



BULLETIN

MAY-AUGUST 2023

www.southbayhistoricalsociety.org

SPONSORSHIP PRAISE

At this time, we want to give thanks to our donors who have supported the South Bay Historical Society and Chula Vista Heritage Museum. We also have gratitude for your generous support by being a member of our organizations, coming to our events and making suggestions so that we can continue to bring education exhibits and programs to you for free.





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CHULA VISTA: LEMON CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

Lemonade anyone? On August 12th we celebrated the industry that put Chula Vista on the map. In the late 1800's land developers composed of stockholders and directors of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, formed a corporation named the San Diego Land and Town Company. Chula Vista was chosen as the development's name, which in Spanish means Beautiful View. Before this, the Chula Vista area consisted of four homes with a windmill and a well for water. The site also included the old adobe La Punta Rancho House, once home to Santiago E. Arguello and his wife Guadalupe Estudillo Arguello.

The developers discovered Chula Vista was perfect for growing citrus. They divided 5,000 acres into parcels of 20 acres. Every house built had to be "of approved taste and plan, to cost not less than \$2000." The parcels sold quickly and lemon trees were planted while orchard houses were being constructed. Large Victorian homes started to be built, surrounded by lemon groves. The first houses had no running water or indoor plumbing. The community didn't have gas or electricity at first, so kerosene lamps were used for light at night, and cooking was done on a wood-burning stove, which was used to heat the home. Large storage water cisterns were used for domestic water use. Later the newly built Sweetwater Dam water source came online to supply the community. Most families had a cow for fresh milk, chickens for eggs and fruits and vegetables were grown in gardens, then canned or dried.

Growers banded together in co-ops to market, pack and ship their lemons and oranges. By 1896, Chula Vista had two packing plants and eventually was the home to two large co-ops-the Chula Vista Citrus Association, associated with Sunkist, and the Chula Vista Mutual Lemon Association affiliated with Mutual Orange Distributors. They operated large packing plants in the city until the 1960s.

The railroads developed a specialized railroad car called the "reefer" using at first ice, to transport lemons to the Midwest or East Coast without spoilage. There was spraying, cultivating, fertilizing and hauling lemons by teams of horses.

During the winter months smudge pots burned all night and growers learned to use the roots of orange trees and graft the lemon tree to it, improving the ability to survive in cold, too much rain, or drought. Lemons were harvested year-round.

Pickers used special ladders with one supporting leg pushed into the tree. Lemons were collected in picking bags and loaded into wooden field boxes, then taken to the packing plants.

The lemons were sorted with three grades of Fancy, Choice and Standard, each with its own identifying lemon crate label for easy identification. The artwork and names associated with these labels have made them a popular item for collectors.

Chula Vista proclaimed itself the "Lemon Capital of the World" in 1900 with 3,000 acres, producing lemons. For many years, business in Chula Vista centered around the lemon industry. One of the early plants was at the corner of Center and Landis Street, called the Leach Packing Plant in 1908. Chula Vista was the home to many packing plants throughout the years.

In 1911 Chula Vista was incorporated as a city, and some houses were being modernized with gas, electricity, indoor plumbing and telephones. Community activity centered around Third Avenue with horses and wagons. Streets were paved with the introduction of automobiles.

Life was full of hard work for the lemon ranchers but one lifelong resident recalled "It was a simple way of life".

We want to welcome our new members of the society, Silvia Artega, Jordan McNally, Silvia Herrera, Carlos Beltran, Anne Schillaci, Xyrone Ocampo and Enrique Valencia.



"Thank you for joining our South Bay Historical Society. We look forward to seeing you at a future event to be announced."

Harry Argovan

*President
South Bay Historical Society*



Article by:
Sandra Scheller
Vice President SBHS

The South Bay Historical Society welcomes **Rose Rugama Inocente** with **Next Step For Downsize Living LLC**. Located at **286 Third Ave, Chula Vista, CA 91910**. "I have had the pleasure of working with Ms. Rose and she is an absolute delight," Sandra Scheller, client.

Imagine, the house is too big and you want to move out and move on to something smaller, Rose has the perfect solution for planning, inventory management, and getting the downsize support needed to plan your next move. Precious items that no longer have a use in your life become someone's treasures. Now with her treasure shop on Third one can find truly unique items. Recently she had a client that collected items from their world travels. After years of collecting he knew it was time to downsize. Rose has an eye for collectibles and treasures that are unique and in the best shape. I asked her about creating a wishlist for clients that are looking for certain collectibles. Rose has partnered with her daughter, Mia, and between the two they can help plan your next downsize and move. Planning in the key when downsizing. Make it a point when on Third to drop by and say hi to the lovely ladies who are true Chula Vistians.

You may have seen Rose on the news when she was asked to help a Holocaust survivor downsize.

<https://www.10news.com/news/local-news/campaign-to-renovate-holocaust-survivors-east-county-home>

Rose was instrumental in helping downsize, renovate, and give the client a new look on life. Rose and Mia can do this for you. Whether you are treasure hunting or wish to downsize yourself, come meet the experts that can create a world of difference in your life.

WELCOMING *Next Step For Downsize Living LLC*



Next Step For Downsize Living LLC

Pictured Mia and Rose with Mayor John McCann welcoming Next Step for Downsize Living's Treasure Store.



Historical Brown Field Municipal Airport

Brown Field Municipal is located 1.5 miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border in the Otay Mesa community of the City of San Diego. The airport, originally named East Field in honor of Army Maj. Whitten J. East, opened in 1918 when the U.S. Army established an aerial gunnery and aerobatics school in order to relieve congestion at North Island.

In 1946, the Navy decommissioned NAAS Brown Field and turned it over to San Diego County. The county ended up renting portions of the former base for use as a chicken farm. Chula Vista High School opened at the Brown Field Campus on September 15, 1947. Chula Vista High School history reference link: <https://tinyurl.com/y259kymc>

Today, Brown Field Municipal is a busy general aviation airport. General aviation encompasses all aviation except air carrier and military, although the military continues to maintain a strong presence. The types of general aviation aircraft that operate at Brown Field Municipal include private, corporate, charter, air ambulance, law enforcement, fire rescue, flight training, cargo, skydiving, banner towing, and airships.

South Bay Historical Society enjoyed a wonderful lunch at a very nostalgic environment full of history surrounding a restaurant called, "The Landing Strip Cafe and Bar," locate within Brown Field Airport.

We enjoyed our food service, large portioned meals and a wonderful view of planes landing and leaving on the runway.

Visit the Landing Strip Restaurant:

Landing Strip, 1424 Continental St, San Diego, CA 92154

(619) 661-6037

<https://www.facebook.com/landing.strip.bar>

HISTORICAL AIRPORT Cafe and Bar





SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL SIGNS

Historic Route California US 101

The Journey Begins

This is a copy of an email sent to the City of National City, City of Chula Vista and the City of San Diego for Help with this project.

The South Bay Historical Society is asking for your help with our **Historic Route California US 101 Signs project** for our South Bay Region.

Here is some background information regarding this SBHS Project from SBHS Board Member **Jack Gechter**. Jack has been spearheading this Historic Route California US 101 Signs Project for our South Bay Region.

Jack reached out to David Potter, who recently (2017) was instrumental in getting the City of San Diego to assist with placing Historic Route US 101 signs in the Morena Blvd Corridor of San Diego.

<https://www.sandiegoreader.com/news/2017/apr/24/bay-parkers-praise-highway-101-signs-morena-blvd/>

Another 1947 Chevron Map shows Historic Route California US 101 starting near the US/Mexico Border in San Ysidro, along Beyer Blvd toward Chula Vista, along National Avenue (Broadway in Chula Vista) (National City Blvd in National City to 8th Street, along 8th Street to Harbor Drive, along Harbor Drive to Pacific Highway.

<http://www.garbell.com/US395-old/highwayman/SD-CAregion1947HMG.jpg>

Here is a 1933 AA Map showing a slightly different Historic Route California US 101 at the end of National Avenue (National City Blvd) to 1st Street, then along Main Street.

https://www.aaroads.com/california/us-101ha_ca.html

This Internet link is a Narration with Photos showing the Historic California US 101 Corridor from Pacific Highway south, to Harbor Drive, to National City Blvd, Broadway - Chula Vista, to Beyer Blvd, to San Ysidro Blvd to the former southern terminus of historic US 101 at the US/Mexico Border. Scroll down the page until you see Harbor Drive (Historic U.S. 101) south.
https://www.aaroads.com/california/us-101has_ca.html

Attached are a few other Maps showing the Historic California US 101 Corridor in our South Bay Region.

The South Bay Historical Society already contacted Zumar Industries to get a quote \$1546.40 for the 20 signs, for the South Bay corridor. See attached. This is the same company that David Potter ordered the signs for the Morena Blvd Corridor. David Potter said that the City of San Diego put up their Historic Route U.S. 101 signs on Morena Blvd for FREE.

We are hoping that the City of National City, City of Chula Vista, City of San Diego will also partner with us for this project and place these Historic Route U.S. 101 signs for us for FREE.

Thank you in advance for your support and assistance with this project.

Follow us on the Historic Route California US 101 Sign delivery Journey, in the next Bulletin and Social Media!

Harry Orgovan
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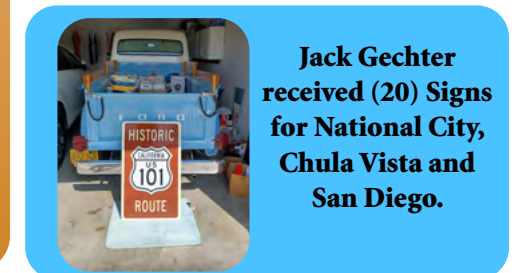
www.southbayhistoricalsociety.org



Historic 101 Route Sign in San Ysidro, California.
Image courtesy Jack Gechter



Mitch Beauchamp, SBHS Secretary and Treasurer, presenting our Historic Route California US 101 signs project to the Mayor and Council Members on August 15, 2023, National City Council Chamber, 1243 National City Boulevard National City, CA





South Bay Historical Society

SBHS

SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL ARTISTS



Honoring Heroes through Art and Service

Joe Pisano, is a Chula Vista Resident and an accomplished artist, U.S. Naval Reserves Chief Petty Officer, and martial arts instructor, whose unique artistic creations go beyond traditional canvases and paint. Through his stunning three-dimensional sculptures, Joe pays tribute to the sacrifice, duty, and honor of military servicemembers and veterans, while also making a significant impact in the lives of those who have endured the scars of war.

His artistic journey took a remarkable turn in 2018 with the inception of the “Stand Together- A Veterans’ Flag.” This extraordinary canvas-based sculpture portrays an American flag caught in a gentle breeze, a powerful symbol of unity and patriotism. What makes this piece truly special is its construction, composed of over 4,300 drywall screws, each meticulously placed to create a stunning visual effect.

Notably, the flag proudly displays over 500 signatures from veterans and their family members, spanning generations from World War I to The Global War on Terrorism. This living testament to the bravery of servicemembers serves as a poignant reminder of their unwavering dedication. However, Joe’s creative spirit didn’t stop there. His most recent masterpiece, “The Art of Immortalizing Heroes,” is a testament to his boundless dedication to honoring military history and the brave individuals who shaped it.

This multi-panel sculpture comprises seven distinct sections, each depicting significant eras and aspects of military service. From World War I to The Global War on Terrorism, Joe’s art captures the essence of the sacrifices made by those who serve. The artwork’s creation was a collaborative effort, involving more than 2,000 servicemembers and veterans, 1,500 children, special needs adults, and community members. Together, they meticulously placed over 100,000 drywall screws, one thousand dog tags, and 3,800 wooden stars, resulting in a breathtaking representation of heroism and resilience.

Beyond his artistic pursuits, Joe’s heart for service shines through in his partnership with the Resurrecting Lives Foundation. Through this collaboration, he raises awareness and provides support for veterans facing the challenges of Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

His art becomes a catalyst for healing, bridging the gap between the military community and the public, and offering hope to those who have suffered the invisible wounds of war.

Joe’s studio, located in the vibrant city of San Diego, California, serves as a haven for creativity and expression. The Arts District Liberty Station proudly displays his artwork, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the emotional journey that his pieces evoke. Moreover, his art has garnered recognition in various esteemed venues, including the USS MIDWAY, Veteran’s Memorial Museum, Hero’s Hall Museum, and other selected galleries. The impact of his work extends far beyond the boundaries of his studio, reaching the hearts of those who encounter his thought-provoking tributes.

Through his artistic vision and unwavering dedication to service, Joe Pisano has become a beacon of inspiration, not only for fellow artists but also for the military community and the nation at large. With each stroke of the brush and every placement of a screw, he immortalizes the heroes who have selflessly given their all. As Joe’s art continues to touch lives and foster healing, his legacy of honoring heroes through art and service will undoubtedly endure for generations to come.

www.pisanoartistry.com

SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL THE ARTIST'S GALLERY

JOE PISANO-ARTIST
www.pisanoartistry.com

The Art of Immortalizing Heroes is a large-scale seven panel art project, inspired by the returning veteran recipients of the 2021 Honor Flight. Each panel of the creation will be dedicated to World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam Conflict, Global War on Terrorism veterans as well as Funeral Honors and Unsung Heroes.

Experience the Art of Immortalizing Heroes with images of the panels and accompanying in-depth video discussions about what each piece means to the artist.





SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL EVENTS 26th Annual Chula Vista Lemon Festival



On August 12th, Chula Vista celebrated the lemon industry from 11am till 6pm down 3rd Avenue from E Street to G Street. South Bay Historical Society celebrated our history with a booth. The event was hosted by the Third Avenue Chula Vista Association and logistics were organized by Fuse Events Productions. Our new booth banner was designed by our board member Marie Dolopo Zhivago. Thank you Marie, it turned out great. Representing our Historical Society was our newest board member Francia Castro, along with Mitch Beauchamp, Nancy Acosta-Meza, Jack Gechter, Patricia Huffman, Harry Orgovan and author-historian Peter Watry. It was great to see and connect with members of our community. Thank you to those of you who became members of our South Bay Historical Society. New members include Silvia Artega, Jordan McNally, Silvia Herrera, Carlos Beltran, Anne Schillaci, Xyrone Ocampo and Enrique Valencia.

A Special thanks to Mitch Beauchamp and Peter Watry for being at the booth all day, set-up and break down. We look forward to seeing you at one of our future events.

Thank you from the South Bay Historical Society President, Harry Orgovan



The Annual Lemon Festival in Chula Vista is a reminder of the city's past.

“The Lemon Festival, in part, grew out of the efforts to bring the community together, men and women,” Steven Schoenherr, former history professor at the University of San Diego.

While Chula Vista's lemon groves are long gone, there are still reminders around town of their rich history. Steven Schoenherr is the founder of the South Bay Historical Society in 2013.





SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL EVENTS

BONITAFEST 51 “Fun for the entire Area”

Article by
Sandra Scheller
SBHS Vice President



Grab your spaceship and head to Bonita for Bonitafest beginning with the 10th annual Twilight Trail Parade. It is open to all, including equestrians, walkers, bicycle riders, strollers, and pets on leashes. Past 4-legged friends goats, llamas, miniature pigs, and sheep. The parade represents the beauty of Bonita. Parade Grand Marshals are Dr. John and Harriet Taylor. Chairperson is 17-year-old Nicolette Luna and her assistant BVHS senior Lyla Rhodes.

Parade participants are to gather at 5:30 p.m. at the Sunnyside Saddle Club Arena in Rohr Park. The parade starts at 6 p.m. sharp. Our resident marching band is the Sunnyside School Mighty Bulldogs Band founded by Southwestern College dean Dr. Cynthia McGregor. The Bonitafest Street Party will begin when the first paraders land at the Bonita-Sunnyside Library/Bonita Museum complex. There will be a lineup of multicultural performances honoring our Latino and Filipino heritage, including the nationally renowned Bonita Vista High School show choirs Music Machine and Sound Unlimited. Attendees can enjoy free multicultural snacks and a book giveaway along with other surprises.

The 46th Bonitafest Melodrama “Ms. Sweetwater Valley” is a musical comedy based on the true story of a 1991 Miss Bonita titlist who had to surrender her crown because she was 17 days too old to compete in the Fairest of the Fair pageant.



This year's Melodrama features award-winning recording artist Kieler Avery, and gifted teenage actors Ella Al-dridge, Lily Hobson, and Syara Platero. Villains Cadwell von Fowl and Lickpenny return to wreak havoc, played by Alexis Luna and Timothy Paul Evans.

The Melodrama runs September 27-30 at the Sweetwater Community Church Theater, 5303 Sweetwater Road. Showtime is 7:30 p.m. The traditional Opening Night Dinner on the Patio is Wednesday, September 27 at 6 p.m. For reservations call Kerie Muller (619) 850-7126. Tickets are \$15. Children 12 and under may pay their age. Bonitafest Melodrama has been honored for its work promoting human rights and for providing no-cost performing arts opportunities for community members across the socioeconomic spectrum.

Bonitafest receives funding from the San Diego County Community Enhancement Program and support from the office of County Supervisor Nora Vargas, Chula Vista Mayor John McCann, and his staff along with our patrons who continue to show support over the many years. Everyone loves the melodrama under the direction of Max Branscomb and his incredible team of performers. If you have never been to Bonitafest do plan on attending. You never know, you might meet up with old pals and make new friends.

Bonitafest theme is
“Bonitafest 51 -
Fun for the entire Area.”

SOUTH BAY HISTORIC WEATHER

The 1858 San Diego Hurricane & The 2023 Hurricane Hilary



Article and References by
Marie Zhivago

The 1858 San Diego Hurricane, also known as the “**Great California Hurricane of 1858**,” was a rare and significant meteorological event. It is one of the few recorded instances of a hurricane making landfall in California. Here are some key points about this event:

1. The hurricane struck the Southern California coast on **September 25, 1858**. It brought heavy rains, strong winds, and widespread flooding to the region.
2. ****Unusual Event****: The occurrence of a hurricane in California is quite rare due to the cold waters of the California Current along the coast. Hurricanes typically form over warmer ocean waters in the tropics.
3. ****Damage and Destruction****: The hurricane caused significant damage to infrastructure, buildings, and ships. Flooding was extensive, impacting coastal areas and low-lying regions.
4. ****Shipwrecks****: The storm resulted in the sinking of several ships along the coast, which highlighted the dangerous conditions and challenges that maritime activities faced during the hurricane.
5. ****Limited Historical Records****: Because this event occurred in the mid-19th century, historical records and data are limited compared to modern storms. Accounts of the hurricane come from newspaper reports, diaries, and other historical documents.
6. ****Impact on Perception****: The 1858 San Diego hurricane contributed to a general perception that California was immune to hurricanes, which has largely held true throughout its history due to the prevailing ocean currents and cooler waters along the coast.
7. ****Learning Opportunity****: The 1858 hurricane serves as a reminder that even regions not typically prone to hurricanes can experience such events. It underscores the importance of preparedness and understanding the potential impacts of rare weather events.

Research Links:

<https://www.aoml.noaa.gov/hrd/Landsea/chenowethlandsea.pdf>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1858_San_Diego_hurricane



Description: Hilary strengthened overnight to a major, category four hurricane. Satellite: GOES-18
Product: Visible (band 2)
Timespan: 08/18/2023 13:20 - 08/18/2023 15:00 UTC

Photo credit the Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere at Colorado State and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (CSU/CIRA & NOAA). Link to video imagery here- <https://satlib.cira.colostate.edu/event/hurricane-hilary/>

The 2023 Hurricane Hilary, was a hurricane located in the Eastern Pacific basin. Hilary brought abundant moisture to Southern California and other parts of the Southwest United States.

California assessed post-Hilary damage; some areas hit with flooding and mudslides, as well as a **A magnitude-5.1 earthquake** shook parts of Southern California on Sunday afternoon, triggering an emergency mobile alert to residents in Los Angeles County and surrounding areas. The National Weather Service said a tsunami was not expected.

Historically, California doesn't experience hurricanes as frequently or as intensely as some other regions, like the Gulf Coast or the East Coast of the United States.

The threat triggered California's first ever tropical storm warning extending from the state's southern border to just north of Los Angeles – presenting an “unprecedented weather event.” It's important to note that California's primary concern for natural disasters often revolves around wildfires, earthquakes, and droughts rather than hurricanes.

However, California can still be affected by tropical storms or remnants of hurricanes that travel along the West Coast. When these storms do impact California, they can bring heavy rainfall, strong winds, and the potential for flooding and landslides. Coastal areas might experience storm surges, beach erosion, and high waves.

While these events are generally less severe than the hurricanes seen in other parts of the country, they can still cause significant damage to infrastructure, homes, and the environment.

Will we be prepared for another Historical Hurricane? The difference now is that San Diego is no longer a town of four thousand people, in the year 1858.

Emergency managers and decision-makers, should take note of the meteorological curiosity of the 1858 San Diego hurricane, the effects of 2023 Hurricane Hilary and not be surprised when such an event occurs again to threaten lives and cause hundreds of millions of dollars in damage.



SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Board Member

Meet Our New South Bay Historical Society Board Member

Francia Castro

A Proud South Bay native, mother of 3 and local Realtor with expertise in relocation.

Former Chula Vista City Council District 2 candidate, now a dedicated commissioner for the Chula Vista Veteran Advisory Commission and passionate contributor to the South Bay Historical Society.





Contribute Historical Content and Become a Valued Member

If you have an interest in joining our SBHS, contact us!

We would love to share historical articles or photos you may have!

Visit our website for more information.

www.southbayhistoricalsociety.org