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NEWS UPDATES

Coronavirus update

As of Aug. 11, San Diego County reported 1,489 cases of COVID-19 had been recorded in the Scripps Ranch 92131 ZIP Code area since the County began keeping track in 2020. Nine deaths caused by COVID-19 have been reported in this area. A total of 26,890 people were vaccinated out of a population that the County puts at 36,090 residents.

In response to a recent sharp increase in regional COVID-19 cases, County officials encouraged businesses and employers to implement stricter COVID-19 measures. They recommended businesses implement a requirement for employees to either show proof of vaccination, or subject themselves to regular testing.

SDG&E customers to received credits

San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) residential customers should see their electricity bills reduced by \$34.60 each month in August and September — or a total of about \$69.20 over two months, thanks to the Cal-

ifornia Climate Credit program designed to fight climate change, according to SDG&E. The credit is from a state program that requires power plants, natural gas providers, and other large industries that emit greenhouse gases to buy carbon pollution permits. The credit on customers' bills is their share of the payments from the state's program.

Recall ballets arrive

Ballots were mailed to San Diego County registered voters for the Sept. 14 California Gubernatorial Recall Election. The ballot asks: 1) Do you want to recall the governor? 2) If recalled, who do you want to replace him? Be aware that names of replacement candidates are not listed in alphabetical order. Visit sdvote.com.

St. Gregory offers free concert series

St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church is inviting the public to its free Summer Nights live outdoor concert series featuring contemporary Christian music on four consecutive Friday nights in September.

The first concert will feature The Vigil Project on Sept. 3. Sarah Hart will perform on Sept. 10. Taylor Tripodi is scheduled for Sept. 17, and Village Lights will be live on Sept. 24.

Food and drinks will be available starting at 5:30 p.m. Children's activities will also be available. Each concert is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. The concerts will be held at 11451 Blue Cypress Drive.

Xceptional ranked on prestigious list

Xceptional, a provider of Managed IT Services and IT consulting services, and headquartered in Scripps Ranch at 10089 Willow Creek Road, was named as one of the world's premier managed service providers in the prestigious 2021 Channel Futures MSP 501 rankings. Managed services providers that qualify for the list must pass a rigorous review.

New business opens

Tracey Ashcraft, who resided in Scripps Ranch for 25 years, plans to open an Exercise Coach location at 9820 Willow Creek Road on Sept. 1. Exercise Coach is outfitted with high-tech computerized machines, and uses its technology to help the more reluctant exercise consumers who are either too busy to spend much time at the gym, dislike the gym scene or are afraid of injury.



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Three sisters gain careers helping others

By Ashley Shah

ackson and Chris Muecke are local residents who have lived in Scripps Ranch for 35 years. They raised children who are now grown: Alexis, Josh, Meredith and Lauren.

Along the way, it occurred to the parents that all three of their daughters are now working in fields to serve humanity in some way.

"The three of them are sensitive to the needs of others and are dedicated toward helping those they serve in and out of professions," mother Chris said.

Here, the three sisters share their journeys that brought them to their present career fields.

Alexis Lopez

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit nurse

Graduating from Scripps Ranch High School (SRHS) in 1998, Alexis Lopez went on to the University of California, Davis (UCD) on a water polo scholarship.

She graduated in 2002 with a degree in Human Development.

"I originally wanted to work in the FBI, but I had talked with a lot of women in that career, and it didn't seem like the right option for me anymore," Lopez said. "Like my dad, I tried about 14 other careers – before choosing nursing. We had a family friend that brought me into Scripps Grossmont (Hospital) to be a unit clerk, and no matter what happened, I always ended up back at the hospital."

'That's the great thing about nursing - there is so much to learn and do.' —Alexis Lopez

In 2010, Lopez decided to attend nursing school. She graduated in 2012 from National University with a bachelor's degree in Nursing.

From 2014 to 2016, Lopez got her master's in Science and Nursing in hospital management and leadership from Grand Canyon University. Lopez worked at Scripps Mary Birch Hospital for the first year of her master's and Rady's Children's hospital for the second year.

She then became a school nurse for about a year and a



Meredith Muecke, firefighter with the San Diego Fire-Rescue De-partment (courtesy photo)

half, while still working every now and then at Scripps Mary Birch Hospital.

In December of 2019, Lopez returned to working solely at Scripps Mary Birch Hospital as a charge nurse.

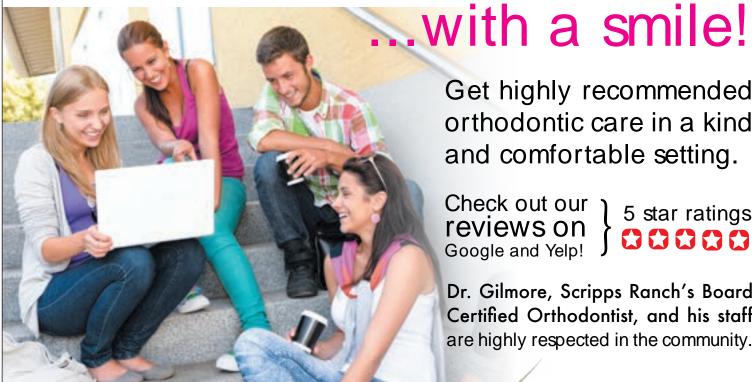
"Then, COVID hit, and initially I was as scared as everyone else. I didn't know how to take it. But, the whole experience has been eye opening," Lopez said.

She now plans to move into something new at the See THREE SISTERS, Page 4



Alexis Lopez holds a newborn infant. (courtesy photo)





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You are in their lives for a short time, but you make such a big difference and it is such an honor," Lopez said.

Meredith Muecke

After graduating from SRHS in 2005, Meredith Muecke also went to UCD to play water polo.

Firefighter

Meredith Muecke (left) and Alexis Lopez. (courtesy photo)

"That's the great thing

Out of all of the career paths she has tried, nursing

"I love taking care of peo-

ple, and especially in the NICU. A baby is there be-

cause they are not healthy.

about nursing – there is so much to learn and do," she

THREE SISTERSContinued from Page 3

remains her favorite.

She graduated with a degree in Exercise Biology and a minor in Chicano Studies in 2010.

After graduating, she worked at Fitness Quest 10 for about two years as a physical therapist.

'I knew I always
had a desire to
know what to do,
and help people
in an emergency
situation.'

—Meredith Muecke

"I really enjoyed the work and experience I had working with professional, elite athletes," Meredith said. "However, unfortunately with just a bachelor's degree, I wasn't able to make enough to cover my bills ... So, I ended up looking for options and eventually found firefighting."

In 2017, she began her journey to become a fire-fighter by starting her EMT training at Miramar College. She also took fire science courses in the Fire Technology program.

"I absolutely loved every minute of my training and was fortunate to be in the very first California State Marshall Firefighter I Academy class through Miramar college," she said.

See **THREE SISTERS**, Page 5





Classes start August 30th! lynchdance.com

THREE SISTERS

Continued from Page 4

Post-graduation from Miramar, Meredith stayed on as a teaching assistant at the college.

"I wanted to maintain and improve my skills while trying to get hired by a big city department," Meredith said.

Around two years ago, she began working at and is still with the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department.

"I received job offers from both San Diego Fire and Orange County Fire Authority at the same time, but I knew San Diego Fire was the right department for me. I wanted to be close to my family and mentors who supported me," Meredith said.

She shared her future plans.

"I really have a desire to get involved with our training division. We put a lot of emphasis in our training division which is why we are such a well-respected division." she said.

At one point in her life, Meredith was not even aware that there could be female firefighters, but she has found a love for it that will never fade.

"I knew I always had a desire to know what to do, and help people in an emergency



In the field of psychology, Lauren Muecke enjoys seeing people transform from a state of distress to one of peace. (courtesy photo)

situation. This job involves so much of what I love; being outside, working as part of a team, and constantly being able to challenge myself to learn new things and grow," Meredith said.

Lauren Muecke

Mental health psychotherapist

Graduating from SRHS in 2008, Lauren Muecke then studied at Northern Arizona University. She graduated with a degree in International Hospitality in 2012.

"I did some research for about two years after I graduated because I knew I wanted to change career paths into something in the psychology field," Lauren said.

From 2016 to 2018, she

attended San Diego State University (SDSU) to get her master's in Child and Family Development with an emphasis in Child Mental Health.

Since graduating from SDSU, she has been working toward becoming a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC).

"Once I graduated SDSU, I applied to the Board of Behavioral Sciences to get my license. Usually, it takes about two to three years to get the 3,000 hours of supervised therapy required for the license," she said.

She worked for two programs for New Alternatives, a therapeutic behavioral service until about June 29 of this year.

"I worked for the Crisis



Lauren Muecke (from left), Alexis Lopez and Meredith Muecke. (courtesy photo)

Action and Connection program for about a year, and then I worked at the North County Outpatient School Based Services for a year and a half," Lauren said.

On Aug. 9, Lauren began a new job at a pilot program that is coming to San Diego which aims to help mental health crises without law enforcement assistance.

"I am super excited to be a part of this new program. I will basically be like a first responder, but to mental health crises, which is awesome," she said.

Lauren described her longterm goals.

"My goal kind of ties in with this job because I want to be able to create a program where law enforcement and first responders are able to learn how to de-escalate mental health issues without violence. I think if we were all just more educated, we could handle these situations in better ways, and more lives would be saved," Lauren said.

She currently has about 2,500 hours of supervised therapy experience and is continuing on her way to her license.

"I think I have always been interested in psychology, but now I for sure know I am in the right place. I love seeing people transform from this state of distress to peace. I love the experience of knowing I can help one person at a time," she said.



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Scripps Ranch News | August 2021



'War of the Three Kings' is the second book in a trilogy

By Ashley Shah

cripps Ranch author PrasannaMadabushi published her second book, "War of the Three Kings," on Aug. 5.

"War of the Three Kings" is the second book in the Magadha Series, which is a trilogy.

"I am really excited for my readers to read this one because I feel like I have grown as a writer, and they will be able to see that," Madabushi said.

She will begin her third, and final book in the series, "Clash of the Heirs," this year and hopes to publish it in 2022.

"Right now, I am doing some plotting and organizing. I'm figuring out what to do with my main characters, but I'm ready. I thought of

Author Prasanna Madabushi

'I am really excited for my readers to read this one.'

-Prasanna Madabushi

a great opening already," Madabushi said.

The Magadha series follows the journey of two royal siblings over the span of several decades.

"In the first book, they are teens, and not in power yet. But, they are realizing their duty and responsibility. In the second book, they are adults, and they face challenges and have to learn from their mistakes," Madabushi said. "The third book will be about when they're older, and more about the love you have for

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your child, which is something that resonates with me. It is about learning what to put first, your child or your country."

Madabushi started her journey with this series in 2015. She published her first book, "Heir to Malla," in 2020.

"I've always loved reading, but I found that I couldn't find many books on Medieval India, so I just started writing. I never had meant for this to become a profession, but I talked with a few local publishers and an editor, and I was able to self-publish my first book," Madabushi said.

Her second book was written during the pandemic, so she shared her experience writing in an uncertain time.

"Writing was actually easier in the pandemic. It gave me a way to escape into my own world and get lost. Art of any form is an escape. However, it was a bit hard to get a book published, and I felt it was hard to connect with other writers," Madabushi said.

'My biggest
inspiration
from writing
comes from my
grandmother.'

—Prasanna Madabushi

She held her first virtual event with Mysterious Bookstore Galaxy in January. Madabushi has also held several events through Instagram. She hopes to connect with local bookstores to hold more events.

She is planning for the future as her trilogy will come to an end next year.

"It is sad to part ways with these characters since they've been with me since 2015. However, I'm excited to begin a new series. I plan to probably start on it right after I finish my third book," Madabushi said. "I think this time I want to do something more in the fantasy land. I'm thinking more of following two brothers and it being more in the realm of

See **AUTHOR**, Page 7



SEASIDE PEDIATRIC

DENTISTRY &

ORTHODONTICS

Welcome Club plans September events

By Denise Stewart

for the well-being of its mem- coordinator. bers, Scripps Ranch Welcome planned for August.

safe again.

be held safely in an outdoor money for club events.

setting, members will dine near the coast, according to tember, an autumn outdoor Out of caution and caring Pam Savelsberg, Gadabouts gathering is planned for a

Club cancelled its monthly the Welcome Club's found-tivities are a favorite among meeting and postponed the ing by Beck McDonald will long-awaited Coffee Klatch be celebrated with a catered Participants show off their Taco Fiesta at the Scripps culinary skills by bringing While members benefited Ranch Community Center delectable appetizers to be from the relaxation of COVID on Sept. 13, according to shared along with a sip of rules during July with an President JoAnn Farmen. evening outdoor social that Plans for entertainment and Hallock says, "A good time many enjoyed, it was decid- traditional gift basket give- is always had by all." ed that August would be an aways are under construcappropriate time to play it tion. Each of the club's interest groups will put together scene, but members always A lunch outing near the a gathering of treasures that end of the month remains delight whoever is the lucky on the calendar. If COVID winner. These gift baskets concerns allow the event to dazzle the crowd and raise

Later in the month of Sepweekend evening. Known to The 40th Anniversary of members as a TGI, these fesmembers and their escorts. wine. Coordinator Lynnell

> Welcome Club is an institution in Scripps Ranch's social warmly greet inquiries about the club. President JoAnn Farmen is easily reached at the website: scrippsranchwelcomeclub.com.



Continued from Page 6

monks and that side of Indian culture."

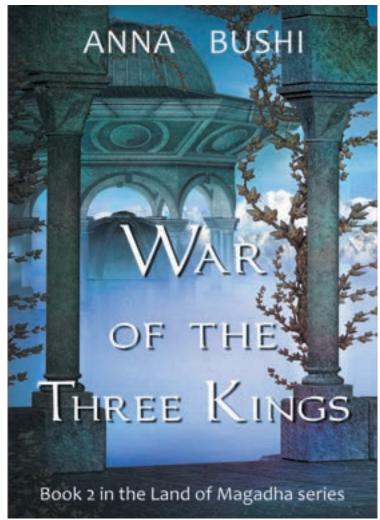
She has been writing for more than six years now, but books have always been a part of her life.

"My biggest inspiration from writing comes from my grandmother. We used to visit her in the summers when I was younger, and she would read us these stories, and I would watch the characters come to life. I loved it," Madabushi said.

Outside of all things book related, Madabushi enjoys gardening and spending time with her two daughters.

Hardcover and paperback versions of her books are available at most bookstores, and e-books are available on Amazon Kindle.

To keep up to date with Madabushi, visit annabushi.com. Follow her on Facebook @annabushibook, and Instagram @anna. bushi.book.



The Magadha Series, including "War of the Three Kings," follows the journey of two royal siblings over the span of several decades.







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Glyphosate, a main ingredient in numerous weedkillers, has been banned from residential use.

Glyphosate banned from residential use

By Suha Chari Sustainable Scripps Ranch

here's good news! glyphosate, the main ingredient in many weedkillers such as Roundup, the world's most heavily used, is finally banned for residential use.

Yes, it may be a small step, but it's come about due to the awareness, diligence and deep caring of many, and by organizations like As You Sow. These folks don't just care about their families' health and their own, but that of everyone else, all life in fact, and for the soil that sustains us.

What is so bad about weedkillers? For one, they deplete the soil of microbes and fungi essential for plant growth. They have given rise to super weeds that are resistant to herbicides, resulting in the development of more deadly weed killers like Dicamba and Chlorpyrifos.

A known carcinogen, glyphosate was found in 93 percent of people, and 60 percent of surface water tested in the Midwest by the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) recently. Pre-harvest use of it is seen to greatly increase residues in foods.

As concerned citizens and responsible parents, how can we be good stewards of our environment, yet manage the pests and weeds that challenge us? Robust plants in healthy soil are the best defense against them. For extra help, experts suggest:

- **1.** Use cardboard and straw to cover overgrown areas, and let sit for a season.
- 2. Invite birds into your garden; hang bird feeders near trees with aphids; let birds take care of them.
- **3.** Encourage beneficial insects by NOT using pesticides, and building a bug shelter.
- **4.** Use beer traps for snails

and slugs.

- **5.** Use a thick layer of mulch to prevent weed growth and keep moisture in.
- **6.** Avoid digging when possible, as it may bring up weed seeds from below.
- **7.** Remove weeds before they flower, to avoid proliferation.
- 8. Plant comfrey around veggie patches to prevent grass creeping in. The leaves are great for compost, as mulch and liquid feed.
- **9.** For persistent insect problems, use a fine mesh to cover the plants during

fruiting season.

10. Grow different plants together (polyculture) except corn, to prevent bugs from devastating any one crop.

For more details, please check: bit.ly/3shTdEy.

It is heartening to note that just by changing your diet to organic, glyphosate levels in the body can be greatly reduced, as seen here: bit.ly/3jYzB4M

Let us be vigilant about what we allow into our bodies, and into that of Mother Earth.



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Parents can help children build social skills

(Family Features) While adults may joke about needing to relearn how to be around others in a post-pandemic world, children can also benefit from a refresh of certain soft skills – especially young children who may not remember pre-pandemic life.

Building on these skills can also help children prepare for a successful return to school. In fact, data from market research firm Mintel shows parents' top learning priorities for their children prior to entering grade school are how to play well with others (67 percent) and good manners (66 percent).

"Summertime is a great time for families to help their children focus on social skills that may not have gotten much attention this past year, particularly if families were social distancing or in quarantine," said Taunya Banta, inclusion services manager for KinderCare Learning Centers. "Parents can set their children up for success when school starts again in the fall by helping them work on these soft skills in relaxed settings like family gatherings and on the neighborhood playground."



Research shows that parents' top learning priorities for their children prior to entering grade school are how to play well with others and good manners. (KinderCare)

Consider these ways parents can help their children build social skills:

Name emotions

Naming emotions is an important part of learning how to regulate them. If your children don't understand what emotions they're experiencing, they may be confused or upset by how they feel, and that could amplify the feelings and make it more difficult to regulate the emotions.

Talk with your children about your own feelings, or the feelings of characters in books, to help them learn to identify emotions and appropriate ways to address those feelings. For example, "I'm sad, but I know a hug will

help me feel better," or "I'm mad and that's OK. It's not OK to hit, but I can punch a pillow or stomp my feet to get the feelings out of my body."

As a family, try practicing some simple emotion regulation strategies like deep breathing. To help younger children breathe deep, hold up two fingers and ask them

See **SOCIAL SKILLS**, Page 11



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1-858-251-8539 ridgeviewhealthcenter.com Ridgeview Health Center is a new, open to the public, care community providing living options in assisted living and memory care. Nestled among rolling hills and landscaped grounds in Scripps Ranch, we offer multiple levels of care all located on the same campus. At Ridgeview Health Center, you can have enhanced peace of mind that your loved ones will Live Better and Live Longer.



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#Blissful Life



Playing with others gives children an opportunity to freely express their emotions and thoughts, work out feelings and explore relationships in a safe, lighthearted way. (KinderCare)

SOCIAL SKILLS

Continued from Page 10

to smell the flower as they inhale (one finger) and blow out the candle as they exhale (the other).

Play with other children

Play gives children an opportunity to freely express their emotions and thoughts, work out feelings and explore relationships in a safe, lighthearted way. If you feel comfortable and can follow health and safety guidelines, visit a playground or set up play dates with other children of similar ages – then take a step back to let the children play together. If your children aren't ready to play with others, allow them to stay close to you until they feel ready to join the other

Once the children are play-

ing together, observe their interactions and talk with your children (in the moment or later) about how they felt. If they had fun, ask what they enjoyed. If disagreements or awkward moments came up, help your children problem-solve ways they could address those situations next time.

"Most importantly, remember children of all ages have an incredible capacity for resiliency," Banta said. "Just knowing they have a steady base to return to, a safe place where they're loved and appreciated for who they are, can give children the courage they need to face the challenge of a new or uncertain social situation with self-confidence and courage."

For more tips to help your children build or improve their social skills, visit kindercare.com.

Make math part of daily life

(StatePoint) What do budgeting monthly expenses, being a sports fan and following a recipe have in common? All these activities employ math.

Unfortunately, it is common for students to struggle with math classes because they don't see how the subject will matter in their everyday life.

Parents can help motivate students by drawing the connections between math and daily life. They can also help ensure children make the grade by equipping them with the tools they need to handle their coursework.

Everyday connections

The more connections you can make between math and daily life, the better. Here are a few ideas:

- When cooking or baking together, have your child help you double the recipe or convert the measurements from metric to standard.
- The next time you're paying a bill, ask your child to calculate the tip.
- Personal finance is perhaps one of the most important and practical math lessons you can teach a young person. Demonstrate creating and



When it comes to math, parents can help make the subject more fun, interesting and approachable by equipping kids with the right tools, and helping them embrace a positive mindset.

managing a budget, explaining concepts such as savings and interest as you go.

- On your next road trip, have your child calculate your estimated time of arrival based on your average speed, as well as the estimated fuel costs for the trip.
- Take a run around the neighborhood as a family. Afterward, have everyone calculate their heart rates. Check your pulse and measure the number of beats in 15 seconds. Then multiply that number by four.

Getting equipped

Ensure kids are equipped to succeed in math classes. For students learning the fundamentals, a basic calculator has all the functions they'll need. When it comes to more advanced math, such as algebra or statistics, graduate your child to a scientific calculator. Those from Casio can handle decimal, trigonometry, exponential and statistical functions in addition to hundreds of other math functions. They also offer several models of graphing calculators, all of which feature a natural textbook display to help students more easily visualize mathematical concepts. New models also feature built-in Python programming functionality. To access free math resources and tutorials, visit casioeducation.com.



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Lemonade Stand Contest deadline

The 2021 Scripps Ranch News Lemonade Stand Photo Contest is nearing an end, but there is still time to enter.

If your children had a lemonade stand this summer, send in a photo. Entries will appear in the September issue of Scripps Ranch News and on ScrippsRanchNews.

One winner will receive \$25 worth of treats from Sweet Treats by Jess Bakery!

To enter, email a high resolution photo of your lemonade stand to info@scrippsranchnews.com. Include the location of your stand and the date the photo was taken. Include name of the photographer and names of those in the photo.

Rules: Photo must have been taken in Scripps Ranch (92131 area) between May and August 2021. Deadline is Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2021. No charge to enter.

Duo introduces arts to underprivileged kids

By Kaila Mellos

wo young Scripps Ranch locals have created a project that is helping bring the arts to those around the country who might not have the chance to experience them in schools traditionally.

Sharisa You and Ashlyn Hunter started a nonprofit organization called Inspiring Tomorrow's Performers to help give some children a fair chance at discovering art forms, including dance and music.

'Now, we're able to work with kids all across the country and are not tied down to a certain school.'

—Sharisa You

"Every time there's funding cuts in schools, performing arts programs and visual arts programs are the first to go," You said. "Many schools don't even have performing arts programs, and it's even worse in low-in-



Ashlyn Hunter and Sharisa You

come districts."

The two, who have known each other since eighth grade, are now going into their senior year at The Bishop's School. They find they have had the same experience with being involved in the arts.

"We have had a great experience with dance and performing arts. That's our source of creativity and kind of like our safe haven," You explained. "We wanted to give that opportunity that we had to other kids who don't have that opportunity."

When they began this nonprofit, it was hard for them to get the classes going because of their age and certain restrictions. They found that when the pandemic started, they could utilize Zoom to get these classes to everyone and avoid the issues they had in getting the arts to kids who wanted to learn.

"We started it on Zoom, and that's when we started holding dance workshops and different kinds of performing arts with new guest teachers once we got enough kids," Hunter said.

Even with Zoom, they had some issues trying to get a school to commit to having them host a class for their students. They were lucky enough to meet a teacher from San Jose who believed in their program enough to give them their start.

"She went to a performing arts high school, and she saw

our vision and believed in us. She gave us the opportunity to work with her kids," You said. "From that experience, it made parents trust us more, and that's how we were able to start our nonprofit. Now, we're able to work with kids all across the country and are not tied down to a certain school."

You and Hunter have worked with kids from nine different states around the

This summer, they also started a couple of summer camp programs. The first one was a dance-specific one, and the second was an immersion in the arts course.

"Each day was a different performing art or just art in general. So, we had different guest artists come in, so they weren't experiencing the same teachers," Hunter said of the immersion camp. "A lot of our teachers from our school's performing arts section come in and teach lessons and different key facts about their art."

Both their camps were very popular, and they received a lot of feedback from the students.

"The feedback we get is really rewarding. Some kids have told us, 'Oh, we want you to do more summer camps.' 'Can they be longer?' 'When's the next class starting?" You said. "Our hard work that goes into putting these workshops on and planning them feels rewarding when you get this feedback that the kids love it. Also, to see them grow, especially in a short amount of time, is amazing."

Since summer is coming to an end, the camps have stopped. But You and Hunter planned to start what they call their "Sunday

To learn more, or to volunteer, visit itperformers.org.







BACK TO SCHOOL

Scripps Ranch High School

- · School days will begin at 8:45 a.m. and end at 3:33 p.m. this year.
- SRHS is moving back to its traditional "pre-COVID" 6 period bell schedule. Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays will

have a traditional 6-period day. Wednesdays and Thursdays will have a "block schedule" with double periods and an advisory period in between periods 1 and 2.

- The first day of school will have a different bell schedule to accommodate the passing out of schedules. Students will begin the day in their advisory class and then go to their period 1 class.
- Kickoff for freshmen will be Aug. 23 and 24. This year's freshman class is invited to the first ever Falcon PRIDE Day. Falcon PRIDE Day is an event designed specifically for incoming freshmen students as a "bridging" into high school. Students will visit five stations throughout the day, each representing SRHS Falcon PRIDE; Positivity, Respect, Integrity, Diversity, Excellence. While at these stations, students will have the opportunity to meet and learn from some of the exemplary upperclassmen students and make their first memories together at SRHS. Falcon PRIDE day is Monday, Aug. 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. On Tuesday, Aug. 24 from 8 to 11 a.m., freshman students will See BACK TO SCHOOL, Page 14

Information from San Diego Unified

The following are excerpts from a San Diego Unified School District message regarding the new school year:

San Diego Unified has an unwavering commitment to open all schools safely and responsibly for the 2021-2022 academic year, which begins ... on Aug. 30. We'd like to make our families aware of the substantial measures that have been put in place to protect the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on our campuses this year, including:

- Upgraded HVAC filtration from MERV 8 to a MERV 13 or HEPA filter, exceeding current requirements
- Portable air purifiers for areas not served by a MERV or HEPA filter
- Face masks required indoors at all times, with nearly 1 million masks distributed to schools since reopening in April
- Handwashing stations and cleaning wipes in multiple locations
- A particulate sensor and CO2 monitor at each site for monitoring the school's indoor air quality
- Electrostatic disinfecting sprayers for cleaning school buses
- Protocols in place for contact tracing, should it be necessary
- · An up-to-date COVID dashboard on our website (sandiegounified.org)

All San Diego Unified staff will be required to get vaccinated or be prepared to take part in a weekly COVID-19 testing regime. Optional weekly testing will be available for students, as testing equipment allows. For unvaccinated

school athletes, the district plans to have a testing team at high schools.

As you may have heard, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced this week that all California public schools will require safety measures similar to those in place in San Diego Unified, including a mandate that school employees must be fully vaccinated or tested regularly.

Because student vaccinations are the safest way to get back to school, we are encouraging everyone to "Make a Date to Vaccinate."

Vaccines are free and readily accessible throughout the region, and can be found by calling 211 or visiting www. myturn.ca.gov ...

We understand that not everyone will be ready or comfortable with returning to in-person learning. With that in mind, all San Diego Unified K-12 students have

the option to enroll in the new online Virtual Academy for the 2021-22 school year.

Virtual Academy enrollment staff are contacting families who expressed interest in enrollment in a survey that was sent out in May. If your family was unable to fill out the May survey and is still interested in the Virtual Academy, please email virtualacademy@sandi. net with your child's name, grade level for 2021-22, student ID number, and current school site, by Aug. 20.

Thank you for doing your part to keep our schools open and ready to support students every day. We look forward to a safe and successful year!



SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS: June 12 - August 28

Open to members and non-members!

Register at www.srsrc.com



GROUP SWIM LESSONS SCRIPPS TRAILS CLUB Parent & Tot to 17 years old Sessions are two weeks long, running Monday through Thursday at Trails



dedicated lessons pool

SUMMER CAMPS: Kinder-8th Grade

- Themed week long camps at Aviary include "Science Lab", "Get Soaked", "Sports Fever", "S.T.E.A.M" "Creative Art" and more
- 3 schedule options: Full day 7:30am-5:30pm, AM half day 8:15am-12:30pm, PM half day 1pm-5:15pm
- NEW this year: You can choose to add an "Optional Add-on" to your camp fun (Pick from group swim lessons, Hour long enrichment programs, Friday field trips, tennis lessons)



JUNIOR TENNIS ACADEMY: 1st-8th Grade

- Week long clinics at Aviary Club running 8:30am-12noon
- Taught by our USPTA Pros

Register at www.srsrc.com SRSRC follows all State & County Covid-19 Requirements.

Aviary location: 9875 Aviary Drive, San Diego, CA 92131 | Trails location: 10216 Scripps Trail, San Diego, CA 92131





BACK TO SCHOOL

Continued from Page 13

attend the traditional Kickoff event to pick up their books, purchase items, etc. Due to scheduling conflicts, freshman students will not take their picture or pick up their school ID during the Kickoff event. Students will have an opportunity to take their picture and receive their school ID the second week of September.

 San Diego Unified School District is following the guidelines of the California Department of Public Health. Every morning at home, students should fill out the daily symptom checklist. Use this link: https://bit.ly/3malgEP.

Marshall Middle School

• First day of school will be Monday, Aug. 30. School starts at 7:40

a.m. and ends at 2:20 p.m. Bell schedule: https://bit.ly/ 3yUufxI.

- For returning students, all of the registration procedures such as school picture information, PE clothes, emergency cards, textbooks and other logistical information will take place in the first week of school.
- New Student Orientation will take place Friday, Aug. 27 for all incoming sixth graders and students new to Marshall Middle School. Participants will tour the campus and meet the administration, counselors, front office staff, and Eighth Grade Mentors. Parents will also be able to purchase PE clothes and pre-order the 21/22 Yearbook: 8 a.m. for students with last names A-L; 10 a.m. for those with last names M-Z.
- · New students who need to complete the enrollment process should read this: https://bit.ly/3m7QH2J
- For information about the Primetime after school

program, email: marshall@ arc-experience.com or apply: https://bit.ly/2UmHd8f.

Dingeman Elementary School

· Classes start at 8:25 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Thursdays have a modified schedule,

with classes beginning at 8:25 a.m., with dismissal at 12:20

 A TK/Kindergarten Family Meet-up is scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 28, 10 a.m. in Scripps Ranch Community Park, 11454 Blue Cypress Drive. Parents representing the Dingeman Family Faculty Connection (FFC) will be available to chat and answer general questions about being a Dingeman Tiger while the kids play and get to know each other. Wear a mask.

Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary School

- Back to School Night for TK/K parents only is set for Aug. 26.
- Aug. 27 is TK/K orientation a 10:30 a.m. Parents should bring their students to meet their teachers.
- · Aug. 27 is also New Student Orientation and School Tour day, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- Back to School Night for parents with children in grades 1-5 is Sept. 2. Adults only.

Jerabek **Elementary School**

- · First day of school is Monday, Aug. 30.
- The first week of school is minimum days for all TK and Kindergarteners. Classes will begin for them at

8:35 a.m. and end at 12:25 p.m. from Aug. 30

FIRST DAY PHOTOS

ATTENTION PARENTS:

Send a special photo of your students on their first day of the 2021-22 school year to Scripps Ranch News. Your photo will be published in the September edition of Scripps Ranch News and posted on Scripps-RanchNews.com. Free!

Send a high resolution photo to info@scrippsranchnews.com. Be sure to include the names of the students in the photo, the school they are attending and grade, along with the name of the photographer. Deadline is Sept 8.

through Sept. 3.

- · Jerabek Elementary Running Club begins Aug. 31. The campus is open at 8:15 a.m. with parent supervision.
- · Back to School Night for parents via Zoom is Sept. 2 from 5 to 6 p.m.

Miramar Ranch **Elementary School**

- First day of school is Monday, Aug. 30.
- Back to School night is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 18.
- Visit the Miramar Ranch FFA website at miramarranch.org for more information.

Chabad **Hebrew** Academy

 Visit the school website at chasd.org.

St. Gregory the Great Catholic School

- · First Day of School was Aug. 17.
- · Virtual School Mass is scheduled for Friday, Aug. 27.
- Visitstggcs.org for more information.





Students who aren't able to articulate their feelings might not be able to make the connection between new, uncertain situations.



Routines can give children a sense of security and structure, which in turn makes it easier to cope with big emotions like stress and anxiety.

Navigate feelings about returning to school

(Family Features) Whether it's your child's first day of kindergarten or the start of middle school, back-toschool season can bring a range of feelings – from worry to excitement – for the entire family.

This year may be more emotional as many families spent the better part of the past two school years at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's important to remember that even in the best of times, it's normal for children to express feelings of sadness, isolation or stress," said Tyreca Elliott, from KinderCare Learning Centers' inclusion services team. "Learning how to address those feelings helps us build self-confidence, resilience and independence. What's important is the way adults respond to children's stress. Offering comfort, reassurance and assisting with problem solving will help children learn and grow from stress in a positive way."

As an added bonus, Elliott said many of the most effective ways to help children learn to navigate their feelings work just as well with adults. Consider these three tips to help your children (and yourself) manage emotions during the transition back to school.

Plan ahead

The fear of the unknown can be stressful. Children who aren't able to clearly articulate their feelings likely won't be able to make the connection between new, uncertain situations – like going to school and being around other people – and their feelings.

Instead, they may become overwhelmed by emotions, which might look like more meltdowns, clinginess or a

variety of other behaviors.

Talk with your children about how they feel about going back to school ahead of the first day of class. Ask questions to help them determine why they feel particular feelings when they think about school, then work together to solve potential issues. That could mean finding a way to meet your children's teachers ahead of time, whether virtually or in-person, or practicing introducing themselves to classmates.

Build a consistent routine

Routines can give children (and adults) a sense of security and structure, which in turn make it easier to cope with big emotions like stress and anxiety. Try to stay consistent, and if you need to make adjustments, talk them through with your children.

Be sure to mention key milestones instead of times,

particularly if they can't tell time yet. Make sure your children have opportunities to ask questions about any changes to routines. They may need reassurance before they're ready to face something new.

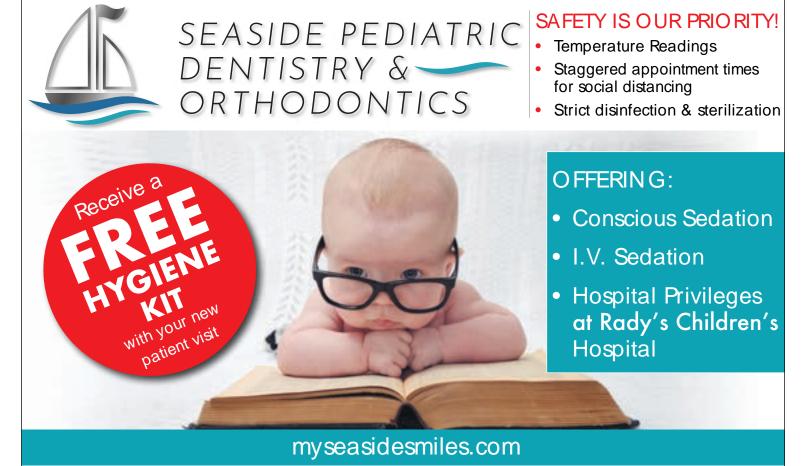
Create special moments

As important as routine is, it's just as important to prioritize quality time together. That could mean a vacation or something as simple as Saturday bike rides or Sunday morning pancakes.

Plan a family outing or special time together to celebrate completing the first week of school.

Family rituals and celebrations can give children and adults something to look forward to. Quality time together also helps families build resiliency.

For more tips to navigate back-to-school season, visit kindercare.com.



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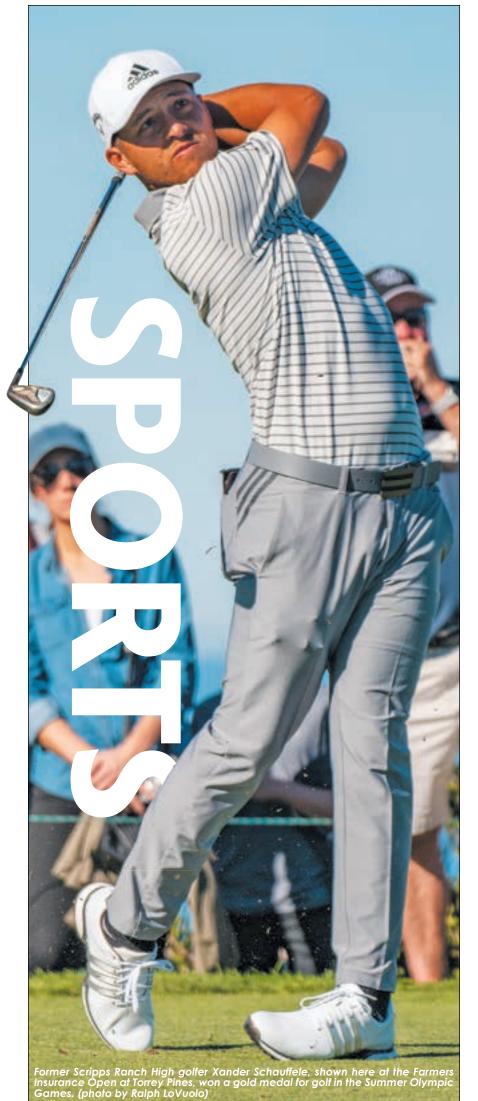














Nicole Ahsinger

icole Ahsinger traveled to Tokyo as part of Team USA to compete in the Summer Olympic Games in trampoline gymnastics where she finished in sixth place.

She is an individual and synchronized trampoline gymnast. Ahsinger also competed in the 2016 Summer Olympic Games and finished in 15th place in the qualifying round.

She is the daughter of Steven and Michelle Ahsinger, and attended Scripps Ranch High School where she graduated in 2016. She went to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, majoring in Broadcasting.

Ahsinger was also the 2021 U.S. trampoline champion, a 2019 World team all-around silver medalist, a 2019 Pan American Games trampoline silver medalist, a 2019 U.S. synchro champion and trampoline silver medalist and a 2018 U.S. trampoline silver medalist. She was a 2017 U.S. trampoline and synchro champion, a 2016 U.S. trampoline and synchro silver medalist and a 2015 U.S. trampoline and synchro silver medalist.

Jennifer Valente

ennifer Valente became a favorite of U.S. fans watching this summer's Olympic Games when she won a gold medal, becoming the first U.S. woman to win a track cycling gold at the Olympics. She captured the women's omnium in an emotional victory and was viewed on television by an international audience — draped in a U.S. flag and overwhelmed with joy. Valente also won a bronze medal in Tokyo in team pursuit.

She captured a silver medal in team pursuit at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio.

Valente grew up in Scripps Ranch. She is the daughter of Kimberly and Thomas Valente.

Valente was part of the five-member women's team that made history for USA Cycling by winning the program's first world title in team pursuit. Outside of the Olympics, she has participated in World Championship competition each year since 2014, capturing nine medals; four golds, four silvers and one bronze.

XANDER WINS GOLD!

ander Schauffele, a former Scripps Ranch High School student athlete who played on the school's golf team and now competes on the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) Tour, won a gold medal for golf in the Summer Olympic games in Tokyo on Aug. 1, finishing 18 under at Kasumigaseki Country Club.

The pressure was intense as Schauffele's chances seemed to fade near the end of the competition, but he came through with two final putts for a one-shot victory over Rory Sabbatini of Slovakia.

"I was trying so hard to just stay calm," Schauffele told the press afterward. "But man, it was stressful. And I made that putt and it was just a huge weight lifted off my shoulders and (I was) just very relieved and happy."

The NBC Sports announcer pro-

claimed him to be "gutsy and golden" as soon as Schauffele sank his final putt to seal his victory.

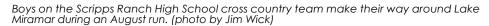
The Olympic golf competition was so tight that there was a seven-man playoff for the bronze medal.

"I think obviously winning a gold medal and representing our country is a big deal or else we wouldn't be sitting here talking to you and answering these questions," Schauffele told CBS Sports. "This is the most honorable thing and the biggest thing you can do for your country."

This Olympic gold medal was even more meaningful to Schauffele on a personal level because his German-born father, Stefan, was an Olympic decathlon hopeful at the age of 20 when he was in a car accident that derailed his dreams of competing.









Female runners on the Scripps Ranch High School cross country team break into a pace as they stride around Lake Miramar. (photo by Jim Wick)

Runners ready for new season

By Terry L. Wilson

he Scripps Ranch High School cross country team will soon be off and running as the 2021 season challenges a bevy of new as well as experienced distance-running student athletes.

Head coach Chuck Warren has been the man behind the whistle since 2012. The team lost several of its top runners last year, and now coach Warren is preparing the next group for this upcoming season.

We have some very good runners this year. Our girls team is especially strong.' —Coach Chuck Warren

"Last year, we had a very talented team of boys and girls and, unfortunately, because of COVID, we never got to run the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) league finals," Warren said. "Our boys might have been the co-favorites to win it. Now, our top two runners have graduated. Giancarlo da Sliva will be running for Santa Clara and Caden Farrow will run for Loyola Marymount University. I would like to add Delphine Maurer as well. She was a two-year team captain and a tremendous leader on our team. Like Giancarlo and Caden, she graduated last June, but will be competing in college at Western Washington University."

With the coronavirus pandemic restrictions loosened for the time being, the team looks forward to an uninterrupted season that, hopefully, will take its members all

the way to the State Championships with a new crop of runners.

"We have some very good runners this year. Our girls team is especially strong. Out of the top 10, we have all but one girl returning from last year. We have two very talented juniors: Chloe Ellermeyer who was our number one girl for the last two years. She also went to the State Championships two years ago as an individual.

Another girl that's getting stronger every year is Michaela Martin. She and Chloe also run track and field. So, they are our two strongest girls," Warren said.

"On the boys side we don't really have two stars like we did last year, but we do have a very solid team of very good runners," he said. "Right now, I think Ken Belt and Brian Maguire are the runners to keep an eye

See **RUNNERS**, Page 18



(photo by Jim Wick)





SRLA preps for fall clinics

By Kaila Mellos

he Scripps Ranch Lacrosse Association is preparing for a pre-season of fall ball to start after coming off a shortened season in the spring due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"Lacrosse is a spring season sport. So, that starts in February, and we'll start registration in the fall," said Janet Beaman, one of two who oversees boys lacrosse. "However, for the last several years, we've had clinics in the fall to lead up to our spring season. Our expectation is that we will host those in October and November to get kids interested, especially kids who've never played the sport before, so they can come out and give it a try before the registration begins."

With the pandemic, it is a work in progress to get the correct permits and enough players to sign up for the Back in April,
it went well,
and we had no
reported cases
of transmission.

—Carl Stepnowsky

seasons. With all the difficulties, the spring session went very well, according to Beaman and Carl Stepnowsky, who also looks after boys lacrosse.

"Normally, in order to get field permits, we have to follow the city guidelines and any safety practices. So, we'll do whatever is asked of us," Stepnowsky said. "In the past, what we've done is taken temperatures and ask players to wear masks from car to field. But since lacrosse is an outdoor sport, it tends to be a little bit safer than an indoor sport. I think back in April, it went well, and



The Scripps Ranch Lacrosse Association holds fall clinics as well as a traditional spring lacrosse season for boys and girls. (courtesy of Scripps Ranch Lacrosse Association)

we had no reported cases of transmission."

According to Beaman, the spring session was jammed into a short seven-week period filled with doubleheaders to get in all the necessary games.

"We were able to have a full season, but it was a shortened season, and we didn't start until April when we started games that we just did like doubleheaders. Those seven weeks we had games so that we could still get in all needed for a full season. Also, by doing it that way, we allowed the numbers to drop and parents were more comfortable registering their children," Beaman said.

More information can be found at srlax.org.



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RUNNERS

Continued from Page 17

on this year."

Sept. 10 is the starting date for the cross country team's first meet in Bonita at the annual South Bay Invitational. But at this time, it's a guessing game as to how many runners will be trying out for the team.

"Most of our Invitational meets are in September. We start our league competition in October, then the post-season begins in November. We had the largest team of any sport here at Scripps Ranch with well over 100 kids on the team. But that was before COVID. Because of the virus, last year's team was down to 42 kids. So, it will be interesting to see how many we get this year," Warren said.

"The returning runners have been training hard all summer," Warren explained one week before press time. "But right now, we are in a 'no contact' period between the coaches and the athletes, so I won't be able to see the team until next week. Until then, the team captains take over the leadership roles and keep the workouts going.

The team was scheduled to begin official team practices on Aug. 9.





With just a few simple tweaks, you can transform any outdoor area into a beautiful oasis ideal for rest, relaxation and fun.

Tips to create a cozy outdoor oasis

(StatePoint) With life returning to normal and fall approaching, it's a good time to focus on creating an outdoor space to enjoy on nice evenings. Whether it's a place for unplugging and relaxing alone or gathering with guests and entertaining, having a spot that you can enjoy well into the fall is key. Below are six tips for turning an average patio, porch or deck into an outdoor oasis.

1. Whether you use your outdoor space for reading a book on a summer day or catching up with friends on a warm night, incorporating plants into this area can create a barrier for privacy. Plant bushes, place large planters in corners or put hanging

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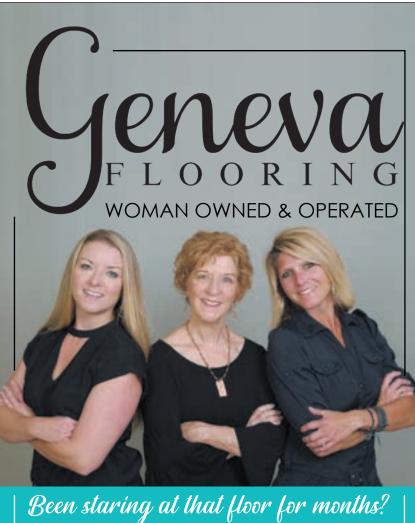


baskets on hooks around the perimeter. For small patios, you may even consider building a planter wall. Not only will it help with privacy, but it will also add color and dimension, making the space

feel like a sanctuary for you and your guests.

2. Add string lights overhead to create ambiance in your space at night. Duck Max Strength Nano-Grab is a versatile double-sided tape you can use for mounting. It's clear, holds up to 20 pounds per 5-foot roll and sticks to painted drywall, wood, glass, tile, metal, stone and brick without

See OUTDOOR OASIS, Page 20



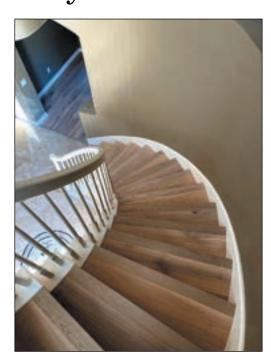


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With a few supplies and a little creativity, brightening your backyard and enhancing your backyard life at night can be a simple DIY project. (Exmark)

Bright ideas for stringing lights

(StatePoint) You've created the backyard of your dreams and love everything about it – except that seeing your surroundings can sometimes be a challenge once the sun's gone down. As the days grow shorter and we head into fall, it's one of the best times of year to enhance your backyard life at night.

While hiring someone to install outdoor lighting can be really expensive and involved, patio string lights are a simple, cost-effective solution. Best of all, you can create a look that reflects your style using any number of patterns.

In a recent episode of "Done-In-A-Weekend Projects" called "Light Up Your Life," expert landscape designer Doug Scott demonstrated how to hang string lights, and discussed what to consider before, and while, doing so. Here are his steps for adding fun, personality and light to your outdoor living and dining spaces:

- 1. First, determine how long your string lights need to be and how many strands you'll need. The only other materials you'll need for this project are appropriate, outdoor-grade hardware (such as cup hooks or a similar fastener) and possibly an extension cord.
- **2.** Next you'll want to sketch your design to make

sure you capture what you're going for and, second, to ensure you're purchasing the correct number and lengths of lights and hooks. For a more relaxed look, you may want a crisscross or free-form pattern. For a more uniform look, you can simply hang lights across the center or around the perimeter of the space.

"Regardless, just make sure your design represents you and how you want to live outside," Scott said.

3. When measuring your lights, be sure to add a few feet on each pass to allow for slack. One other thing you'll want to consider is whether you'll be able to make light connections in discreet places, ideally where they connect to the wall, post or tree.

"Having a connection in

the middle of a swag won't be the end of the world, but you'll want to minimize this as much as possible," Scott said

4. Install your hooks according to your plan. Then, hang your lights with the bulbs removed to decrease your chances of breaking them. You'll also want to make sure that your first strand reaches an outlet, or that you have an extension cord that will. Once you're satisfied with your general look, install one bulb in each strand to test that everything is working properly. If all is good, install the rest of the bulbs, light them up, then kick back and enjoy.

Need some inspiration to get started? A free downloadable guide from Exmark,

See **STRINGING LIGHTS**, Page 21



From bathrooms to bedrooms to offices, you can make the rooms of your home healthier and more inviting by becoming a plant parent. (Wild Interiors)

How and where to add indoor plants

(StatePoint) So, you want to become a plant parent? How do you make sure your new green "baby" will thrive in your home?

When selecting the best spaces for different types of plants, it's important to consider light, humidity and maintenance required, as well as what benefits that type of plant will bring to the space. Wild Interiors, the leading grower in all things green, offers tips for success. To learn more, visit wildinteriors.com.

OUTDOOR OASIS

Continued from Page 19

leaving a residue. Nano-Grab will keep your lights secure and in place and make it easy to take them down and store for winter.

3. If you are sticking with the rest and relaxation vibe in your outdoor oasis, think about adding a fountain or other small water feature for relaxing background noise. Keep that sense of Zen going

into the night with a fire pit, heaters or bamboo torches for warmth on cooler evenings.

4. For those interested in entertaining guests, you may want to mount an outdoor TV for watching summer ball games or a sound system for listening to background music. You'll want to ensure this equipment is properly installed for outdoor use in areas safe from wind and rain.

5. Creating an outdoor dining area doesn't have to break

the bank. When entertaining guests, a beverage cooler, bar cart and BBQ station are convenient additions you can make to what already exists on your patio. Building a cart or station for storing paper towels, tin foil and other essentials for the grill master can be a fun DIY project, too.

6. Having an amazing space doesn't always mean starting from scratch. You can simply add a fresh coat of paint in a bright color pal-

ette to update existing privacy walls or tables and chairs. All you need is a can of paint and a roll of FrogTape brand painter's tape to keep lines crisp and clean. As for color, you may be tempted to keep it neutral, but don't shy away from crisp blues and soft yellows. They will give a fresh and fun feel for all your summer entertaining.

For additional tips and uses for Nano-Grab, visit duckbrand.com.



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Impressive interior enhancements

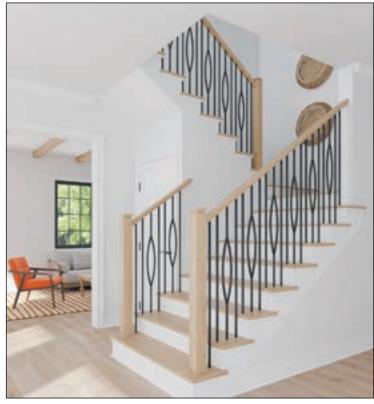
(StatePoint) First impressions are everything. While a lot gets said about exterior curb appeal, what one sees upon entering your home matters just as much.

Whether you simply want to wow guests and the members of your household, or you're looking to make a splash in the housing market with an updated, modern look, check out these interior enhancement ideas.

1. Go clean and modern. Did you know that it can be easy to change out your existing ho-hum balusters? Check out the Concealed Iron Baluster Installation Kit from L.J. Smith Stair Systems. The kit is used for installing 1/2-inch square hollow iron balusters to open treads and level runs, resulting in a clean finished look that's totally contemporary and on-trend.

2. Refresh mouldings. Looking to upgrade base and crown mouldings? You don't need to replace them entirely to get a fresh new look. Save time, money and effort by simply covering them over with CoverTrim from Ornamental Decorative Millwork. Designed to install over existing mouldings, these primed and ready-to-paint pieces are made of durable medium density fiberboard for an easy DIY job.

3. Elevate hardware. Replacing door hardware is a simple way to upgrade the look of your doors and add a personal touch. Designer brand Bravura Hardware offers premium, environmentally-friendly, scratch-resis-



Impress your family and guests while making a splash in the housing market with an updated, modern look. (StatePoint)

tant crystal door hardware that conveys elegance and style with sleek, smooth edges. Bravura also offers a design-your-own-hardware tool so homeowners can customize, combining knobs, levers and rosettes with a choice of seven backplate designs and seven finishes.

4. Get sophisticated. The new line of Hollow Iron Balusters from L.J. Smith Stair Systems can add a touch of sophistication to stairways. One of the styles features a single acrylic orb, a second design features sophisticated ornate detail, and the third boasts an expanded center diameter. The marquis center of the fourth option pairs well with the manufacturer's plain half-

inch square baluster. For homes with staircases directly in the foyer, this is a project that can make a particularly striking impact.

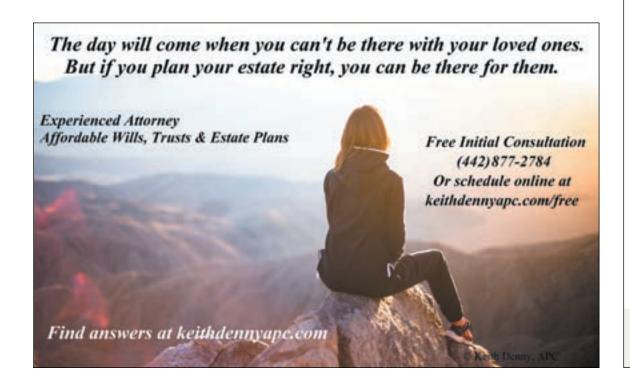
5. Upgrade interior doors and windows. Instantly upgrade the appearance of interior doors, windows and cased openings with Craftsman Crossheads from Ornamental Decorative Millwork. The one-piece, pre-built crosshead comes in five common widths and can be installed in less than 10 minutes. Made of poplar and factory-primed, once painted, it can be secured quickly above a door or window for a fast, custom-looking upgrade that enhances the style of any room in the home with minimal effort.

STRINGING LIGHTS

Continued from Page 20

which provides helpful illustrations and brief descrip-

tions of five commonly used string light patterns, can be found by visiting Exmark's Backyard Life at Exmark. com/backyard. There you can also access other original video series, including "Prime Cuts" and "Dream Yards," to help you make the most of your backyard.







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DIY ideas to increase value

(Family Features) Now as much as ever, your home may be a sanctuary for all kinds of expression, from thinking and dreaming to working and playing. Over the past year, homeowners began to consider the intersection of function and design in new ways.

Weekend warriors are dedicating themselves to creating more organized living spaces and making their homes better places for learning, working and living. If you're considering upgrades to your home, consider these DIY ideas from the experts at Royal Building Products that can increase beauty and resale value.

Home Office: Spending more time at home may mean storage space is at a premium, especially if you're relying on a makeshift home office. You can add a high-impact and functional element to your office with a built-in bookcase or workstation. Consider your materials carefully since they have a big impact on your final results. For example, a versatile alternative to wood is synthetic polyvinyl chloride (PVC) trim, which you don't need to sand or prime before painting, ultimately saving time, energy and money. While PVC is slightly more expensive than some wood options, it also requires less maintenance long-term.

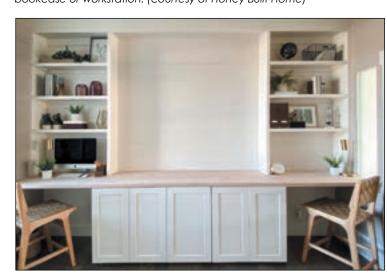
Bathroom: By updating wornout items, modernizing fixtures and creating a more functional space, you can expect to recoup up to 50 percent of a bathroom's remodel cost, according to the National Association of the Remodeling Industry. If you're considering an on-trend look like shiplap, a practical solution like Royal prefinished PVC Shiplap can help create a clean, comfortable space. It's waterproof, mold resistant, flexible and works well in spaces with many slants and angles. Plus, it's lightweight and easy to install.

Entryway: A home's foyer offers the first impression of its interior, teasing the personality of architecture and decor found with each step deeper inside. Whether bold and dramatic, tranquil and serene, or something in-between, the entryway often sets the tone for a home's ambience. Details like decorative molding and lattice trim can create a striking entryway for almost any home style.

Exterior: Whether you're sprucing up an outdoor living space or simply want to



Add a high-impact and functional element to your office with a built-in bookcase or workstation. (courtesy of Honey Built Home)



More and more homeowners are creating organized living spaces and making their homes better places for learning, working and living. (courtesy of Honey Built Home)

boost curb appeal, subtle enhancements can make a big impact. For example, board and batten shutters offer an attractive, low-fuss way to highlight your home's windows. Painting the front door is another low-cost way to freshen up your exterior. Or invite a touch of nature by adding flower boxes to your front porch or windows.

Find more creative inspiration, tools, tips and practical steps for every level of DIY-er at buildroyaldiy.com.

Select a trim style to match your home style

The right style of trim can transform a room into a whole new space. A good rule of thumb is to keep the style of trim consistent with your home style and from room to room.

Craftsman: The craftsman home style pairs well with simple, tailored and purposeful doors and minimally ornamented window casings while white, light beige and cream-colored crown moulding can create roomier spaces.

Colonial: This home style's rustic simplicity and rich detail call for interior trim that lends a touch of stately courtliness. Choose multipiece trim and wider baseboards, wainscoting and crown moulding to adorn family room floors, walls and ceilings.

Cape Cod: This practical and quaintly unassuming design can be accented by subtle interior trim such as transom windows and sidelights that surround multi-paneled entry doors, casings for double-hung windows, picture rails and frame walls.

Modern: The clean expansiveness of this home style lends itself to unadorned window and door casings as well as baseboards. You can go minimalist and use trim merely to protect walls and floors. Alternatively, you could rely on trim to create an appealing contrast with the wall colors.

Ranch: Open, informal and inviting, this style needs trim work that flows from room to room. Many styles work, from simple baseboards to more formal trimmed windows and cabinetry in the kitchen, fireplace mantels in the family room and passageway cas-





Use the checklist below as your guide to beautifying your home's exterior during National Curb Appeal Month this





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Checklist for Curb Appeal Month

(StatePoint) Whether you want to boost the value of your home to put it on the market or you want to enhance its beauty and settle in for long-term living, it's important to keep curb appeal top of mind.

That's because first impressions count. Indeed, curb appeal accounts for up to 7 percent of home value, according to research conducted at the University of Texas at Arlington. It's also the first thing people see when they visit your home, whether those folks are prospective home buyers or friends and family. During National Curb Appeal Month this August, let this checklist be your guide to beautifying your home's exterior:

- 1. Raise the roof. Work your way from top to bottom of your house, taking into consideration that the roof is one of the most prominent features of your home exterior. If it's time to replace your roof, be sure you're investing in a product that's impact- and fire-resistant, as well as resistant to fading, rotting, cracks and insects. The good news is that you don't need to compromise beauty to get this level of longterm durability. To capture the authentic look of real cedar shake while getting the high-performance benefits of composite materials, consider upgrading with the Select Shake composite tiles from DaVinci Roofscapes, which come in 11 color blends for a finished multiwidth look. The brand also offers a Lifetime Limited Warranty, giving you peace of mind.
- 2. Beautify the entry door. Upgrading your entry door handle is like icing a cake: it adds a special finishing touch to your home and makes a great first impression. Step up your style with Delaney Hardware's premium Bravura designer collection. Made of solid forged

brass, the pieces in this line provide timeless sophistication and craftsmanship that can't be duplicated. Available in a variety of styles, from an elegant farmhouse design to a sleek modern handleset, you can customize your hardware with one of several finishes: aged bronze, aged pewter, oil rubbed bronze, polished chrome, satin brass, or satin nickel.

- 3. Create a perfect pathway. Are your front walkway and steps riddled with hairline cracks and minor flaws, or are they simply drab? Revitalize them completely with a real stone coating. The Terrazzo line from Daich Coatings offers the beauty of real granite in six colors, and can be applied to concrete, masonry, linoleum, vinyl and tile surfaces. Tested for water, salt, chemical, impact and abrasion resistance, this long-lasting stone coating is easy to apply, easy to clean and works in any environment. Though it creates a surface that's naturally slip-resistant, it's a good idea to apply TracSafe Anti-Slip Sealer on top for added safety in both wet and dry conditions.
- 4. Stock your toolshed wisely. Stepping up your curb appeal is simple when you have the right tools on hand. Battery-powered outdoor products enable you to tackle all your routine chores quickly and easily.

For tasks ranging from mowing the lawn and trimming bushes to blowing leaves, consider stocking your toolshed with RYOBI Outdoor Products. The 40-volt lineup includes 50 cordless outdoor products that share the same battery. Since they're battery-powered, the products are quieter and require no mixing of gas and oil, no maintenance and no hassle starting - delivering maximum cordless convenience.



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