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**SCRIPPS RANCH**  
**YEARBOOK**<sup>®</sup>  
2018

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# SCRIPPS RANCH NEWS



## Daughter's commitment honors father

By Cynthia Kurose

In January 2014, Rachel Barnhill's father, a United States Marine, was getting ready for yet another year-long deployment. This time around, Rachel, her brother and her mother decided they would do something a little different to mark the days until his return.

Colonel Bruce Barnhill, USMC-retired, has been a lifelong running enthusiast. Knowing that it was a passion of his, Col. Barnhill's family decided that, in his honor, they would run every single day until he returned from deployment.

"He was proud of us all," said Rachel of her father's reaction to his family's commitment.

Rachel's mother, Patty, made it slightly more than 100 days before her run streak came to an end. Her brother, Reese, made it just past 200 days when illness confined him to his bed, unable to continue his daily runs. Rachel, however,

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*'It's a lot about determination and perseverance.'*

— Rachel Barnhill

Rachel Barnhill is set to complete a five-year run streak on Jan. 13, 2019. She has run a minimum of one continuous mile every single day since Jan. 13, 2014. (photo by Cynthia Kurose)



**FLU PREVENTION**  
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**A DELIGHTFUL**  
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## Soccer community mourns loss of a legend

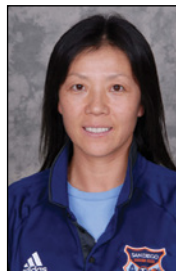
By Cynthia Kurose

Ouying Zhang, affectionately known as "Coach O," died on Dec. 1, 2018 at the age of 43. She was diagnosed with lung cancer in April of this year while on an annual trip to China. She is survived by her husband Edde and two children, ages 6 and 4.

In addition to being a two-time Olympian and a star player for the Chinese National Team in three successive Women's World Cups, Coach O had her biggest impact on the local community as a girls soccer coach with the San Diego Soccer Club (SDSC) since 2010.

Raffi Ruotolo is SDSC director of coaching for older girls.

"It's a sad day for everyone – the club and all the kids," he said. "Whoever [had] a chance to be trained and coached by Coach O, it's a blessing and something they should treasure forever. She was not just a coach; the discipline, humility and everything she brought with her is probably more important and had a bigger impact on these young ladies' lives than the sport,



Ouying Zhang (courtesy San Diego Soccer Club)

alone. She was an incredible person."

Two of Coach O's former players, Mia Arredondo, a 14-year-old Scripps Ranch resident, and Valeria Suarez, reflected on the impact their coach had on their lives. Arredondo described a moment at the annual SDSC soccer banquet last year when she received the most valuable player award.

"When I got to the stage, I thanked Coach O and she said, 'don't thank me; you did this by yourself. I told you I would get you here and look where you are now. This isn't me, this is you,'" Arredondo recalled. "That was a turning point for me. She made me truly believe in myself."

Suarez explained that, over time, her bond with Coach O evolved beyond soccer to feeling more like family.

"If I felt insecure about myself on the field, Coach O would always say, 'you got this. I support you in every choice you make. I believe in you,'" Suarez said. "Since then, I thought of her like a second mom or my best friend."

Arredondo's and Suarez's parents spoke of the legacy that Coach O leaves behind.

"Her legacy is her children and her team," said Ernesto Arredondo, Mia's

See **LEGEND**, Page 2

## A capella choir group delights its audiences with a unique sound

By Laura A. Hogan

Local a cappella choir Chamber Bravura has performed at such venerable establishments as Carnegie Hall and Disneyland, and represented the United States in the 2017 Australian International Music Festival.

Seeing a need for an a cappella choir for middle school and high school students, Scripps Ranch local

Katherine Girvin founded Chamber Bravura in 2012. The choir has quickly become world renowned for its sound and talent in the past six years.

Chamber Bravura is comprised of 35 dedicated young performers ranging in age from 10 to 18. Girvin said the wide range in age allows for ease in transitioning parts as middle-school aged boys' and girls' voices mature.

"Most people would think it would be a huge impediment to have younger voices and older voices, but I find it incredibly rewarding for the group," Girvin said. "The benefit of having such a large range is that, specifically for the boys, they can start in one area and finish in another. It makes for a nice transition as older members go to college and

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**Chamber Bravura: a highly-accomplished choir**

The young members of Chamber Bravura, dressed in their festive holiday sweaters, prepare to perform in Balboa Park. (courtesy photo)



## COMMITMENT

Continued from Page 1

just a seventh grader at the time, remained determined to keep running every single day until her father's return.

Upon Col. Barnhill's return from deployment and with Rachel's commitment fulfilled, she set a new goal for herself: to beat her father's previous run streak record of 515 consecutive days.

This time, "he was shocked that I was determined to keep going," she said.

But this daily habit had become a personal passion for Rachel. Plus, she said, it had become something she and her father could share as a bonding experience.

"When I first got back, it was awesome," said Col. Barnhill. "I'd get home from work and we'd go out for our run together. It was a great opportunity to spend some quality time doing something positive with my daughter."

While Rachel, now a junior at Scripps Ranch High School (SRHS), admits that some family and friends who are familiar with her run streak think that she is "pretty crazy" for continuing to pursue her hobby, she is by no means alone in her

pursuit. Both national and international organizations exist to celebrate streak runners. The United States Running Streak Association, Inc. (USRSA) was established in the year 2000, while Streak Runners International, Inc. (SRI) was founded in 2012. Both organizations allow streak runners to register their run streaks and join a national and global community of like-minded individuals, celebrating milestones and learning about one another's personal missions.

According to the SRI/USRSA web site, "The official definition of a running streak ... is to run one mile (1.61 kilometers) within each calendar day." Presently, the longest active run streak in the world, as registered with USRSA, is held by 68-year-old Jon Sutherland of West Hills, Calif. His run streak began on May 26, 1969, and he is approaching his 50th consecutive year of running.

Rachel described the challenges that she has occasionally faced over the past years in maintaining her run streak.

"I've run as late as 11:30 p.m. at the end of a busy day (with a parent following close behind), or early in the morning before a flight,"

she said. "I've run down a volcano while on vacation in Hawaii, or at a rest stop during a road trip to Yosemite. But the biggest obstacle has been getting sick; those were slow, hard runs."

Rachel's parents have remained supportive of her endeavor, but never insistent, always primarily concerned with her well-being.

"There have certainly been times when she could have stopped due to sickness, but she pushed on through. It's really amazing," Col. Barnhill said.

Her mother, Patty, said that her biggest concern about Rachel discontinuing her streak is the potential disappointment and sense of withdrawal she may experience once running is no longer a part of her daily routine.

A member of the cross country and track teams at SRHS, Rachel says that running remains a passion for her and she intends to pursue it at least through the end of high school.

"It's a lot about determination and perseverance for me now," Rachel said. "It's a continuous challenge, but it's also very calming. The most important part of this for me is that I enjoy it. As long as I'm still having fun, I will continue to run."

## LEGEND

Continued from Page 1

father. "She met these girls as children and now they're women. It takes a village to raise your children and she had a part in that."

Guillermo Suarez, Valeria's father, said that Coach O, "had a gift and she wanted to share it with others. That's what I'd like to see going forward - for those who she impacted to carry on that legacy."



A two-time Olympian and three-time Women's World Cup soccer star, local youth soccer coach Ouying Zhang died on Dec. 1, 2018. (courtesy photo)

Memorial services were held Dec. 8 at San Diego New Life Chinese Church in Clairemont.

## CHOIR

Continued from Page 1

the younger boys move from tenor to bass."

The choir will welcome anyone interested in joining but requires dedication and commitment. Chamber Bravura members meet weekly, year round and practice privately for upwards of two hours a day to perfect the music. The group routinely learns more than 60 songs a year to perform for both private and public audiences. Girvin said the songs are at a college level of expertise and span everything from classical music to the popular a cappella band Pentatonix covers.

Olivia Kuykendall, a high school senior and Chamber Bravura member for six

years, said her favorite piece to perform was Eric Whitaker's "Alleluia." Kuykendall shared that the piece is split into 12 parts and is nine minutes in length.

"This is one of the most stunning choral works I have ever heard or had the pleasure to learn and sing. The harmonies in this song are so challenging and dissonant yet so beautiful, and I always feel so accomplished and proud after performing this piece," Kuykendall said.

Chamber Bravura sustains its level of expertise with the aid of generous donations and paid performances. While the group historically makes a trip abroad to perform, Girvin said the group agreed to forgo a trip in 2019 in order to properly save for a larger trip to Asia in the summer of 2020.

The group is in the midst of its busiest time of the year with the holidays and multiple performances already in the books.

For Hannah Mora, a high school senior and Chamber Bravura member for five years, the hard work and dedication is what sets this group apart from other a cappella groups.

"It is easy for big a cappella groups to have members hide behind other peers, but our director really makes sure that we all know our parts so that we don't rely on just a few people," Mora said.

Chamber Bravura is well known in a cappella circles and has not lost a single competition. Girvin said the focus of all the success should be on the choir members.

"I get to show up and work with the most amazing people - who just happen to be children - every week," she said. "They have made me a better person. They are uniquely musically strong and they are uniquely wonderful people."

For more information on the choir, including links to listen to the group's unique sound, visit [chamberbravura.org](http://chamberbravura.org).

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# Kersey spearheads flu prevention effort

By Cynthia Kurose

For City Councilman Mark Kersey, protecting himself, his family and his community from the flu is a very personal mission. In 2014, Kersey suddenly and unexpectedly lost his 38-year-old brother to the H1N1 flu virus, complicated by pneumonia and a bacterial infection. Sadly, he left behind a wife and four young children.

This flu season, Kersey said that he is thankful for the opportunity to turn tragedy in to action. Through generous donations from WAXIE Sanitary Supply and GOJO, the makers of Purell hand sanitizer, Councilman Kersey has procured donated hand sanitizing stations for every recreation center and public library in the City of San Diego.

“We don’t think it could happen to us or a loved one, but the threat of the flu is real, even for young, healthy people,” Kersey said. “I’m thankful for WAXIE and GOJO’s partnership to help San Diegans fight the flu.”

The Scripps Miramar Ranch Library marked the final location of the 93 community facilities to receive a Purell dispenser. Trevor Jones is the branch librarian, and was on-hand to welcome Kersey and Umahl Anderson, WAXIE Sanitary Supply regional sales manager, for the installation.

Jones explained that while the library has previously purchased personal hand sanitizer bottles for patrons to use at the front desk, he was excited about the larger footprint and visibility of the new automatic dispenser and hoped it would encourage greater utilization.

“It fulfills a huge need we have,” Jones said. “Being in a public library, public health is a big thing. It’s really great to see City officials caring and doing something about it with a preventive step like this.”

Doctor Bethani Bernaba is a family medicine physician at Sharp Rees-Stealy Mira Mesa and a Scripps Ranch resident who is a big advocate for preventive measures to combat the flu.

“It is recommended that everyone over the age of six months receive the flu shot,” said Bernaba, who recommends the vaccine to all of her patients. “It’s really our best defense against the flu.”

Acknowledging skepticism over whether the vaccine

could be to blame for causing the flu, Bernaba said, “a lot of people think that they get sick from the flu shot, but that is impossible. What oftentimes can happen is you get an immune system response to the shot. And that’s actually a good sign because ... you’re ‘building up your armies’ so that if you do get exposed to flu, you can fight it off a lot better.”

Last season, 342 people in San Diego County, alone, died from complications from the flu. While the 2017-2018 season represented an anomalous number of cases of influenza and flu-related deaths, Bernaba said that, this season, she is still seeing what she would classify as a normal number of flu cases in a typical year.

Flu shots are offered at medical offices and pharmacies throughout the county, many without an appointment. Sharp Rees-Stealy and Scripps Health facilities do require an appointment, but can be accessed easily with a nurse visit, and do not require an appointment with a primary care provider. Patients at Kaiser Per-

manente in Rancho Bernardo can walk in without an appointment to receive a flu vaccine at an on-site nurses clinic. Many pharmacies at retail locations throughout the county also offer flu shots on a walk-in basis, including CVS, Walgreens and Target.

Aside from receiving the flu shot, washing hands frequently is another effective step for protection and minimizing the spread of germs to others.

“Wash your hands, dry your hands and sanitize,” said Anderson, who hopes that his company’s donation of sanitizer dispensers will help to encourage this practice.

If you do find yourself afflicted with the flu, Doctor Bernaba offers this advice: “Stay home and rest and keep yourself well hydrated. What your body needs most is rest. If after the first three to four days you feel that you are getting worse, it might not be a bad idea to put a call in to your doctor to get their advice.”

Check with your medical provider or dial 211 for access to flu shot locations throughout San Diego County.



Councilman Mark Kersey, branch librarian Trevor Jones and WAXIE Sanitary Supply regional sales manager Umahl Anderson commemorate the installation of a hand sanitizing station at the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library on Nov. 20. (photo by Cynthia Kurose)

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# Tradition and novelty mark Welcome Club events

By Denise Stewart

**S**cripps Ranch Welcome Club has a rich tradition of friendship and fun dating back to its founding in the 1980s. The club, comprised of local women and described as a Circle of Friends, has met regularly to enjoy one another's company and greet new members since then. This Welcome Club year had an especially busy calendar full of club-wide events and smaller interest-group activities.

This time last year, members and their escorts were savoring the flavors of the Country Club of Rancho Bernardo's dining room. DJ Scott "Yo" Rider drew the holiday crowd to the dance floor with his engaging selection of dance tunes that are always a big hit with the club.

As always, the Holiday Coffee Klatch attracted many Welcome Clubbers. The tables were laden with delicious brunch dishes and members feasted on the sweet treats brought by the co-hostesses. Coffees are a monthly event, but this holiday celebration was especially festive.



Welcome Club members celebrate autumn birthdays. (courtesy photo)

Another Welcome Club annual holiday tradition was enjoyed once again. The regular monthly meeting featured a holiday gift exchange among members who wished to participate. Along with their gifts, many ladies traded bakery treats with others who enjoy sharing the benefits of their culinary skills. Some members even left the Community Center meeting room with cookies still on their plates.

The summer season was highlighted in July by the club's longtime tradition of an outdoor salad supper. A potluck event, the evening celebration is an ongoing contest between the gastronomically amazing salads to be eaten, and the extrava-

gant gift baskets to be raffled. Annually, the salad supper draws a big crowd.

The monthly gatherings of the bridge, bunco and pitch players continue to be a favorite among the ladies. Either before or after the entertaining games, players enjoy delightful treats along with the pleasant company.

Trail Walkers meet three times most weeks to enjoy jaunts about the many hidden trails in our neighborhoods. Occasional off the ranch trips are the highlight of the walking group's month. Beach and countryside excursions add variety to Trail Walkers exercise routine on a regular basis now.

Books are a favorite friend among many Welcome Club-

bers. Three book groups meet monthly to share their reactions to what they have read. One group prefers the light of day and the other the calm of the evening for their chats. All the groups put a special holiday trim on their conversations this month.

In November, the Theatre Group attended another of Scripps Ranch Theatre's performances. Members, spouses, dates and friends met for a small plate feast before the play. This musical, "She Loves Me," was a crowd pleaser. The word about town is that the performance had the most talented vocal ensemble ever to appear on our local stage. The play's enjoyable story line, the cast's trained voices and abundant energy made it a memorable experience for the viewers.

Often during the year, Welcome members venture about town on a Gadabout to see a movie, enjoy an exhibition, tour a museum or visit a special place. In December, a beachside holiday lunch at The Shores Restaurant added California coastal glam to the monthly Gadabouts expeditions.

Welcome Club is a seasoned group, but living up to its moniker, potential new members are enthusiastically encouraged to join. This year the group of women has grown by 13 new members. Some of these newer members are women who recently moved here, while others lived in Scripps Ranch at an earlier time in their lives, moved away and now have returned to the community and are renewing friendships and meeting new people.

While Welcome Club is primarily a social club, the members do support local interests and causes. This past year donations have been given to the Scripps Ranch Civic Association, Scripps Ranch Friends of the Library, San Diego Armed Services Toys for Tots, Bella Voce Chorus and Symphony in the Park.

*Should you want more information about the Welcome Club, check out this newspaper's website for articles on the club or go to our club's website at [scripps-ranchwelcomeclub.com](http://scripps-ranchwelcomeclub.com).*

## Garden Club elects officers

By Denise Stewart

The Scripps-Mesa Garden Club elected a new Board of Directors at its November meeting. Bob Gale, a Mira Mesa resident and an avid gardener, will lead the group for the 2019 calendar year. Bob has a lavishly planted yard surrounding his home. He brings both experience and enthusiasm to his new leadership position in the club.

The Scripps-Mesa Garden Club meets most months at the Scripps Ranch Library on the fourth Tuesday at 6 p.m. Professionals often give presentations to the group on gardening products and techniques. During the height of the growing season, the club visits local gardens to learn more about the skills used to successfully propagate flowers and vegetables.

While their gardens rest these few winter months, so do the gardeners. They will not meet in December, but will resume meeting Jan. 22nd to gear up for the spring planting and growing season.

*Local gardeners who want to learn more about their hobby by attending club meetings may contact Bob at [rgale@gmail.com](mailto:rgale@gmail.com).*

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A delightful assortment of lights and inflatables illuminate this home on Merritage Court. (photo by Daniela Alvarez)



This brightly-lit display outside a Merritage Court home puts the "ho-ho-ho" in holidays. (photo by Daniela Alvarez)



# Local holiday lights offer great sights

By Daniela Alvarez

**A**s the cool winter approaches, holiday lights and decorations are beginning to appear in every neighborhood. These decorations can be found throughout most of San Diego, but some streets stand out for their fantastic displays. Enjoy a drive with the whole family through these nearby areas and

take in the colors and sounds of each festive home. Here are just a few twinkling destinations to explore:

**SCRIPPS RANCH**  
**Stonebridge Parkway and Merritage Court**

Aptly nicknamed Merritage Court, this street is brightly lit with hundreds of lights, Christmas inflatables and movie-themed decorations such as Disney and Star Wars.

**Farmingdale Street off Scripps Ranch Boulevard**  
Includes Swan Lake Drive, Stoney Way and other streets. If you're looking for more classic Christmas decorations and lights, this is the area to go. Delicate, twinkling lights such as bright ornaments adorn this quiet area.

**POWAY**  
**Hickory Court, Butterwood Court and Rockrose Court**  
Known as the Candy Cane

Courts, this area is entirely lit up with dozens of candy canes, with holiday music playing, and there's even a drop box to send letters to Santa Claus.

**RANCHO PEÑASQUITOS**  
**Oviedo Street off Black Mountain Road**  
Famously known as Christmas Card Lane, Oviedo Street is like a storybook Christmas village come to life. You'll find animated installations, colorful displays and giant greeting cards.



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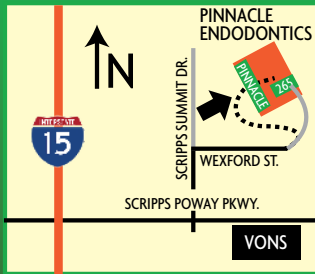
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**HOLIDAY EVENTS**

**MUSTANG WINTER CONCERTS**

**Dec. 12, 13, 19, 20**

The Marshall Middle School band, orchestra and choir will perform winter concerts in the school's theater building: Winter Band Concert, 7 p.m. Dec. 12. Winter Orchestra Concert, 7 p.m., Dec. 13. Choir Concert, 6 p.m. Dec. 19 and 20.



Barry Manilow

**'A VERY BARRY CHRISTMAS'**

**Dec. 13**

Twenty-three students from Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary School have been

selected to perform with Barry Manilow at Viejas Arena on Dec. 13. Barry Manilow is bringing his classic "A Very Barry Christmas Show" to San Diego, featuring holiday classics, Manilow hits and Santa. Doors open at 7 p.m., concert starts at 8 p.m. Online tickets: [bit.ly/2rnCQaR](http://bit.ly/2rnCQaR). 5500 Canyon Crest Drive.

**WINTER WONDERLAND**

**Dec. 14**

Members of the Scripps Ranch Swim & Racquet Club are invited to a Winter Wonderland holiday party from 4 to 7 p.m. on Dec. 14 at the 9875 Aviary Drive location. The event will feature pictures with Santa; Elsa and Anna, the "Frozen" sisters; plus The Grinch. There will be real snow, snow train rides, a Christmas movie, crafts, a Jumpee and treats. This event is open to club members and their guests only. Guest passes are available at the Aviary Drive location front desk. Call (858) 271-6222 or visit [srsrc.com](http://srsrc.com).



**NEW HOLIDAY TRADITIONS**

A new Scripps Ranch tradition has begun as locals started decorating trees located in the park on the east side of Spring Canyon Road just south of South Brookville Drive. Sources say they promise to remove the ornaments after the holidays.

**PET PHOTOS WITH SANTA**

**Dec. 15**

Bring your pet to Unleashed Scripps Ranch, 10625 Scripps Poway Parkway, between 1 and 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 15 for a photo with Santa. For a \$9.95 donation, you will receive a commemorative digital photo and help animals in need find loving homes.

**'THE NUTCRACKER'**

**Dec. 15, 16, 21-23**

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 15 and 16 at 2 p.m. at the David and Dorothea Garfield Theatre, 4126 Executive Drive. Buy tickets at [bit.ly/2zd23sR](http://bit.ly/2zd23sR). In addition, the Scripps Performing Arts Academy will present an abridged version at the Nutcracker Holiday Tea on Dec. 21-23 in The Elizabeth Ballroom at The Fairmont Grand Del Mar, 5300 Grand Del Mar Court. For tickets to the Nutcracker

See **HOLIDAY EVENTS**, Page 7

**SCRIPPS PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY**

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Serving the Scripps Ranch Community since 1987, Scripps Performing Arts is more than a ballet school that includes a variety of genres (jazz, tap, lyrical, modern, Baby and Me, and musical theatre); it offers a nurturing, non-competitive environment that encourages each student to become the best that they can be without compromising their technical and artistic training.



**HOLIDAY EVENTS**

Continued from Page 6

er Holiday Tea, call (858) 314-2020.

**BECKY'S GIFT DRIVE**  
Through Dec. 15



Helping families affected by Cancer

The Becky's Gift drive provides presents during the holiday season to families affected by cancer. New, unwrapped toys for children age 1-16 are now being collected. The goal this year is to collect 1,000 toys. Gifts will be delivered to UCSD Moores Cancer Center, The Oncology Associates of San Diego, and South County Hematology and Oncology Center.

Anyone interested in donating new, unwrapped toys or gift cards can drop them off at Scripps Rock Dental, 12112 Scripps Summit Drive, Suite C; St. Gregory the Great Catholic School, 15315 Stonebridge Parkway; the dental office of Dr. William Racicot, 13206 Carriage Road, Suite 105; Mainstream Bar & Grill, 13385 Poway Road; or Chase Bank, 9994 Scripps Ranch Blvd. Contact Becky Walton at bekywalton@san.rr.com, Christie Jackson at christie@jacksonlane.com or visit facebook.com/BeckysGift.



The Scripps Ranch Theatre production of "She Loves Me" runs Dec. 14, 15 and 16. (photo by Ken Jacques)

**'SHE LOVES ME'**

Dec. 14, 15, 16

"She Loves Me," a warm romantic comedy with an endearing innocence and a touch of old-world elegance with a Christmas twist, is wrapping up its run Dec. 14, 15 and 16 at Scripps Ranch Theatre. Shop clerks, Amalia and Georg, work together – and don't see eye-to-eye. This euphoric romantic comedy with a soaring score follows their story as they each respond to a lonely-hearts advertisement and their lives intertwine. Shows are Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. For tickets, visit scripps-ranchtheatre.org or call

(858) 578-7728.



**LAST CALL FOR DONATIONS**

Dec. 18

Scripps Ranch resident Victoria Muschek and her family are in their seventh year collecting and packaging hygiene items for homeless youth in San Diego. They are collecting items such as small bottles of shampoo, small soaps, tooth brushes, tooth paste, 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 through Dec. 18. Chile Peppers is at 10299 Scripps Trail. For questions, contact Victoria Muschek: bmuschek@san.rr.com.



**LUNCH WITH SANTA**

Dec. 21

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. 21. Tickets cost \$15 per child; ages 1-10. 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.

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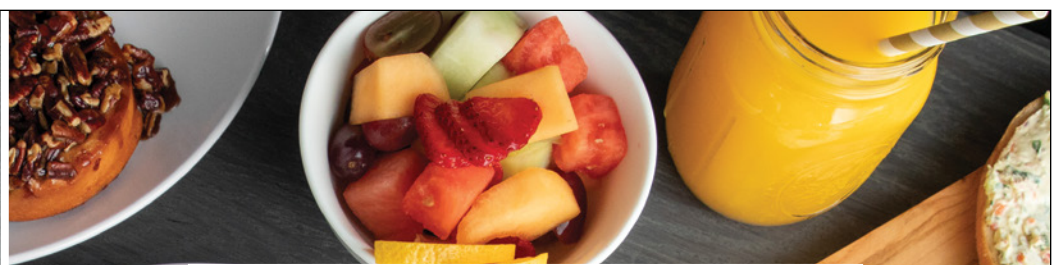


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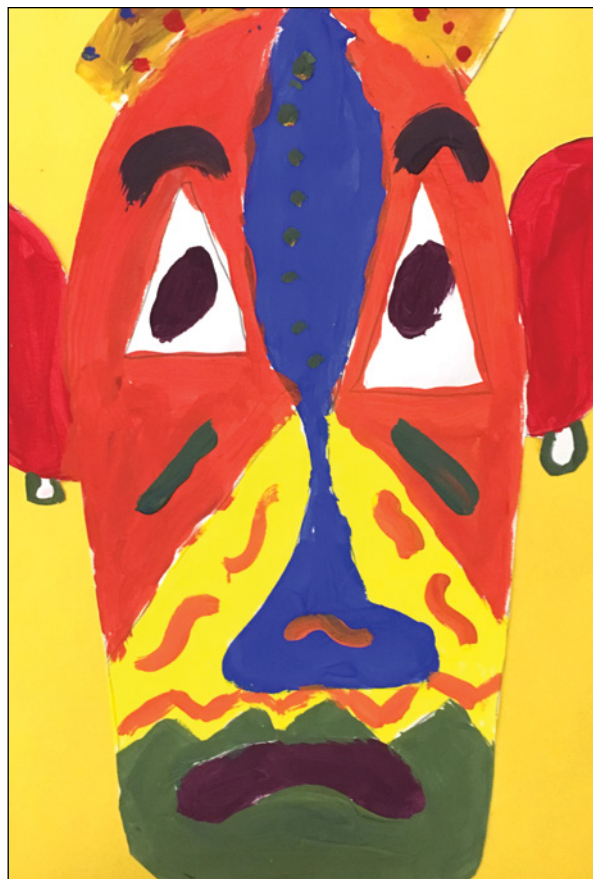




The Scripps Ranch High School varsity girls basketball team had another strong season under the direction of head coach James Stewart, going all the way to the semi-finals before falling to Bonita Vista in the Division I CIF San Diego Section 2018 Girl's Basketball Championships. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



This future fireman was among the youngsters allowed to sit in the cab of fire trucks at Fire Station 37 during the Scripps Ranch Fire Safe Council's Fire safety Expo on May 5. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



This vivid painting was among the many artworks adorning the halls of Miramar Ranch Elementary School on May 31 for the school's 21st annual Student Art Show.

### SCRIPPS RANCH IN PICTURES 2018

The year 2018 produced many wonderful memories, a few surprises, but mostly some great happenings. As always, the year was punctuated by good people doing great things in this community. Young people were front and center. These pages offer a selection of colorful memories.



Samantha Nocella displays her back to school face for her first day of preschool at Discovery Isle. (by Kimberly Nocella)

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The Scripps Ranch High School girls varsity soccer team rejoices in the glow of victory after winning the CIF San Diego Section 2018 Division 1 Girls Soccer Championship on March 3 by defeating Rancho Bernardo High School 1-0. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Participants in the first Sustainability Hack, held April 15 by Sustainable Scripps Ranch, pause for a photo outside the Scripps Ranch Community Center. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Players on the Scripps Ranch Little League Intermediate Division All-Star team made history this summer by advancing all the way to the Little League Intermediate Division World Series. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Lisa Nguyen (from left), Diane Rider, Jan McGinn, Trevor Jones, Joan Reese, Victoria Mazelli and Nancy Assaf enjoy a moment near the fairy-lit courtyard at An Evening to Remember, a celebration on March 10 commemorating the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library's 25th anniversary. (photo by Jim McGinn)

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Members of the Scripps Ranch High School girls varsity water polo team give their coach their full attention during a break in a hard-fought battle against Canyon Crest Academy in CIF San Diego Section Division II Semifinal action on Feb. 22. The Lady Falcons suffered a 7-9 loss, bringing their playoff run to an end. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



The Scripps Ranch High School varsity girls lacrosse team made it to the first round of the CIF Open Division Playoffs before falling to San Marcos 12-9. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



The Scripps Ranch High School boys varsity soccer team barely lost the championship game of the Division I CIF San Diego 2018 Boys Soccer Championships to Point Loma in a shoot-out on March 3. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Students holding the school's banner helped lead the entire student population of Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary School on the annual Penguin Parade on Jan. 12 in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. (photo by John Gregory)

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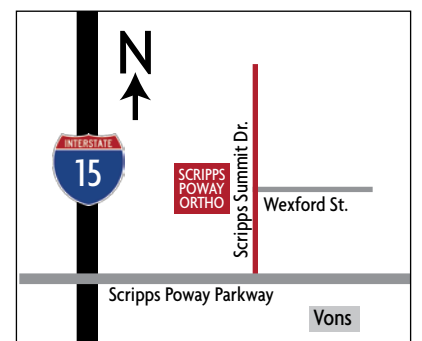
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Evelyn Camaclang and Naomi Banister of Girl Scout troop 2057 organized an open space clean-up throughout Scripps Ranch as their Silver Award project the week of Oct. 13-20.



Happy runners stream down the street at the start of the 2-Mile Fun Run, one of five events in the annual Fourth of July Run & Ride, produced by the Scripps Ranch Old Pros. (photo by John Gregory)



SRHS Senior Class ASB officers (from left) Ashley Lo, Nina Suomi and Bryn Tannone planned the school's senior prom, held June 2 at the San Diego Natural History Museum. (photo by Tracey LoVuolo)



A young player focuses on her batting skills during Scripps Ranch Softball Association Opening Day events on Feb. 24 in Cypress Canyon Park. (photo by John Gregory)



Youngsters enjoy the sounds of Back to the Garden, featuring Eve Selis, in the Scripps Ranch Symphony in the Park concert series on Sept. 9 at Hoyt Park. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Diane Pali Belliveau (left) and Stacy Wible, who were teachers when Jerabek Elementary School first opened, reminisce during the school's 40th anniversary. (photo by John Gregory)



SRHS head football coach Marlon Gardinera placed heavy emphasis on academic achievement and character development, helping to reinvigorate the football program. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



CEO Tom Teravainen leads the Support the Enlisted Project, a nonprofit headquartered in Scripps Ranch that assists young military families in financial crisis. (courtesy photo)

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Scripps Ranch High School boys varsity lacrosse goalie Daniel Yang shows good form as he defends the net during early season action. The Falcons went to the Division I 2018 CIF San Diego Section Boys Lacrosse Championships, losing 8-10 to La Jolla in the championship game on May 19. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



A youngster keeps cool while participating in the 48th annual Scripps Ranch Fourth of July Parade. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



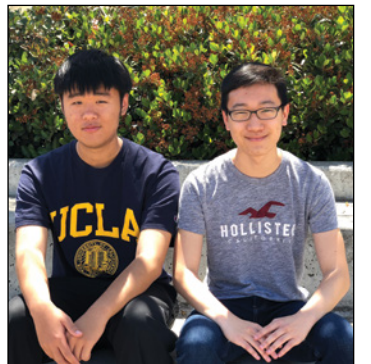
A pair of canines pose at the feet of the Easter Bunny while a youngster observes those waiting to see the big bunny at the Scripps Ranch Farmer's Market on March 31. The Farmer's Market closed in October, but not before holding a successful Trick or Treat Day as its last event. (photo by John Gregory)



Longtime Scout Master Paul Honeycutt received the Silver Beaver Award, a special distinguished service award of the Boy Scouts of America. (courtesy of Paul Honeycutt)



Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary School, led by Principal Liz Sloan, received the Quality Schools in Every Neighborhood award from the San Diego County Board of Education. (photo by John Gregory)



Jonathan Luo (left) and Joon Lee were named valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively, for the SRHS Class of 2018. (photo by Cynthia Kurose)



Shelley Zimmerman, a Scripps Ranch resident, retired from the position of San Diego Police Department chief in March. (photo by John Gregory)



Scripps Ranch resident Avalon Hartman created a unique Facebook page titled Life 2.0 for recently divorced women. (courtesy photo)



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Members of the Jerabek Elementary School choir provide the musical portion of the ceremony as the school celebrates its 40th anniversary on June 1. (photo by John Gregory)



Scripps Ranch High School hurdler Jaydonn Young competes in a dual track meet against University City High and Mira Mesa High on April 12. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Scripps Ranch High School boys varsity baseball player Colin Beaver watches the ball soar after a swing in early season action. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



A group of seniors celebrate following the Scripps Ranch High School Class of 2018 commencement ceremonies at Viejas Arena on June 1. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Julia Morales shows perfect form and focus as she rounds a corner for Scripps Ranch High School in a dual track meet against University City High and Mira Mesa High on April 12. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

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Some parents joined Scripps Ranch High School seniors in the school's parking lot to paint the students' designated parking spots that were auctioned off to the highest bidders in a school fundraiser. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Kenny Bordieri plays Stuart Tramontane and Erica Marie Weisz portrays Lizzie Monohan in "For Better," one of the many lively productions presented by Scripps Ranch Theatre. Visit scrippsranchtheatre.org. (photo by Ken Jacques)



Two talented vocalists helped The Heroes take Hoyt Park by storm as they played to a highly appreciative audience during their July 15 performance in the Scripps Ranch Symphony in the Park concert series. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

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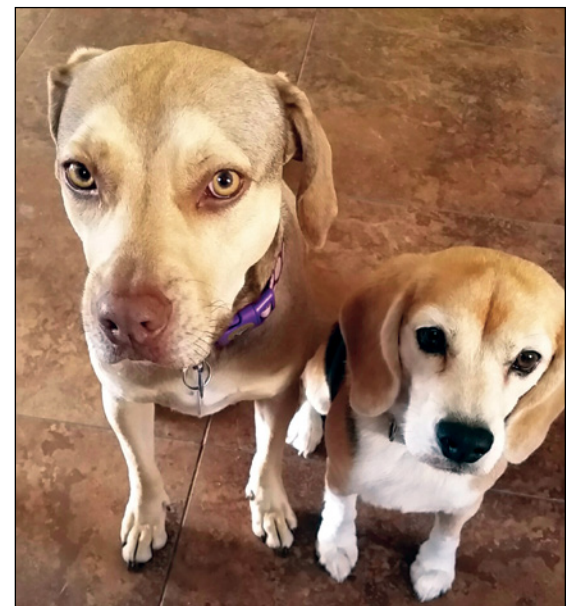
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Players on the Scripps Ranch Pop Warner Junior Pee Wee Falcons team pose for a victory photo after defeating Fallbrook 8-0 in a hard-fought championship game at Scripps Ranch High School on Oct. 27. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



The Scripps Ranch High School varsity football team experienced a much improved 6-4 season record in 2018, playing at home in front of enthusiastic crowds. Falcons sophomore running back Nicholas Gardinera broke 1,000 yards for the season, and the team is looking forward to continuing its upward course in 2019. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Pepper, a beagle-pit mix, and Lucy, a beagle, look a bit guilty, but they are also extremely cute and furry. These two made their media debut on Real House Dogs of Scripps Ranch, a Facebook page created by Scripps Ranch resident Jessica Pearson. Cat lovers relax: she also created Real House Cats of Scripps Ranch. (courtesy of Jessica Pearson)



If anyone is sure to be having fun during Scripps Ranch High School athletic events and assemblies, it's the school's cheerleaders. These young women not only form a spirited group, they are always smiling and fully enjoying their high school experience. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)





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# CHAMPIONS!



Members of the Scripps Ranch High School field hockey team pose for a victory photo after winning the CIF San Diego Section 2018 Open Division Field Hockey Championships. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

## Field hockey team wins title

The Scripps Ranch High School field hockey team captured a hard-fought championship game 1-0 against San Pasqual High School on Nov. 17 to win the CIF San Diego Section 2018 Open Division Field Hockey Championships. San Pasqual dominated much of the first half, but Scripps

Ranch began to build some momentum. The Lady Falcons scored 9 minutes into the second half, and that would end up being the only goal scored during the entire game. Scripps Ranch added this victory to the numerous shut-outs the team accomplished this year, which is definitely became a season not to be forgotten.



All parents still needing to register their children for the Scripps Ranch Little League spring season must sign in to a new online league management system at scrippsranchl.org. (photo by John Gregory)

## Little League registration is open

By Ken David

Sign-ups for the 2019 Scripps Ranch Little League (SRL) spring season have begun, and parents will have to sign up themselves this year as part of a new online league management system.

SRL President Marcus Armstrong emphasized that this year, all parents will need to go online at scrippsranchl.org to register players for the spring season.

"The first thing to do is to go to the site and create a new user profile," he said.

The league's website was redone this year using tools

from Dick's Team Sports HQ, a web development and technology venture of Dick's Sporting Goods. Armstrong noted that the web template is something used by other leagues across San Diego and the country. He also wants to let parents know that they will need to enter more information than they have in the past, but that the one-time effort will offer benefits in the future.

"It's going to greatly reduce the amount of time it takes them to register, after this season," Armstrong said. "By doing this, we'll see some increases going forward in what we can do as far as organization and communication."

While player sign-ups continue into January 2019, a \$40 late fee will be added to the regular league fee after Dec. 16.

Open to both boys and girls, SRL divisions include T-Ball (ages 4-6), Rookies (ages 6-7), MAPS (machine pitch; ages 7-8), Lower Minors (ages 8-10), Upper Minors (ages 9-11), Majors (ages 10-12), Intermediate (ages 12-13), Juniors (ages 13-14), Seniors (ages 15-16) and Challenger (for players with physical or mental limitations, ages 5-18).

All youngsters registered will be assigned to a team. Then, each player's skills will be reviewed during assessments scheduled for the first two weeks in January.

Assessments give team managers a chance to evaluate players who are then placed on teams with an eye toward balance.

"That's the main goal of not only Scripps Ranch but also all Little Leagues," Armstrong noted. "To have all kids participating and have well-balanced teams across the entire division."

Players whose skills and performance throughout the year stand out could be selected by league managers

See **LITTLE LEAGUE**, Page 19



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Joshua Cox is a junior guard who is one of the most consistent shooters on the team. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



Andy Manso moves the ball up the court during an early season victory against Oceanside. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)



## Season brings optimism, change

By Ken David

**E**arly in the new season, the Scripps Ranch High School boys varsity basketball team and head coach Brian Keiser bring optimism and returning talent to a season marked by change.

The Falcons hit the floor this year running a two-guard offense. When on defense, the team generally plays either a man-to-man or a 1-3-1 zone.

“We spread the floor, move the ball, lots of passes, lots of movement,” Keiser said. “The offense is designed to get layups and open threes, but we also have options — because we have players who can do it — to throw it in the post a lot. And we have Grant, so we’re looking for that a lot.”

“Grant” would be Grant Norberg, a 6-foot, 6-inch returning junior who starts at center and was named to the San Diego City Conference All-League Second Team last year as a sophomore.

“He’s had a great start

to the season. He’s already had one college coach come out to see him,” Keiser said of Norberg. “He’s tall, he can run the floor, he’s a lefty, he’s explosive, so he’s got the tools.”

Point guard Gabriel Pennington, another returning varsity player, is also a key player on this year’s team.

“He’s going to be up there with our leading scorers,” Keiser said. “He’s physical, a good ball handler. He can get to the rim, he can make a jump shot. Tough kid.”

The coach also called attention to Joshua Cox, a junior stepping up as a shooting guard in his first year on the varsity team. The coach

described Cox as one of the most consistent shooters on the team.

“We’re always trying to give him open looks,” Keiser said. “If he’s open, he’s got the green light.”

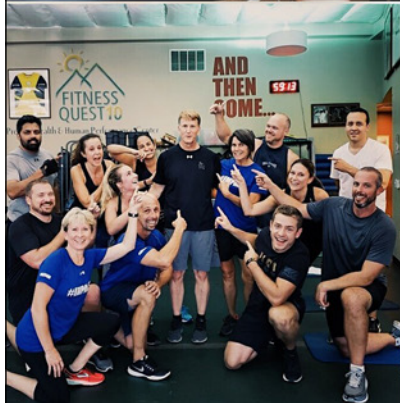
While Mira Mesa High remains as a rival in the Eastern League, other games that stand out to Keiser are the Jan. 5 league opener against Morse, a team that gave the Falcons some tough games last year, and games against Lincoln, which comes into the Eastern League this year as a result of league realignment.

See **BASKETBALL**, Page 20



Grant Norberg, a 6-foot, 6-inch junior, is a San Diego City Conference All-League Second Team player who returns to the Falcons at center. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

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Baha Keshin drives to the hoop against Oceanside. (photo by Ralph LoVuolo)

## BASKETBALL

Continued from Page 19

“When (CIF) power rankings come out at the end of the year, they realign the leagues based on those,” Keiser explained. “We played in the Western League for years before they changed the format and we had some tough games with Lincoln. They’re back now, so that’s one (opponent) I’m circling as a tough one and probably intense.”

Keiser is in his 20th year of coaching, with this being his eighth year at Scripps Ranch High School. His own playing time included standout performances for Gresham High School in Oregon and at Pacific Christian College in Orange County. Assisting him this year is Ian Larsson,

who played basketball at San Diego’s Westview High, and in college at Sonoma State University and Miramar College.

Coach Keiser noted that the Falcons have a good record of making the playoffs each year, but this year’s goal is to go further.

“We go to the playoffs virtually every year,” he said. “We’d like to have some better seeds and have some better chances in the opening rounds; that’s a goal this year. We’re a perennial playoff team hoping for more success in the playoffs.”

The next games for the Falcons will be Dec. 14 at La Jolla and Dec. 15 against Steele Canyon in Chula Vista. To learn more and follow the team, visit [srhsbasketball.com](http://srhsbasketball.com).

# SRHS team rolling in talent

By Ken David

The Scripps Ranch High School roller hockey team is off to a good start in a season brimming with talent and opportunity.

The team is coming off last year’s 17-3 record. Led by CIF Roller Hockey Player of the Year Matt Gauthier, it was a season that saw the Falcons go into CIF playoffs as a second seed. The team made it to the semi-finals before falling to Westview in overtime.

Head coach Greg Friedman looks ahead to this season with optimism.

He has something of a farm system feeding talent into the Scripps Ranch team. Until recently, Friedman coached roller hockey at both Scripps Ranch High and at Thurgood Marshall Middle School, where his sons were playing.

“The last couple of years we’ve really had a lot of talent,” he said of the Falcons. “Most of those kids that played at Marshall are now on varsity (at Scripps Ranch High), so this is probably our strongest year that we’re going to have. Most of those kids have been playing together for seven years.”

Gauthier graduated last year, but other local talent

is ready to make an impact in the rink.

“Last year we had the top player in the league. This year, we’re more team-oriented. A lot of passing,” Friedman said. “I’ve got two freshman twins that play for the Anaheim Junior Ducks.”



Those two are Ben and Jack Ivey. Ben is a forward, and Jack plays defense. Both also play ice hockey for the 14 and under AAA Junior Ducks, the highest level for that age group.

“They’ve started this year (for the Falcons), and they’ve already made a big difference,” Friedman said.

Another standout player on the team, according to the coach, is senior Cody Sherman, a forward who also plays for the Anaheim Duck’s AAA team.

“He’s probably one of the top players in the country,” Friedman said. “He’ll probably go on to play juniors (with the U.S. National Team) next year.”

A dentist with a private practice in Scripps Ranch, Friedman is a Serra High School alum who played soccer while growing up in Southern California. He said he got into hockey while attending dental school in St. Louis. He’s been coaching since 1992, shortly after his sons started playing.

The team’s assistant coach is Jon Gauthier, older brother of Matt, a Scripps Ranch High alum and a former Falcon roller hockey player himself. Following Scripps Ranch High, Jon Gauthier won three National Collegiate Roller Hockey Association championships while skating for Lindenwood University.

The Falcons’ next roller hockey games will be Jan. 2 against Cathedral Catholic and Jan. 7 versus Poway. Both games will be at the Escondido Sports Center, 3315 Bear Valley Parkway in Escondido. For more information about the team, visit [srfalcons.org](http://srfalcons.org).

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## How to defeat holiday bulge

By Debbie Serban

Beating the holiday bulge is not as easy as it sounds to most people. Most of us are continually tempted by all the overwhelming holiday treats and fabulous meals. So many of us tend to simply accept that we will gain fat during the holidays. We often choose to eat more, enjoy many sweets and exercise less. It's a simple equation for gaining fat.



Debbie Serban

There is also a simple equation for maintaining your current fat. Take on the Okinawa belief of "Hama Hachi Bu." When asked by many researchers about the secret to longevity and vitality, and living a long and fulfilling life, Okinawan centenarians said, "Hama Hachi Bu" – "Eat until you are 80 percent full."

Here is the recipe to improving your holidays and making them more enjoyable and memorable:

### Hama Hachi Bu with a twist – Maintain 80 percent

#### Four simple instructions:

- Eat until you are 80 percent full.

- Make drinking water 80 percent of your total daily liquid intake.

- Exercise until you are 80 percent fatigued, and when you complete eight of your 10 workouts, pat yourself on the back!

- Spend 80 percent of the time you are with family and friends real, full of positive conversations, making fun memories, moving and enjoying activities together.

Maintaining the Belly Bulge and that Mutating Middle during the holidays can be as simple as realigning the reasons we get together for the holidays. Is it truly to spend time with family and friends? Is it really time to celebrate? Is it time to make memories?

If so, then focus on making all of these at least 80 percent successful. When you remember why you come together at this time of year and apply the simple concepts above, you are sure to bring more joy to yourself and those you are with during the holidays. When we focus and distract ourselves with meaning and purpose, the useless eating and snacking diminish, which helps leave the belly bulge behind. Happy holidays!

Debbie Serban, MS, is a nutrition and fitness professional working with a variety of populations. She coaches and supports her clients in meeting their goals in fitness, nutrition and life balance. [serban-wellnessandfitness.com](http://serban-wellnessandfitness.com). (858) 822-9201.

# Put your best food forward this season

(StatePoint) The holiday season can be an indulgent one, full of cookies, candies, heavy meals and eggnog. While no one wants to rein in the fun during the merriest time of year, there are simple ways to keep your health on track.

- **Stick to routines.** To the best of your ability during this hectic time of year, attempt to stick to routines that promote wellness. Set a bedtime and honor it. Hit the gym. Meditate. Do whatever it is that keeps you grounded and feeling your best.

- **Drink up.** It can be especially easy to forget to stay well-hydrated in the winter, especially when you're indulging in alcoholic beverages at all those holiday parties. Water doesn't need to be the only source of hydration you think about this season. Soups and purees made from hearty winter vegetables, as well as citrus fruits do the trick, too, and their nutritional properties can help keep you healthy in winter.

- **Keep things organically sweet.** Instantly boost the flavor of your favorite



Consider giving a honey makeover to all your favorite holiday recipes. (copyright Mikhail Malyugin/stock.Ado-be.com)

meals with organic honey. One great option is Organic Honey In The Raw. USDA Organic certified and Non-GMO Project verified, it's made from pure nectar collected from exotic wildflowers found in the remote Caatinga region of northeast Brazil. The hand-harvested, sustainable honey is raw (never heated above 117 degrees) and unfiltered, so it retains the benefits of bee pollen.

Just one tablespoon of organic raw honey provides

the right amount of sweetness and flavor for any dish or drink, including year-round staples like oatmeal, yogurt, tea and more. You can also consider giving a honey makeover to all your favorite holiday recipes, including glazes and sauces for meat and poultry, cocktail recipes, and of course baked treats.

- **Make Substitutions.** Other healthful substitutions this holiday season include topping pies with Greek yogurt instead of

cream, using apple sauce in place of oil and nut flour instead of white flour in baking, and serving vegetable mash as an alternative to mashed potatoes.

- **Be Mindful.** The holiday party circuit can be dangerous when it comes to making nutritious choices. When you enter a party with a buffet set-up, it can be tempting to reach for the richest foods first. Before indulging in the canapes and Swedish meatballs, try filling up a plate with crudité first.



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## Preventing gun violence before it happens

By Mara W. Elliott  
San Diego City Attorney

Mass shootings and everyday gun violence have become so commonplace in America that many are losing hope that we can stop the senseless loss of innocent lives.

In San Diego, my office and the Police Department are restoring hope by leading the state in using a

relatively new tool that prevents gun violence when red flags appear: the Gun Violence Restraining Order (GVRO).

Courts issue GVROs against a person who poses a clear threat to himself or others, preventing him from possessing, accessing or purchasing firearms or ammunition.

My office has obtained more than 80 GVROs this year, leading to the surrender of more than a dozen assault weapons, 200 other firearms and 80,000 rounds of ammunition. In each case, we presented a judge with clear and convincing evidence – warning signs that could not be ignored.

There's no telling how many lives we've saved. Some GVRO respondents had made specific threats to kill. Others threatened suicide. Many used their firearms recklessly because of addiction or mental health issues.

The California law was prompted by the 2014 mass shooting in Isla Vista, a community where I felt safe as a student while attending UC Santa Barbara. A GVRO could have prevented that tragedy and hundreds like it. Yet few California cities were obtaining GVROs until I became your City Attorney and made this program my priority.

Our success was noticed in Sacramento and we were asked to conduct GVRO training for law enforcement agencies and their attorneys throughout California. Our fourth training is this month, in Anaheim. Previous trainings were held in San Diego, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Here are examples of how we've used GVROs to prevent predictable tragedies:

- A car dealership employee made disturbing comments

to his co-workers, praising the Las Vegas mass shooter for setting a modern record for killing, fantasizing about shooting up a mosque and vowing to return to work with a gun if he were fired.

My office obtained a GVRO and the man surrendered a semi-automatic rifle with significant killing capability.

- After a student discussed conducting a school shooting on social media, police found disturbing images

on his social media, including racist posts and photos of him shooting an AK-47 rifle, and learned he had killed small animals on campus. Our GVRO prevents the student from accessing firearms.

- A wife heard her husband cocking a pistol in their bathroom during an argument over their divorce and hid the pistol the next morning. The husband returned two days later and said he was going to shoot her and their infant child. Our GVRO allowed police to confiscate the pistol.

- A man made a suicide threat to his fiancé and later assaulted his elderly father for refusing to hand over his firearms. Police arrested him, and he threatened to shoot a police officer on his release. With our GVRO, police confiscated seven guns, including three AR-15 rifles.

- A man believed to be in the early stages of dementia threatened to shoot his wife and a neighbor because he erroneously believed they were having an affair. His 75-year-old wife escaped the house, barefoot, by climbing over a fence and running through a cactus garden. We obtained a GVRO and police seized a rifle and two pistols.

These examples show how GVROs prevent gun violence in a range of situations where other laws do not allow so quick a response to an immediate threat.

As the mother of young children, I was forever changed by the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Now, as your City Attorney, I work every day to protect San Diego's children, and everyone else who could be the victim of foreseeable gun violence.



Mara W. Elliott

## Warm holiday wishes

We, the publishers of Scripps Ranch News, offer our most sincere wishes to all our readers and advertisers. We truly hope that each and every one of you, whether traveling or staying cozy in your Scripps Ranch home, are able to enjoy the holiday season with family and friends.

As we mark our one-year anniversary of publishing this newspaper, we thank all who have enjoyed this publication, supported us and wished us well.

We take this opportunity to remind everyone that we are longtime Scripps Ranch residents with children in local schools, and this is our family business. We are proud to be among all our Scripps Ranch neighbors. We consider ourselves the "home team" for Scripps Ranch and we aspire to bring you a community publication that further enhances your lifestyle, kindles pride, stimulates your mind and strengthens connections to your neighborhood.

**Have a wonderful holiday  
and a prosperous New Year,**  
John & Jacqueline Gregory, Publishers

## Gift cards

*Leftover funds under \$10  
can be redeemed for cash*

By Summer Stephan  
District Attorney

*As your district attorney, I'm committed to increasing communication and accessibility between the DA's Office and you, the community. One way I have been doing that is through this column, where I provide consumer tips on public safety matters.*



Summer Stephan

If you're like the rest of us, you have a stash of gift cards with low balances on them from a few cents to a few dollars. Did you know that if the balance is under \$10, it is redeemable for cash by law? That's right, California Civil Code section 1749.5 subdivision (b) (2) is clear on this and it is something consumers and retailers alike should know.

A retailer's failure to issue cash refunds on amounts under \$10 could lead to a couple of scenarios:

- Violation of the law
- Civil action resulting in penalties or fines
- Additional expenses of company training or legal costs
- Poor image

Retailers should ensure that their staff – particularly cashiers – understand this law and are trained to engage the refund process. Already, a number of retailers inform consumers of their right to request cash for gift card balances

under \$10 by printing a reminder on the reverse of the gift card – a smart and consumer-friendly move.

When approached for a refund, the retailer should cash out the gift certificate right at the cashier.

Consumers who have less than \$10 on a gift card and want to redeem the balance for cash should:

- Politely ask.
- Cite the law if met with resistance or with an employee who simply doesn't know the law.
- Ask for a manager if there is still a problem with obtaining a refund.
- If the retailer still refuses to comply, report it to law enforcement.

My office has a consumer unit within the division that prosecutes economic crimes. This division handles a variety of wrongdoing, including computer intrusion, identity theft, investment scams, embezzlements, real estate matters, counterfeit goods, environmental crimes and it protects consumers and businesses through filing civil cases to prohibit unfair business practices within the marketplace.

People often think that the district attorney only handles violent crime, but it's important to know that we also protect the public from economic fraud and scams that can be harmful and painful for victims.





Beverly Cassity points to a photo of her youngest granddaughter on the center of the fireplace mantel.



An abundance of poinsettia baskets, stuffed animals and Santa figures are placed around the bottom of the Christmas tree so grandchildren can view them. (photos by John Gregory)

**HOMES**



A centerpiece featuring pine cones, an elf, Santa and Mrs. Claus sits atop a coffee table.

### Warm Christmas Interior

Mike and Beverly Cassity's Scripps Ranch home has been transformed into a Christmas wonderland full of memories. The holiday vibe has an instant impact from entryway through the living room. While Beverly admits "sometimes I go overboard," the result is delightful. Beverly ensures that grandkids have plenty to view at eye-level, from the holiday Annalee Dolls collection to her handmade wreaths to animated stuffed animals. "Every ornament on our tree has a memory attached to it," she explained.



Mike and Beverly Cassity display their Christmas tree.



Two snowmen and a Santa figure stand beside the fireplace.



Beverly holds the hand of a jolly Santa figure.

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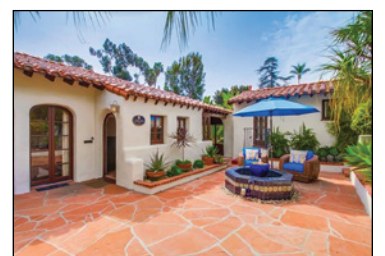
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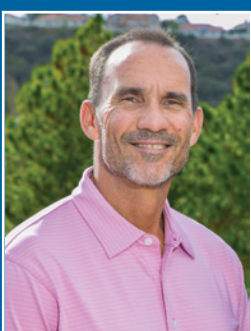


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During the holiday season, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress and success possible. We are thankful to all the families we got to help buy and sell a home this year and look forward to the opportunity to work with your family in 2019!

**We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**



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