

Local

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CENTER AIMS TO FIND PATH TO CIVILITY

UCSD, nonprofit seek end to culture of hate, intolerance

BY JOHN WILKENS

UC San Diego and the National Conflict Resolution Center have launched a new research program aimed at evaluating and building civility in American life. The Applied Research Center for Civility, based at the university, will study the dynamics behind hate, intolerance, racial injustice and other social ills, then

identify and assess ways to curb them, and share the findings in reports and conferences. "Civility in our public life as we know it is on life support," said Steven Dinkin, president of the San Diego-based Conflict Resolution Center and co-chair of the new civility center. "The breakdown of civil discourse has exacerbated our country's deep political polarization. This has led to increased violence and decreased consideration for our neighbors throughout the pandemic, literally costing people their lives."

He said the civility center "will look at best practices for navigating entrenched divides, and synthesize those into unified, comprehensive models for national distribution and discussion." Public polling shows Americans are concerned about the decline in civility, and although they often disagree along partisan lines about what is responsible for the problem, they share a desire to fix it. In his inauguration speech in January, President Joe Biden echoed those hopes. "We must end this uncivil war that pits red

"The breakdown of civil discourse has exacerbated our country's deep political polarization."

Steven Dinkin • president of the National Conflict Resolution Center

against blue, rural versus urban, conservative versus liberal," he said. "We can do this if we open our souls instead of hardening our hearts." The new research center here aims to move beyond aspiration with data collec-

tion and analysis, helping to create what UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep Khosla called "a more just, humane future for America." The first project, funded with a \$400,000 grant by the Conrad Prebys Foundation, will look at juvenile justice

reform in hopes of disrupting the "school to prison pipeline," punitive policies on campuses that push students — disproportionately those of color — into the criminal justice system. Other areas of initial concentration will include workplace culture and microaggression identification; conflicts and communication around gender and sexuality; restorative justice; cyberbullying intervention; religion/sectarian tensions and racial violence; and effective communications and mediation strategies. SEE CIVILITY • B2



TAMMY MURGA U-T

Artist Carly Ealey finishes a mural on Palm Avenue and Florence Street in Imperial Beach last week.

CITY MAKING THE CASE FOR KINDNESS, MURAL BY MURAL

Artwork throughout Imperial Beach in support of nationwide City of Kindness movement

BY TAMMY MURGA

IMPERIAL BEACH

Imperial Beach has vowed to become a city of kindness and it hopes to engage the community in its campaign with five diverse murals residents might already have spotted in recent days. Veterans Park features a mural with colorful flowers and foliage surrounding a young couple sharing secrets and laughs. On Third Street and Palm Avenue, there's a woman surfing alongside several dolphins. Just over a mile east on Palm Avenue and Florence Street is a mural of a Black

woman's hand and a White woman's hand coming together to cradle a glowing heart. These images are what kindness means for the five San Diego County-based artists who created them and they hope it inspires passersby. "The women's hands that are coming together: one could be love, one could be kindness in a way. We need to show love, kindness and really come together and this is just a nice reminder," said Carly Ealey, the muralist behind the 110-foot-long mural. "It's been really cool to see so many people drive by and they'll stop and yell at me, 'Looks amazing.'"

The murals, fully funded by the San Diego-based Chuck and Ernestina Kreutzkamp Foundation in collaboration with the Imperial Beach Arts Bureau, are in support of the nationwide City of Kindness movement, an international campaign with kindness challenges that has attracted multiple cities, organizations and celebrities such as Kind Snacks, the Dalai Lama and Lady Gaga. To make Imperial Beach's participation official, the City Council on May 5 designated the South Bay community a city of kindness. "We believe Imperial Beach is an

even better community when people respect one another, and leaders prioritize people. We also recognize the health, psychological, and civic benefits of kindness," Mayor Serge Dedina said in the proclamation. "Our intention with this designation is to take steps to foster kindness in our deliberations and decisions leading to kind thoughts and actions throughout the city of Imperial Beach." The murals and those who interact with them will also be a part of a documentary currently under way, titled "The Case For Kindness," SEE MURAL • B4

ENCINITAS APPROVES ELECTRIC BICYCLE PROGRAM

Service to start in September as a 1-year pilot project

BY BARBARA HENRY

ENCINITAS

A bike-share program featuring easy-to-use Electra bikes is poised to launch in Encinitas this fall and could later expand to other North County cities. BCycle L.L.C., a subsidiary of the Trek bicycle company, won contract approval last week from the Encinitas City Council to start a one-year, pilot project. It'll replace a previous plan for a regional bike-share program operated by Gotcha Ride, which was terminated by Gotcha amid the coronavirus pandemic last year. Council members said that the new proposal offered benefits the old one did not. BCycle is going to be using electric-power-assist bikes from Electra, a business that has its headquarters in Encinitas and is another subsidiary of Trek company. "The story here seems even better," Councilman Joe Mosca said, later adding, "I'm over the moon with this, thinking it's a really awesome deal." Councilwoman Kellie Shay Hinz, an avid cyclist who's campaigned for bike safety education programs and bike lane improvements, said she had tried out the bikes and found them very easy to use without reading the instructions. Councilman Tony Kranz said he expected the pilot program would successfully spread to neighboring communities after it concludes. BCycle appears to have learned from the mistakes made by other bike-share companies and other communities, including San Di-

SEE BIKES • B4

USD STUDENTS PROTEST LENIENT PUNISHMENT FOR SEX ASSAULT

University officials defend policy, cite privacy reasons for withholding specifics

BY DAVID GARRICK

SAN DIEGO

More than 100 University of San Diego students held a vocal protest on the edge of campus Sunday demanding the university expel all students found guilty of sexual assault by a campus hearing board. The protesters said they were frustrated that a student found guilty of sexual assault was banned from campus for spring semester instead of being expelled, contending his possible return this fall would make the campus unsafe. University officials declined to dis-



KRISTIAN CARREON

Marchers on the University of San Diego campus on Sunday protest the school's one-semester ban of a student accused of sexual assault.

cuss the specific incident for privacy reasons, but they stressed that sexual assaults are handled case-by-case and that punishments are based on a thorough review of all circumstances. Officials said they couldn't reveal

whether the student received any punishment beyond the one-semester ban, such as community service. But they said it would be "highly unusual" for a student to be suspended without any

SEE PROTEST • B4

SOMEONE SAN DIEGO SHOULD KNOW

FOR ROBERT LEE BROWN, MEDIATION IS A WAY OF LIFE

BY JAN GOLDSMITH

It was the late 1960s, and Robert Lee Brown, then a teenager, was working the night shift at a grocery store when a White female customer dropped her shopping list. Brown, an African American, bent down and picked it up. The customer falsely accused Brown of brushing up against her. A few days later, Brown's boss began regularly driving him home after work rather than allowing him to walk. He eventually told Brown the reason: Ku Klux Klan members had threatened to harm him over the incident. Brown was born and raised in the segregated South in Bartow, Fla.

At an early age, his father brought him to a prominent tree. "My father said, 'Look at the tree.' He told me this is where they hanged people and burned them after. 'Don't ever forget this tree.'" "I remember going to the back of restaurants; separate bathrooms; segregated seats at the movies and going to the back of the bus." "I remember the name-calling. We avoided driving back roads because we did not feel safe." SEE BROWN • B4



Robert Lee Brown

LOCAL REPORTS

CRIME, FIRE & PUBLIC SAFETY

4 fires probed as arson

Authorities were investigating a cluster of four small brush fires as arson in the San Ysidro area Sunday.

The first fire started about 12:20 p.m. and scorched a half-acre in an area along Dairy Mart Road just south of Interstate 5, said San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Capt. James Shadoan.

About an hour later, three smaller fires ignited around the same time about 200 to 300 yards away, north of I-5 near San Ysidro Boulevard, Shadoan said.

A police helicopter helped search for a man investigators wanted to question in connection with the fires but didn't locate him. Investigators found a vehicle that matched a description given by witnesses, but the car was abandoned, Shadoan said. A detailed description of the man was not available.

david.hernandez@sduniontribune.com

Escondido-area man arrested in theft of artifacts

ESCONDIDO

San Diego County sheriff's detectives arrested a man on Saturday suspected of stealing precious Native American artifacts from Harrah's Resort Southern California in Valley Center.

The suspect, 32-year-old Sonny Hunter, was arrested on charges of burglary, grand theft and possession of stolen property and has been booked at the Vista Detention Facility.

Detectives believe Hunter is the man who on Thursday entered the casino, opened a plexiglass case and stole six artifacts belonging to the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians, officials said. No further details about the artifacts were given.

They found all six artifacts after entering Hunter's house in unincorporated Escondido Saturday morning with a search warrant, according to a statement from the Sheriff's Department. They also found Donald Morrow, 37, hiding in Hunter's home with a loaded firearm. Morrow was arrested on an outstanding felony warrant and on suspicion of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

jonathan.wosen@sduniontribune.com

Man, 20, found fatally shot at Mission Bay hotel

SAN DIEGO

A 20-year-old man was killed early Sunday morning in a shooting at a Mission Bay hotel that San Diego police are investigating as a homicide.

At 3:30 a.m. Sunday, police were called to the San Diego Mission Bay Resort on East Mission Bay Drive, where multiple callers reported hearing at least one gunshot. When police arrived, they found a man suffering from a gunshot wound to his torso inside a hotel room. Despite life-saving efforts by San Diego Fire-Rescue workers, the man died at the scene, police said.

According to witness reports, the man was involved in an altercation in the hallway and the hotel room before the gunshot was heard. Witnesses described seeing two men leaving the area in a white, late-model sedan. The victim has been tentatively identified but his name has not been released.

Anyone with information about the shooting is asked to call San Diego Police homicide detectives at (619) 531-2293 or Crime Stoppers at (888) 580-8477.

pam.kragen@sduniontribune.com

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Monday, May 17, the 137th day of 2021. There are 228 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history

On May 17, 1954, a unanimous U.S. Supreme Court handed down its Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka decision, which held that racially segregated public schools were inherently unequal, and therefore unconstitutional.

On this date

In 1875, the first Kentucky Derby was run; the winner was Aristides, ridden by Oliver Lewis.

In 1973, a special committee convened by the U.S. Senate began its televised hearings into the Watergate scandal.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MISSION BAY LOT EYED FOR HOMELESS CAMPING

Neighbors say overnight parking would aid vulnerable

BY ANDREA LOPEZ-VILLAFANA

SAN DIEGO

A group of beach area residents wants the city to open a parking lot in Mission Bay that will allow homeless people who live in their cars to legally park overnight.

Proponents say the parking lot at Rose Marie Starns South Shores Park, a small green space near SeaWorld mostly used for boating, is a good location for people to rest at night because it has room for more than 250 cars and access to public restrooms.

The park is currently open from 4 a.m. to 2 a.m. but overnight camping is not allowed.

"We have to start coming up with creative solutions to the problem because what we have considered in the past isn't working and it's not enough," said Caryn Blanton, acting executive director for Shoreline Community Services, a nonprofit that works to eliminate homelessness in San Diego's central beach neighborhoods.

Blanton and three other Pacific Beach residents recently launched an online petition for the overnight parking lot. The petition on Change.org had gathered more than 175 signatures as of Wednesday.

Nearly two years ago, the city adopted a prohibition against vehicle habitation. Supporters argued that a crackdown on people living in their cars on city streets was necessary after a federal judge ruled that a 1983 version of the law was too vague to enforce, which contributed to more people parking and sleeping in beach communities.

"Safe" parking lots be-



EDUARDO CONTRERAS U-T

From left, Katheryn Rhodes, Regina Sinsky-Crosby, Paige Hernandez and Caryn Blanton are asking the city to allow overnight parking.

came locations where families and individuals living in their vehicles could park overnight, and in most cases receive resources from nonprofit groups. There are two safe lots funded by the city — one in Kearny Mesa and the other in Mission Valley.

San Diego's law prohibits people who live in a car or RV to park within 500 feet of a home or school at any time during the day. It also prohibits people from sleeping in their vehicles on a public street between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m.

"The thing about living in your vehicle is you are constantly living in fear of getting a citation," said Pacific Beach resident Regina Sinsky-Crosby.

Mario Gonzalez was recently diagnosed with Huntington's disease and bought an RV five months ago to save money. He has gotten eight parking citations since then.

Gonzalez said it's difficult to find work because he has to constantly move his RV to different locations. He's gotten tickets while

washing clothes, sleeping and working construction jobs, he said.

"You're a prisoner to your RV," he said.

San Diego City Council President Jennifer Campbell proposed using the lot for people living in their cars two years ago. The lot was evaluated but it was not one of the sites selected by the previous city administration, Campbell said Wednesday in a statement.

Campbell said her office continues to work with the county and city to assess the need for safe parking lots.

Sinsky-Crosby said opening Rose Marie Starns South Shores Park to overnight campers would help people in need.

"The vehicle habitation ordinance didn't solve a problem," she said. "This is an opportunity to solve a problem."

According to a 2020 report by the Regional Task Force on the Homeless, the number of first-time homeless people in the county increased from 2,326 in 2019 to

4,152 in 2020.

Authors of the report said the increase could be a result of a different method of collecting data because the task force relied on the number of people who seek homeless services and not its annual point-in-time count, where volunteers catalog specific people on the street during one night in January.

Residents in favor of the safe-parking proposal are currently seeking support from community groups in nearby neighborhoods.

Blanton said the lot doesn't have to serve as a safe space for years; it's just something the city and community can do to meet the immediate needs of people who are vulnerable.

"Do I want this in my neighborhood necessarily? No," Blanton said. "I'd rather have a park and a boat ramp. But right now it needs to serve another purpose, it needs a greater purpose."

andrea.lopezvillafana@sduniontribune.com

SAN DIEGO WEATHER WILL REMAIN GRAY MOST OF THIS WEEK

BY GARY ROBBINS

SAN DIEGO

This week's weather forecast will sound like a broken record — for those of you old enough to remember record players.

The weak trough that produced sporadic and scattered showers in greater San Diego on Sunday will last until late tonight, when the sys-

tem clears off to the east, says the National Weather Service.

There will be partial clearing near the coast on Tuesday and the temperature will turn a bit warmer. But the leading edge of a new low-pressure trough will begin to show on Wednesday. Skies will be mostly cloudy Thursday and Friday, and the "May gray" layer will

deepen next weekend.

San Diego's daytime high is expected to be 66 today, 68 on Tuesday, 70 on Wednesday and 65 on Thursday. The seasonal average is 68.

Escondido is expected to reach 68 today, 72 on Tuesday, 75 on Wednesday and 69 on Thursday.

Sunday's system produced 0.28 of an inch of rain in Oceanside through 12:30

p.m., and 0.14 of an inch at San Onofre. San Diego International Airport got 0.04 of an inch of precipitation.

Since Oct. 1, the airport has recorded 4.4 inches of rain, which is about 5 inches below average. Ramona has gotten 7.79 inches, which is 6.37 inches below average.

gary.robbins@sduniontribune.com



U-T FILE

Steven Dinkin, who heads National Conflict Resolution Center, will co-chair the new civility center.

CIVILITY

FROM B1

Many of those are areas in which the Conflict Resolution Center already works. Founded in 1983, it provides training and other resources to help people, organizations and communities in the public and private sectors navigate their differences. By its count, it has managed more than 20,000

cases.

The center and UC San Diego have collaborated on other projects. In 2014, they launched the Galinson/Glickman Campus Civility Initiative, also known as Tritons Together, which has trained nearly 10,000 student club leaders in inclusive communications and conflict resolution.

Their new civility partnership, formally launched Saturday during the Con-

flict Resolution Center's annual Peacemaker Awards, will be funded through a mix of research grants, donations and contributions to a permanent endowment, organizers said.

It joins similar initiatives at other colleges around the country, including the Institute for Civil Civic Engagement at the University of San Diego.

john.wilkens@sduniontribune.com

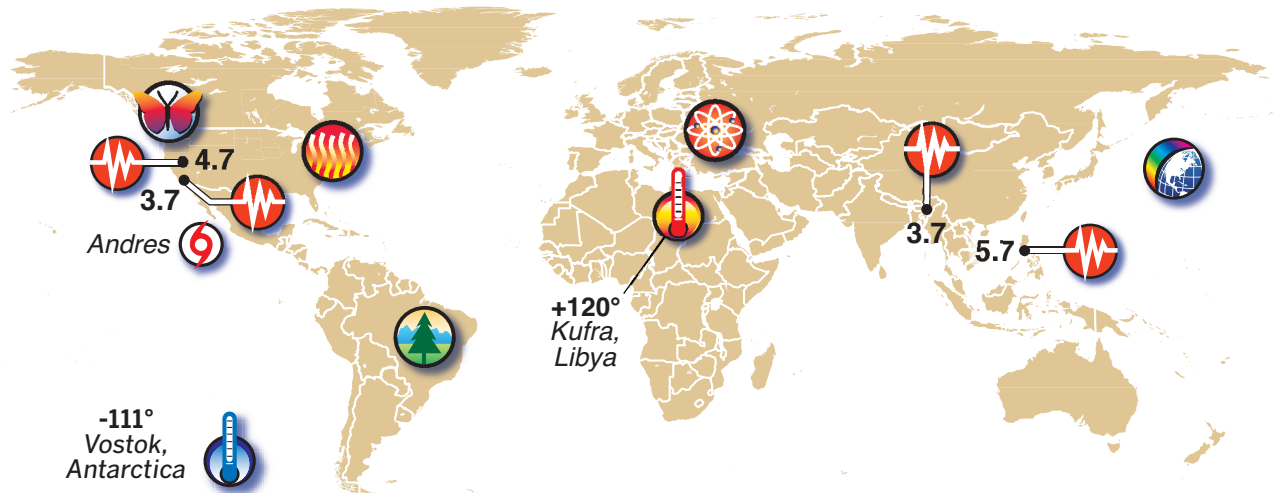
EARTH WATCH Diary of the planet

Royal breeding


 Western monarch butterflies from the Pacific Northwest to California may not be going extinct as earlier feared, but are instead changing their breeding habitats and adapting to climate change. A Washington State University expert says last winter's count of the colorful insects revealed a sharp drop, especially across much of Southern California, where the number plunged from about 300,000 three years ago to just 1,914 in 2020. But entomologist David James says large populations were observed by citizen scientists in metropolitan Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area, where they had seldom been seen wintering before.

Earthquakes

 The Philippine capital of Manila and nearby areas were jolted by a tremor that was unusually strong for the region. Earth movements were also felt in eastern India's Assam state, Los Angeles and a wide area from the northern Sierra Nevada to the Sacramento Valley.



Methane warning

 The U.N. announced that cutting emissions of methane from farming, fossil fuel operations and landfills is urgently needed to help combat the deepening climate emergency. While methane doesn't last as long in the atmosphere, it is many times more potent as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. The U.N. says that global industry could easily and inexpensively slash methane emissions by 30 percent within a decade, with a 45 percent cut possible by using other readily available methods. Some of the

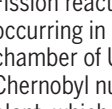
biggest sources are the growing mountains of human trash buried in landfills around the world that generate the gas as they decompose. Plugging leaky oil wells, coal mines and pipelines could also help curb methane emissions.

Forest recovery

 Areas of felled forest around the world, collectively the size of France, have regrown naturally during the past 20 years, potentially soaking up more carbon emissions than the United States creates each year. But the World Wildlife Fund, which led the survey,

says far more areas of forests are being lost each year through deforestation than are recovering. "The data show the enormous potential of natural habitats to recover when given the chance to do so," said John Latspeich, executive director of Trillion Trees, the coalition group behind the study.


Chernobyl smolder

 Fission reactions appear to be occurring in an inaccessible chamber of Ukraine's crippled Chernobyl nuclear power plant, which exploded 35 years ago. Scientists say they don't know if the slow rise in neutron emissions will fizzle out or increase, forcing them

 to find ways to prevent another catastrophe. "It's like the embers in a barbecue pit," said nuclear chemist Neil Hyatt of the University of Sheffield. He says the new rates of fission are very low and believes they probably will not lead to an explosion. But scientists on the scene say they are not sure since there is no direct way to monitor what is happening inside the sealed and intensely radioactive chamber.

'Stratoshrink'

One unexpected consequence of humanity's greenhouse gas

 emissions is that they have shrunk the stratosphere — a thinning that could eventually affect life on Earth, satellites and GPS. Writing in the journal Environmental Research Letters, scientists say the high and rarified layer of the atmosphere has contracted by about 1,300 feet since the 1980s and is likely to shrink another 3,300 feet by 2080 without sharp cuts in carbon emissions. Global heating of the troposphere, the atmosphere's lowest layer, has caused it to expand, pushing up the bottom layer of the stratosphere. And when carbon dioxide emissions mix into the stratosphere, they cause that layer to cool and shrink.

Earliest cyclone

 Tropical Storm Andres became the earliest tropical cyclone to form in the eastern Pacific on record. It beat Tropical Storm Adrian's formation in 2017 by 12 hours but was weak and short-lived.

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