

Retiree Times

3rd Quarter 2021



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I just returned home from having lunch with 5 women I used to work with at SDG&E. We've pretty much known each other since the early 80s, working together in some fashion. We were commenting about what a great time we had at work; how many friends we made; how SDG&E helped to provide us with the means that we now have; and how much we enjoy getting together still after more than 40 years. I really loved how we all became family (and there are many who are actually family – multi generations working at SDG&E) and that we spent time together, not only during working hours but after hours as well. We celebrated marriages and births and mourned the passage of each other's family members. And sometimes we had a falling out, only to come back together again. I know that's why everyone looks forward to the Annual Luncheon. We want to reconnect and celebrate those experiences and friendships that we shared in the past. The last 18 months have been difficult for all of us. We missed so many happy times we celebrated in the past

with our families and coworkers. Your Annual Luncheon committee and Board are working closely with the Scottish Rite Event Center to ensure that we can have a safe and fun event. Everything is looking good, and as long as everything continues to go well, we will all come together on 12/7. Besides, I strongly suspect that the vast majority of us are vaccinated, right? You should be hearing from us late September/early October. I am very hopeful that I will see you all on 12/7!

Your President,

Samm McDonald



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For current information on activities, events and notices check the SDGE Alumni web site

<http://sdgealumniassoc.org> or
Facebook SDG&E Alumni Association page
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/408831429206094/>

Retiree Times is published by the SDG&E Alumni Association

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P O Box 129831, HQ08S2
San Diego, CA 92112-0750

Visit our website at:
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IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A DRONE, IT'S SDG&E TO THE RESCUE

07/26/2021

Did you know that we employ a team of biologists, and use technology like drones, to help keep birds and animals of all kinds safe from potential infrastructure-related incidents?

With our temperate climate, San Diego hosts a long breeding season for birds, starting in December for eagles and hawks and running through September for some of the smaller species. Throughout the year, company personnel are trained to keep an eye out for bird nests and exercise caution when trimming trees or operating around utility infrastructure.

Common birds sighted in our service territory include woodpeckers and other cavity-nesting birds (like bluebirds), who take up residence in wood poles, raptors in the inland areas, and a mix of smaller songbirds and large ospreys along the coast.

"Some birds come back to the same spot year after year for nesting," shared senior environmental specialist Julia Varnergardner. "In fact, Lake Murray is home to an osprey pair that returns annually to nest on one of our transmission towers. Several years ago, we installed a platform for the local celebrity to provide a safe space to nest away from the electrical lines."

Protecting Red Tail Hawks

During a recent inspection of one of our transmission poles, construction supervisor Tom Harrison discovered a family of Red-Tailed hawks comfortably nesting along the cross-arm of a steel pole. The large nest was occupied by two adults and their chicks. The normal course of action to remove and relocate the nest was not feasible due to the pole's location and the age of the birds.

After careful evaluation, Harrison planned for his crew to climb the pole and install protective sleeves on the wires to keep both the nest and hawks safe. As two highly experienced linemen climbed the pole, another crew member monitored the situation with a drone to keep a close watch on the chicks and make sure the adult hawks didn't attack to protect the nest.

This creative solution allowed the hawks to stay in the nest until the young chicks could fledge, protecting them from electrocution and ensuring the large nest would not spark a fire. When all the birds are no longer using the nest, the team will remove the vacant nest to discourage birds from nesting in that location again.

"The work was potentially dangerous as hawks are naturally protective of their young and there was potential for the adults to attack the workers as they installed safety measures," explained senior environmental specialist Angelique Hartman, who coordinated the rescue. "We planned for all types of contingencies. Thankfully everything went well and the birds are now protected and safe until they are ready to leave the nest."

Rescuing a Great Horned Owl

Recently, our company made the news for helping protect a great horned owl nest after one of the young owls (referred to as an owlet) was, unfortunately, electrocuted by the nearby distribution line. After receiving a call for help from Avian Behavior International, the Northeast District team quickly took action, visiting the nest location in Escondido to assess the next steps.

Innovating to Help Birds

As part of our Wildfire Mitigation Plan, the installation of covered conductors was originally designed to provide additional protection against wildfire ignitions, but they have the added benefit of eliminating the risk of electrocution to birds.

RESCUE, *continued from pg 2*

Other examples of our grid hardening efforts benefiting wildlife include the company's work on undergrounding distribution lines in high-fire threat districts, which helps to reduce fatal interactions between wildlife and SDG&E facilities.

In addition to foot patrols, we also employ drones to inspect poles. These drone flights have helped to spot active nests on poles that may need to be relocated or removed due to the risk they pose for igniting fires. All work crews have the authority to stop a job if they see a nest or bird in danger. Given the company's success in protecting birds, we have taken an active role in Edison Electric Institute's Avian Power Line Interaction Committee, a group that convenes utilities to share best practices on effective mitigation strategies to ensure birds are safe around utility infrastructure.

We are currently working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on the development of an Eagle Conservation Plan.

When approved later this year, SDG&E will become the first investor-owned utility to be issued a permit under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

The approved and permitted plan will allow us to work within certain proximities of known eagle nests, when necessary, with protection measures agreed to by our company and the USFWS.



SDG&E ANNOUNCES WILDFIRE SAFETY AND RESILIENCY ADVANCEMENTS FOR 2021 WILDFIRE SEASON 08/03/2021

San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), a recognized industry leader in wildfire safety, unveiled its (click on the link for a video) [wildfire mitigation and resiliency advancements](#) in preparation for this year's wildfire season. The advancements continue a decade-long commitment to strengthening the region against a dynamic climate that has brought on unprecedented high fire-threat conditions in recent years.

Infrastructure and technological enhancements continue to play a fundamental role in limiting the potential risk of utility-related wildfires and mitigating the impacts experienced during a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS). As a result of this year's resiliency efforts like strategic undergrounding and an expanded generator grant program, SDG&E estimates that nearly 11,000 additional customers could benefit from reduced PSPS impacts, depending on the weather events experienced this year. In addition to building regional resiliency, this year's growth in clean technology also contributes to the company's sustainability goals.

"Nothing is more important than the continued safety and well-being of the communities we serve, as well as the preservation of our environment," said Caroline Winn, chief executive officer for SDG&E. "We are working tirelessly to integrate new, innovative technologies to significantly decrease the PSPS impacts experienced by our customers and reduce utility-related wildfire risk, while also forging a path towards a more sustainable future."

Read the full article here [SDG&E Announces Wildfire Safety And Resiliency Advancements For 2021 Wildfire Season | SDGE | San Diego Gas & Electric - News Center \(sdgenews.com\)](#)

SAN DIEGO MTS COMPASS CARDS ARE NOW PRONTO

Goodbye
Compass.



HELLO
PRONTO!

The new way to pay for transit.



If you ride the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System buses or trolleys changes are coming to how you pay.

Starting September 1, MTS and NCTD riders can use the new regional fare system, PRONTO. PRONTO will replace the Compass Card and Cloud systems entirely, offering riders a better payment experience when choosing transit.

We know riders have lots of questions about the transition from Compass to PRONTO. You can read more specific information in the dropdown menus below, but here are some key details:

What's New:

- Earn-as-you-go to get the best fare, every time! Load money into your PRONTO account or onto your card, then scan or tap with each trip you make to earn a Day or Monthly Pass as you ride. (COASTER excluded - will still require upfront payment for Day and Monthly Passes.)
- One-way fares on PRONTO will be valid for unlimited transfers within two hours of activation.
- Get real-time account management online (no more waiting up to 48 hours for passes to be available)
- A wider retail network to purchase and reload PRONTO cards

To celebrate the launch of PRONTO, riders who get a PRONTO card or the mobile app in advance will ride MTS free* in September (yes, a full month of free transit!). Learn more here [PRONTO Fare System | San Diego Metropolitan Transit System \(sdmts.com\)](#)

Save the Date!

Holiday Luncheon Update

The holiday luncheon will be held on December 7th at the Scottish Rite Temple.

More details to come!



Reminder: If you change your email address, please send us your new one so we can stay in touch!

Go to:

<https://www.sdgealumniassoc.org/update-e-mail-address>

HIDDEN SAN DIEGO: A LOCAL'S GUIDE TO SAN DIEGO'S SECRET SPOTS

Like many amazing American cities, San Diego gets a generous amount of praise for its incredible attractions. Must-sees like Balboa Park, SeaWorld, and the Gaslamp Quarter draw millions of visitors every year. That said, San Diego also has its fair share of well-kept secrets — hidden gems that not everyone knows about.

Here are a few of the best “secret spots” you’ll find in San Diego.

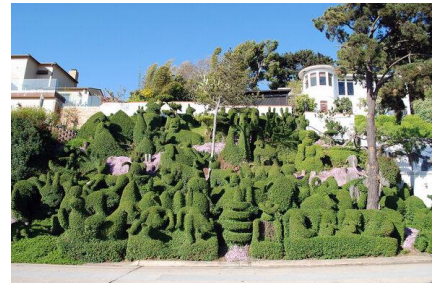
[SPRUCE STREET SUSPENSION BRIDGE](#) The Spruce Street Suspension Bridge is an adventure and a destination in one. Tucked away in the Banker’s Hill neighborhood, this pedestrian-only footpath spans nearly 400 feet across Sessions Canyon and sits 70 feet above it. The bridge was built in 1912 in order to connect a newly built trolley stop to a residential area. It has remained in place as a favorite spot for locals to take a gently swaying stroll above the treetops.

[W Spruce St, San Diego, CA 92103](#)



[HARPER'S TOPIARY GARDEN](#) San Diego residents Alex and Edna Harper have spent years creating something truly special at their home in Mission Hills. Topiary is the practice of shaping shrubbery into whimsical shapes, and the Harpers have turned their front garden into one of the country’s finest exhibits of this botanical art. Their display includes countless bushes trimmed into the form of animals, geometric shapes, human figures, and more. Visitors are encouraged to stop by (as long as they respect the Harpers’ space and home while they do).

[3549 Union St, San Diego, CA 92103](#)



[THE HIDDEN SWINGS](#) San Diego’s “Hidden Swings” are the stuff of legend around here, and for good reason. These classic playground-style tree swings often afford some of the best views of any spot in town. Nobody’s really sure who put them up. Sometimes they disappear for a while, only to reappear later — either in the same place, or somewhere else entirely. It’s a mystery! One thing’s for sure: The tracking-down of these carefree playground-style delights is often an enjoyable scavenger hunt in and of itself. And once you find one, you’re in for a renewed sense of childlike wonder.

[Various Locations](#)

Continued on next page



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HIDDEN SAN DIEGO, continued

THE “SIN SHIP” WRECKAGE

Tucked away in nearby Coronado lies one of the only shipwrecks in the country that’s observable without scuba gear: The SS *Monte Carlo*. In the 1930’s, the *Monte Carlo* — an infamous gambling and party vessel that operated offshore during the prohibition years — was destroyed by a storm just off the coast of Coronado. For years it was buried, before El Niño storms uncovered it years later. Today it remains moored where it was destroyed.



[North Pacific Ocean, Coronado, CA 92118](#)

SUNNY JIM CAVE

Nestled beneath the cliffs of La Jolla Cove is a cave unlike any other you’ll ever explore. Originally hand-dug beneath the home of miner Gustav Schultz in turn-of-the-century 1902, the cave was first plumbed for minerals before being turned into a bootleggers’ smuggling passage during the prohibition. Today, the cavern sits beneath **The Cave Store**, a popular La Jolla gift and souvenir shop. The store offers self-guided tours of the cave by reservation, so be sure to call ahead and set up a time to go spelunking.

[1325 Coast Blvd. La Jolla, CA 92037, USA](#)



POTATO CHIP ROCK

Hiking is certainly a popular pastime around here. The variety of terrains of the area, the spectacular views, and the always-perfect weather are just some of the reasons why. And sometimes, the reward at the end of a solid hike is a singular sight like [Potato Chip Rock](#). Named for its unique shape, this slim outcropping on [Mt. Woodson Trail](#) is a favorite spot for locals. Once you behold it for yourself, you’ll no doubt see why.

[Mt. Woodson Trail, Ramona, CA 92065](#)



Do you know of other ‘hidden gems’? Let us know!

SDG&E ALUMNI TRANSITIONS

Note: This edition does not have a report of the member retirements and deaths that occurred since the last publication. They will be included in the 4th quarter edition. A list of retirees and deceased members can be found on the SDG&E website: [Retired and Deceased Alumni | SDGE-Alumni-Assoc \(sdgealumniassoc.org\)](http://Retired and Deceased Alumni | SDGE-Alumni-Assoc (sdgealumniassoc.org))

COOK'S CORNER

Introducing a new feature... recipes from the Employee cookbook (and retirees).

Chicken Cutlet Ole – Vee Pitt

4 T oil

1 lb chicken cutlets

1 small onion, chopped

2 stalks celery, chopped

1 clove garlic, chopped

Salt and pepper

1 28 oz can whole, peeled tomatoes, drained

¾ cup chicken broth

1 t chili powder

½ t oregano

¼ t cumin

1 cup bottled taco sauce

1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Corn or tortilla chips

1. Saute cutlets in oil; set aside
2. Add onion, celery and garlic to remaining oil pan. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook until tender
3. Smash tomatoes and add; stir in chicken broth, chili powder, oregano, cumin and taco sauce. Return chicken to pan and cook until sauce it thickened.
4. To serve, arrange shredded lettuce on plate; add chicken mixture and top with shredded cheddar and chips.

SDG&E CUSTOMERS TO RECEIVE NEARLY \$70 IN BILL CREDIT OVER TWO MONTHS

08/06/2021

California Climate Credit Helps Offset Summer Bills

This August and September, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) residential customers will see their electricity bills reduced by \$34.60 each month – or a total of about \$69.20 over two months, thanks to the [California Climate Credit program](#) designed to fight climate change.

The credit is from a state program that requires power plants, natural gas providers, and other large industries that emit greenhouse gases to buy carbon pollution permits. The credit on customers' bills is their share of the payments from the state's program.

Recognizing that many customers see their bills spike during summer months due to use of air conditioning, SDG&E petitioned the California Public Utilities Commission a few years ago to change the timing of the electric portion of the Climate Credit to August and September. In the past, the electric credit was applied in April and October.

Residential customers with natural gas service received the natural gas portion of the California Climate Credit – \$17.86 – in April.

There is no action required to receive the credit. All residential customers, including community choice aggregation customers, automatically receive the Climate Credit from SDG&E on their bills.

Anyone having trouble paying their utility bill due to COVID-19 is encouraged to visit sdge.com/assistance to learn about payment assistance and bill discount programs that are administered by SDG&E and other entities, or they can call SDG&E's customer care center at 1-800-411-7343 for more information.