



Enjoy the great open space in our own “backyard” — San Dieguito Park

President’s Message

I have been fortunate in recent weeks to be able to travel the great open spaces of Utah and Idaho, where keeping safe distances is easy! While “thumbing” through our digital archives, I came across the story of the great open space right in our “backyard” — San Dieguito County Park. Through the years, you have probably hiked the trails, enjoyed a picnic on the greens, fed the ducks, maybe even attended a wedding at the gazebo.

But did you know that the 64-year-old park was once part of Mexico? Juan Maria Osuna was granted the land that is now San Dieguito County Park by the Mexican government in 1840. He built an adobe home for his wife and 14 children and used the acreage for farming and livestock. Historian emeritus Richard Moore helped us recount how Osuna’s legacy became a lush oasis for Solana Beach, Del Mar and Rancho Santa Fe (see page 3.) Here’s the story of the park’s grand opening in 1956.

In this historic time of the Covid-19 pandemic, Hey JoJo Productions added a new chapter in the park’s story by staging perhaps the first drive-in musical theatre production there on July 24. Learn more starting on page 3.

In this edition, we’ve also reported how the City of Solana Beach is supporting residents, businesses and non-profit organizations through pandemic-related disruptions. (See page 2.)

How are you coping with the “new normals?” How does 2020 compare to other challenging periods of Solana Beach history? Share your memories and photos at solanabeachhistoricalsociety@gmail.com.

Michele Stribling



Claud Hupp and Jerry Cullison of the County Parks Department, and Don Armstrong, head of the San Dieguito Park Committee, at the sign placed in 1956.

THE SAN DIEGO UNION
a-10 Mon., Dec. 3, 1956
 SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

North Coast Area Park Is Dedicated

RANCHO SANTA FE — The 93-acre San Dieguito County Park on Skyline Drive was dedicated yesterday. It is the 52nd park in the county system.

C. S. Goode, assistant county public works director, told 350 persons at the dedication that the county has plans for immediately improving the area. He said a parking area will be black-topped, roads in the park will be oiled, and rest rooms, a water plant and quarters for the park superintendent will be constructed.

San Dieguito area Boy Scouts conducted flag raising ceremonies. The San Dieguito Union High School band played and the 109-piece Earl Warren Junior High School choral group sang.

Claud J. Hupp, county parks chief, said the rapid growth of the county was creating greater need for more parks like San Dieguito Park.

“We are indebted to the Santa Fe Irrigation District for donating the land to the county,” he said. “We are also indebted to the San Dieguito Junior Chamber of Commerce through whose efforts the county received the land.”

A bronze plaque for the park was presented by William Arballo, president of the San Dieguito Junior Chamber of Commerce.

The park is located at the intersection of Skyline drive and Sun Valley road, three miles east of Solana Beach.

Supporting our Community through Challenging Times

Solana Beach has not been spared from business disruptions, job losses and the ongoing societal challenges generated by the global Covid-19 pandemic. Here's how City Council has been supporting our community.



Free food distributions

Upon learning (from SANDAG zip-code reports) that Solana Beach unemployment had shot to 26.3 percent by May 2 from 1.99 percent in March, Mayor Jewel Edson and Deputy Mayor Judy Hegenauer went to work with staff to direct \$26,190 in Cares Act funding (distributed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development via the County of San Diego) to feeding residents in need. The City collaborated with the San Diego North County Food Bank, Casa de Amistad, St. Leo's Mission, La Colonia Community Foundation and the Boys & Girls Club, to schedule three distributions — one per month through the summer. Each distribution is designed to provide up to 400 resident families with 25 to 40 pounds each of fresh items, such as produce and milk, as well as non-perishables. The next distribution is scheduled for August 31 at La Colonia Community Center parking lot.

How to help: *No food donations needed, but you can volunteer to help on site August 31. Contact Assistant City Manager Dan King at dking@cosb.com.*

Small business support

In June, the city received \$236,506 in CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funding allocated by the County. At its June 10 meeting, Council voted that \$200,000 would be used to support local small business through financial assistance grants of \$2,000 to \$4,000. (Remaining funds were allocated to help cover coronavirus-related expenses borne by the City.) Mayor Edson and Council Member David Zito led the charge to swiftly roll out the application process, with a deadline for submissions of July 17. Grant disbursements began during the last week of July and will continue through September 30. An update on this program will be reported at the August 26th Council meeting.

How to help: *Patronize local businesses with online purchases, restaurant take-out orders and gift cards. If you have a professional skill to share, contact the Solana Beach Chamber of Commerce at director@chambersb.com.*

Community Grant Funds

On July 8, Council approved \$45,500 in grants to 13 community organizations. These annual grants are funded by City, EDCO (our waste hauler), and Santa Fe Christian Schools (for use in the La Colonia de Eden Gardens community). *(Continued on page 4)*

San Dieguito County Park

Saved from Development in the 1950s . . .



San Dieguito County Park offers sweeping views

In 1906, Juan Osuna's heirs sold the family's property to a subsidiary of the Santa Fe Railway, which planted 3.5 million Eucalyptus seeds in hopes of using the wood for railroad ties. When that didn't work out, the company sold individual parcels that eventually helped create the town of Rancho Santa Fe. Eventually, the land the park now occupies was owned by the Santa Fe Irrigation District (SFID).

In 1952, H.G. Larrick Sr., then president of the irrigation district, floated the idea of creating a park. Don Armstrong, a Solana Lumber sales executive, promoted the notion with the San Dieguito Junior Chamber of Commerce, which agreed to sponsor the project. Armstrong initially envisioned a small park of, say, five acres, to be carved out of what was — even then — the most expensive land in San Diego county, selling for \$5,000 an acre or more. But Larrick and the SFID Board of Directors had a grander vision. "I was thinking of a larger park. I have a site in mind that would be closer to 100 acres," Larrick told Armstrong and his fellow Jaycees.

Many, many meetings later, the SFID directors and County Board of Supervisors came to agreement on deeding the park land to the County of San Diego. The year was 1954. The cost? A symbolic \$10 check, hand-drawn extra-large for a triumphant photo-op. But those were the days of big strobe "flash" lighting and — twice — the newsman's flash failed. (Source: *40 Years of Progress: 1922 to 1962, San Dieguito Citizen*)

. . . Stages a Disney Princess Hit in 2020!

"Kids are sick of being on their computers and stuck inside. So I had to figure out a way to do theatre . . . for their sanity and mine," explained Director Jolene "JoJo" Bogard of her search for a safe, outdoor venue for her



Alicia Lechtenberger as
Gramma Lala

musical theater camps. Bogard's Heyjojo Productions has long performed in local parks over the summer, but pandemic-related restrictions on gatherings nixed her typical venues this year.

Inspiration struck while enjoying a drive-in movie in South Bay. "The next day, I drove to San Dieguito Park and scouted for a flat area in front of any parking." JoJo found her "stage" in an upper-park eucalyptus grove adjacent to two levels of parking — creating almost an amphitheater from which family and friends could view their young stars performing "Moana." (See next page)



Simrin Gutpa as Moana

Growing more veggies than you can consume?
 Share your harvest with neighbors in need by donating produce to St. Leo's Mission. The Eden Gardens parish continues weekly food give-aways on Tuesday through Friday evenings. Drop off fruit, vegetables, milk or eggs between 6 and 7 p.m.

Moana, continued

JoJo contacted Park Ranger Nicole Ornelas, who approved the performances so long as the troupe strictly followed State and local health guidelines, including the “POD” system. “I had no idea what she was talking about,” Jojo recalled.



A backstage view of the drive-in musical theater production “Moana”

She quickly learned. Ranger Ornelas showed her how a large camp with more than 100 children on site was separated into groups of no more than 10, separated as “pods.” JoJo’s rehearsals started a few days later and took precautions one-step further: “I asked the kids to wear masks,” Jojo explained. “I just think they need to start getting used to it.”

“Moana” is the story of a plucky island girl who discovers her seafaring ancestry and restores her peoples’ love of ocean-going. JoJo divided the cast into “Ocean” and “Village” pods. Each pod entered and exited from one side of the stage only. When the pods appeared on stage together, they stayed six feet apart.

Distancing guidelines applied to the audience, too, during two shows on July 24. Friends and family were required to remain in their cars, where they could listen through auto stereos to the low-frequency broadcast arranged to comply with park noise rules.

“Together we were able to provide a safe and engaging event that followed all current health ordinances and illustrated an outlet for creativity,” commented Ranger Ornelas.

Supporting our Community, Grant Funds, cont.

The allocations were:

- \$5,000 to the Boys & Girls Club of San Dieguito for their club houses
- \$5,000 to the St. James & St. Leo Medical Program
- \$5,000 to La Colonia Community Foundation
- \$5,000 to Casa De Amistad
- \$5,000 to North Coast Repertory Theatre
- \$4,500 to the Community Resource Center, to address food insecurity in the region
- \$3,000 to North County Immigration
- \$3,000 to the Assistance League of Rancho San Dieguito
- \$2,500 to Disconnect Collective
- \$2,500 to Jaliscience Folkloric Academy
- \$2,500 to the Nature Collective
- \$1,500 to Bike Walk Solana
- \$1,000 to San Diego Botanic

Solana Beach Civic & Historical Society is a non-profit charitable corporation 501 (c)(3)
solanabeachhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

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Time for Membership Renewal and Recruitment!

Thanks to all who have already renewed membership for 2020-21. Now, how about recruiting more members to the Society? Although we have helped educate and beautify Solana Beach since 1953, many residents may be unaware of our contributions. Please share this newsletter with your friends and neighbors and encourage them to join us in sustaining a vibrant future for Solana Beach.

Our mission: To promote artistic and cultural advancement, support public education about our local history, and sustain the beauty of our unique community.

Among our many accomplishments and ongoing programs:

- The Living History Program for third graders at the Heritage Museum — soon to be filmed for posterity!
- Annual scholarships for college-bound students
- Planting the Torrey Pines grove at the north end of the Coastal Rail Trail
- Landscaping of the Lomas Santa Fe median
- Designing and funding the War Memorial at the Plaza
- Plaques with QR codes on historical buildings a walking tour brochure
- \$10,000 donation for Harbaugh Seaside Trails Trails land acquisition
- Campaigned for designation of Hwy 101 as a Scenic Route
- Crafts Group annual Holiday Boutique
- \$10,000 funding for Solana Beach Skatepark
- SeaWeeders’ landscaping and maintenance at our Post Office
- Boulder seating and SeaWeeders’ native garden at the Fire Wall sculpture, Fire Station
- SeaWeeders’ landscaping at El Viento park

In addition, we have made significant progress on our ambitious project to digitize the Society’s trove of historical records so that they can be made available to researchers worldwide through the San Diego County Library Digital Asset Management System.

Return this form or pay securely by PayPal or credit card [online](#).

Given these uncertain times, donations are welcomed, too. If you have any questions, please email solanabeachhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

2020-21 Annual Membership Form

• Name _____ Spouse / Partner _____

• Address _____

• Phone# _____ Email: _____

• Interested in joining the SeaWeeders Garden Club? _____ Crafts Group? _____

• Annual Dues (check your category):

• Individual	\$25.00	_____	Make your check payable to SBC&HS and mail to P.O. Box 504, Solana Beach, 92075
• Family	\$30.00	_____	
• Business/Corporate	\$100.00	_____	
• Life Membership	\$500.00	_____	
• Additional Donation	\$	_____	

