Sunday’s parade is ready to roll

The 55th annual Christmas Parade and Holiday Festival starts 2 p.m. Dec. 2 down Girard Avenue. A festival and tree lighting follows 3:30 p.m. at the Rec Center.

BY ASHLEY MACKIN

The La Jolla parade, “Christmas in the Village,” is back for the 55th year to ring in the holiday season for residents and visitors alike, beginning at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 2 down Girard Avenue.

Despite funding concerns (organizers were $5,000 short as of Nov. 20), Parade Chair Ann Kerr said “We’re going to go ahead with the parade. I’m confident.” Kerr added that people could continue to donate to the cause because some parade bills are not due until January.

Several classic attractions are returning to the lineup this year, along with some new participants and partnerships. The popular equestrians and their horses will arrive at 10 a.m. to their designated space on Girard Avenue between Kline Street and Virginia Way.

SEE PARADE, A7

A scene from last year’s Christmas in the Village parade. FILE

Task force buys time in effort to delay La Jolla post office sale

BY PAT SHERMAN

The Save Our La Jolla Post Office Task Force received good news last week from a federal agency that says selling La Jolla’s Wall Street post office would have a negative impact on the 1935 structure and beloved community landmark.

The federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) determined that the United States Postal Service’s federal preservation officer ruled incorrectly when he said in October that selling the post office would have “no adverse effect” on the structure.

It has been nearly a year since the United States Postal Service (USPS) announced its plan to sell La Jolla’s post office at 1140 Wall Street and relocate services to a smaller building elsewhere in or near the Village.

The post office task force, comprised of attorneys, land use experts, historic preservationists and other community members, was formed shortly after the announcement to devise a plan to keep postal services on Wall Street — including having a nonprofit organization, such as the La Jolla Historical Society, purchase the building and lease a portion of it back to USPS.

USPS has determined that the Wall Street building is eligible for placement on the National Register of Historic Places for its WPA-era architecture and 1935 mural by artist Belle Baranceanu.

The sale has been delayed about six months by the Section 106 process, which requires federal agencies, such as the USPS, to study the impact of a sale or alteration to buildings either listed on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register.

In a letter opining that selling the post office would have no adverse effect on the building, Federal Preservation Officer Dallan Wordekemper wrote that a “preservation covenant” with the new owner would require that the new owner restore, maintain and preserve the property and mural in accordance with Secretary of the Interior standards, and that no construction, alteration or rehabilitation be permitted that would affect its historic features without prior approval of the California Historic Preservation Office.

However, on Nov. 20 ACHP Director Reid Nelson sent a letter to Wordekemper stating his opinion that the covenant as worded is “insufficient to justify the finding of no adverse effect” and “does not include provisions that ensure the long-term preservation of the building.

SEE POST OFFICE, A20

Plans for Jewish student center rejected again

BY PAT SHERMAN

Scaled-down plans for the proposed Hillel Center for Jewish Life near UC San Diego were shot down again by the community — this time by the La Jolla Shores Planned District Ordinance Advisory Board.

Attorney Julie Hamilton represents residents opposed to the Hillel project at the Nov. 20 meeting of the La Jolla Shores Planned District Ordinance Advisory Board. PAT SHERMAN

SEE JEWISH CENTER, A10
Winning lottery ticket sold at Dick's Liquor

La Jolla resident Lisa Orviss cashed in a winning Mega Millions lottery ticket worth just under $185,000 that she bought at Dick's Liquor, 737 Pearl St. The winning ticket matched the numbers 47, 37, 8, 44 and 48 and missed the Mega number 27.

Free lecture to explore diet of early man

The UC San Diego and Salk Institute's Center for Academic Research & Training in Anthropogeny (CARTA) will host a free public symposium, “The Evolution of Human Nutrition” 1-5:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7 in UCSD Price Center's East Ballroom. It will feature scientists from a variety of backgrounds, who will explore the evolving diets of man's ancestors. Registration is required at carta.anthropogeny.org

FROM POST OFFICE, AT property's historic significance as required by ACHP regulations. 

If the USPS maintains its finding of no adverse effect, it must summarize in writing its reason for that determination as to whether Susan Davis's bill is heard in committee regarding the legislation, Leslie Davis said, adding that the congresswoman’s staff and task force members are revising the legislation to make it more palatable to Issa and his committee members in the coming year. Leslie Davis also said Issa’s committee reps acknowledged that 80 percent of the cash-strapped USPS budget is comprised of labor costs.

“They did say that La Jolla seemed to have the most organized and relevant effort to save their post office.” — Leslie Davis

Reps for the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on the Save Our La Jolla Post Office Task Force

La Jolla man pleads not guilty in attempted kidnapping

An 18-year-old La Jolla man accused of trying to kidnap two teenage girls in National City before he was struck by a car in National City on Nov. 19 pleaded not guilty Nov. 21 to three felony counts.

During his arraignment at Scripps Mercy Hospital, Mandelaux Watson-Newcomb was ordered by Judge Alvin Green to remain in custody in lieu of $1 million bail.

According to National City police, the defendant drove up to 13- and 14-year-old girls as they walked home from a convenience store.

“Two girls were propositioned by Mr. Watson Newcomb, but they ignored him and continued to walk,” Deputy District Attorney Harrison Kennedy said. “He stopped his car and ran after them.”

The older girl sent her younger cousin for help. The prosecutor alleged that the defendant struck the 14-year-old in the face and ground his pelvis against her buttocks until he was chased away.

Kennedy said the young man lay down in the street and was struck by a car, but got up and ran to a fast-food restaurant, where he was detained. Relatives kept the doors of the establishment shut until officers arrived, according to National City police.

Details on the defendant's medical condition were not released. He faces 11 years in prison if convicted of attempted kidnapping with an intent to commit rape, assault with force likely to cause great bodily injury and forcible sexual assault.

Defense attorney Denis Lainez said his client is a recent high school graduate and lifelong La Jolla whose 19th birthday was days away.

The judge scheduled a readiness conference for Dec. 3 and a preliminary hearing for Dec. 6. — City News Service

La Jolla HOA gives $1,500 to Station 16

BY ASHLEY MACKIN

The Windemere Homeowners Association gathered on Nov. 19 to present $1,500 to the officers of Station 16 (2110 Via Casa Alta) and the San Diego Fire and Rescue Foundation. The money was given to thank them for their efforts in extinguishing a canyon fire on Aug. 24 near the gated Windemere community.

“We’re here to present checks to San Diego Fire and Rescue Foundation (and) to those at Station 16. We want to thank you very much for your efforts that night … it could have been a real disasters … it could have been a loss of property or of life,” said Windemere Manager David Abrams.

San Diego Fire Rescue Foundation Executive Director Wendy Robinson said at the presentation, “It’s the mission of the Fire (and) Rescue Foundation to provide enhanced equipment, training and technology for our fire fighters so we are here exclusively to make sure that they have the tools and the training and equipment they need to protect all for us. The donation today will be used for station 16 (and) the greatest need for that particular station.”

Winning lottery ticket sold at Dick’s Liquor

La Jolla resident Lisa Orviss cashed in a winning Mega Millions lottery ticket worth just under $185,000 that she bought at Dick’s Liquor, 737 Pearl St. The winning ticket matched the numbers 47, 37, 8, 44 and 48 and missed the Mega number 27.

Free lecture to explore diet of early man

The UC San Diego and Salk Institute's Center for Academic Research & Training in Anthropogeny (CARTA) will host a free public symposium, “The Evolution of Human Nutrition” 1-5:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7 in UCSD Price Center's East Ballroom. It will feature scientists from a variety of backgrounds, who will explore the evolving diets of man's ancestors. Registration is required at carta.anthropogeny.org

FROM POST OFFICE, AT property's historic significance as required by ACHP regulations. 

If the USPS maintains its finding of no adverse effect, it must summarize in writing its reason for that determination as to whether Susan Davis's bill is heard in committee regarding the legislation, Leslie Davis said, adding that the congresswoman’s staff and task force members are revising the legislation to make it more palatable to Issa and his committee members in the coming year. Leslie Davis also said Issa’s committee reps acknowledged that 80 percent of the cash-strapped USPS budget is comprised of labor costs.

“They did say that La Jolla seemed to have the most organized and relevant effort to save their post office.” — Leslie Davis

Reps for the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on the Save Our La Jolla Post Office Task Force

La Jolla man pleads not guilty in attempted kidnapping

An 18-year-old La Jolla man accused of trying to kidnap two teenage girls in National City before he was struck by a car in National City on Nov. 19 pleaded not guilty Nov. 21 to three felony counts.

During his arraignment at Scripps Mercy Hospital, Mandelaux Watson-Newcomb was ordered by Judge Alvin Green to remain in custody in lieu of $1 million bail.

According to National City police, the defendant drove up to 13- and 14-year-old girls as they walked home from a convenience store.

“Two girls were propositioned by Mr. Watson Newcomb, but they ignored him and continued to walk,” Deputy District Attorney Harrison Kennedy said. “He stopped his car and ran after them.”

The older girl sent her younger cousin for help. The prosecutor alleged that the defendant struck the 14-year-old in the face and ground his pelvis against her buttocks until he was chased away.

Kennedy said the young man lay down in the street and was struck by a car, but got up and ran to a fast-food restaurant, where he was detained. Relatives kept the doors of the establishment shut until officers arrived, according to National City police.

Details on the defendant's medical condition were not released. He faces 11 years in prison if convicted of attempted kidnapping with an intent to commit rape, assault with force likely to cause great bodily injury and forcible sexual assault.

Defense attorney Denis Lainez said his client is a recent high school graduate and lifelong La Jolla whose 19th birthday was days away.

The judge scheduled a readiness conference for Dec. 3 and a preliminary hearing for Dec. 6. — City News Service

La Jolla HOA gives $1,500 to Station 16

BY ASHLEY MACKIN

The Windemere Homeowners Association gathered on Nov. 19 to present $1,500 to the officers of Station 16 (2110 Via Casa Alta) and the San Diego Fire and Rescue Foundation. The money was given to thank them for their efforts in extinguishing a canyon fire on Aug. 24 near the gated Windemere community.

“We’re here to present checks to San Diego Fire and Rescue Foundation (and) to those at Station 16. We want to thank you very much for your efforts that night … it could have been a real disasters … it could have been a loss of property or of life,” said Windemere Manager David Abrams.

San Diego Fire Rescue Foundation Executive Director Wendy Robinson said at the presentation, “It’s the mission of the Fire (and) Rescue Foundation to provide enhanced equipment, training and technology for our fire fighters so we are here exclusively to make sure that they have the tools and the training and equipment they need to protect all for us. The donation today will be used for station 16 (and) the greatest need for that particular station.”

Winning lottery ticket sold at Dick’s Liquor

La Jolla resident Lisa Orviss cashed in a winning Mega Millions lottery ticket worth just under $185,000 that she bought at Dick’s Liquor, 737 Pearl St. The winning ticket matched the numbers 47, 37, 8, 44 and 48 and missed the Mega number 27.

Free lecture to explore diet of early man

The UC San Diego and Salk Institute's Center for Academic Research & Training in Anthropogeny (CARTA) will host a free public symposium, “The Evolution of Human Nutrition” 1-5:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 7 in UCSD Price Center's East Ballroom. It will feature scientists from a variety of backgrounds, who will explore the evolving diets of man's ancestors. Registration is required at carta.anthropogeny.org

FROM POST OFFICE, AT property's historic significance as required by ACHP regulations. 

If the USPS maintains its finding of no adverse effect, it must summarize in writing its reason for the decision and the evidence that it considered the ACHP’s opinion, Nelson wrote.

Post office task force chair Leslie Davis said the ACHP’s determination will prolong the Section 106 process, further delaying a sale while the task force works on its strategy to keep postal services in place.

“Section 106 is what is keeping us from having that post office sold — and it continues to keep us from that,” Davis said.

In addition, in order for the USPS to sell the post office, an agency must first accept responsibility for maintaining the preservation covenants and assuring that the building's historic facets are maintained — which can be an expensive and time-consuming process.

Davis noted that five days after the City of Los Angeles accepted responsibility for overseeing the covenants on Venice Beach's historic post office, the building sold (to film producer Joel Silver).

“Thus far, neither the City of San Diego, nor a state or local preservation agency has stepped up to accept financial responsibility for maintaining the covenants on the Wall Street building.

“Happily, no one is accepting that,” Davis said, noting that both the task force and ACHP have requested additional language be added to the covenants.

Postal reform on hiatus

A postal reform bill introduced this year by Congresswoman Susan Davis (D-53rd), which would give communities like La Jolla the first option to purchase their historically significant post offices, will not likely be considered before year’s end — though it could fare better next year.

Leslie Davis and other task force members met recently with representatives from the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which oversees USPS and is chaired by Congressman Darrell Issa (R-49th).

Though Issa has authored his own postal reform bill — viewed by many as a Draconian cost-slash-measuring measure that would seem at odds with the task force's preservation efforts — Issa makes the final determination as to whether Susan Davis's bill is heard in committee and ultimately advances.

Though Issa’s committee had previously offered the task force only tepid acknowledgement of Susan Davis’s legislation, Leslie Davis said the task force’s meeting with oversight committee reps last week offered some hope.

“We’ve put faces to voices, which I think is good for us, because now we can open up the conversation,” she said. “They did say that La Jolla seemed to have the most organized and relevant effort to save their post office.”

The representatives left the task force with some things to consider regarding the legislation, Leslie Davis said, adding that the congresswoman’s staff and task force members are revising the legislation to make it more palatable to Issa and his committee members in the coming year. Leslie Davis also said Issa’s committee reps acknowledged that 80 percent of the cash-strapped USPS budget is comprised of labor costs.

“That’s another reason not to focus on real estate holdings, because it’s a drop in the bucket,” Davis said.

Still, the committee reps maintained USPS’s commitment to selling off its real estate — particularly in California where property values are high — as it is an “easier divestiture,” Davis said.