the first hour. The planned craft will be snowman tea lights.

Singing of holiday songs and a program will start at around 4 p.m. The tree lighting will be held at about 4:30 p.m. around the time it starts to get dark.

The bake sale will feature tasty treats, along with hot chocolate to warm cold hands. Proceeds from the bake sale will help offset costs of the event and also benefit the Girl Scouts SHARE program.



Members of Girl Scout Troop 3102 invite the entire Scripps Ranch community to the Tree Lighting event on Dec. 1 at Jerabek Park from 3 to 5 p.m. (courtesy photo)

Catherine Melis, leader of Girl Scout Troop 3102, explained that the event is being planned and run by local Girl Scouts as a project to earn their Bronze Award. The Scripps Ranch Civic Association is co-hosting the event.

The young Girl Scouts involved – ages 10 to 11 – are starting to learn about being leaders and beginning to learn about performing community service together through this project.

“They choose the songs and they design the pro-

grams and the fliers that we posted. They plan the script and they have to present at the Girl Scout meetings to encourage people to come. ... They write letters to invite people to come,” Melis said. “They’re going to be the ones doing all the talking. They actually run the program.”

The Scouts have put in a lot of effort to make this event inclusive and have chosen songs that reflect diversity.

“The girls have been organizing it and planning it and this year their focus is on

making it inclusive. Hanukkah, Kwanza and Christmas are all hitting together this year,” Melis said.

“This is the 37th annual event. For the girls, it’s a chance for them to give back to the community and to bring everybody together,” Melis said. “It’s not just for Girls Scouts ... it’s for anybody in the community to be at. ... It’s just a fun chance for everyone to get together and celebrate.”

Jerabek Neighborhood Park is located at 10150 Avenida Magnifica.

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The arrival of Santa Claus on a fire truck highlights the annual Scripps Ranch Symphony in the Park Holiday Concert. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

Enjoy the annual Holiday Concert

The annual Holiday Concert, presented by Scripps Ranch Symphony in the Park, will be held at Jerabek Neighborhood Park on Sunday, Dec. 8. Santa Claus will arrive on a red fire truck with lights flashing at the end of the concert.

The concert is scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. with live, holiday-themed music. Santa will arrive as the music begins to wrap-up. The event will officially end at 6:30 p.m.

This year's concert will feature holiday songs performed by the band Christmas Tree Oh!

The Holiday Concert always draws a large crowd of families and children. The excitement builds near the end of the concert as the siren from the fire truck carrying Santa can be heard when the truck nears the park. Enthusiastic youngsters cheer loudly as Santa arrives and walks into the park. The jolly old elf visits



Children will once again line up to greet Santa and tell him about their holiday wishes. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

with all the children who line up to meet him.

Sharp HealthCare is the official sponsor of this year's Holiday Concert.

Scripps Ranch Symphony in the Park is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that arranges and holds free summertime concerts for the community once each month from June through September. The annual Holiday Concert in December is the last concert of the year, closing out the Scripps Ranch Symphony in the Park sea-

son. Those wishing to learn more or wanting to contribute to Scripps Ranch Symphony in the Park may visit symphonyinthepark.org.

Anyone planning to attend the Holiday Concert should dress in warm clothing and arrive early to find parking. Visitors may bring low-backed chairs to sit in and picnic baskets are allowed. Pets and plastic tarps are not allowed.

Jerabek Neighborhood Park is located at 10150 Avenida Magnifica.

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Holiday season events in Scripps Ranch

'IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE'
Nov. 20-22

Marshall Mustang Theater presents "It's a Wonderful Life," Nov. 20-22, 6 p.m. at Marshall Middle School. Tickets available at bit.ly/32PFuGS.

ROTARY CLUB HOLIDAY DRIVE

Through Nov. 30

The Rotary Club of Poway-Scripps is holding a supply drive for Corazon de Vida, a

nonprofit organization supporting orphanages near Tijuana. Needed items include: toilet paper, bleach, dish soap, liquid detergent, cooking oil, heavy duty mops and brooms, large heavy duty trash bags, feminine products, baby wipes, shaving razors, shaving cream, diapers sizes 4 and 5 only, body lotion, hair gel, sun block lotion, hair ties for girls, Pine Sol type cleaners, lunch juice boxes, breakfast

nutrition bars. There is also a need for Smart & Final and COSTCO gift cards. Drop off locations are at the office of Edward Jones – David Parker, financial advisor, 9968 Hibert St., #102; and Chase Bank, 9994 Scripps Ranch Blvd.

SCRIPPS RANCH TREE LIGHTING

Dec. 1

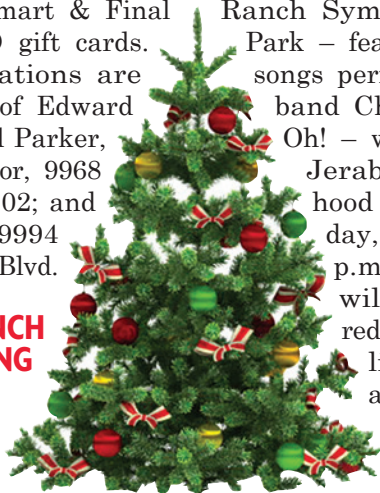
The Scripps Ranch Tree Lighting Ceremony and Toy Drive is at Jerabek Park on Dec. 1 from 3 to 5 p.m. The event includes a craft activity for kids, a bake sale, hot chocolate, singing, a short program, a visit from Santa and the tree lighting. Those planning to attend are encouraged to bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to the Toys for Tots program. Co-hosted by Scripps Ranch Girl Scouts and the Scripps Ranch Civic Association.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY CONCERT

Dec. 8

The annual Holiday Con-

cert, presented by Scripps Ranch Symphony in the Park – featuring holiday songs performed by the band Christmas Tree Oh! – will be held at Jerabek Neighborhood Park on Sunday, Dec. 8, 5-6:30 p.m. Santa Claus will arrive on a red fire truck with lights flashing at the end of the concert. Visit symphonyinthepark.org.



'MIXED NUTS'

Dec. 14, 15

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

'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.

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.

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

See **HOLIDAY EVENTS**, Page 14



Ralph Lo Vuolo
Photography

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HOLIDAY EVENTS

Continued from Page 12

ages 1-16 are now being collected. Gifts will be delivered to four cancer centers in San Diego. 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 or beckysgifts.org.

Send information about your organization's holiday event to Scripps Ranch News for inclusion in the Dec. 11 issue. Deadline is Nov. 26. Send information to info@scrippsranchnews.com.

TRADITIONS

Continued from Page 1

cook and lots of rosemary and garlic. He also said a good wine is an essential piece of any holiday meal.

Pihas said he also likes to include some favorite Greek recipes as well. Spanakopita and homemade dolmas make excellent appetizers, he said. A Greek staple at all their holiday meals is butternut squash made carefully by peeling, deseeding, roasting and smashing with butter and maple syrup. While it might be work intensive, Pihas assured the effort pays off.

"Cooking is one of the great celebrations of life – it creates memorable experiences for the family to remember for years to come," Pihas said.

For some of Yanni's favorite holiday cuisine including the butternut squash, visit Yanni's Bar and Grill, 12015 Scripps Highlands Drive.

**Yanni's Bar & Grill
butternut squash**

Ingredients:

- 5 pounds butternut squash
- 4 ounces brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 8 ounces butter
- 4 ounces maple syrup

Preparation:

- Peel, seed and cut the butternut squash to small pieces.
- Boil for 15 to 20 minutes.
- Drain and mash, add butter (will melt from the heat from the butternut squash).
- Add seasoning ingredients slowly to achieve your preferred level of seasoning.



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Try these warm and fuzzy holiday activities

(StatePoint) Whether you're braving the cold to find the perfect Hanukkah gift or searching high and low for the ideal Christmas tree, there are plenty of opportunities to create special memories with your family this season. And there are ways to make each event a little warmer and fuzzier.

"One of the best things about the holidays is how cozy everything can feel," said Laryssa Grant, women's buyer for national shoe retailer Rack Room Shoes. "While it can be a busy time of year, it's important to treat comfort as a priority and slow down to enjoy each moment."

Here are three activities to try this season that can make you feel warm and fuzzy on the inside – and outside!

Get snuggly

Over-scheduling can put a damper on the holidays. That's why it's important to carve out some quality time to get in the spirit. Give each family member a goodie bag of holiday-themed pajamas and then pop in a holiday movie to spend the evening snuggled up with the people you love.

Make it cozier: Pair the pajamas with shearling-lined slippers, such as those from Koolaburra by Ugg to ensure everyone's feet stay warm and toasty all night. Minnetonka and Skechers also offer faux fur-lined options to try. Cozy, comfortable slippers can also serve as ideal stocking stuffers this holiday season.

Adopt a charity

Set an example for young-



Whether it's doing good works or enjoying the sights and sounds of the season, there's no better time of year for creating cozy memories. (StatePoint)

er generations by adopting a charity for the holidays. Whether you give the gift of your time or money, supporting causes close to your heart can become a cherished family tradition.

Make it cozier: After each family member selects a special charity, set aside time to discuss over a cup of hot chocolate and homemade cookies.

Take a tour of local lights

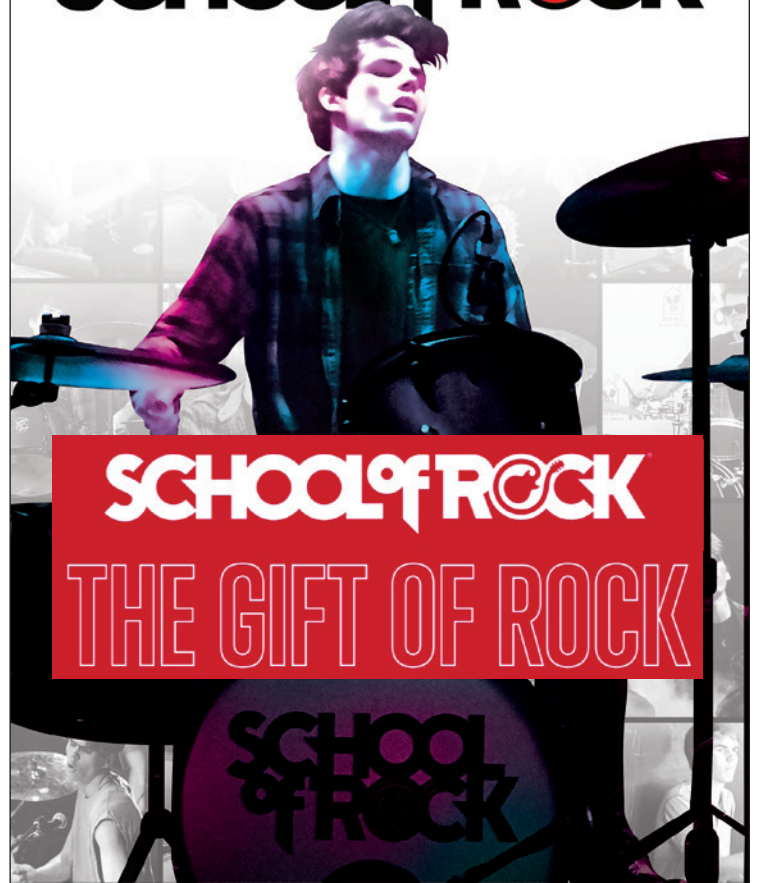
Check out the lights in your community for a fun

and budget-friendly way to get in the holiday spirit. From spectacular light shows to twinkling home displays, take advantage to explore all your area has to offer.

Make it cozier: Popular shoes from Sperry and Crocs are now available with a plush fur lining for warmth and comfort no matter where your holiday plans take you.

To view all warm and fuzzy options in footwear, visit Rack Room Shoes in store or online at RackRoomShoes.com.

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SCRIPPS RANCH
NEWS

SPORTS

Girls VB team competes into post season

By Hoyt Smith

Never say never when it comes to the girls varsity volleyball team at Scripps Ranch High School.

The Lady Falcons have been persistent fighters in the regular season and the post-season, scratching and scrapping for a CIF playoff berth and contending in state championship competition in spite of breaking even with a 4-4 record in league play.

The team, coached by Scripps Ranch High School alumna and prep volleyball champion Roni Greenwood, gained strength and confidence as the season progressed, winning in the first round of the Division 1 CIF playoffs against Poway High School on Oct. 30, then beating Canyon Crest Academy in the quarter finals on Nov. 1.

Although Scripps Ranch lost to Santa Fe Christian in the CIF semi-finals on Nov. 6, they still earned a statewide playoff bid.

The Lady Falcons would still be vying for a state championship run if they beat

Temecula's Linfield Christian High School girls volleyball team on their home floor Nov. 12. Linfield Christian was 25-3 for the season. Unfortunately, Scripps Ranch lost the close State Playoff match to Linfield Christian 3-2.

"This is probably the most improved team Scripps Ranch has ever had," Greenwood said. "I've never seen a team, or a group of individuals, improve as much as these girls have."

That's a huge compliment coming from a past four-year letter winner, three-year starter and two-year captain at Scripps Ranch High School who helped her volleyball team win two straight Division II CIF Championships in 2003 and 2004.

As Greenwood noted, the 2019 varsity girls volleyball team is a very young team, with only three returning starters, six sophomores and two freshmen. The squad is deep in experience however, with 13 of its 15

members being veterans of club volleyball.

"We've always had very competitive teams here," Greenwood said. "There are so many talented players continually coming out of Scripps Ranch, and we have about nine alumni from the program playing in college right now, including Long Beach State, San Jose State and the University of Hawaii."

The coach added that two seniors on her volleyball team are considering playing at the NCAA level next year.

This season the team was sparked by the outstanding play and impressive attacking skills of sophomore outside hitter Gala Trubint, who leads the team in kills.

"Gala is definitely a very steady force, and very competitive," Greenwood said.

Rounding out the team's leadership are team captains junior outside hitter Sabrina Krebs and senior libero Collette Kearns, who their coach said have done "an incredible job bringing

our young team together."

Forging an elite season out of a schedule that placed them just three games above .500 speaks to the extremely high caliber of varsity girls' volleyball opponents in San Diego County. League opponent Cathedral Catholic High School, for example, was ranked as high as second in the nation by Maxpreps this fall.



SRHS SPORTS

Continued from Page 1

straight-A student, the team put up big numbers – scoring more than 50 points three times. The defense was not bad either, earning three shutouts. With these players feeding into the varsity, looks like the Falcons football program will continue its winning ways in the future.

More SRHS winners:

Girls golf

The Scripps Ranch High School girls varsity golf team, under the direction of head coach Todd Wilson, also has an excellent record of victories throughout recent years of success. This season the team won the San Diego City Conference Golf Tournament, which it has now accomplished for the fourth straight year. Then, junior Ruhee Pandit finished in second place in the City Conference Match Play Golf Championships and freshman Kiana Glossner finished fourth. The team placed second in the CIF D1 Girls Golf Championships.

Cross country

Both the boys and girls Scripps Ranch High cross-country teams placed second behind Cathedral Catholic on Nov. 14 in the Western League Finals. Six Scripps Ranch High runners earned medals including Giancarlo da Silva, Caden Farrow, Nick Melanese, Chloe Ellermeier, Samantha Nauman and Delphine Maurer.

The Falcons cross country runners participated in the JV Championships and Varsity Cluster meet Nov. 7 at Morley Field. Both the Scripps Ranch JV girls team and JV boys team came in first place. Lizzie Tarczy and Samuel Stevens each finished first in their races. The boys varsity team and girls varsity team both captured second place. Giancarlo da Silva and Caden Farrow finished first and second, respectively. Da Silva broke the school record on Morley Field.



THANK YOU SCRIPPS RANCH... HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

With the month of November and Thanksgiving season upon us, I would like to take a moment to say "THANK YOU!" My team and I are tremendously grateful that we get to change lives every single day in our wonderful community. I never thought almost 20 years ago when I opened the doors at Fitness Quest 10 with no clients, no money, and no business plan that it would lead to what it is today. We are extremely blessed to play an integral part of your health, fitness, & happiness and we look forward to continuing to be the best part of your day, everyday.

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HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

Todd Durkin

Todd Durkin, MA, CSCS | Creator & Owner, Fitness Quest 10





Photos are of the Nov. 12 win against Bishop's.

Photos by John Gregory

SRHS field hockey: Champions again

By Dave Kensler

The varsity field hockey powerhouse of Scripps Ranch High School earned its second CIF San Diego Section Open Division Field Hockey Championship in a row as it beat archrival Serra High 2-1 on Nov. 16.

Just a few weeks ago, it claimed the Western League title with a double overtime win against Serra High in a regular season ending game on Nov. 4.

For head coach Jane Morrill, the success of this year, which has carried over from previous seasons, comes down to one word: culture.

"We have a culture in which we win. You have to establish that type of culture if you want to win," she stated. "Then it carries over from one season to the next."

According to Morrill, every year the culture begins in the summer months.

"The girls play on clubs and go to camps," she said. "At Fitness Quest they participate in a six to eight-week conditioning program. By the time we start practices they are in great shape."

Yet field hockey is not a one-dimensional focus for most of the players.

"Almost every girl plays other sports during the school year," Morrill explained. "Plus, these girls are so smart (academically) it is amazing."

She points to the fact that there are six seniors on this

year's team, the three who are also the team captains – Adah Anderson, Hailey Brigger and Juliana Ishimine – and those three are all going to prestigious Vassar College in New York for field hockey and their academic pursuits.

The other three seniors are Jessica Ebert, Ashlynn McGrattan and Erin Burgess – all excellent players.

With only six seniors graduating from a team of 18-players, opponents will be hard pressed to beat the Falcons next year and beyond, Morrill believes.

"Our JV team went 29-0 and not one goal was scored on them the entire season," she said. "That is an incredible statistic. Our returning varsity players for next season already know it is going to be a fierce competition to be on the team. Everyone

will need to work hard over the summer. No guarantees."

Beyond the wins and successes, Morrill values other aspects of being a part of such a successful program.

"I really appreciate the involvement of so many parents," she said. "When you have parents who are so supportive and take care of so many necessary details, it allows me more time to coach."

The values the girls learn are something Morrill knows extend far past their field hockey careers and even into the classroom, too.

"I believe our program builds character and integrity for each girl," she said. "The peer group pressure to succeed athletically and academically is tremendous, and from that, positive lifetime traits evolve. We want this program to shape lives."



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Photos will be published in the December issue of Scripps Ranch News and also posted on ScrippsRanchNews.com.

- Email a high-resolution photo taken within the 92131 Zip Code area of Scripps Ranch in 2019 to info@scrippsranchnews.com
- Include the name and address of the photographer.
- Include the date and location photo was taken.
- No Photoshop or alterations allowed.
- Deadline: entries must be submitted by Nov. 22, 2019.
- Prize includes a meal at Yanni's Bar & Grill.

Send entries to info@scrippsranchnews.com.



JV CHAMPIONS

The Scripps Ranch High School junior varsity girls tennis team completed a highly successful season by winning the 2019 Western League title. This talented team pictured above includes (back row, from left) Sagey Moorjani, Emily York, Kayla Xu, Lana Smith, coach Karyn McCartney, Katie Tran, Margaux Savary, Fanna Seman, Grace Li, (front row, from left) Varshi Guttuumukkala, Mehak Kahlon, Catalina Haas, Linh Dao, Lorena Ford, and Anya Yu. (photo by Maureen Fonseca-Ford)



The Scripps Ranch Pop Warner 14U football team ran through San Marcos for a 20-0 championship victory. (photo by Claire Sugishita of Sproutography)

POP WARNER CHAMPIONS

The Scripps Ranch Pop Warner 14U football team defeated San Marcos 20-0 in the championship game at La Costa Canyon on Nov. 2. A large contingent of Scripps Ranch fans cheered the underdog Falcons as the players avenged their only loss this season against the same team that beat them earlier 20-8. It was a sweet championship victory for the team, parents, cheerleaders and family members as well as the entire Scripps Ranch Pop Warner Football and Cheer Association. The Scripps Ranch 14U football team defeated Vista 18-8 on Oct. 26 to earn its place in the championship game.

Registration open for spring youth leagues

• Registration is open for the Scripps Ranch Softball Association spring softball program which offers girls the opportunity to learn and play recreational fastpitch

softball in a fun and safe environment. Visit srsoftball.org. • The Scripps Ranch Lacrosse Association is open to boys in grades K-8 and girls in grades 2-8. Reg-

istration for the spring season will close Dec. 31. Visit srlax.org. • Scripps Ranch Little League registration is open for the spring 2020 season. Visit scrippsranchl.org. • The Scripps Ranch Soccer Club has spring soccer for boys and girls for both competitive and recreational players. Registration will close Jan. 29, 2020. Visit scrippsranhsc.com.

Eat The Frog Fitness plans opening events

Eat The Frog Fitness Scripps – 10625 Scripps Poway Parkway, Suite D-E, in the Scripps Ranch Marketplace shopping center – will host a two-week soft opening for all of its founding members in late December and early January.

Everyone who has reserved a Founding Rate with Eat The Frog Fitness Scripps prior to the grand opening will have the opportunity to come into the studio with VIP exclusive access and take multiple complimentary sessions. The grand opening will be in mid-January, following the completion of the soft opening. Once Eat The Frog Fitness Scripps is officially open, every local resident will have the ability to come in and take one free session to experience the personalized small group fitness studio.

Eat The Frog Fitness will throw a big grand opening party at the end of January to celebrate.

For more information, visit eatthefrogfitness.com.



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Undefeated SRHS advances to semifinals

The Scripps Ranch High School football team remains on its quest to capture the 2019 CIF San Diego Section Division III Football Championship following a 42-7 quarterfinal victory over West Hills High on Nov. 15. The win bumped up the team's undefeated record to 11-0.

The Falcons will face Central High School of El Centro at Scripps Ranch at 7 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 22 in a semifinal contest.

The Falcons played like a skilled undefeated team against West Hills High during its first CIF football playoff game in years. Although West Hills grabbed a first quarter touchdown to take the lead, the Falcons

offense soon drove downfield to tie the score. The West Hills defense began executing powerful blitzes up the middle, one leading to a quarterback sack. The last time they attempted this tactic, they failed to tackle the Falcons runner who sliced right past the West Hills defenders for a touchdown.

Then, two West Hills turnovers led to two more Falcons touchdowns and extra points. Those mistakes turned the tide and the Falcons held a decent lead as the first half ended.

The game was never in doubt in the second half as the Falcons took charge with authority. The Scripps Ranch defense, which has been incredibly effective all

season, did not allow any points the rest of the contest.

Scripps Ranch looked sharp, like a playoff team peaking at the right time. The team played with more intensity than in the regular season. Their timing and reflexes had improved. Quarterback Luke Durkin's passes were even more precise. The line blocked more intensely and completely. The running game was powerful and effort was sustained. Tackling was more aggressive. The fans could hear the pads popping from where they sat in the stands. The kick coverage had more hustle, and placekicker Matt Killam was perfect on all extra point attempts. The remarkable season continues.



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HOME

Home prices still rose in October

The price of resale homes in San Diego County ticked up in October, according to housing statistics compiled through the San Diego Multiple Listing Service by the Greater San Diego Association of Realtors® (SDAR). The median price of single-family homes in the county rose by more than 3 percent in October compared to September, reaching \$665,000. The increase was coupled by a slowdown in single-family home sales by just under 5 percent month over month. However, sales were higher than October of last year by about 2 percent. Similarly, attached properties (condominiums and townhomes) saw a more than 2 percent increase in the median sale price in October compared to September, standing at \$429,000. Sales of condos and townhomes were 2 percent lower month over month, and nearly 4 percent lower than October 2018. "Rising prices and low inventory are still a burden on our state and local housing economy, but mortgage rates that are approximately 1 percent lower than at this time last year should give some lift to buyer demand," said SDAR President Kevin M. Burke, JD.

Scripps Ranch home sales for October 2019

Single family homes sold: **28**

Median price of single family homes sold: **\$931,000**

Attached homes sold (condominiums or townhomes): **13**

Median price of attached homes sold: **\$476,000**

Tips for a merry holiday home

(StatePoint) A merry holiday season starts at home. Here are some nice ways to add cheer to the rooms and spaces where people gather.

- **Light a fire:** It may be the most primitive technology in existence but lighting a fire is still one of the best ways to create a rich holiday atmosphere. Bonus: use aromatic firewood such as pine, fir or cedar.

- **Bake Cookies:** Make the whole house smell amazing (and become everyone's favorite person) by popping cookies and other desserts in the oven that include spices evocative of the season, like nutmeg, cloves, cinnamon and vanilla. For a lighter option, you can get the same effect by brewing tea with these same ingredients.

- **Add flora:** Spruce up your living spaces – literally. Holly, Christmas cactus, poinsettias and spruce add color and vibrancy to mantels, staircases, coffee tables and other nooks and crannies. What's more, many of these plants will continue to thrive long after the lights and tinsel come down.

- **Project a movie:** Decorat-



The holidays come but once a year. Make the most of the season by turning your home into a winter wonderland. (copyright manaemedia/iStock via Getty Images Plus)

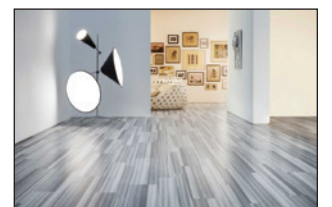
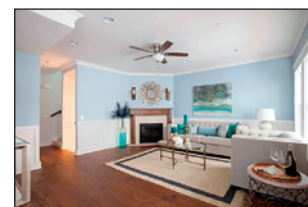
ing for the holiday season can be as easy as setting up a projector and playing seasonal movies on a loop. From classics like "Miracle on 34th Street" to contemporary favorites like "Elf," these films provide the perfect backdrop to the holiday season. With the ability to run all day, the LampFree Projectors in Ca-

sio's Slim Series are ideal for this purpose.

- **Host a sing-along:** Securing yourself a digital piano with an authentic concert grand sound may just be the best gift you give your family this holiday season. The Casio GP-500 reproduces the three-dimensional sound field generated by an acous-

tic grand to fill a room with rich, complex sound, making it a great place to gather for holiday sing-a-longs. The piano itself can also be a decoration destination – think garlands and candles. Be sure to set out sheet music and other instruments like tambourines or bells so that guests can join in the fun.

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As weather patterns become more extreme, it's not impossible for temperatures to reach freezing this winter in the inland areas of San Diego County. Prepare pipes for extreme conditions to prevent leaks and flooding. (Copyright AndreyPopov/iStock via Getty Images Plus)

Prevent unnecessary costs this winter

(StatePoint) A drop in temperature and an increase in harsh weather elements like rain, sleet or wind can make winter costly at home.

Between turning up your heat and spending money on energy bills, the last cost any homeowner wants to account for is burst pipes and the damage they can cause. It doesn't take much of a crack to cause thousands in repairs. A one-eighth inch crack in a pipe can spew more than 250 gallons of water daily, according to the Institute for Business and Home Safety, destroying furniture, floors and personal items.

To help homeowners save this winter, Mike Pfeiffer, senior vice president of Technical Services at the International Code Council, offers the following tips:

Own your thermostat

Many households battle over what temperature to maintain. While the debate can get "heated," Pfeiffer suggests keeping the thermostat setting constant. When it's very cold and you keep changing the thermostat, it will be harder for your heating device to bring your home back up to your desired temperature. Programmable thermostats are a great way to maintain a comfortable temperature and save energy. Not only can you set them while you're away, but smart

thermostats will begin to learn your habits and gradually adapt to your desired settings.

Let those faucets drip

It's very rare in San Diego, but a surprise cold spell could bring temperatures to the freezing point sometime this winter. After all, the weather is more and more extreme and unpredictable these days. When a cold snap pushes into the area, it's a good idea to let water drip from the faucet to prevent pipes from freezing, cracking or bursting.

"Make sure it's cold water when you do this," Pfeiffer said. "Running cold water through the pipes, even a trickle at a time, helps prevent freezing."

This is especially true on exterior walls where there may be limited insulation. Don't forget about seldom used areas such as guest bathrooms or laundry sinks and equipment.

Insulate

During winter you want to stay warm – so do your pipes. Add insulation to attics, basements and crawl spaces. Seal up cracks and openings along the perimeter of your home where cold air can blow through and cause pipes to freeze. Insulation will maintain warmer temperatures in these areas and help lower heating costs. Be sure to check for exposed water

lines in unheated areas and consider installing specific products made to insulate water pipes, like an insulated pipe sleeve, heat tape or similar materials.

Open doors

When cold weather is in the forecast, opening cabinet doors in the kitchen and bathroom can help. This allows heat to seep into cabinets and circulate warmer air around plumbing.

Check hoses and sprinklers

Before cold air arrives, its best practice to drain any water from sprinklers' supply lines following your manufacturer's or installer's directions. Don't forget to remove, drain and store hoses used outdoors.

"Despite what you may have heard, don't use antifreeze in any of these lines unless directed by a professional," Pfeiffer said. "Antifreeze is environmentally harmful and dangerous to humans, pets, wildlife and landscaping. Not to mention that you cannot use antifreeze in any line connected to a potable supply."

On top of these tips, it's always important to make sure any home renovations use the most recent building and plumbing codes, which will help keep your family safe and also help you save money down the line on unnecessary repairs and maintenance.



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Winter weatherization for a comfortable home

(StatePoint) Do seasonal temperatures sometimes leave you frustrated with your home's lack of insulation? Staying comfortable indoors is a top priority for most people, and luckily, it's easy to ensure your home is at an optimal temperature.

With a few quick tips and home defense strategies, you'll be on your way to a more comfortable abode in just a few hours.

Why weatherize?

Preparing your home to combat temperature change is an important task for both homeowners and renters throughout the year. Feel uncomfortable drafts? Notice your heating and cooling equipment is continuously running? Tired of expensive energy bills? You're not alone: almost two-thirds of American adults live in a home that needs to be weatherized, according to recent research conducted by Duck brand.

There are many motivations for weatherizing. In fact, did you know...

- 54 percent of people weatherize to save money on energy bills

- 44 percent weatherize to make the temperature of their home more comfortable
- 22 percent do it for greater energy efficiency

Is that a draft?

First, you'll need to identify the source – or sources – of leaks. Don't stress, it's easy! Hold an incense stick near potential draft sources, such as windows and doors. If the smoke blows sideways, you'll know an air leak exists and it's time to weatherize. But don't stop there. Areas such as attic access openings, pull-down stairs and exterior electrical sockets are additional, often overlooked sources of air leaks.

So, now what?

Once you've identified the leaks, it's time to stop them. Window and door seals take a beating from normal wear-and-tear and can be a large source of drafts coming into the home. Replace old, cracked seals with such products as Duck Brand Heavy-Duty Weatherstrip Seals, which are made with durable, flexible material, allowing them to stand up



With a few key home projects anyone can complete, you can make your home more enjoyable all year long and save on energy bills in the process. (StatePoint)

against extreme temperatures that cause other seals to freeze or crack. They help to block cold winter air from entering, as well as dust, pollen and insects during the warmer months.

For added protection with older windows, an easy-to-install, crystal-clear option like Duck Brand Roll-On Window Insulation Kits can create an additional barrier against cold air. The pre-taped top and easy roll-on

film require no measuring, making installation painless. When applied to indoor window frames, the film provides an airtight seal that's easily removed once warmer weather arrives.

Finally, address the hidden leaks with solutions like Duck Brand Socket Sealers Insulating Seals. Quick and easy to install, they fit behind outlets or light switch faceplate covers. When installed on exterior walls,

they act as a buffer between the inside and outside air. Next, attic stairway covers protect against an often-uninsulated area, and offer a flexible, lightweight solution that can be repositioned to maintain direct access to the attic.

For more information on increasing home comfort, along with easy-to-follow weatherization installation videos, visit duckbrand.com/weatherization.

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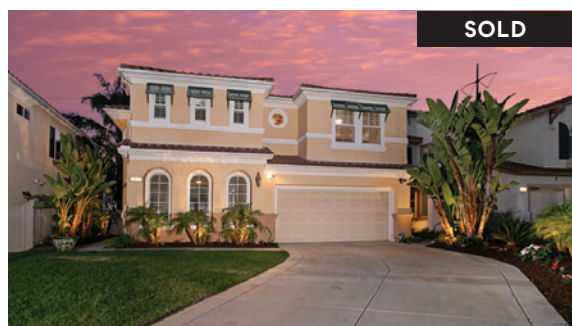


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