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## Oreo's tale of rescue and recovery

By John Gregory

The humanity of some residents in Scripps Ranch was shining brightly as a helpless creature was rescued a few days before Christmas

Alisha Zeeshan discovered a small, badly injured male kitten abandoned behind a garbage dumpster in Scripps Ranch Community Park on Dec. 19.

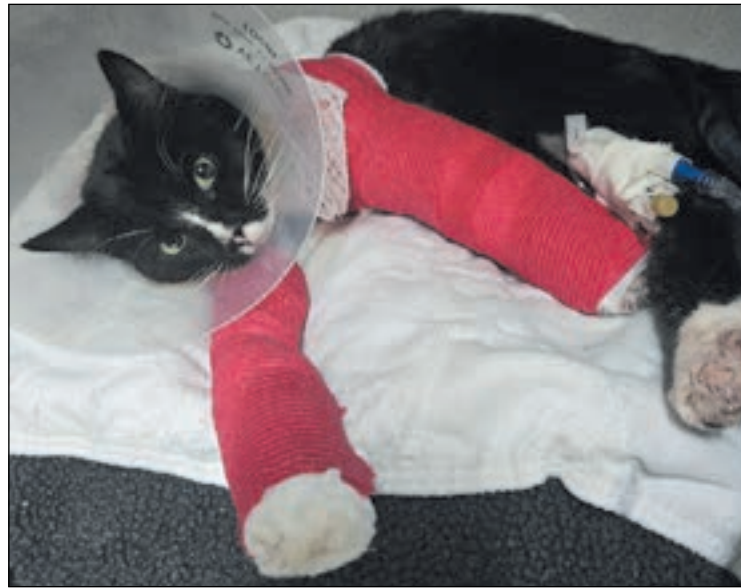
She walks through the park nearly every day, but it was by chance she saw this tiny feline, alone and in pain. Zeeshan posted a photo of the kitten on the Scripps Ranch Information Exchange social media page.

Scripps Ranch resident Susan Kilmer happened to check the posts that morning and leapt into action, becoming the kitten's guardian angel.

"I drove there immediately. I brought my cat carrier with me and an old towel," said Kilmer, who owns two other cats. "She showed me where he was, and I scooped him up with the towel and put him in my carrier."

The young cat was very weak and lethargic.

"The one thing I'll remember is that he has yellow eyes. We just looked at each other. He made a high pitched



This badly injured kitten was discovered in Scripps Ranch Community Park. It is shown here before emergency surgery. (courtesy photo)

meow," Kilmer said.

The kitten didn't struggle going into the cat carrier. He couldn't move, she said.

One of his legs was maimed and he lost one of the digits on his other paw. His tail was also injured, and maggots were crawling around the wound, Kilmer said. Someone had wrapped the injured leg before he was discovered, yet they abandoned the kitten in the park.

"It tore my heart apart. I couldn't imagine someone doing that," she said.

The Humane Society was notified, but it did not specify a time when it would send anyone to help, Kilmer said.

So, she rushed the cat to a local veterinarian. They examined the kitten and thought he was about seven to eight months old, and that the injury had happened about seven to 10 days earlier. The staff speculated that the tiny kitten might have climbed into the engine compartment of a parked vehicle to keep warm, which sometimes happens. When the vehicle was started, moving parts such as a belt or rotor might have caused the injuries.

They did not find an identification chip and recommended that she take him to a specialty veterinary hospital in Sorrento Mesa, which

she did.

Kilmer was asked the name of the cat. Caught off guard, she named him quickly, calling him "Oreo" because of his black and white markings.

"As soon as they saw him they took him to the back. I waited while they did an assessment. I spent the entire day there," Kilmer said.

The veterinary hospital staff had many conversations about Oreo's condition. Finally, it was determined that the necessary surgery would have a positive outcome.

Kilmer immediately paid a \$2,200 deposit so the hospital would take needed actions to make the cat comfortable while he awaited surgery.

"They cleaned up his wounds. ... They wrapped both arms up. Gave him antibiotics and fluids," she said.

Then Kilmer had to quickly find a way to raise the additional funds to cover the more than \$9,000 additional cost for surgery.

"I created the GoFundMe page," she said. "It was just crazy. The money kept coming in. The next morning when I checked, there was about \$4,000. So many people keep reaching out."

Oreo's operation was held, and his damaged leg was

See **OREO'S TALE**, Page 5

## Local author receives awards for first novel

By Ashley Shah

Scripps Ranch author who goes by the pen name of L.M. Twist published her debut historical fiction novel "Louis Mie and the Trial of Hautefaye" about one year ago.

"This is my first novel and the positive reception is what I am most proud of. It was really exciting and gratifying to see positive reviews. This novel has really spoken to people, which was really, I think, unexpected yet thrilling," she said.

The book was awarded The Firebird Award for Legal Thrillers, the Historical Fiction Company five stars and highly recommended notation, and Literary Titan Gold Book Award.

The novel is based on a real-life political based crime. The setting of the novel takes place in France in 1870, when Napoleon III ruled amidst the Franco-Prussian War.

"Napoleon III, who is the nephew



of Napoleon I, ruled as the emperor of France for almost 20 years, until he was essentially captured on the field by the Prussians," Twist said. "The empire basically crumbled overnight after his capture, and a republic was put into place. It was a radical change for France. Many peasants and less educated French people had been extremely attached to the emperor."

During the time of the war, misinformation ran rampant; the economy was bad; there was a drought; tensions were

at an all-time high. There were rumors that there were spies from Prussia among the French.

The story begins with the events surrounding the murder of the victim, Alain de Monéys. Monéys was deputy mayor of a village. He was actually leaving to join the French army against the Prussians.

"Monéys' cousin was in a tavern. He was telling people what was actually happening in the war, which was that France was losing the war. There were a few members in the tavern that belonged to a mob that heavily supported the emperor Napoleon III, that disagreed with the cousin and claimed that he said, 'Long live the Republic.' The cousin states that he never said that. The cousin runs away from the tavern before the situation can escalate," Twist said. "Then, Monéys walks into the tavern, and gets lumped into this situation. He is accused of being a Prussian spy and

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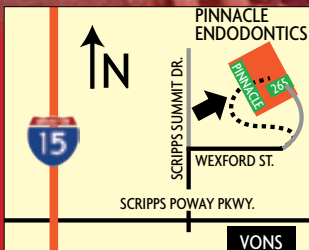


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Now is the time to ask how susceptible your property is to wildfire damage and devastation. One of the most important aspects is "defensible space." This is a way to ensure that your property is defended against the next wildfire event.

The Forestry and Fire Prevention Team at the Resource Conservation District and Fire Safe Council of San Diego County is pleased to announce a Home Assessment Program. The program will be offering a free educational home assessment with resources on home hardening and defensible space principles. This will help assist and guide homeowners on how to better prepare and protect their home and property from wildfire.

During a brief 30 to 45 minute visit, two trained as-

sessors will review home hardening and defensible space principles in the context of your home. The staff will assess your property for fire risk and vulnerability, provide you with a comprehensive report detailing what areas to prioritize, and a list of resources you can reference to fulfill your individual fire resilience goals. To find out how to get your assessment, visit [firesafesdcounty.org/hap](http://firesafesdcounty.org/hap).

In a fire prone area like

Scripps Ranch, one of the best things you can do to protect yourself and your home from fire is to prepare accordingly.

The Scripps Ranch Fire Safe Council is dedicated to making Scripps Ranch fire safe for today and the years beyond. Our next meeting is Feb. 18. If you'd like to attend, please let us know.

Contact us at (858) 201-3711; 9903 Businesspark Ave., #102, San Diego, CA 92131; [srfiresafecouncil@gmail.com](mailto:srfiresafecouncil@gmail.com).

## Former principal is promoted



Nicole DeWitt

Former Scripps Ranch High School principal Nicole DeWitt was appointed as interim deputy superintendent of San Diego Unified School District by the Board of Education. DeWitt began her career in education in 2002, joining San Diego Unified in 2017 as a principal at Scripps Ranch High School. DeWitt has also been a teacher, an English Learner coordinator, and an executive director with the district. Most recently, she worked as senior executive director, Thriving School Communities.

"I am deeply committed to our students and the mission of this district," DeWitt said. "I look forward to continuing the work and am grateful for the opportunity to partner with our students, families and staff to create opportunities and expand possibilities."

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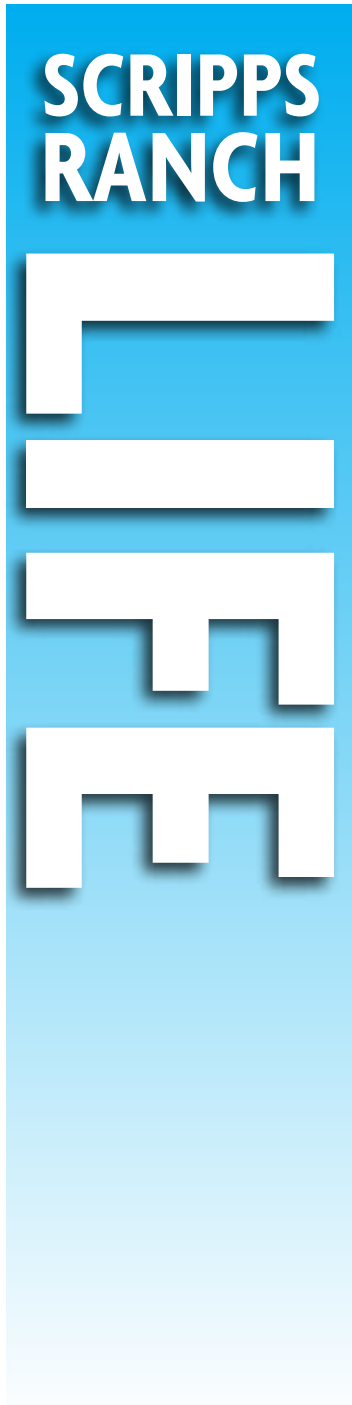
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Enjoying the Women's Club Holiday Party are (from left) Connie Gallagher, Susie Hill, Lynn Parke and Wendy Higgins. (courtesy of SR Women's Club)

The Holiday Party celebration also included (from left) Tom Massey, Lin Schoeneberg, Ann Massey, Mary Rea, Lou Rea and Gigi Cramer. (courtesy of SR Women's Club)



SCRIPPS RANCH WOMEN'S CLUB

## 2025 Scholarship and Community Giving Programs begin

By **Mary Rea**  
Publicity chair

**E**xciting news! The Scripps Ranch Women's Club (SRWC) is gearing up for our 2025 Scholarship and Community Giving Programs, with applications opening on Feb. 1. Each year, the SRWC is proud to offer scholarships to female graduating seniors. Detailed information about the Scholarship application process and eligibility requirements is available through the Scripps Ranch High School Counseling Office or on our website at [srwomensclub.org](http://srwomensclub.org).

A hallmark of the Women's Club is a commitment to giving back to the Scripps Ranch community. Through our Community Giving Program, we support projects initiated by local schools and nonprofit organizations, making a lasting impact on our community. In 2025, we are excited to continue our mission and have another opportunity to make a difference! For more information about eligibility and to apply online, please visit the Women's Club website.

***A hallmark of the Women's Club is a commitment to giving back to the Scripps Ranch community.***

We have so much to look forward to in 2025! The Women's Club calendar is brimming with exciting opportunities for social engagement, arts and culture, theater performances and outdoor adventures. We kicked off the new year on a beautiful day with our annual La Jolla Shores Walk, followed by a delightful luncheon at Piatti's. This event was just the beginning of what promises to be a wonderful year

ahead!

Looking forward, our Social Committee has an inspiring lineup of outings planned. In February, we will enjoy a tour of the Central Library, followed by an architectural tour of the iconic Salk Institute in March, and a visit to the Leo Carillo Ranch in April. As always, these events will be complemented by enjoyable luncheons, offering even more opportunities for fun and camaraderie among our members.

Also in January, the Women's Club enjoyed a fascinating docent-led tour of the

Blue Gold Exhibit – The Art and Science of Indigo, concluding with lunch at the Artifact Café.

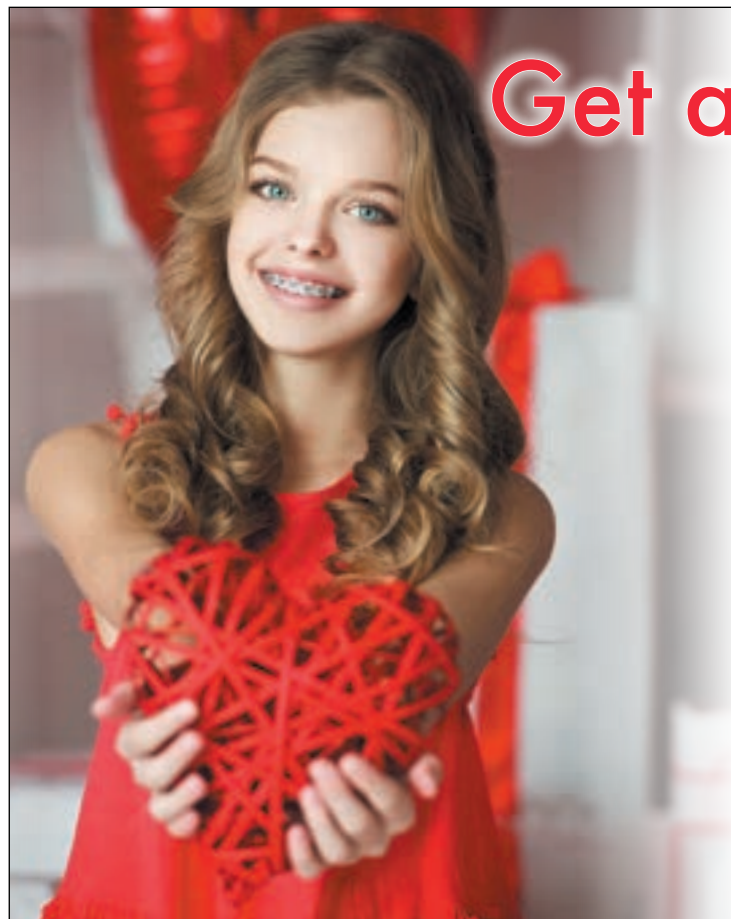
In the months ahead, we are excited about several unique and captivating art/culture programs, including a Beatles tribute band performance at the Poway Performing Arts Center, and Artwalk 2025 in Little Italy.

Our dedicated walkers will embark on a favorite adventure in February at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park. This popular walk offers the perfect opportunity to admire the lush landscaping, stunning

water features and the exotic animals at the park. Other exciting adventure walks are planned for 2025, including trips to the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve, the San Dieguito River Park and the Olympic Training Center.

What could be more enjoyable than discovering and walking through new, scenic spots in San Diego, all while appreciating the great company of other club members?

We can't wait to share all of these upcoming new experiences with our members in 2025!



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## SCRIPPS RANCH WELCOME CLUB Club members start enjoyable year

By Denise Stewart

In January, the games will be played, the books discussed, the crafts created and the trails hiked, just like it has happened for more than 40 years. These regular activities bring local women together each month for enjoyable and friendly times with their Welcome Club friends.

The club's January calendar features two favorite events that make the month espe-

*These regular activities bring local women together each month for enjoyable and friendly times with their Welcome Club friends.*

cially enjoyable. On the 14th, Marianne Paul celebrated her birthday by hosting a Coffee for her club friends. The delicious brunch dishes that she and her co-hosts delighted their guests with added a warming touch to the morning celebration. Welcome Club Coffees occur regularly throughout the year and draw a congenial crowd for enjoying conversation along with the menu.

Later this month, a Gadabouts trip to Balboa Park will tour the newly rebuilt Botanical Garden along with its

spectacular variety of plants. The excursion will gather the women to share a delightful experience among the flora. After the tour, the ladies will go to a nearby restaurant to enjoy lunch at one of the park's unique restaurants. Pam Savelsberg organizes Gadabouts several times during the year and each occasion is a very pleasant day out. Sometimes the Gadabouts is a movie and lunch, while other events are trips to enjoyable places of interest.

The Playgoers have set up this year's dates for attendance at the Scripps Ranch Theatre performances. Their theatre nights are enhanced with a potluck supper before the show at Alan Binks's home.

*Welcome Club has a website that serves both the members and others who are interested in learning more about the group's doings: scrippsranchnewswelcomeclub.com.*



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**RIDGEVIEW**  
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# Seniors receive special surprise

**P**roject Welcome Home at Ridgeview Heath Center in Scripps Ranch was a huge success, according to Kimberly Williams who spearheaded the effort to deliver granny square blankets to every resident in a surprise event on Dec. 20. The delivery was followed by a holiday carol sing along and party.

Williams is the creator of the YouTube channel “Kimberly with Knit for Brains.” She started the charity Project Welcome Home to aid in the transition of seniors into the assisted living facility. More than 1,500 handmade crochet granny squares were sent from across the United States, Canada and Europe for the project. Williams and her mother crocheted the squares together to make 40 granny square blankets to give to every senior resident in the facility.

Williams is also a yoga instructor at Ridgeview.

“I recognized that, when moving into an assisted living facility, these seniors may often have lost their independence, possibly



Kimberly Williams interacts with residents of Ridgeview Heath Center during a special surprise event on Dec. 20. (photo courtesy of Kimberly Williams)

a spouse, a pet, their homes, and they are now living in a communal setting.” she said. “I wanted to show them that they are loved and noticed, and so I came up with the idea of giving them blankets they could wrap around themselves in their new homes.”

Williams put out the call to the subscribers of her YouTube channel, and received the impressive response. Included with these squares have been letters of encouragement and love.

## OREO'S TALE

Continued from Page 1

successfully amputated, as was his tail. His other paw was repaired.

“They told me he did really well. No complications,” Kilmer said.

Oreo is recuperating in the home of Dovie Kilmer, Susan’s sister. He is purring and meowing, has a good appetite, is using the litter

box and ventures around his new home.

“He is playful, showing more and more energy and strength each day. ... He is a blessing,” Dovie stated via email. “I love this little guy ... We are going to make every day fun, pleasant, filled with good food, fun times, plenty of sunny windows and birds to watch and listen to.”

Oreo welcomes belly rubs and likes to snuggle at bed-

time or early morning.

Numerous additional treatments remain in store for Oreo, and they are costly – beyond the expenses for the surgery.

“The outpouring of support has been just amazing. I would really appreciate any (additional) help,” Susan said.

Those wishing to contribute may search the GoFundMe site for: *Oreo’s Urgent Surgery Fund: Second Chance.*

## Gardeners’ meeting is all about roses

By Denise Stewart

It’s chilly and dark early, so the Scripps-Mesa Garden Club members are still meeting indoors at the Community Room of the local library on the fourth Tuesday at 6 in the evening. It might be our version of winter, but members are looking forward to spring and their gardens bursting with blooms of fragrant roses.

To make sure their dreams come true, members will be learning the best techniques for creating beautifully designed rose gardens that are full of healthy, fragrant plants. The speaker for this month’s meeting will be Master Gardener Beth Van Bortel, who specializes in the growing of roses in our local micro-climate.

The Garden Club meets monthly with speakers and visits to nearby gardens in the longer evenings of spring and summer. For more information, visit [scrippsmesagardenclub.com](http://scrippsmesagardenclub.com). Newcomers are welcome to the meetings and invited to join the local gardeners club.

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## LEISURE

## From Russia with dough: Neapolitan pizza dreams

By Jill Alexander

It seems like everyone is getting into the pizza game these days, and a San Diego-based couple has joined the ranks with their own delicious twist. You'll find Waves & Slices Pizza at the Scripps Ranch Farmer's Market on Thursdays where 27-year-old Daria Beliaeva and her husband, 29-year-old Vadim Simakov, serve fresh, 10-inch Neapolitan-style pizzas.

"We started a few months ago making Neapolitan pizzas, and it's delicious," Beliaeva said. "We are both in the hotel business, but we're doing this on the side. My husband was a chef in Russia."

The couple moved to the San Diego area in 2022 to be closer to family.

"My mother has been here for about five years," Beliaeva said. "Our goal is to open a pizza and coffee place at some point."

Married for three years and living in Encinitas, the duo's story is as flavorful as their pizza. Beliaeva, who hails from near Moscow, holds a degree in tourism and had worked as a barista and manager at a coffee and



Waves & Slices Pizza offers 10-inch Neapolitan-style pizza pies at the Scripps Ranch Farmer's Market. (courtesy of Waves & Slices Pizza)

pizza spot in Russia. Simakov, born in Siberia, brings culinary expertise from his background as a chef.

Their love story began in Sochi, Russia, where they both worked at a ski resort in the hospitality industry near the site of the 2014 Winter Olympics.

"My husband started making pizzas on the side after buying a pizza oven, and then

we decided to sell them at farmers' markets," Beliaeva said.

Since November, Waves & Slices Pizza has been a hit at the Scripps Ranch Farmer's Market, with regulars coming back for their signature pies.

Simakov prepares the pizzas on-site using a secret Italian dough recipe. Each pie bakes in their portable oven in just three minutes.

"The pizzas are thin-crust Neapolitan, so they come out crispy and traditional," Beliaeva said.

Customers can choose to enjoy their pizza at the market or take it home to reheat later. Prices range from \$13 to \$16, with about six slices per pie.

In addition to their pizzas, the couple is experimenting with desserts and other menu items as they work toward their ultimate dream.

"Coffee is my passion, pizza is his, and that's our main goal: to open a place of our own selling pizza and coffee," Beliaeva said.

When asked why they chose Italian cuisine over Russian fare, Beliaeva laughed.

"We didn't think there was a big call for Russian food here. In Russia, pizza and coffee places are often combined. Italian food is more popular than Russian food," she said.

Visit Waves & Slices Pizza at the Scripps Ranch Farmer's Market, held each Thursday from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. at 10045 Carroll Canyon Road.

## Fixit Clinic is set for Feb. 8

A San Diego Fix-It Clinic will be held in Scripps Ranch on Saturday, Feb. 8 from noon to 3 p.m. at the Scripps Ranch Recreation Center, 11454 Blue Cypress Drive.

Citizens have been all too accustomed to the throw-away lifestyle. If something doesn't work, throw it out and buy a new one. Because of this behavior, the country's landfills are filling rapidly, and electronic waste has become one of the largest pollution generators. So why not learn how to fix it?

Bring your broken, non-functioning things: electronics, appliances, computers, toys, bicycles, clothes, etc., for assessment, disassembly, and possible repair.

We'll provide workspace, specialty tools and guidance to disassemble and troubleshoot your item. Whether we fix it or not, you'll learn more about how it was manufactured and works.

This is a family-friendly event: children are heartily invited.

Do you like to repair things? Are you curious about getting more involved? Please email us at [sdfixitclinic@gmail.com](mailto:sdfixitclinic@gmail.com) for more information.

Learn more here: [sdfixitclinic.org/event/sd-fixit-clinic-in-scripps-ranch](http://sdfixitclinic.org/event/sd-fixit-clinic-in-scripps-ranch).

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# ‘White’ raises fascinating issues

By Ashley Shah

**S**cripps Ranch Theatre’s upcoming production of “White” is a modern, comedic drama that is fast-paced and features thought provoking dialogue.

The main character, Gus, played by Joey Landwehr, is a white artist struggling to gain recognition in the art world.

“Gus has a friend, Jane, who has become a curator for the well-known Parnell Museum. The museum, in the past, typically displayed pieces from white artists, but Jane wants to shake it up. She wants to have a woke exhibition featuring work from people of color,” director Yolanda Franklin said.

Jane is played by Noelle Caliguri.

“Gus thinks that he has a way-in to the museum because Jane is choosing the artists. However, she’s trying to create diversity amongst the artists, and she tells him ‘no,’” Franklin said.

Gus tries to find a way to work around this issue.

“Gus’ boyfriend, Tanner, acted alongside Vanessa, a black actress. They had taken



a class together. Gus really liked Vanessa’s acting. Gus hires Vanessa to present his artwork as her own artwork at the museum,” Franklin said.

Vanessa is portrayed by Mysia Anderson. Anderson also plays other characters in this production.

“We watch Vanessa’s journey because she does not accept Gus’ proposition right away. She comes back with her reason why,” Franklin said.

The story begins there, but delves into deeper conversations of issues of race, identity

and cultural appropriation. “We start to explore the ethical dilemmas faced by the characters and the broader implications for society,” Franklin said. “This is a continuation of another conversation. It’s about race, white privilege, and a black female occupying primarily white spaces.”

*The production will run every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from Feb. 14 to the last show on March 9. There will be an industry night on March 3. Tickets for this production can be purchased at scrippsranchtheatre.org/tickets.*

## LOCAL AUTHOR

Continued from Page 1

saying ‘Vive la république.’ He starts getting attacked by the mob. Over some hours in broad daylight, they follow Monéys around attacking him. They end up setting a pyre and burn him.”

The whole situation was a misunderstanding that led to the murder of an innocent man.

“However, the novel mainly centers around the progressive and passionate pro-republic lawyer, Louis Mie, who is a real person, who ends up defending five of the 21 members of the

mob accused. The novel focuses on one member of the mob, Leonard Piarrouy, who was a staunch supporter of the emperor,” Twist said. “Piarrouy and Mie’s political views could not have been further away from each other, but Mie opts to defend him regardless. We explore through the novel whether he can provide justice to his clients. What does justice mean in this new republic? Is he able to save his own life, and his family’s life?”

The novel debuted on Jan. 1, 2024. However, the author had been researching and writing since 2020.

“In late 2020, I stumbled upon this story when I was doing some research about that region in the southwest of France, which is where my husband and his family are from. The story absorbed me, and I could not stop looking into it. I was drawn into who Louis Mie was, and why he was doing this,” Twist said.

This novel is only the beginning for the author.

“I am already working on the sequel.” Twist said.

Twist is a lawyer with 14 years of experience. *The novel is available on Amazon, Target, Barnes and Noble and other distributors. Visit [lm-twist.wordpress.com](http://lm-twist.wordpress.com).*

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# WORDS & PICTURES

## 2024 Home Lighting Contest winners announced

The 2024 Scripps Ranch News-Berkshire Hathaway Home Lighting Contest completed its fifth season in December. Another dazzling array of homes decorated in outside light displays continued to grow, brightening Scripps Ranch neighborhoods, enhancing a festive holiday spirit in this community and even building goodwill for Scripps Ranch which is becoming known as a must-see location for viewing wonderful holiday lights.



The Norman Rockwell Award winner (photo by Lisa Shadburn)



The Clark Griswold Award winner (photo by Lisa Shadburn)

*Thanks go out to the many residents who decorated their homes with outdoor lights this holiday season.*

These are the winners of the 2024 Scripps Ranch News-Berkshire Hathaway Home Lighting Contest:

### Norman Rockwell Award

Elegant displays that accentuate and coordinate with the beauty and elegance of the home: Lights and Train Display; 12488 Kingspine Ave.; submitted by Chris Speziale.

### Clark Griswold Award

The most over the top lighting display: Tropical Scripps Ranch Christmas; 11551 Swan Lake Drive; submitted by Bob and Lisa Wood.



The Grandma Got Run Over (by a Reindeer) Award winner (photo by Lisa Shadburn)

### Grandma Got Run Over (by a Reindeer) Award

Reminds me of my childhood – best classic holiday lights: Candy Land; 11711 Aldercrest Point; submitted by Ellen Nelson.

### It Takes a Village (group) Award

Best decorated group of

homes: Multiple homes on Vandemen Way. Vandemen Wonderland; 11239 Vandemen Way; submitted by Neha Srivastava. Brightened Happiness; 11218 Vandemen Way; submitted by Amit Prakash. Christmas Lights Overload; 11231 Vandemen Way; submitted by Jeff Monroe. The Reason For The Sea-



One of the It Takes a Village (group) Award winners (photo by Lisa Shadburn)

son; 11207 Vandemen Way; submitted by Frank and Paulette Deniston.

Judging and prizes were provided by Laura Kay Stephens and Megan Paige from Berkshire Hathaway Home Services California Properties Luxury Collection.

Thanks go out to the many residents who decorated their

homes with outdoor lights this holiday season and entered this year's contest.

A special thanks go out to Laura Kay Stephens and Megan Paige from Berkshire Hathaway Home Services California Properties Luxury Collection for sponsoring this fun and popular Scripps Ranch event.

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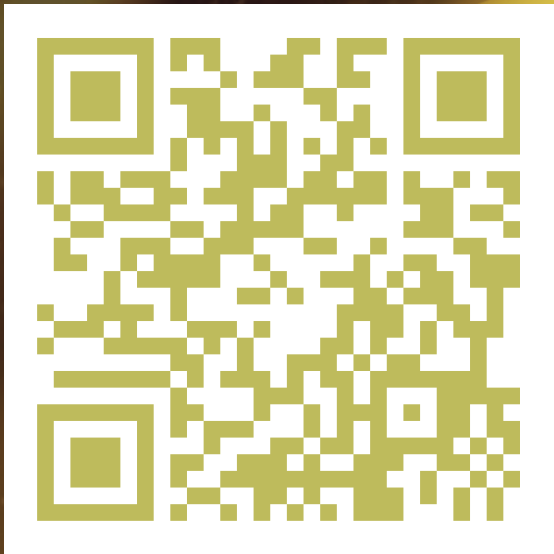
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## UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 22

### Seahorse Hotel

Inspired by ongoing habitat restoration projects in Australia, the Seahorse Care Team at Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego recently installed a Seahorse Hotel in the White's Seahorse Habitat. These innovative artificial habitats provide a new type of sanctuary for seahorses and help spread a creative conservation message of hope. Guests can find Birch Aquarium's Seahorse Hotel in the White's Seahorse Habitat in the Seadragons & Seahorses exhibition. The aquarium also offers daily seadragon talks where guests can learn more about Weedy Seadragons, a fascinating relative of seahorses.

[aquarium.ucsd.edu](http://aquarium.ucsd.edu)

JANUARY 25

### 'Appropriate'

The estranged siblings of the Lafayette family gather to settle their late father's Arkansas estate. Amid the clutter they uncover a shocking relic, forcing them to confront long-buried secrets and decades of resentment. As tensions boil over and the cicadas roar, the family faces unsettling truths about their past and how it has shaped them. Directed by Steve H. This Tony Award-winning play is a searing and bitingly funny portrait of family, history and legacy. "Appropriate" runs Jan. 25-Feb. 23 in the Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage, Old Globe Theatre.

[TheOldGlobe.org](http://TheOldGlobe.org)

FEBRUARY 13



### Twyla Tharp Dance

Twyla Tharp celebrates her 60th anniversary with a coast-to-coast tour featuring her Olivier-nominated "Diabelli," set to Beethoven's masterpiece of the same name, and "Slacktide," a new dance to a reimagining of Philip Glass's iconic "Aguas da Amazonia." Showcasing Tharp's uncanny and witty use of music to create work of startling originality and beauty, the



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[seaworld.com/san-diego/upgrades/animal-experiences](http://seaworld.com/san-diego/upgrades/animal-experiences)

two dances once again ensure Tharp's place as one of the great artists of our time. Presented by La Jolla Music Society, at Balboa Theatre.

[TheConrad.org](http://TheConrad.org)

FEBRUARY 16

### Allison Adams Tucker Trio

The "Pleasure of Your Company" music series, sponsored by the Scripps Ranch

Friends of the Library, welcomes back the Allison Adams Tucker Trio on Sunday, Feb. 16, at 2:30 pm. Trio members will explore songs in "The Language of Love" from around the world for Valentine's season. There is no charge for the concert, although donations are appreciated. Miramar Ranch Library Center, 10301 Scripps Lake Drive.

[sfol.org](http://sfol.org)

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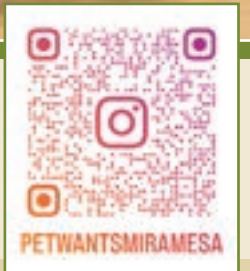
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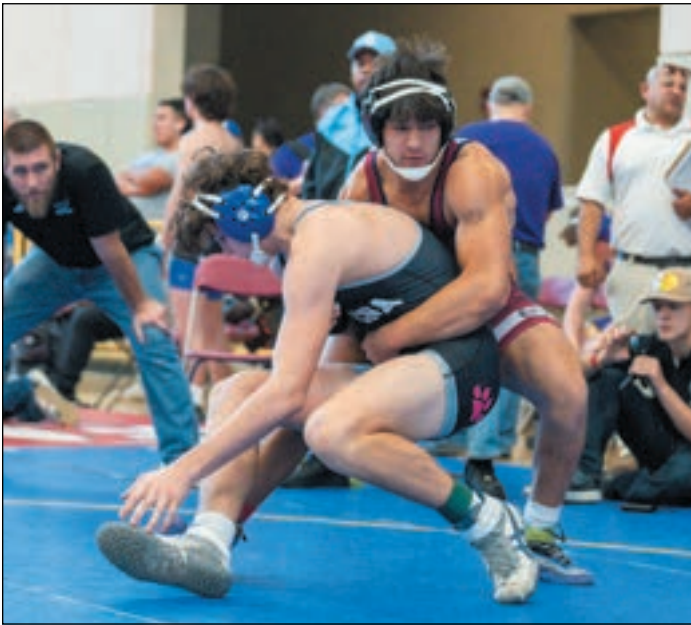
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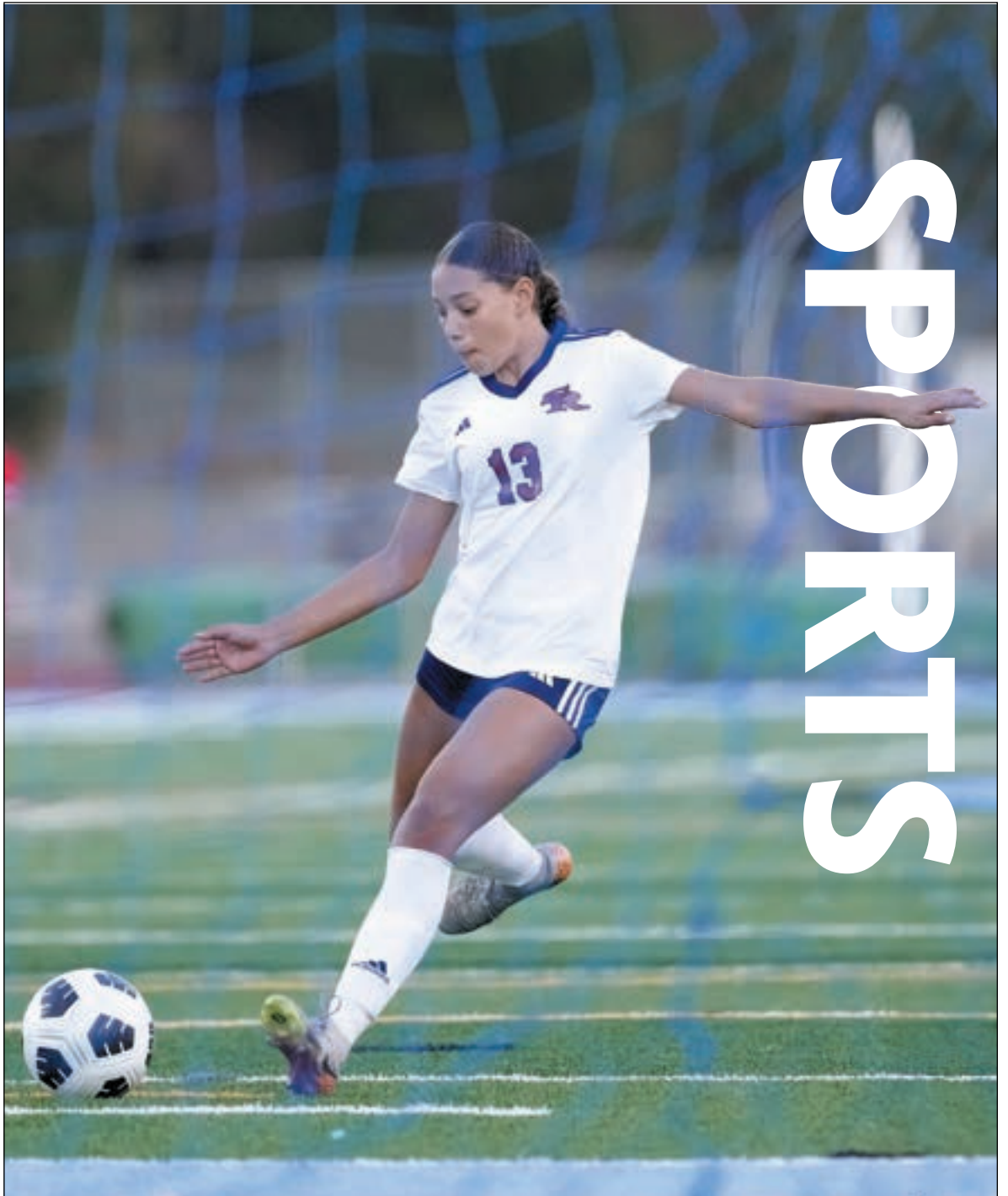




**INTENSE STRUGGLE:** Dane Walkowiak-Vargas of Scripps Ranch High competes against a worthy opponent in a match during the Mission Hills Invitational Tournament on Jan. 4. The Falcons captured fourth place overall as a team. (photo by Phuong Vu)



**MAKING CONTACT:** Nadia Berens takes a swing during 12u action in the December at the Diamond Tournament in San Marcos Dec. 14-15. Three teams from the Scripps Ranch Recreational Softball Association played in the tourney in their final games of 2024. Players are back on the field for spring rec softball in late January. (photo by Lisa Shadburn)



**SPORTS**

**BIG KICK:** Scripps Ranch High's Morgan Mingo strides to strike the ball on a critical penalty kick in a tight match against Mt. Carmel High on Dec. 21 in the varsity platinum championship game of the San Diego Holiday Jubilee soccer tournament. The game was decided by penalty kicks with the difference being Scripps Ranch goalie Kate Nahrstedt denying Mt. Carmel's first penalty kick. Final score was 2-2 (5-4 in PKs). (photo by Jim Wick)

# Womens basketball team enters home stretch

By Hector Trujillo

The Scripps Ranch High School (SRHS) womens varsity basketball team looks to close out its final six games of the regular season strong in hopes of making another run in the post-season.

SRHS started off the season playing well by winning four of its first five games which included a 61-14 blow-out over Mission Bay High on

Dec. 14, along with a 57-30 drubbing of Bonita Vista High on Dec. 21 in tournament play to finish second overall. The only defeat during that span came on Dec. 11 in a 65-46 loss to Lincoln High.

"I feel that we're going to have a decent run for the rest of the year," said head coach James Stewart III.

The Lady Falcons team, which finished ranked in the top-10 in San Diego last year, has four returners

along with two freshmen, while the other players are junior varsity players from the previous season.

"It's been a good season so far," Stewart said. "It's a very interesting team and, although the process has been a slow one, it's been a fun one."

Senior point guard Ree Ree Davis and junior forward Clare Valentine have been among the standout performers so far by helping to provide poise and stability for

the rest of the team.

"The varsity game is a lot faster, so there's a lot more preparation with regards to opponents and getting more information by watching film," Stewart said. "Western League in general is pretty tough. We'll see how it goes but I'm pretty optimistic."

Of the six remaining games, the three that will be at home take place on Jan. 31 versus Mira Mesa High, Feb. 1 against Mt. Carmel High and the regular season

finale on Feb. 13 in a rematch versus Morse High.

Of the three remaining road games, the one that is circled on the calendar is a rematch versus Cathedral Catholic High School on Feb. 11. Scripps Ranch High has also competed in two other tournaments which were the So Cal Holiday Prep Classic where the Lady Falcons went 2-1; and another in which they finished with a 65-42 victory over Hesperia on Jan. 4.



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# Team hopes to close strong

By Hector Trujillo

**A**fter starting off slowly with back to back losses at the hands of La Jolla Country Day and Mission Hills High, the Scripps Ranch High School mens varsity basketball team was able to find its footing under new head coach Matt Nash.

The Falcons then followed up by winning three of the next four games starting with a 58-52 victory over Ramona High on Nov. 26, a 40-36 win against Rancho Bernardo High on Nov. 30 and a 44-40 victory versus Westview High School on Dec. 10.

“I love my group of players,” Nash said. “We’ve played some tough teams and it took time to learn what they do well, but I’m happy with the direction of the season.”

Nash replaced Brock Flint and interim coach Travis Petty in late July, having spent last season as a varsity assistant coach at Santa Monica High School. He also coached high school at Glendale Preparatory Academy in Arizona the two years previous, along with spending time with the Portland Trailblazers of the National Basketball Association for two seasons in 2016 and 2017 as a video analyst.

“The big thing for us is we’ve got to continue playing the right way – playing together and sharing the basketball while having fun and making each other better,” he said.

Showing their resilience, the Falcons bounced back from losing five out of six between Dec. 13 and Dec. 26, with the lone victory coming Dec. 18 against Oceanside High. A three-game winning streak started on Dec. 27 with a 77-54 win over St. Joseph Academy. That was followed by an 81-52 blowout over Steele Canyon High and a dramatic 62-60 victory against Tri-City Christian on Dec. 30. Scripps Ranch has gone 4-4 overall so far in both tournaments that it has competed in with some of the standout players this season being senior Dominic Stevens, junior Charlie Barajas and senior Dominic Procopio who have made an impact on the offensive and defensive ends.

All except for one of the seven games remaining will come against league opponents starting on Jan. 24 versus St. Augustine High followed by a rematch against Mira Mesa High on Jan. 28. The Falcons will close out the regular season with three-



SRHS senior Dominic Procopio goes in for a contested layup in a victory against Westview High on Dec. 10. (photo by Jim Wick)



Falcons junior Charlie Barajas looks for space to shoot against Mira Mesa High during action on Dec. 13. (photo by Jim Wick)

straight home matches including the season finale on Feb. 13 against St. Augustine High.



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