

SDMETRO

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NO. 3 VOL. XXXVI



WOMEN OF INFLUENCE 2021

Including Teresa Campbell
of San Diego County Credit
Union and Chanelle Hawken
of Cox Communications.

WINNERS ON PAGE 8

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**COVER STORY:
Women of Influence 2021**

Teresa Campbell, president and CEO of San Diego County Credit Union and Chanelle Hawken of Cox Communications, join 10 other forward-thinking leaders who make up our 2021 Women of Influence list. They are professionals in their respective industries who have made significant contributions to the San Diego community. See Page 8.



**One Woman's Journey
from Vietnam to Escondido**

It's been quite a journey for a woman who escaped Communist Vietnam as a child, to now owning a restaurant in Escondido that specializes in catfish dishes. Mary Khuu and her husband Andy Millea own Smokey's Lake Wohlford Cafe in Escondido, a popular dining spot. Khuu also likes to cook Chinese food and recently added several Chinese dishes to her menu.



**How to Help Senior Citizens
in Isolation Socialize**

Surveys show that a large majority of the elderly suffer feelings of loneliness ranging from moderate to severe. Here are several ways relatives or caretakers of senior citizens can do to help them socialize and stay connected in these trying times.



A Glorious Weekend at Big Bear

Big Bear, one of the most popular skiing resorts in California, has continued to grow over the years, drawing over six million annual visitors, who rub ski poles with 5,000 permanent residents. Close to San Diego, Los Angeles and Las Vegas, Big Bear makes for easy summer getaways where fishing, boating, golfing, ziplining, skiing and biking are all on the menu.



New Local Search Directory Debuts in San Diego

San Diego-based Local Umbrella Media has partnered with the Towne Post Network to offer a free local search directory for businesses, plus monthly neighborhood and special edition magazines.

Chairman | CEO
Robert Page
BobPage@sandiegometro.com

Publisher
Rebeca Page
RebecaPage@sandiegometro.com

Managing Editor
Manny Cruz
Manny@sandiegometro.com

Graphic Designer
Christopher Baker
cbaker@sandiegometro.com

Photography/Illustration
Pam Davis
San Diego State University

Contributing Writers
Marsha Sutton
Cecilia Buckner
Marlise Kast-Myers

Advertising
SALES & MARKETING DIRECTOR
Rebeca Page

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P.O. BOX 3679
RANCHO SANTA FE, CA 92067
858.461.4484 FAX: 858.759.5755

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SAN DIEGO SCENE

Gail Stoorza-Gill
August 28, 1943 – May 16, 2021

There were few classier or savvier business women in San Diego than Gail Stoorza-Gill who introduced and encouraged me to join her, Buzz Woolley and Neil Morgan on the board of directors of the Voice of San Diego in its infancy. She passed away May 16 from complications related to chronic fibromyalgia and surgery. She was 77.



Gail Stoorza-Gill

She was smart, intelligent, compassionate and genuine, with a business track record rarely equaled. When Gail spoke you listened. She had something to say. It isn't an overstatement to say that Gail was the personification of the ultimate lady.

She founded what became the largest independent public relations and advertising agency in California and the biggest woman-owned enterprise of its kind in the United States.

Her career began at Phillips Ramsey Advertising and she became the director of advertising for Rancho Bernardo, a brand new community master planned by Harry L. Summers, who, along with Charles "Red" Scott, became her lifelong mentors and treasured clients.

Gail founded her own company in 1974 which later became Storrza, Ziegau and Metzger. Nearly every major company in San Diego became her client: the San Diego Padres, Economic Development Corporation, the Port of San Diego, La Costa Resort and McDonald's. The company had offices in San Diego, Sacramento, Los Angeles and Riverside.

PR Week named her one of the "50 Most Influential Women in Public Relations." She received the Human Unity Award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

She is survived by her husband, Ian Gill, founding managing partner at Silvergate Development, and co-owner and president of Highland Partnerships INC., and daughter Alexandra and partner Ted Esser and their two sons, James and Charles.

A celebration of Gail's life is being planned for July and donations in lieu of flowers can be made to the National Fibromyalgia Association, 3857 Birch St., Suite 312, Newport Beach, CA 92660

– Bob Page.

Congrats!

SHAWNDA DORANTES
 MSN, FNP

SD METRO 2021
 WOMEN OF INFLUENCE

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Ronson J. Shamoun, Principal Attorney and CEO of RJS LAW, is an Adjunct Law Professor at the University of San Diego-School of Law where he teaches a Tax Practice and Penalties class. He was recently presented with the following awards:

- San Diego Metro Magazine- Best Attorney 2016
- San Diego Magazine- Top Attorney 2016
- San Diego Business Journal- Best of the Bar 2014, 2015 & 2016
- Martindale Hubbell's- AC Preeminent Rated 2014, 2015 & 2016
- San Diego Daily Transcript- Top Attorney 2014 & 2015
- San Diego Metro Magazine- 40 Under 40 - 2015

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Port of San Diego to double shore power at cruise terminals

The Port of San Diego is doubling shore power capability at its B Street and Broadway Pier cruise ship terminals to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions on and around San Diego Bay.

The Board of Port Commissioners has approved \$4.6 million in funding for the project as well as various agreements related to equipment purchasing, construction and installment of additional shore power equipment that will allow two cruise vessels calling on San Diego to connect to shore power outlets at the same time. This means the ships will not have to run their diesel auxiliary engines while in port.

The Port's goal is to complete the shore power expansion by September 2022, four months ahead of recently updated California Air Resources Board (CARB) regulations that require essentially all cruise ships calling on California ports to use shore power beginning Jan. 1, 2023.

Having two shore power outlets at the cruise ship terminals will result in at least a 90 percent overall reduction of harmful pollutants such as NOx and diesel particulate matter as well as a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.



Two cruise ships at the Port of San Diego's B Street Cruise Terminal along the North Embarcadero.

Save Our Heritage Organisation to hold 38th annual People in Preservation Awards



Alcazar Garden-Cultural Landscape, Restoration. (Photo courtesy Balboa Park Conservancy)

Save Our Heritage Organisation, San Diego's countywide preservation group, celebrated its 38th annual People In Preservation Awards, on Thursday, May 27, during National Preservation Month with an online award presentation.

This year's awards will honor 12 distinctive projects and people ranging across multiple historic preservation mediums, from building restorations and adaptive reuse to historic community traditions and important arts and cultural centers, with an outstanding group of people and projects, including the extensive restoration of a Mid-Century Modern coastal gem, the rehabilitation of a support building at Hotel del Coronado, and the recognition of a long-time writer especially known for her work in La Jolla.

The Balboa Park Conservancy raised the funds and organized a collaborative restoration of Alcazar Garden with the City of San Diego, one of the Preservation Award winners.

In 2019, work began on various water features, landscape and tree trimming, walkway updates, restoration of the historic art tiles, and fresh coats of paint matching historical color schemes

For the complete list of People in Preservation Award winners, contact SOHOSandiego.org.

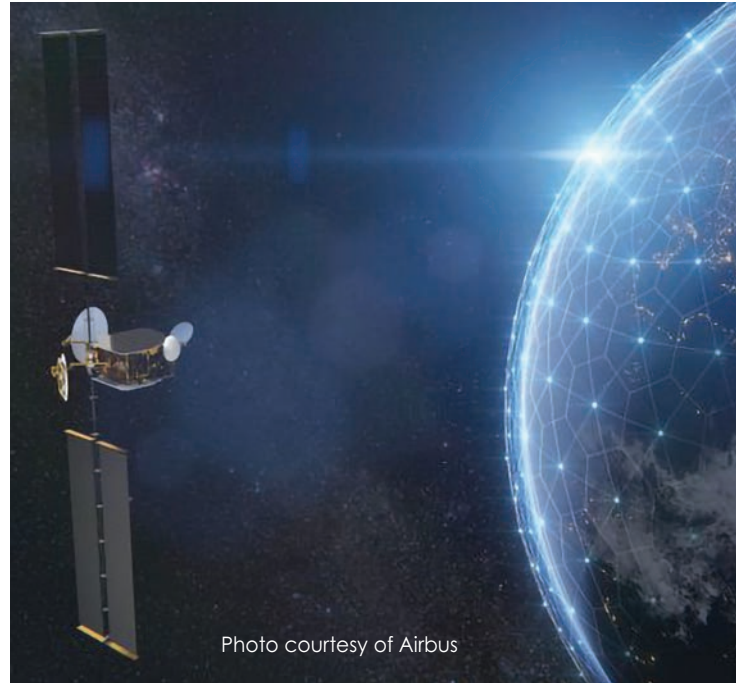
Northrop Grumman solar arrays to power Airbus OneSat spacecraft

Northrop Grumman Corporation was awarded a contract by Airbus Defence and Space for the design, development and production of 24 ship sets of solar arrays to support the OneSat satellite product line. The solar arrays will power the OneSat communication satellites in geosynchronous orbit.

The solar array technology features the Northrop Grumman Compact Telescoping Array (CTA) design that utilizes a telescoping boom system to deploy an accordion-folded flexible solar array blanket. The solar arrays are a 20kW-class system that deploys over 18 meters in order to provide energy to OneSat.

“The technology used for our solar arrays allows for an efficient launch and is one of our many company-designed advanced components that enable satellites of all classes to perform their missions,” said Frank Bernas, vice president, space components and strategic businesses, Northrop Grumman.

Northrop Grumman’s CTA system was developed for missions like OneSat that require extremely compact stowage volume for spacecraft launch while remaining lightweight. Northrop Grumman’s CTA creates enough space to allow for three full spacecraft to be launched aboard a single rocket.



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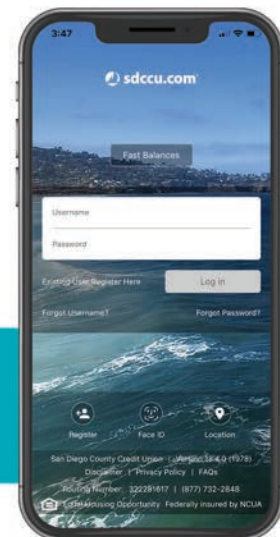
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**San Diego County
Credit Union**

Port of San Diego approves two more leases for Seaport Village for 90 percent occupancy

The Board of Port Commissioners has approved two new leases for Seaport Village --

Zytoun Gourmet Mediterranean and Old Harbor Distilling Company. They are the latest locally owned-and-operated businesses to soon join the waterfront shopping, dining and entertainment center.

Zytoun, the owner of Aladdin Mediterranean Restaurant in San Diego, will operate a full-service Greek and Mediterranean restaurant along the boardwalk in the Carousel District of Seaport Village on the west side of the shopping center. Zytoun will feature an outdoor, wrap-around patio with views of San Diego Bay, and healthy and fresh premium-quality Mediterranean cuisine

including scrumptious salads, vegetarian meals, melt-in-your-mouth shish kabobs, and delicious appetizers like hummus, tabouli, and falafels.

Old Harbor Distilling Company will open its second San Diego location in Seaport Village's Lighthouse District on the east side of the shopping center. Old Harbor will include a craft tasting room combined with a fast-casual seafood restaurant concept offering chowders, lobster rolls, and fish plates. Old Harbor has operated its first location in San Diego's East Village since 2013.

Renovations for both Zytoun and Old Harbor are anticipated to begin in the fall, with opening targeted for spring/summer 2022.



The Lighthouse District at Seaport Village (photo courtesy of Port of San Diego)

John Dunlap appointed park president for SeaWorld & Aquatica San Diego

John Dunlap has been appointed park president for SeaWorld & Aquatica San Diego and is responsible for leading strategic planning and all operations for the parks. He succeeds Marilyn Hannes, who was promoted to a new role of senior vice president of strategic relationships for SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment after 23 years with the company, with five of those years leading the two parks.

Dunlap has a passion for animal conservation and is a seasoned, accomplished, and well-respected theme park industry leader with a proven history of developing world-class, thrilling, meaningful, and educational experiences for

guests. Prior to his current role, Dunlap served as president and CEO of the attraction management and advisory company, Iconic Attractions Group, where he helped clients in the United States and abroad develop business strategies to transform the performance of their parks. His projects included the redevelopment and opening of the Dubai Safari Park and the transformation of the Jungle Island theme park in Miami.

Prior to founding Iconic Attractions Group, Dunlap led one of the world's most well-known and respected zoological parks as director of the San Diego Zoo.

Sept. 18 gala will honor retiring chancellor of San Diego Community College District



The San Diego Community College District will hold a gala on Sept. 18, 2021 honoring the legacy of retiring Chancellor Constance M. Carroll that will also serve as a major fundraiser for the tuition-free San Diego Promise.

Chancellor Carroll will be retiring July 1, 2021 after serving for 17 years as the chief executive officer at one of the largest community college districts in California. The gala, titled "A

Legacy of Achievement: A Tribute to Chancellor Constance M. Carroll, Ph.D. Benefiting the San Diego Promise," is scheduled to be held at the San Diego Mission Bay Resort.

The SDCCD's longest-serving Chancellor, Carroll has made an extraordinary impact on the district and its students since her appointment in 2004. Prior to that she served as president of San Diego Mesa College for 11 years.

Congratulations

Mary Cheeks

PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER, JAMUL CASINO



RECIPIENT OF SAN DIEGO METRO MAGAZINE'S 2021 WOMAN OF INFLUENCE AWARD

The Jamul Indian Village of California extends our heartfelt congratulations to you, Mary, for receiving this honor. We appreciate the bold and steady leadership you bring to Jamul Casino and thank you for your continued hard work. Your accomplishments and exemplary influence can now be recognized by the entire community thanks to this prestigious award.



jamulindianvillage.com
14191 Highway 94, Jamul, CA 91935

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE 2021



Meet our selection of Women of Influence in the San Diego region

TERESA CAMPBELL

Teresa Campbell is president and chief executive officer of San Diego County Credit Union. SDCCU's impressive blend of products and services are leading the way for overall credit union success. Under Campbell's leadership, through a continued focus on delivering exceptional customer service combined with the hard work and dedication of SDCCU's great team, SDCCU has maintained its stance as an industry leader and achieved continued growth and success. SDCCU has grown to \$10 billion in assets and reached over 425,000 members, with membership more than doubling in the 10 years since Campbell has served as president and CEO. 2020 was a difficult year for many but under Campbell's leadership SDCCU managed through the Covid-19 pandemic.



Assets grew to \$9.69 billion and SDCCU's net capital remained outstanding at 15.18 percent. SDCCU extended relief at the outset of the pandemic with 90-day deferral options on consumer loans, including auto, credit card and real estate. Business and commercial real estate loans were also offered to those members in need. SDCCU has been named the best credit union for 21 years in a row voted by readers of the San Diego Union Tribune. Campbell led the implementation of a program at SDCCU to help bridge the gap so that kids can gain the skills they need to a successful financial future.

MARY CHEEKS



Mary Cheeks is president and general manager of Jamul Casino. She is an industry veteran with more than 30 years of experience in casino management and casino finance. She joined the Jamul Casino team in May 2018, initially tasked with helping lead the team through an ownership transition, rebranding and a complete transition of 100 percent of its systems and operations between operating entities within a 90-day period. She faced the Covid-19 pandemic with unusual poise and clarity. Early in the pandemic, she partnered with tribal leaders and Southern Indian Head Council (SIHC) to offer guidance and information on how to best keep casino guests and staff safe. Jamul

became one of the first casinos in the nation and one of the first two in California to reopen after its initial closure in March 2020. With Cheeks leading the way, the tribe was able to successfully refinance the casino. She has recognized opportunities for expansion into new businesses, including Jamul's Poker Room and its new outdoor venue, the Rooftop. Her commitment to Indian health, COVID safety and appreciation for first responders was also demonstrated by Jamul's 2020 donations to Sharp Grossmont Hospital, SIHC, and Indian Health Council totaling \$75,000. She is a graduate of the College of New Jersey.

DANIELLE HUMPHRIES

Danielle Humphries is an extraordinary role model and advocate for gender parity in the legal industry. She is also an innovator, leader in law, and influential community leader. As a partner at Hahn Loeser and chair of the firm’s San Diego Trust & Estates Practice Group, she serves as general counsel for families, managing a multitude of legal issues, including trust and estate-related issues, wealth preservation and protection, philanthropic planning, and tax planning. Humphries has extensive experience representing fiduciaries and beneficiaries in complex trust and estate administration and litigation. Her representation of fiduciaries includes advising individual and corporate fiduciaries on risk management and their duties and responsibilities in the course of administration of trusts and estates. She has a stellar reputation as a trusted adviser with experience, insight and sophistication. She volunteers her time on various boards within the San Diego community, most specifically Promises2Kids. She has also been a driving force in Hahn Loeser’s continued support for the San Diego Museum of Art. She has been named a Super Lawyers’ Rising Star and Best Lawyer in America, Litigation-Trusts and Estates 2021. She holds two degrees from the University of San Diego.



CHANELLE HAWKEN

Chanelle Hawken is vice president for government and public affairs for Cox Communications. She provides leadership and strategic direction to the local, state and federal government affairs, community affairs media and public relations and internal communications departments for Cox’s California markets, which include San Diego, Orange County, Palos Verdes and Santa Barbara. She also oversees Cox Charities, an employee-driven foundation funded by employee donations matched by Cox to provide scholarships to local students and grants to nonprofits supporting youth, education, the military and conservation. She is vice chair of the Downtown San Diego Partnership and is a board member of LEAD San Diego. She is a member of SDGE’s Wildfire Advisory Council and is on the executive board of the California Cable and Telecommunications Association. Since the pandemic Hawken has been instrumental in her role at Cox to direct more than \$800,000 in Cox donations and grants to nonprofits in San Diego County supporting the community through the pandemic. Organizations included food banks, David’s Harp Foundation, Monarch School serving the homeless youth, San Diego Foundation’s Black Community Investment Fund and Computers 2 Kids. Her undergraduate and law degrees are from the University of San Diego.



TW2 congratulates our Senior Consultant **Jennifer Whitelaw** on being named among San Diego’s Women of Influence.

www.tw2marketing.com





JENNIFER WHITELAW

Jennifer Whitelaw is a senior consultant to TW2 Marketing, leading the firm's fast-growing commercial real estate division. With over 22 years experience in the industry, she is a trusted adviser to many top real estate companies and leaders. Over the years she has played an active role in the region's biggest and best commercial real estate projects, specifically the Riverwalk project. In 2019, Hines hired TW2 because of Whitelaw's sophisticated understanding of the real estate industry to provide marketing communications for the Riverwalk project, and Hines' effort to win approval by the San Diego Planning Commission and San Diego City Council of its 200 acre, \$3 billion transit-oriented village in the Mission Valley submarket. In November 2020, the San Diego City Council gave its final authorization of Riverwalk with Whitelaw being a key player in gaining the approval. She serves on the ULI San Diego-Tijuana Chapter's board and is co chair of its program committee. In her La Mesa community she created the Garden Bounty program for her son's elementary school. She is a former board member of San Diego Civic Solutions. She launched Whitelaw Marketing when she was 26 before merging it with TW2 in 2007. She continues to maintain Whitelaw Marketing for independent projects. She is a graduate of UCLA.

HILARY DARGAVELL

Hilary Dargavell is chief of operations for a multi-million-dollar real estate company, and RJS Law, San Diego's leading tax law firm. She manages operations, payroll and employees of the companies and related entities. She organizes the well-known Tax Controversy Institute at the University of San Diego Law School. Dargavell is actively involved in her church, involved in the Student to Student Peer Counseling Club, and volunteers for Noah Homes in Spring Valley where she assists adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She is a former 40 Under 40 Award honoree selected by SD METRO Magazine. She is graduate of Cuyamaca College.

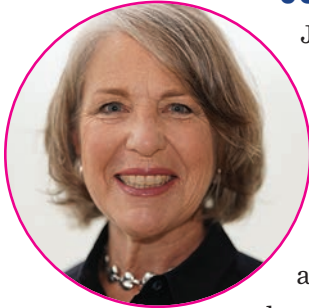


SHAWNDA DORANTES

Shawnda Dorantes is an acclaimed female entrepreneur, a maser nurse injector, cosmetic tattooist and co-owner of Beauty Lounge Medical Spa, a leading, full-service aesthetic destination in San Marcos. Prior to entering the permanent makeup industry and opening Beauty Lounge in 2018, she worked as a nurse in the acute care setting and specialized in medical, surgical, telemetry and hospice care. Her tailored expertise and innovative service offerings paved the way for Beauty Lounge's proven success. With an impressive 36,000 followers on Instagram ([instragram.com/beautyiungesanmarcos](https://www.instagram.com/beautyiungesanmarcos)), the popular full-service med spa offers botox, fillers, laser treatments, microneedling, non-surgical facelifts, body contouring, permanent makeup, teeth whitening and results-driven skin care treatments. She is a team sponsor of youth sports in San Marcos. She is committed to philanthropy. Dorantes triple majored in degrees in biological sciences, women's studies and nursing at Cal State San Marcos. She has been named a Best Aesthetic Injector in America by the National Directory of Recommended Providers, and has earned her Allergan Master injector certification. She recently earned her Masters of Science in Nursing from the University of San Diego, to become a certified Family Nurse Practitioner.



JULIANNE MARKOW



Julianne Markow is a high-impact, pragmatic leader with more than 25 years of experience at Fortune 500, startup and nonprofit companies who is now the chief operating officer of Voice of San Diego, a nonprofit investigative news organization. Prior to joining Voice of San Diego, she served as CEO of The New Children’s Museum, where she led the organization to new levels of visibility and growth, achieving record attendance and membership levels, and as the chief operating officer at the Fine Arts Museum in San Francisco. She led tech support and product development teams at Gateway Computers, and spearheaded strategic planning, mergers and acquisitions, business integrations and financial planning and analysis at a large division of Sara Lee Corporation. Markow has served on the boards of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce and the MS Society. She is on the board of directors at Kitchens For Good and on the advisory board of the San Diego Art Institute. She earned her MBA from the University of Chicago, an MA in international relations from Columbia University and received her BA magna cum laude from Harvard University.



**Congratulations
Sonya Orme
Woman
of Influence**

As founder of Prime Executive Offices, a 15 year standing Executive office rental agency in Carlsbad, Sonya tailors solutions to each business client’s specific needs, which creates long standing relationships and propelled her agency as an industry leader.

And with her enduring support of local non-profit organizations, it’s no wonder she’s a 2021 Women of Influence honoree.



primeexecutiveoffices.com

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BARBARA BRY

Barbara Bry's diverse career has a common theme of entrepreneurship and leadership in business, journalism, the nonprofit sector and government. She has been on the founding team of several local companies, started two organizations that empower women (Athena San Diego and Run Women Run), and served on the San Diego City Council. Currently she is the chief operating officer of Blackbird Ventures, which invests in and incubates early stage technology companies. She was the first editor of Voice of San Diego. Bry has received numerous honors including induction into the San Diego County Women's Hall of Fame, the CONNECT Distinguished Contributions Award for Technology Innovation and recognized by the SBA as "Small Business Journalist of the Year for San Diego and Imperial Counties.



DR. FAYE GIRSH, ED.D.



Dr. Faye Girsh was president of the Hemlock Society USA, whose motto is "Good Life, Good Death" from 1996 to 2004. She founded the Hemlock Society of San Diego in 1987, leading it for over 32 years. She has a doctorate in Human Development from Harvard University, was associate professor and chair of the Psychology Department at Morehouse College, a research associate at the University of Chicago, and instructor at Roosevelt and Northwestern Universities. For 18 years Girsh practiced as a clinic and forensic psychologist in San Diego. She initiated the Caring Friends program, which has become the Final Exit Network. She is on the board of ERGO (Euthanasia Research and Guidance Organization), and news editor for the World Federation of Right to Die Societies. She was awarded Hemlock's Lifetime Achievement Award and earned the Marilyn Sequin award from the World Federation of Right to Die Societies in 2016.

CHERI PIERRE

Cheri Pierre is the CEO of Computers 2 Kids. Pierre owns Pierre and Associates, a consulting firm that provides businesses, entrepreneurs and organizations with the tools and expertise they need to manage their corporate impact actively. She specializes in helping under-resourced nonprofit organizations, small businesses and entrepreneurs implement sustainable solutions usually reserved for large multinational companies. Her global consulting positions in Washington and Germany include working with the World Bank, Inter America Bank, VUBI, government ministries and executive offices of the German Ambassador. She has been serving as CEO of Computers 2 Kids, a nonprofit created to assist the underserved to obtain computers, software, training and support to help them become computer literate as well as increase their access to educational, occupational and financial resources. She has served as board chair of ArtsBusXpress and is a board member of San Diego HR Roundtable.



SONYA ORME



Orme is an experienced commercial real estate professional and founder of Prime Executive Offices and Eclectic Enterprises LLC. Prime Executive Offices specializes in providing private offices, mailbox rentals and meeting rooms. Eclectic Enterprises is an investment company focused on asset management, leasing and property management. She has been active and a successful player in the Carlsbad/Northern San Diego County Commercial Office/RND markets for over 20 years. She has served on the board of directors to the Lot 40 Commercial Real Estate Owners Association and Faraday Spectrum for the past 15 years. On 2020, a very challenging year, she continued to thrive with her positive attitude and forward thinking by focusing on her continuous commitment to her clients. She earned both her B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Denver.

MICHELE BARROW

Barrow is a tax partner at Lavine, Lofgren, Morris & Engelberg LLP, San Diego’s largest independent certified public accounting firm. During the pandemic, with tax laws and deadlines evolving in a climate of economic uncertainty, she led her team and advised clients with calm confidence and professionalism. For 20 years Barrow has provided tax compliance and tax planning services to a wide range of corporations, partnerships, individuals and trusts. Her love of business and math, paired with the joy she receives from helping clients save money and reach financial goals, led her to later pursue a Master’s in Taxation from San Diego State University. She has an undergraduate degree from Cal State San Marcos.



BOBBI BRINK
Lions Tigers & Bears



CHRISTIE MARCELLA
Jacobs Center



JENNIFER TROWBRIDGE
Jacko Law Group PC



TASHA RENE TURNER
Balfour Beatty

COX

Congratulations to Chanelle Hawken, Vice President of Government and Public Affairs

We are inspired by your leadership and commitment to the San Diego region and to helping our communities thrive.

Congratulations to you and all of the 2021 Women of Influence honorees!



An Immigrant's Tale:

One Woman's Journey from Vietnam to Escondido

By Marsha Sutton

It's been quite a journey for a woman who escaped Communist Vietnam as a child, to now owning a restaurant in Escondido that specializes in catfish dishes.

Born in 1976, Mary Khuu fled former South Vietnam in 1978 with her two siblings, her father, and her mother, who was pregnant at the time.

The family sold their jewelry to pay for passage on a boat but was denied seats at the last minute due to overcrowding.

As it turned out, that was fortuitous because that boat was shot and sunk leaving Vietnam.

"A lot of people swam to shore, and a lot didn't make it," Khuu said.

The family was able to obtain passage on a second, smaller boat – a skiff crammed with 100 fleeing refugees.

The passage from Vietnam was hazardous and the conditions were frightful, but the family was grateful that they were denied passage on the first boat.

Their boat eventually made its way to Pulau Bidong, an island off the coast of Malaysia that was established as a Vietnamese refugee camp. But the boat began to sink about 100 yards off shore.

"My dad swam three of us kids to shore and came back for my mom," Khuu said.

Her younger sister was born on the beach after the family arrived in the camp, where the six of them spent about a year in deplorable conditions.

Descriptions of the refugee camp in Pulau Bidong, which operated from 1978 to 2005, report that latrines were inadequate, sanitation nearly non-existent, and rivers of filthy water ran through the camp after frequent rainstorms.

Mary Khuu and husband Andy Millea own Smokey's Lake Wohlford Café in Escondido. (Valley Roadrunner)

Each refugee received one gallon of water daily, and Khuu said everyone over the age of 2 was given just one bowl of rice per day. Goats milk was provided for those younger than 2.

Khuu said they lived in the camp for more than one year until the entire family was sponsored by a couple in Tucson, who flew all six to the United States for resettlement.

The husband and wife were teachers who had no children at the time.

Khuu's family lived on welfare for six months. Khuu said her father got off welfare by taking a second job.

"He said, 'No one needs to take care of my family except myself,'" said Khuu, adding that the sponsors called him "such a hard-working, proud man."

Khuu's father, who is Chinese, was a mechanic working on military jeeps and tanks in China. After leaving China, he headed to Vietnam where he met and married Khuu's mother who is half-Chinese and half-Vietnamese.

"We still have family in China," Khuu said. "My two uncles are still there."

Her father's primary work in Tucson was applying his skill as a mechanic fixing cars, and for his second job he worked as a butcher.

"My mom became a seamstress," Khuu said. "Back in Vietnam my mom had two dress companies that she owned – one in the north and one in the south. Those were taken away from her when the Communists came in."

The family learned English and her parents eventually moved to Los Angeles where they live today.

Smokey's restaurant

Mary Khuu attended the University of Southern California where she earned an engineering degree. In her third year at USC, she met James Andrew Millea, a technical writer born in Ohio.

The two worked together as technical writers and eventually started their own company in Playa Del Rey called Nexus Aerospace, providing technical publications writing for the aerospace industry.

"We had that for a few years and then the recession hit in 2008," Khuu said. "That's what hurt us."

After marrying, they eventually moved to Valley Center and now have four children ages 17, 16, 13 and 7.



Smokey's café is open for breakfast and lunch for now, and just recently opened for indoor dining as well as take-out.

Khuu and her husband, who now works as a technical writer for General Atomics in San Diego, decided to home-school their kids. In Khuu's spare time she did flower arrangements and began cooking for weddings, parties and funerals as word spread.

In 2019 Khuu's husband noticed a restaurant for sale and wanted to buy it.

"I said no," she said, laughing. "He kept asking and I kept saying no, but he ended up buying it and that's how we acquired this place."

"This place" is called Smokey's Lake Wohlford Café in Escondido.

The new buyers signed the agreements in January of 2020, opened in February, and then were forced to close mid-March due to the pandemic.

"So much for opening," Khuu joked. "We didn't do too well with the take-out only because we had just opened. Then in April we had all that rain and we had water intrusion."

So they spent the next few months repairing the restaurant, until they were able to reopen in mid-June for take-out only.

Today, with 12 employees, a full-time cook and Mary Khuu as the part-time cook, Smokey's specializes in southern cooking using fresh ingredients.

"A lot of people come here for our catfish," she said.

Khuu likes to cook Chinese food and

recently added several Chinese dishes to her menu of primary American food that includes catfish and Angus beef burgers.

"I just added Chinese bowls – chicken, beef or bulgoki beef which is Korean," she said. "Everyone had been asking for chicken curry so I added a chicken curry bowl on the menu as well."

Favorites on menu are marked with a catfish icon.

"I added a few of my specialty items that people were requesting," Khuu said. "In the time between June and December I tried to do a weekly special based on what people wanted and I added that to the menu."

Smokey's café is open for breakfast and lunch for now, and just recently opened for indoor dining as well as take-out. Menu changes and hours of operation, and possibly even a renaming of the restaurant, may be forthcoming as business picks up.

The restaurant's promo reads: "Down home-cooking with a flair for catfish! Nestled in northeast Escondido, Smokey's has a lake view waiting for you. Minutes away ... miles apart."

Khuu's refugee journey from Vietnam to Escondido, and from one bowl of rice a day to owning a restaurant serving catfish specialties, is a remarkable story of one immigrant's uniquely American experience.



Music vector created by pch.vector - www.freepik.com

How to Help Senior Citizens in Isolation Socialize

A 2020 study by UC San Diego reports that 85 percent of residents in independent senior housing communities experience feelings of loneliness ranging from moderate to severe. This spurred on an array of movements in support of senior residents, including the fundraising campaign No Seniors Alone Initiative. Organized by the San Diego Seniors Community Foundation, its goal was to raise \$1 million that would be used to support isolated elderly residents across San Diego County.

While these movements are vital in caring for our elderly loved ones, it's not always up to movements to help the elderly. As a relative or caretaker of a senior citizen, these are just some of the things you can do to help them socialize and stay connected in these trying times.

Schedule Regular Video Calls

Communication is an effective way to fight off loneliness. What you can do is assist your elderly loved one in setting up their device, so that they can accept video calls. Register their contacts list and teach them how to schedule video calls whenever they feel like it. This could give them something to look forward to and a direct (albeit digital) opportunity to socialize with family and friends.

Some user-friendly applications that you can use for your video calls include Zoom and Skype. Zoom is a reliable application where users are not required an account to sign in, but it has a time limit for calls with more than two participants. Skype is a good option too, just be sure to walk your loved one through the signup process. Alternatively, you can teach them how to hop on calls through apps they might already be familiar with, like Facebook Messenger or Viber.

Sign Them Up for Online Activities

Staying entertained can also help distract seniors from being disconnected, and games are an excellent avenue for this. Moreover, a study published by the *Frontiers in Medicine* journal shares that online games and activities can improve the cognitive skills of older adults. This includes their reaction time, ability to focus, and

visuospatial functions.

So, why not try something like bingo given that it is already a favorite pastime for the elderly? The good news is that bingo easily translates to the digital sphere in terms of ease of gameplay and the ability to find different games. There is also a huge benefit of playing bingo online that will help combat social isolation - it's an effective avenue for players to socialize with fellow bingo players. Foxy Bingo incorporates this social element into their online bingo platform with its thriving online community and easy-to-use chat features. This allows players to easily communicate with each other and form new meaningful relationships. Even though it is digital, it will more than help senior citizens maintain their overall wellbeing while in isolation.

Of course, bingo isn't the only game seniors can enjoy. There are plenty of other games they can play if they're willing to try something new. For example, *Words with Friends* is a digital version of Scrabble that lets you play against other people. Other examples are online Mahjong and chess that could be ideal.

Enlist in Companion Services

For elderly loved ones who require daily assistance, it might be worth considering companion services. This refers to a form of home care where a caregiver provides non-medical support to seniors. This service includes assistance with daily chores and hygiene practices. Before looking through your options, it's worth talking to your elderly loved one about whether this is something they're comfortable with.

Some of the reputable home care service providers in San Diego County are Right at Home, Home Instead Senior Care, and Partners in Home Care. Make sure to read up or inquire about their services before hiring, to ensure the safety of your older relative.

These three methods of helping isolated seniors may seem simple, but you'd be surprised at how effective they will be. Taking the time to interact and attend to your elderly loved ones makes waves in alleviating their isolation.



“People should be able to die the way they want to, in a humane and peaceful way, with their friends and loved ones present, and consistent with their own values and beliefs.”

FAYE GIRSH, PAST-PRESIDENT OF THE HEMLOCK SOCIETY USA,
FOUNDER OF THE HEMLOCK SOCIETY SAN DIEGO,
AND CO-FOUNDER FINAL EXIT NETWORK.



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for her distinction as a 2021 *SD Metro* “Women of Influence” awardee.

Danielle’s commitment and dedication to her clients and her community make her truly deserving of this honor. She is a champion and mentor for many women, an advocate for change and inspiration for others to get involved in their communities. Congratulations to Danielle and all of the *SD Metro* “Women of Influence” honorees!



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BIG BEAR

A Glorious Weekend at the Best Ski Resort in Southern California

By Marlise Kast-Myers

The year was 2008 when I met the man who would be my match. My list of relationship requirements spanned from traveler and linguist to musician and artist. Near the top was a passion for snowboarding and surfing, two sports I considered life giving.

Having checked every box on my wish list, my man sealed the deal in 2011 with marriage and a honeymoon that took us surfing in Mexico and snowboarding in Mammoth.

Now 10 years later, we longed to return to where it all started. The only caveat was that our lives had adopted something called “responsibility.” With full-time jobs, a fixer-upper property, and a hobby-turned-business antique store, we had little margin for active getaways.

When my husband suggested we

celebrate our anniversary in Big Bear, it sounded completely doable. And it was. Departing Thursday after work, we made it from our home in San Diego to our hotel in Big Bear in just over two hours.

Framing the banks of Big Bear Lake, this small SoCal town first lured us over a decade earlier with its rugged trails in the San Bernardino National Forest. We weren't the only ones.

In 1845 a group of renegades stole a herd of cattle, only to be chased by Benjamin Wilson who served as Justice of the Peace. In his quest for the thieves, he discovered a forest alive with grizzlies, soon labeled “Big Bear Valley.”

Fifteen years later, prospector Bill Holcomb struck gold in nearby Holcomb Valley. News spread and population grew, eventually leading to infrastructure of

roads, dams, and mountain communities. The real “gold” however, came about in 1938 with the opening of the area's first ski lift.

At the time, the town itself — originally called “Pine Knot” — was nothing but a lodge and a small cluster of camps. That year, the name was officially changed to Big Bear Lake, and those camps marked the early center of the community.

Big Bear continued to grow over the years, now drawing over six million annual visitors who rub ski poles with 5,000 permanent residents. We too are part of that six million, naming Big Bear as our home mountain. The proximity makes it a no-brainer, and the fact they have two ski resorts under one lift ticket keeps us on winter repeat. Every season, we hit both Snow Summit and Bear Mountain on the

Big Bear Valley



same day, admiring each resort for its distinct personality.

Family-friendly Snow Summit is like the tame sister — structured, orderly, and predictable. With plenty of beginner-to-intermediate slopes, she teases with a few back-country challenges worth exploring on powder days.

Bear Mountain ski resort is like the rebellious brother with a bounty of terrain parks, halfpipes, and steep groomers to boot. His followers, immersed in their own selfie-stick world — adorned in baggie pants and layered hoodies — capture nearly every GoPro jump and jib as if stars of their own movies.

Admittedly, we love them both equally.

These sibling mountains didn't always get along, however. In 2002, the former competitors — just two miles apart — came under the same umbrella to form Big Bear Mountain Resorts. In 2014, they were adopted by new parents, this time by Mammoth Mountain for \$38 million. Three years later, Mammoth sold to Alterra Mountain Company, making all three California ski resorts part of a conglomerate of more than 15 resorts across the U.S.

Although Bear and Summit may not be physically connected, a free shuttle transports the masses between the two resorts every half hour. The rewards for hitting both peaks include 438 acres, 26 lifts, 55 runs, 8,805 vertical feet, and an average snowfall of 100 inches.

The 2021 season was percolating at 120 inches so we knew it was time to pay Big Bear a visit. Our only problem was that we didn't have a friend with a cabin. If you love the mountains, always have a friend with a cabin.

Big Bear has over 300 of them available for rent, and come winter, the majority flirt proximity at a price. During the holidays, expect to pay five times the standard rack rate, plus a three-night minimum as part of the commitment. Hotels are not far behind, unless its midweek late season when prices drop by nearly half.

From April through November, Big Bear becomes financially fair. Tack on a fourth day, and it's not too painful on the budget. While the majority of visitors come to ski, there are still plenty of activities to keep families entertained including tubing, bobsledding, bowling, helicopter tours, and a zoo that rehabilitates local Alpine species.

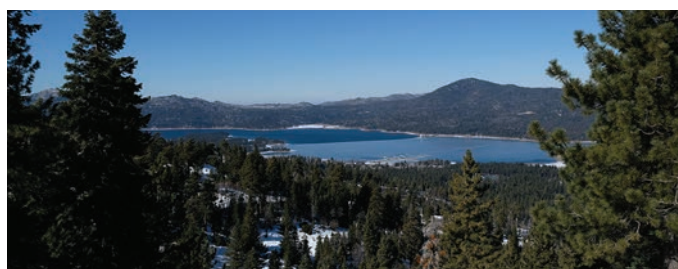
When winter melts into spring, this four-season escape doesn't disappoint. Close to Phoenix, Vegas, and Los Angeles, it makes for easy summer getaways where fishing, boating, golfing, ziplining, and biking are all on the mountain menu.

Considered the jewel of the San Bernardino National Forest, it beckons hikers to the famed Pacific Crest Trail running 40 miles through the Big Bear Valley. In the past, my husband and I had rented snowshoes, trekking from the Discovery Center to the PCT that merges with Cougar Crest trail.

But on this anniversary trip, we had boarding on the brain. With one foot in winter and one foot in spring, we held out for



Big Bear Lake Village



Big Bear Lake

Thank You Chancellor Carroll!

Please join the San Diego Community College District in celebrating
"The People's Chancellor," Dr. Constance M. Carroll,
 on her 28 years of service to the District including 17 years
 as its longest-serving Chancellor.

Best wishes on your upcoming retirement!

Chancellor Carroll will be honored during a gala fundraising event on Sept. 18.
 For more information, visit: sdccd.edu/promise-gala

TRAVEL

midweek March and paid a reasonable \$150 per night at Holiday Inn Resort The Lodge. The free slope shuttle service and proximity to the Village won us over. Within walking distance of our hotel were 120 shops, restaurants, and bars that made up Big Bear Lake Village, the commercial area.

We purchased lift tickets from the new-and-improved Big Bear Visitors Center, complete with touch-screen kiosks and live wildlife cams. It's the go-to spot for local weather, road conditions, upcoming events, cabin rentals, and everything in between.

After settling into our hotel, we walked to the Village for dinner at The Bone Yard Bar & Grill. Charbroiled burgers, ribeye steak, and baby back ribs fed the après ski masses. With options like "redneck tacos" and collard greens, it's only logical that country music, televised sports, and 44 beers on tap should put a bow on the ambiance. Albeit far from romantic, it's where we went to fuel our day on the slopes.

Late to bed, early to rise, Snow Summit had us carving corduroys by first bell at 9 a.m. We hit far left, claiming intermediate-and-advanced runs to ourselves before day-skiers arrived from LA and beyond. Making up roughly 70 percent of the runs, experienced riders have plenty of cherries for the picking, best explored post-storm or early-groom.

At Big Bear, bluebird days after a "dump" are epic, and when they happen, it's definitely worth skipping work. You'll be snaking between Chairs 11 and 7. Beginners and park rats can claim Summit Run, as well as the freestyle terrain parks peppered throughout the slopes.

We tapped it all, hitting nearly every run by late afternoon. There were no lift lines or chair-strangers to speak of; it was just the two of us, reveling in the moment of being 40-ish and free on a Friday.

Lift conversations covered the spectrum of achy muscles, random contrails, real estate, and returning for Oktoberfest. During the fall, Big Bear takes German tradition to 7,000 feet with live music, a vendor village, fun zone, and plenty of brats and beer to make it official. This 50-year Big Bear tradition was still going strong and we wanted to be part of it.

In the meantime, we would act our age at Sweet Basel, the closest thing to fine dining Big Bear had to offer. White linens, candle-lit tables, and soft music set the stage for our romantic evening. It was intimate in a town of tourists, with just 13 tables where signature lobster and gorgonzola-stuffed filet mignon were served. We indulged in the homemade doughnuts and tiramisu, knowing both would be burned off at Bear Mountain the following day.

And they were. But this time, we were not alone. We were joined by the young LA aggressors, living out their personal music videos, feeling invincible in a plume of smoke and vapor. Unlike family-friendly Snow Summit, "Bear" felt different, smelling of



Three skiers brave the slope

barbeque, Red Bull, marijuana, mountain air, and a smack of cocksure adolescence.

Skiers were clearly outnumbered. From the parking lot came hordes of snowboarders, rising from tailgate parties, accessorized in everything from bunny ears and Mohawk helmets to Captain America capes and football jerseys. We felt rather drab in our normalcy. But alas, we were there to ride and literally approaching the "hill" (thankfully, not yet over it).

Like the bulletproof crowd, I too tackled slopes, jibs, and jumps I probably shouldn't have. From the double black Geronimo peak at 8,805, to the box rails in the terrain park, I too — for just a moment in time — longed for a helmet cam.

Blame it on that maverick mountain that makes one come alive and do dirty tricks that battle the body. My heart said "yes" but by legs paid the price, reminding me come sundown, that I was 40-something. Of course, my husband played the wisdom card and relaxed lodge-side with a cold one. At least one of us was acting our age.

By 4 p.m., we were back in the car, and by dinner time we were trailing at the coastline. That's what makes Big Bear so magical. From mountain to beach, there are few destinations where one can technically snowboard and surf in the same day. With my head against the window, I thought for a split moment if I should give it a try, perhaps add it to my bucket list and give it a go someday.

We pulled into the driveway, and my husband turned off the ignition. Turning toward him, I exhaled deeply and smiled.

"Happy anniversary," I said.

And there it was — that moment when you realize that a weekend at the best ski resort in Southern California, is just exactly enough.



NEW LOCAL SEARCH DIRECTORY DEBUTS IN SAN DIEGO

LOCAL UMBRELLA MEDIA ADDING DIGITAL
SERVICES THROUGH AGREEMENT WITH
TOWNE POST NETWORK

San Diego based monthly direct mail publication company Local Umbrella Media announced their partnership with the Towne Post Network (TPN), an Indiana-based cross-platform publishing company. Through their agreement, San Diego businesses will be able to post their online listings to TownePost.com, a free local search directory. Additionally, the two companies will launch monthly neighborhood and special edition magazines throughout California during spring and summer 2021, with the first publications scheduled in select San Diego neighborhoods and Butte County in Northern California.

“After multiple discussions with Brad Weber, CEO and Founder of Local Umbrella Media, it was clear his success with hyperlocal direct mail and digital publishing throughout California and TPN’s robust social and local search directory would be of great benefit to California small businesses,” said Tom Britt, Founder and CEO of the Towne Post Network.

Recently featured in Editor & Publisher Magazine for “reinventing the community magazine model”, TPN has developed an online search directory with complimentary monthly magazines which are direct mailed to businesses and residents in numerous communities across the Midwest.

“Everyone at Local Umbrella is excited about the introduction of TPN’s social media tools and local search directory,” said Weber. “Combining those tools with our recently launched Umbrella SmartMail system, our valuable advertisers will have many opportunities to reach consumers and maximize foot traffic and sales. The timing couldn’t be better, as we all continue to recover from the pandemic.”

With TPN’s system, local businesses/ advertisers can purchase an affordable sponsored-content story about their newly launched or existing business. To readers, these stories appear no different than articles about local events and people; it is more news about what is occurring in the community. TPN publishes the sponsored-

content on each community’s Website and magazine and then creates a seven-day social media campaign on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

TOWNE POST NETWORK BACKGROUND

Successfully disrupting old and obsolete business models is not bound by geography.

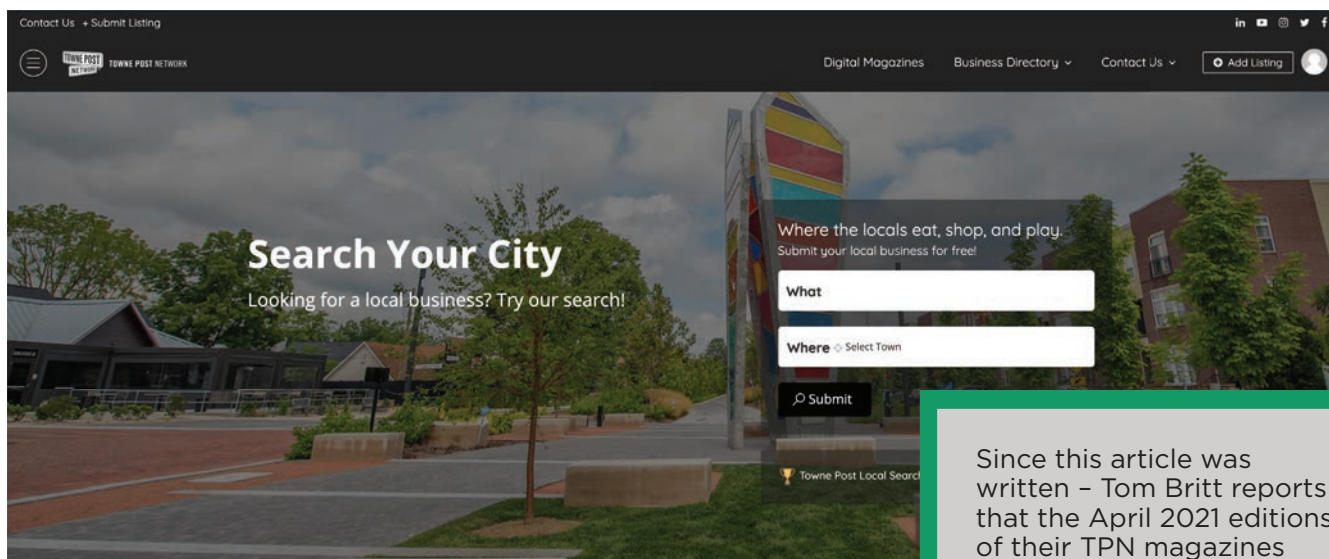
Fishers, Indiana, a suburb of Indianapolis, has proven to be fertile ground for Britt.

He and his team have developed a comprehensive integration of print, digital and social for his franchise system of local community magazines in Indiana, Kentucky – and now to California.

Achieving entrepreneurial success is never an easy road, but Britt had his a-ha



Co-founders and husband/wife team Jeanne and Tom Britt started the Towne Post Network in 2003.



moment during 2003 when he launched a community Website for the Indianapolis suburb of Geist where he lives. The site generated considerable traffic from the community primarily because the content was short articles, announcements of local events and free classified ads.

With that early success, he quit his day job as a publishing consultant during early January 2009 and focused all his time to develop and expand his concept. The essence of his success was the addition of a complementary print magazine nine months after the launch of the Website. Instead of trying to digitize an existing print publication, he reversed-engineered the process. This counterintuitive approach is often misunderstood by many major print publications, newspapers and magazines.

“To the best of my knowledge, no other magazine system in our space does business this way. We have always leveraged digital and social to give our monthly magazines life all month long,” added Britt.

Recently, TPN was recognized as the “Most Innovative Media Franchise System for 2020” by Corporate Vision Magazine. TPN was recognized for its “expertise within its given field; dedication to client service and satisfaction; and a commitment to excellence, quality and innovation.”

In 2020, Britt decided to tackle one of the

oldest challenges for print media: how to present accurate audience reach data for advertisers. He and his team developed its Real-Time Analytics Report, which combines print distribution; Facebook, Twitter and Instagram impressions; and Web analytics. Britt also opened an online “store” to purchase print, digital, and social marketing packages from TPN publications.

“Not only do we put our analytics out there, but we also put our product inventory and pricing out there for the world to see,” added Britt. “It’s a reflection of our commitment to transparency, not only with our small business customers, but the public as well.”

TOWNEPOST.COM LOCAL SEARCH DIRECTORY

Like other paid review websites, TownePost.com is a free location-based listing service that gives local businesses a way to generate more local customers. Simply visit the website and click on the “Submit Listing” link at the top of the page. From there, business owners can submit a description of their business, key in their Google address for geo-tagging, add categories, keywords, store hours, social media links, website backlinks, phone number, and even an image gallery to help give the listing page life. Once approved, the business owner can manage their listing page and make updates

Since this article was written – Tom Britt reports that the April 2021 editions of their TPN magazines reported all-time record sales. “This is pretty remarkable, considering the impact of COVID on the print industry in general. It certainly is a testament to the strength of our model and our team. We’re excited to add Brad Weber to allow us to help California small businesses gain access our powerful marketing program. I’m expecting by Summer to have established several territories in California with Brad and his local team in San Diego and elsewhere in the Golden State.”

whenever they wish, including the addition of digital coupons and events.

“What makes TownePost.com unique is our analytics dashboard for small businesses,” said Britt. “Not only can businesses manage their listings, but they can see how many views they have had, how many leads have come through the website, and even receive inbound inquiries through TownePost.com. It’s a true lead generation platform.”

San Diego area business owners are encouraged to visit TownePost.com to submit their online listing. For print advertising information, contact Brad Weber with Local Umbrella Media at (619) 300-1732 or brad@localumbrella.com.

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