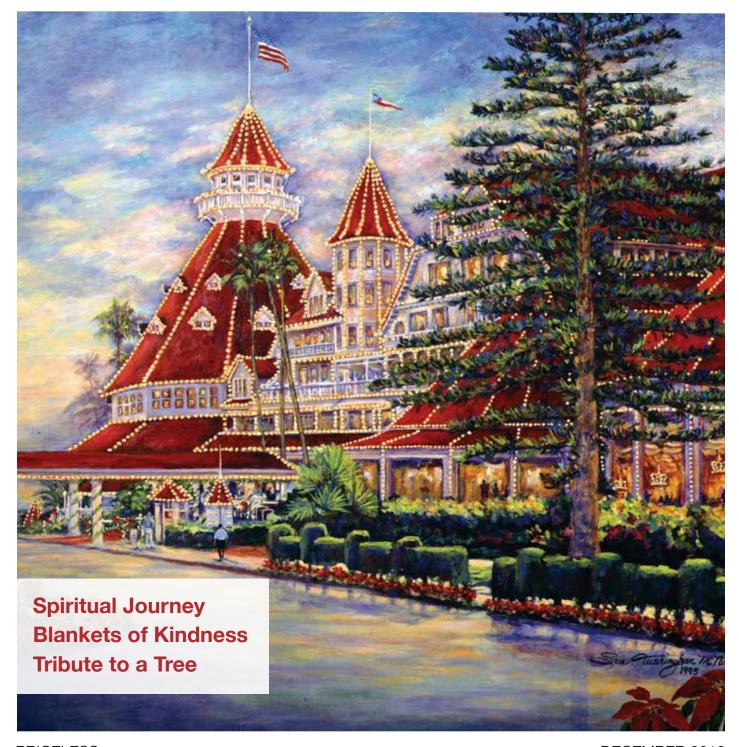
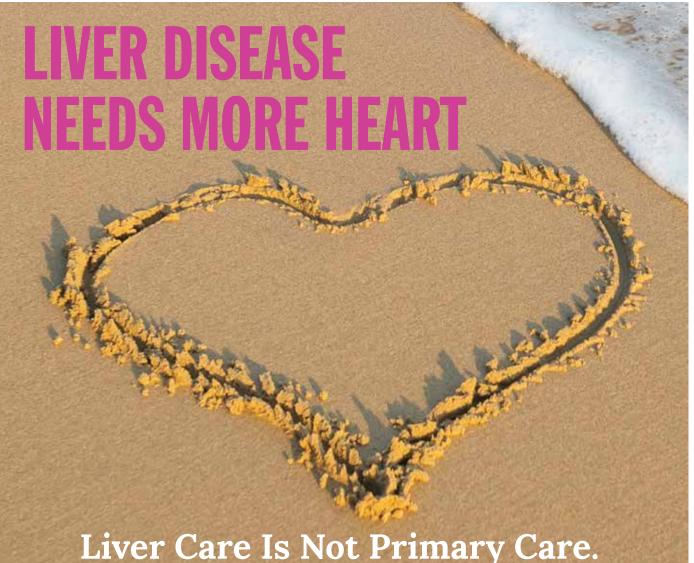
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A Recipe from Tartine for the Holidays

Cover image courtesy of Sue Tushingham McNary

Sue McNary has become one of Southern California's most widely collected and respected artists. Her works are in many private collections and in the National Archives collection in Washington, D.C. www.CoronadoArtGallery.com





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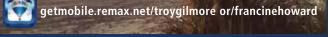
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The Magic of the Season

oronado is beautiful year-round, but this time of year is especially magical in the Crown City — from the twinkling lights on the trees along Orange Avenue to the annual lighting ceremony of Rotary Park's Christmas star pine. And of course, the Hotel del Coronado all aglow is the biggest holiday decoration around, a beacon for all who drive over the bridge.

But the best part of Coronado are the people who light up our town and make it so incredibly special. Surfers meet at the beach, locals sip coffee with friends in the mornings. There is comfort in watching children ride their bikes to school or going for a leisurely walk past the home of a friendly dog and stopping to chat with neighbors.

Coronado defines the word *community.*Volunteerism makes our town great. We respect, honor and support our military and their families.
We come together during times of tragedy and gather spontaneously to pay tribute to friends, mentors and loved ones we've lost. Even our local

elections are memorable, not just for the civilized discussions, but for the kindness candidates showed each other.

In this issue, we shine the spotlight on a few of the many things we love about our city. Kids with hearts of gold like Avery Dozier who help those less fortunate. The magic of Noah Homes and its humble beginnings in Coronado. Island Girl Christine Van Tuyl takes us on a bike ride down Orange Avenue and shares her favorite spots for holiday drinks. We follow Father Mike, Dan and Brooke Gensler on a spiritual adventure abroad along Spain's Camino de Santiago, and we pay tribute to a majestic tree that fell in Spreckels Park.

As 2018 comes to a close, we thank you for your support, too, as we take root in this community we love so much. Wishing you peace, prosperity, health and happiness this holiday and in the year ahead.

The Crown City Magazine Team,

Amy Slack, Heather Canton,

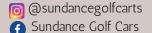
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Student's blanket and clothing drive spreads kindness

By SAMANTHA BEY

hen Coronado High School senior Avery Dozier was 8 years old, she was jogging through Balboa Park with her mother and saw a homeless man that struck a chord with her. "He looked freezing," she said. Dozier asked her mother if they could get him a blanket. Luckily, there was one in their car to give to him.

Since that act of kindness nearly a decade ago, Dozier has been collecting and distributing blankets and warm clothing items to homeless people in San Diego through her annual blanket drive.

She began the drive shortly after her experience in Balboa Park by organizing it through her Girl Scout



Warming Hearts

troop in 2009. Her initial effort collected more than 100 blankets to hand out that winter. Throughout her middle school years, she organized the drive with the help of her soccer team and by running segments on KCMS, Coronado Middle School's video newscast program. Each year, she collected more and more blankets to distribute to the growing homeless population.

Once she reached high school, Dozier promoted the drive in the Coronado Eagle & Journal and on social media. NBC 7 News got wind of it and did a segment, which opened up collections from all over San Diego. Dozier began collecting jackets, scarves and socks in addition to blankets to hand out during San Diego's colder months.

"We think of San Diego as always having this perfect weather," Dozier said. "But it really can get



Coronado High School senior Avery Dozier donates thousands of blankets to area shelters.

cold for people on the streets in the winter. Plus handing out these items that give warmth to people is about so much more than just the weather."

The drive has now snowballed, bringing in thousands of items, Dozier said. Her family uses its garage as a storage area throughout the year. She accepts donations all year round, then hands them out with the help of family and friends several times during winter in shelters and places like



Avery Dozier's blanket drive started in 2009 with around 100 blankets collected through her girl scout troop.

"Handing out these items that give warmth to people is about so much more than just the weather." — Avery Dozier

the Alpha Project that also employ homeless people.

Two years ago, she began individually wrapping items that she gives to people on the streets on Christmas Day. She recalls several touching experiences: A Haitian woman bilingual in French and English sang her a beautiful Christmas carol in French as a token of gratitude. And a "tough-looking guy," Dozier said, cried when he opened his gift and told her she was the first person he'd ever spent the holiday with. "Of course, then we were both crying," she said.

In her deliveries to the shelters, she often sees previous recipients and employees who recognize her and welcome her warmly.

Dozier said that the outpouring of support and donations from the Coronado community is overwhelming and incredible. "So many people want to get involved and help," she said.

Donations can be brought to the Coronado High School office or to Dozier's home at 732 G Ave. She is also happy to pick up items; call (619) 204-3653.

The high school senior manages all of this with spirit and grace – and a full plate. She serves as the high school's ASB president, is a lauded varsity soccer player and was recently commended by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation for scoring in the top 4 percent nationally on the PSAT.

"So many people are not quite as lucky as we are here. We can help them. We can do our part to give back," Dozier said. "I truly believe in the butterfly effect a lot, and this is my way of contributing to that."

Indeed, San Diego is a warmer place because of her efforts.

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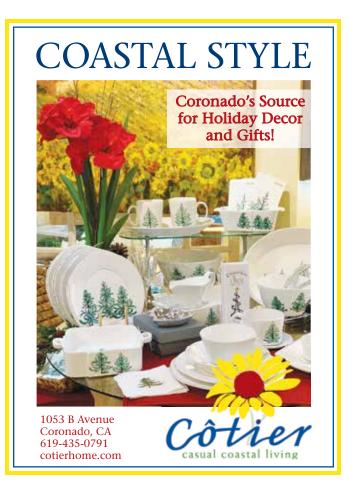
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Transcendent Trek

Walk along Spain's historic Camino offers time for reflection

By MARTINA SCHIMITSCHEK

or more than 1,000 years, people have been making their way across Spain on foot to the Tomb of St.

James in Santiago de Compostela. For most, it's a journey that is both physical and spiritual.

While there is no official starting point, there are many well-worn routes leading to the city of Santiago de Compostela and its famous cathedral, which was constructed between 1078 and 1211. The church is believed to enshrine the relics of St. James, one of the Twelve Apostles. Tradition holds that he was beheaded in Jerusalem in the year 44 and his body was returned to Spain where he had been preaching in the preceding years. The cathedral is on the site where the remains were rediscovered in the ninth century.

Last year, more than 300,000 pilgrims walked the last 100 kilometers (about 62 miles) of the Camino de Santiago to the cathedral, which is the minimum to get a certificate of completion for making the pilgrimage. The walk was popularized in the 2010 movie *The Way*, starring Martin Sheen.

Like Sheen's character Tom, most pilgrims walk all or part of the French



Dan and
Brooke Gensler
climb a hill to
the town of
O Cebreiro in
Galicia, Spain.

Way, which starts in St. Jean Pied de Port, France, wanders over the Pyrenees and passes through the cities of Pamplona and León. The complete journey is nearly 500 miles.

This summer, three of the thousands from around the world making the trek were from Coronado.

Dan Gensler, president of the financial planning and investment firm The Gensler Group, and his younger daughter Brooke, a medical student studying at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, walked the entire length of the French Way. Their journey, which began on June 12, took a

For each pilgrim, walking the wellworn route of countless believers is a very personal experience, Father Mike said. "Everyone is on their own Camino based on what your reasons are for being there," he said.

For Dan, 55, it was a chance of a lifetime to spend a month with his 23-yearold daughter before her medical studies ramped up and a time for reflection.

"I knew we were going for a long walk, but I didn't really know what we were getting ourselves into," Dan said of the journey, whose idea took hold after Brooke trekked the last 100 kilometers during a semester studying in Toledo, Spain, while at Notre Dame University in 2015.

The month together allowed for long talks as well as periods of quiet contemplation and prayer. "It was special for my dad and me," Brooke said. "We prayed the Rosary together every day." Of Father Mike, she said, "It was great to see him



Above and background: A moment of reflection at the Cruz de Ferro, halfway between Astorga and Ponferrade.
Pilgrims lay stones at the base of the cross as a symbol of leaving their burdens on the Camino de Santiago.

in a different context and have conversations with him."

The trio also walked for Missionvale, South Africa, a care center founded by Sister Ethel Normoyle 30 years ago in a destitute section of Port Elizabeth. Their walk, which they called Miles for Missionvale, has so far raised \$13,500 for the charity, which includes a clinic and a school. Dan has been involved with Missionvale since 2006 through the Rotary Club of Coronado.

The Genslers' journey started on a cold, wet and windy morning on their way over the Pyrenees. The early portion of the route is less crowded, and the two found themselves getting to know their fellow travelers.



An early morning walk leads to the medieval town of Puente la Reina.

"We walked with some amazing young kids," Dan said. "You make some amazing bonds."

"The opportunity to meet people from all over was really cool," Brooke said. "A good number of people were very inspiring, trusting to let their lives go where they are called to."

The trio carried their own belongings and traveled without reservations. They used the app Buen Camino to guide them. "We decided in the morning when we were going to stop at night," Dan said. The app lists inns on the way and can be used to make reservations. The group opted for simple, private



Father Mike (right) celebrates Mass at St. Mary the Royal, also known as the Church of St. Benedict.
Founded in 836 in O Cebrerio, it is believed to be the oldest church on the Camino.

rooms for around 40 euros a night. (Dormitory-style hostels, known as albergues, are also available for as

little as 5 euros per night.)

Some of the inns where they stayed offered group dinners, "to really get to know the people along the way," Dan said.

Walks started early, around 5 a.m. and ended about 2 p.m. before the height of the afternoon heat and covered an average of 20 miles a day. Their routine also included celebrating Mass every day, either at a church or in the room with Father Mike.

"You walk or rest. You're pretty much not moving a lot after you're done walking," Dan said.

The trail is mostly rural, passing small, ancient stone churches and



Booklets — stamped at churches and businesses along the way — record the distance traveled. To receive a certificate of completion, pilgrims must walk at least the last 100 kilometers to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela.

villages where coffeehouses offer meals and a short break and public water fountains can be used to refill bottles.

Among the highlights was Cruz Ferro, a high point on the walk where pilgrims leave a rock at the base of wooden pole with an iron cross. Rocks, often brought from home, represent burdens to be left behind and have accumulated into a high mound.

"People deposit rocks for whatever you want to leave on the Camino," Dan said. "This is a moving spot, prayerful and spiritual."

Some days were physically challenging. "It's not a stroll in the park. There is some rigor to it. Some days are like doing Cowles Mountain all day long."

For Father Mike, the journey was particularly arduous. On a downhill trek on his third day, he developed blisters on his feet. He walked the next 10 days in pain.



After weeks on the trail, the three Coronado pilgrims reach their goal at the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

"The pain was my Camino," he said. "It was a redemptive suffering."

Walking sticks were a huge help and arriving at the cathedral, he said, "was the happiest place on earth, better than Disneyland after all that walking." There, he joined local priests and other priests who made the journey in celebrating Mass.

"It's unforgettable," Father Mike said of the entire experience. "If I could do it without training at 67, anyone can do it."

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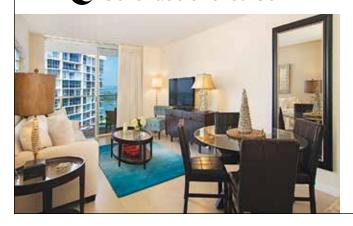


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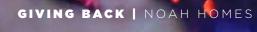
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Winter Wonderland

Holiday lights, festivities illuminate the magic of Noah Homes

By SHARLA LANE

his holiday season, a sparkling Enchanted Village awaits on 8 quiet acres in Spring Valley at Noah Homes.

Noah Homes is a nonprofit that provides housing and care for 90

Noah Homes is a nonprofit that provides housing and care for 90 adults with developmental disabilities including autism and Down syndrome, and it has deep roots in Coronado.

For two weekends starting Dec. 14, Noah Homes will welcome families to its first Enchanted Village. Hundreds of volunteers and staff will transform the property into a magical holiday experience with thousands of lights, festively decorated cottages, carolers, a snow machine, interactive exhibits and more to entertain guests of all ages.

"We have been searching for a fun way to get people to come and see the magic that is Noah Homes. We've had such great support from the Coronado community over the past three decades, but many of our supporters have yet to come see the very place they helped create," said Molly Nocon, CEO of Noah Homes. "After visiting the Magical Forest in Las Vegas, I knew that we could do something similar. I'm so excited to welcome families to Noah Homes and can't wait to share our Enchanted Village with the world."





Be sure to cheer on the Noah Homes trolley in the annual Holiday Parade down Orange Avenue.

The Enchanted Village promises to be more than a fun family experience, it is also committed to employing adults with developmental disabilities — a rare opportunity. Two out of three adults with developmental disabilities are unemployed and the chance to work and earn a paycheck is coveted.

The concept is based on the Magical Forest at Opportunity Village in Las Vegas, which started 25 years ago and now attracts 50,000 visitors annually, raising much needed funds for people with developmental disabilities. Linda Smith, former senior executive vice president at Opportunity Village is supporting Noah Homes in the development



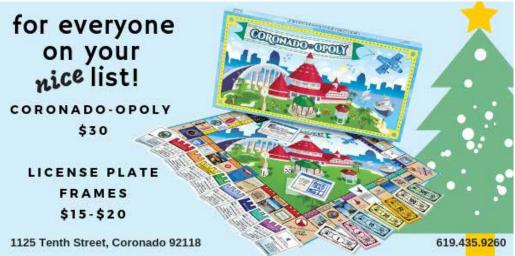
of San Diego's holiday experience. During her 36 years at Opportunity Village advocating for people with disabilities, she helped raise more than \$450 million.

Each year, Noah Homes must raise more than \$1 million to cover expenses not reimbursed through government funds. This includes things such as maintenance for the homes, 25 vehicles, training for the staff of 100 and extra care hours for those who are sick.

Noah Homes began more than 35 years ago as the vision of Sister Kathryn Jennings of Sacred Heart Church of Coronado and Coronado philanthropist Walter Fitch III.

In 1982, after much persistence, the parents, community and Sister Kathryn, who directed her ministry to people with disabilities, incorporated and purchased the land in Spring Valley with generous funding from Fitch. In 1983, Casa de Felicidad opened with six residents and four people on staff. Over the

















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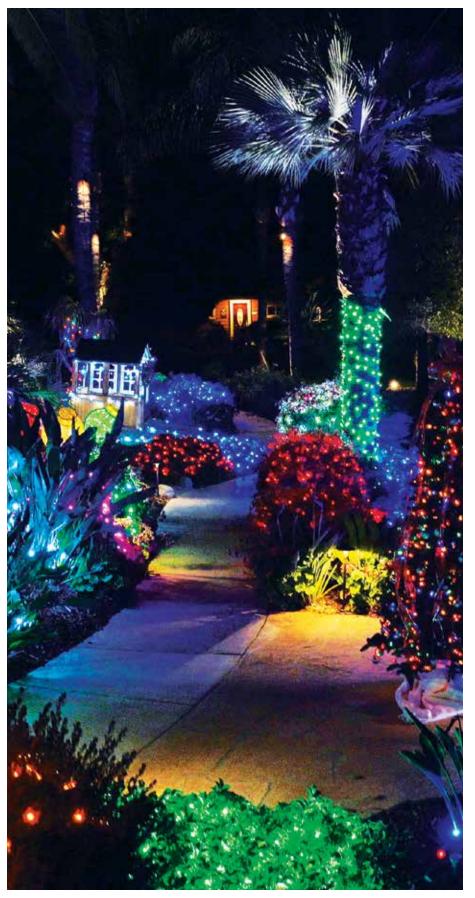
years, Noah Homes has remodeled, expanded to 10 homes and has become a successful environment promoting a place of refuge, safety and acceptance — like Noah's Ark.

"Walter Fitch III was my husband Bernie's sweet uncle. Walter had a long-standing involvement with Noah Homes and shared his vision and love with us. The special residents of Noah were the children Walter never had," said Francette Roeder, a Coronado resident and Sacred Heart eucharistic minister. "Over the years, we have witnessed the great work Noah Homes is doing and it is truly a place of miracles."

With the continued support of the Coronado community, including philanthropists such as Frances Harpst who left a generous bequest upon her passing in 2010, Noah Homes has grown to become a best-practice model that is nationally recognized. It opened two of the first memory-care homes in the country for people with developmental disabilities who develop dementia and Alzheimer's. Noah Homes also advocates and collaborates with other nonprofits, researchers and policy makers to ensure the 330,000 people with developmental disabilities in California have quality, lifelong housing and care options.

Noah Homes has participated in Coronado's annual holiday parade for the last three years and will again be in this year's parade on Dec. 7. More than 50 residents and staff will be walking or riding in a vintage trolley car down Orange Avenue.

Visit the Enchanted Village this holiday season and discover holiday magic at Noah Homes.



Once the sun goes down, thousands of colored lights will sparkle throughout the Noah Homes grounds.









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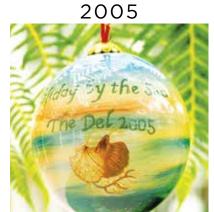
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ORNAMENTS THROUGH THE YEARS









By GINA PETRONE

he holidays have always been celebrated in grand tradition at the Hotel del Coronado, even before the resort opened and began receiving guests in January 1888. The first Christmas dinner in 1887 was an intimate affair, prepared by chef Frederic Compagnon for 25 guests on an elegantly dressed table in the Garden Patio. Toasts were given and, according to the Coronado Mercury, "the evening was enlivened by music and social converse."

The first mention of a Christmas tree at The Del appears in 1889, when the Ballroom was decorated for the holidays with flowers and evergreens. Favors were hung on a Christmas tree and then distributed.

The following year, Del owner John D. Spreckels began a tradition of hosting annual Christmas parties for the children of Coronado and for those staying at the hotel. Held in the Ballroom, the party included a giant Christmas tree in the center of the room, where Elisha Babcock, Jr., the original owner and later manager, played Santa, giving presents to every child attending.

In 1917, Santa came down through an opening in the Ballroom roof and was met at the foot of the ladder "by his daughter, who was all dolled up in white furs," according to the Coronado Eagle and Journal. After Santa arrived, "came Charlie Chaplin who cut capers and was greeted with shrieks of laughter from the children."

Over the years, the Ballroom trees were decorated with candles, red and green lights, lanterns, tinsel, colored balls,



130th Anniversary Crown Ornament











toys and even strands of snowy popcorn. In 1904, one of the Norfolk Island Pines in front of the hotel was hung with lantern lights and became the first outdoor electrically lit Christmas tree in the nation. By the 1920s, Christmas trees were displayed in the main lobby, Crown Room, Ballroom and even guest suites.

To kick off The Del's 1988 centennial celebration, the resort started a tradition by giving each Christmas its own theme. In December 1987, the hotel chose "The Wizard of Oz" in keeping with The Del's long association with L. Frank Baum, author of the Wizard of Oz series.

In 1993, The Del offered its first collector's ornament: a regal, richly colored crown in red or purple, made from shimmery mercurystyle glass, capturing the theme "Treasures of the Season." Later celebrations showcased a variety of themes, each with a complementary collector's ornament, such as "Teddy Bears & Toys" (1997), a bell-shaped glass ornament with a hand-painted image of The Del and a bear; "A Season of Traditions" (2003), a metal-framed square glass with an image of Santa on one side and The Del on the back; and "The Sweetest Season," (2010) which featured a gingerbread Del complete with candy cane decorations.

In 2007, a box set of the first 14 ornaments in miniature was produced along with a cloche ornament of The Del perched on a white garden urn under glass for that year's theme "Winter Garden." Since 2004, a portion of the proceeds from the ornament sales has benefited the Coronado



Schools Foundation.

Sometimes the Christmas designs are tied to milestones at the hotel. For instance, in 2012, in preparation of The Del's 125th anniversary, the theme was "A Time to Celebrate" and the ornament was shaped like a vintage pocket watch, paying tribute to Del founders Elisha Babcock, Jr. and Hampton Story. In 1999, during an extensive restoration project, a theme of "Reflections of the Past, Visions of the Future" was

illustrated in an ornament available in purple, cranberry or white, featuring a golden rendering of The Del's distinctive architecture.

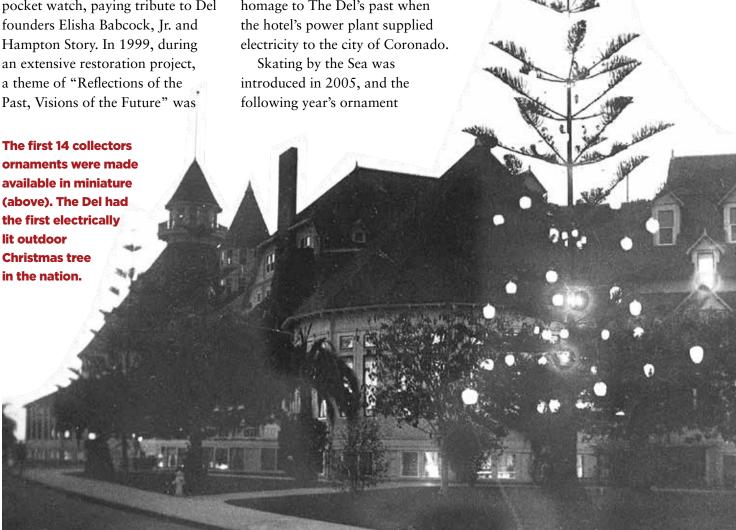
In 2013, during the 125th anniversary celebration, the 21st ornament became the first in the collection to light up, paying homage to The Del's past when the hotel's power plant supplied electricity to the city of Coronado.

celebrated "Winter Wonderland," featuring a scene of The Del surrounded by a skating rink.

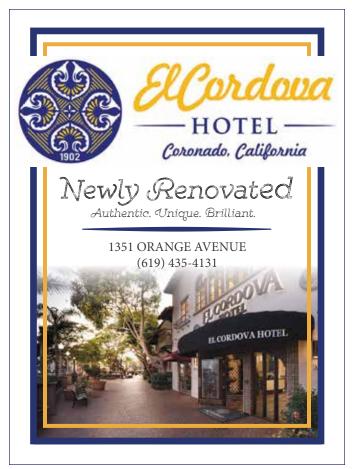
This year's holiday theme celebrates 130 years of "A Christmas Legend." The 2018 collector's ornament is a hinged glass pendant in elegant golds and red with The Del depicted in blown glass. It contains a secret compartment to place your favorite treasures for years to come.

The ornament is available in The Signature Shop and Est. 1888 at the hotel or online at hoteldel.com. The ornaments typically sell out every year.

• Gina Petrone is heritage manager at Hotel del Coronado.













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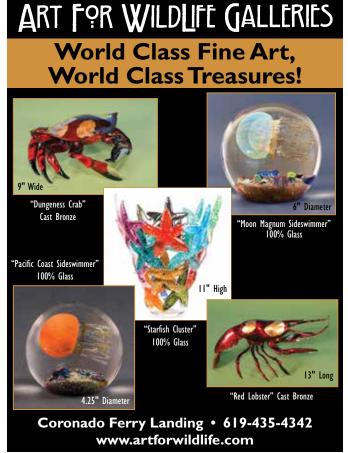




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Opposite: The Italian stone pine tree was a centerpiece in Spreckels Park with a wide, beautiful canopy. Above:

A sad ending for the tree.

Majestic Spreckels Park Tree Was a Treasured Community Landmark

By LESLIE CRAWFORD

or more than a century, a beautiful Italian stone pine was the centerpiece of many activities and events at Spreckels Park.

Birthday parties, wedding proposals, daily play time for Sacred Heart students, Coronado Promenade Concerts and the Coronado Flower Show were held under its large canopy.





The City of Coronado saved a piece from the main trunk to count the rings. Factoring in weather variations over the years that can create false rings they determined the age of the tree to be over 100 years old.

In September, we said goodbye to the old tree. On a calm weekday afternoon, the majestic tree keeled over, taking down a few others in its path. Thankfully, no one was injured.

Some of our beautiful trees are Coronado's oldest residents. Organized city tree planting officially began in 1894 when the Coronado Beach Company formed the first Park and Shade Tree committee. The National Arbor Day Foundation designated the city of Coronado a Tree City USA in 1984, recognizing the active management of our trees with over 9,000 trees catalogued on city property, representing 146 species.

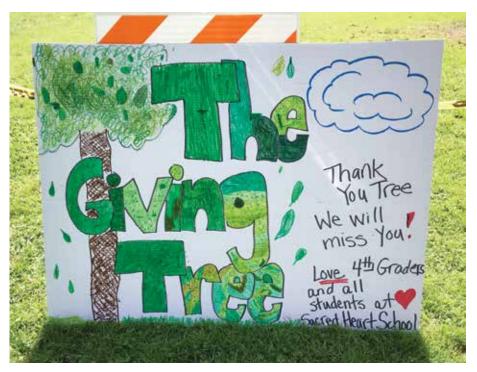
The city takes a proactive stance on maintaining trees on our streets and in our parks. A group of private citizens sits on the city's Street Tree Commission. The advisory board's mission is to "to maintain, improve, renew, and protect the urban forest in public rights of way, as well as to share information with the public, enhance appreciation of trees, promote proper tree care, and to encourage participation in the development of Coronado's urban forest."

The city's trees are routinely



assessed for health and risk management, including those in Spreckels Park, which had recently been surveyed. But that can't guarantee something won't go wrong. In the case of the stone pine, the final report from an independent arborist stated that

root failure was the cause for it to fall. The root structure didn't provide a good anchor for the tree and several roots were *girdling* or twisted around underneath the trunk of the tree. Girdling can be caused by a plant being left in a pot too long, which forces



Students from Sacred Heart School paid tribute to a tree they played under every day.

the roots to circle around on themselves.

Within an hour of the tree falling, people began arriving at the park to look at the damage and, in many cases, pay their respects to the old resident. A poster paying homage to the tree created by the fourth-grade students at Sacred Heart Parish School appeared in the park. Throughout the day, people streamed by, wondering what happened.

The city quickly posted caution tape around the tree and surrounding area until they could

get the proper equipment on scene to dismantle and remove the debris. The next morning work began to clean up the damage and assess the surrounding trees.

Stone pines (*Pinus pinea*) are native to Mediterranean regions in southern Europe, Israel, Lebanon and Syria. They are also known as Italian stone pines or umbrella trees because of their beautiful wide canopy. Travelers to Rome would recognize these trees, iconically lining hilltops surrounding the city. Given that our climate is very similar, the Italian stone pine was a good choice to be planted in Spreckels Park so many years ago.

The tree was more than 100 years old according to a conservative count of the rings in the main trunk, but no one knows exactly when the tree was planted, where it came from and who planted it. We do know the stone pine lived a beautiful, long life and will be missed.









Are you feeling naughty...or nice? Either way, 'tis the season for fun holiday drinks. Whether you're craving something bubbly or you've got a hankering for holiday horchata, our island has plenty to toast about! Check out some of these clever concoctions.

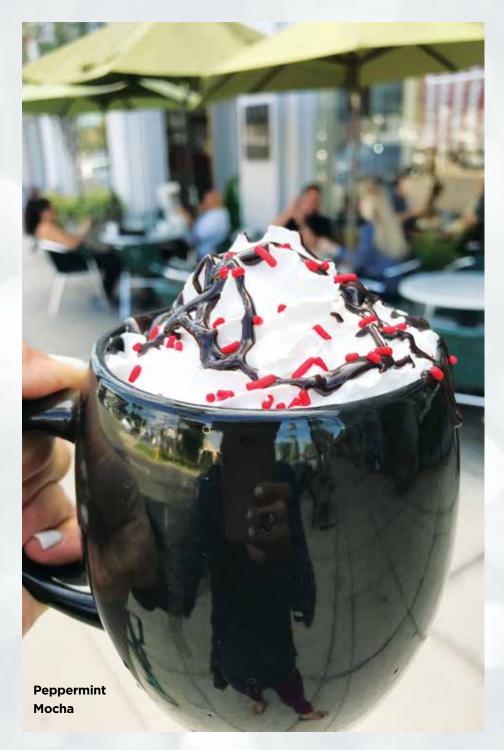
Get Festive with These Holiday Libations



Old School Style

Is there a more Christmassy place in town than the Hotel Del Coronado? I think not. And there's no better way to savor the holiday in high spirits (and style) than with a visit to Babcock & Story. Named after the hotel's visionary founders, this Old World bar simply oozes cool refinement. Take a break from ice skating and order the decadent chocolate martini (complete with festive garnish) or warm up with a hot toddy. Did you know the original 46-foot-long handcrafted mahogany bar was brought by ship from Philadelphia around Cape Horn in 1888? If that's not enough to summon the Ghost of Christmas Past, I don't know what is!

BABCOCK & STORY BAR AT THE HOTEL DEL 1500 OCEAN AVE. (619) 435-6611



Go Griswold

Sometimes you just need something sweet, and Café 1134 serves up a drink that goes perfectly with your Christmas sweater! The festive peppermint mocha comes with a shameless amount of whip cream ... and don't forget the sprinkles! Relax at an outside table and take in the holiday hustle andbustle or stay warm and toasty inside. Either way, the sugar high has got you ready to cut down that tree or tackle your exterior illumination project. (We just know Clark would approve.)

CAFÉ 1134 1134 ORANGE AVE. (619) 437-1134

Get **Sparkling**

Nothing says holiday like a bottle of bubbly, and Wine a Bit has something special to stuff in a stocking. The Italian-made Black Bellini by Fresca Frizzante is a unique blend of sparkling wine made with white peach and blood orange juices. Drink it on its own for a sweet treat (yep, there's alcohol in there) or pare it down with your favorite Prosecco. No artificial flavors, preservatives or colors are added ... this stuff is made in Venice, baby! Best part? It will only set you back \$14.99. Ho, ho, ho!

WINE A BIT 928 ORANGE AVE. (619) 365-4953

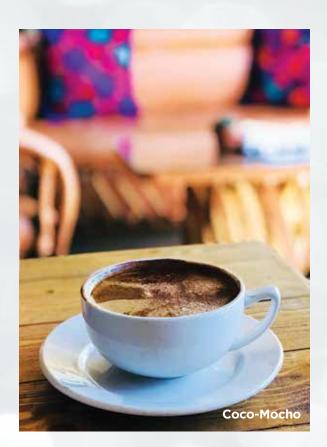


Fond of Coffee...With a Kick?



Head over to Fonda Don Diego for some hot, house-made specialties. Beverage manager and mix-master Andrew whips up the capricious Coco-Mocho, a warm and tasty coffee-drink with coconut milk, almond milk and homemade coffee liquor. Add some cinnamon and a dusting of Mexican chocolate and you'll wear your mustache with pride. Feeling a bit hot and bothered? Cool off with a Hard Horchata instead. With almond milk, house-made coffee liquor and a sprinkle of cinnamon, you'll be ready to Macarena your way to your next destination.

FONDA DON DIEGO 120 ORANGE AVE. (619) 537-0054



Hair of the Dog



Recovering from your office Christmas party? Don't get your tinsel in a tangle. Head to Nicky Rottens to refuel and recuperate. Order the Bloody Mary with vodka, house-made Bloody-Mary mix and a slice of bacon. It comes served in a nifty mason jar so you're sure to get a handle on the day. If you're craving something sweeter, opt for the Hail Mary instead, with light rum, pomegranate, pineapple and Luxardo maraschino liqueur. If you're in really bad shape, get some food...order the Hangover Bowl...that's what it's there for!

NICKY ROTTENS 100 ORANGE AVE. (619) 537-0280







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911 Guadalupe Avenue. Offered for \$2,595,000, Represented Seller and sold for over asking with multiple offers



9 Saint Christophers Lane. Offered for \$1,269,000, Represented Buyer



106 Antigua Court. Offered for \$1,025,000, Represented Seller after taking over expired listing

ADDITIONAL CLOSINGS THIS YEAR

- 816 H Ave., Coronado (rep. seller)
- 1730 Avenida del Mundo #406 (rep. buyers)
- 6645 Oakridge Road (rep. buyers)
- 3125 Bancroft St., North Park (rep. buyer)

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Baker Finds Sweet Spot

By MARTINA SCHIMITSCHEK

obbins Kelly calls herself a one-trick pony. She's been baking the same recipe for 50 years. And for 50 years, people have been happily giving, receiving and eating her specialty: a rich, moist rum cake that comes in a variety of sizes. "I've baked them for years and years, and it evolved into selling them," said Kelly, a 1970 Coronado High School graduate. Her recipe is a secret. Her mother got it from a friend, a Navy

wife whose family was in the baking business in New Jersey. Ingredients include walnuts, butter and, of course, a little rum, which is in the batter and the glaze.

"I do a lot in one year," Kelly said of the number of cakes she bakes, even though the cakes have always been a side business. She's been a business owner until this September when she closed her store Mistletoe in Seaport Village, which she owned since 2004. Her first shop was Fabrication, which she opened in 1982 on Loma Avenue and later turned into All Things Coronado.

"After my mother died, I realized I'll never get her house cleaned out if I run two businesses," Kelly said. So, she closed All Things Coronado in 2014.

In the meantime, she kept baking.

Many of her confections have been made for fundraisers and as donations. Kelly has baked hundreds of cakes for the annual Coronado MainStreet Garden Party and for the Coronado Fire Department.

The cakes for the fire department started when Councilwoman Ruth "Patty" Schmidt asked Kelly to bake a cake for each fire station, a tradition that lasted until Schmidt's death in 2010. That year, Kelly, who wanted to

with Tasty Rum Cakes

continue Schmidt's legacy, went to the department and realized that only the crews on duty got a piece of the cakes. That's when she started making individual cakes for each member of the fire department.

"It's one of our favorite things," said Capt. Ted Porter of the cakes they receive every December.

"Everyone looks forward to it each year," said David Hingeley, who has been an engineer with the department for 27 years. He said he can't remember a time when the department didn't get the annual holiday treat.

"It's one of the best rum cakes I've had, and I think everyone agrees with me," he said. "She's a sweetheart. It's meant a lot to everybody."

The cakes come in a range of sizes from bite size and mini to small, medium and large. Kelly said she recently completed her first five-tier wedding cake using an extra-large size for the bottom.

"People call me and need them for different occasions," Kelly said. "It's become a tradition for some to get them." She has put 50 bit-sized cakes into a bucket, each with a saying about aging for a 50th birthday party and baked 90 minis with the same aging theme for a 90th birthday party. She also created a sandcastle cake for a Coronado Historical Association auction.

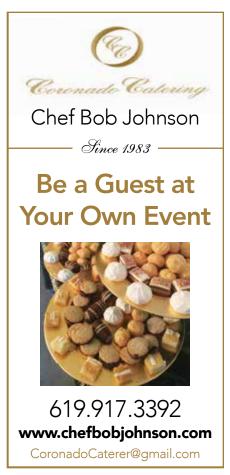
"What's great about rum cakes is they travel well," she said. She has been shipping them to Navy SEALs and friends in Hawaii.

"They're just a great all-purpose cake," she said. They can be dressed up with whipped cream or ice cream and fresh fruit — or eaten as is.

"People seem to like them" Kelly said. "It's kind of a mystery to me."

To order a cake, call (619) 892-2168 or visit robbinsrumcakes.com













Tartine's Chocolate Gingerbread

Barbara Massey, proprietor and executive pastry chef of Tartine, shares a favorite holiday recipe of hers — Chocolate Gingerbread. Not too sweet and with a bite from the chocolate, cocoa and molasses, these little cakes make a perfect dessert or a lovely accompaniment to afternoon tea or coffee. They are also available the entire month of December at Tartine.

YIELD: 10 PAPER TULIP CUPS

8 ounces (2 sticks) unsalted butter 1 cup brewed, strong, hot coffee 1 cup dark brown sugar 1 cup light molasses 4 eggs

2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons unsweetened dark cocoa 1½ teaspoons baking soda

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground ginger

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon ground allspice

Optional edible candy toppers

Notes: Paper tulip cups are oven-safe baking cups that are available online, at kitchen supply or craft stores. You can make this recipe using a hand mixer or stand mixer with the paddle attachment.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix butter and coffee until the butter melts. Add dark brown sugar, molasses and eggs and mix until combined. Add the melted chocolate. Sift all the dry ingredients together, then add to the wet mixture until just combined. This batter will be thin. Place tulip cups in muffin tins. Add ½ cup batter to each tulip cup. Bake for 35 minutes, or until set. These gingerbreads are delicious on their own, but even more decadent served with sweetened whipped cream or a scoop of ice cream. Will keep 5 days when stored in an airtight container.



















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