

SDMETRO

your business your life

NO. 3 VOL. XXXIX

SAN DIEGO'S 2024 TOP ATTORNEYS



Joseph Leventhal



Elizabeth Sperling



Emil Petrossian



Zachary Myers



Scott Levin



Michael J. Gleason



Danielle Humphries



Ronson J. Shamoun



William W Eigner

THE SD METRO INTERVIEW: THE CIA'S JONNA MENDEZ PAGE 16

SERVING SAN DIEGO, LOS ANGELES AND IRVINE

619-777-7700

RJS LAW
A TAX LAW FIRM

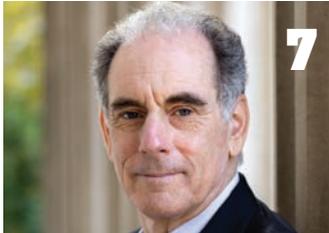
www.RJSlawfirm.com

Our mission is to always provide quality journalism for our readers by being fair, accurate and ethical and a credible resource for our advertisers.



COVER STORY:
SAN DIEGO'S TOP ATTORNEYS - 2024

The best attorneys in San Diego are found here.



HONG KONG: CONQUERED WITHOUT A SHOT

Will this former British colony remain an Asian financial business center? Is Hong Kong tracking down those who immigrate or flee the place? These questions and more are answered by Mark Clifford, a former reporter and editor with nearly 30 years in Asia and Hong Kong.



THE BATTLE FOR GAMBLING RIGHTS IN CALIFORNIA

A list of the companies and organizations spending the most to lobby the Golden State.



THE SD METRO INTERVIEW:

Former Central Intelligence Agency Chief of Disguise Jonna Mendez talks about her nearly 30-year career with the Agency, when she often traveled overseas and undercover, plus her Oval Office meeting with President George H. W. Bush.



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S PLACE FOR THERAPY

Learn what our top-notch travel writer, Marlise Kast-Myers, says about her trip to the Grand Canyon State. You'll want to go, too!

SDMETRO

your business your life

Chairman | CEO

Robert Page
BobPage@sandiegometro.com

Publisher

Rebeca Page
RebecaPage@sandiegometro.com

Managing Editor

Manny Cruz
Manny@sandiegometro.com

Associate Editor

Douglas R. Page
dpage@sandiegometro.com

Graphic Designer

Christopher Baker
cbaker@sandiegometro.com

Photography/Illustration

Benjamin Myers
Jim Childers
Vecteezy.com

Contributing Writers

Marsha Sutton
Alexi Koseff
David Rottenberg
Myrna Marston
Marlise Kast-Myers
Andrew Simmerman

Advertising

SALES & MARKETING DIRECTOR
Rebeca Page

Get in the loop with SD Metro's Daily Business Report. Sign up for daily emails on the latest business at sandiegometro.com

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

SD METRO magazine is published by REP Publishing, Inc. The entire contents of SD METRO is copyrighted, 2022, by REP Publishing, Inc. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without prior written consent. All rights reserved. All editorial and advertising inquiries can be made by calling or writing to the above. Editorial and ad deadline is the 24th of the month preceding the month of publication. Mail subscriptions of SD METRO are available for \$50 a year for addresses within the United States. A PDF version of this issue is available at sandiegometro.com Additional information, including past articles, online-only content and the Daily Business Report can be found at sandiegometro.com. For reprints or plaques of articles published in SD METRO, please call Rebeca Page at 858-461-4484

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any Preference limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or an intention, to make any preference, limitation or discrimination. "Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians; pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18. This magazine will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which in violation of this law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this magazine are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD Toll-Free at 1-800-669-9777. Th Toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

Read us online:
sandiegometro.com



240 UNDER 40
540 UNDER 40
ANNUAL

NOMINATE YOUR FAVORITE SAN DIEGANS UNDER 40 YEARS OF AGE FOR OUR 25TH UNDER 40 UNDER 40 ANNIVERSARY.

NOMINATIONS ARE DUE BY APRIL 15TH

SAN DIEGO'S TOP ATTORNEYS 2024



Scott Levin

Levin is the founder of San Diego Divorce and Mediation & Family Law. He has been practicing law in San Diego since 2004, when he and his wife returned to their hometown after his graduation from NYU and the University of Virginia School of Law. As a family law attorney and mediator, he is known as the Chief Peacemaker for his work as a neutral divorce mediation attorney who helps couples resolve conflicts and navigate divorce amicably. Through his mediation services, he is able to assist clients in reaching fair settlements and takes care of all the legal tasks required so clients navigate divorce without going to court or having to hire litigation attorneys. This work helps our neighbors, friends and colleagues save time and money while reducing stress and protecting their children. He is able to utilize his finance background as a Certified Divorce Analyst to uniquely assist high-asset couples achieve amicable settlements no matter the complexity of the issues. He also assists clients in the drafting of prenuptial and postnuptial agreements.



Michael J. Gleason

When Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP expanded to the West Coast and opened an office in San Diego, it needed a leader to help further HLP's growth in a key region of the U.S. The firm looked to one of its own, partner Mike Gleason, who represented businesses in complex civil litigation in the firm's Cleveland office. He was named Partner-in-Charge of Hahn's San Diego office and has helped expand it to 23 employees since opening in 2012. He defends and represents companies in complex litigation, including the defense of consumer class actions. Within his litigation practice, he represents clients on Proposition 65 issues – providing companies with compliance advice as well as defending companies allegedly in non-compliance with the Proposition. He has assisted over 100 companies with Proposition 65 needs. He serves on the board of the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program, a private nonprofit that provides pro bono legal services to the most vulnerable members of the San Diego community. He also volunteers at the Feeding San Diego warehouse. He is an AV-rated trial and appellate lawyer. He is a graduate of the Cornell University Law School.



Danielle Humphries

She's a partner at Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP and chair of the firm's San Diego Trusts and Estates Practice Group. She's earned a stellar representation as a trusted legal advisor with experience, insight and sophistication. 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. She has extensive experience representing fiduciaries and beneficiaries in complex trust and estate administration. She is an extraordinary role model and advocate for gender parity within the legal community. She volunteers her time and legal acumen to local charitable causes and has served on various boards like Promises2Kids. She's a member of the Gift Planning Committee at Scripps Heath Foundation. She was named a Woman of Accomplishment by SD METRO Magazine and is a San Diego Super Lawyers Rising Star. She was also named one of the Best Lawyers in America for both Litigation - Trust and Estates in each of the past four years.

TOP ATTORNEYS



Zachary Myers

Myers is a corporate and securities partner at Wilson Sonsini. He is a “go-to” attorney for Southern California’s private and public companies in the technology and life sciences sectors, especially biotechnology and medical device companies involved in complex, high-value transactions. His practice allows him to work with all kinds of companies, from startups to large, publicly traded ones. He represents private companies on venture capital financing, helping companies raise millions of dollars to fund, grow and expand their businesses. He has assisted numerous clients that have gone public, helping to list them on the New York Stock Exchange and the NASDAQ. He often represents clients in the purchase or sale of their businesses. He’s an expert in corporate and securities law and often lectures at UCLA, the UCSD Rady School of Business, and the Keck Graduate Institute. He serves on the Board of Directors of Connect (f/k/a San Diego Venture Group) and EvoNexus in San Diego.



Elizabeth Sperling

Sperling is a partner and co-managing partner for the San Diego office of Glaser Weil. She focuses her practice on representing financial institutions and other consumer-facing businesses (including those in the food and beverage, consumer products, retail and gaming spaces), real estate companies, property owners and high net worth individuals in high-stakes consumer litigation. She brings extensive trial, arbitration and appellate experience in class actions, torts, unfair business practices and related consumer protection actions, unfair debt collection practices, loan workouts, state attorneys general investigations and litigation and products liability and complex toxic tort cases. She recently represented Fannie Mae and Jame B. Nutter & Company in two putative class actions-turned-mass-actions filed by hundreds of Puerto Rico residents against numerous banks and mortgage servicers. She and her team defeated class certification and obtained the dismissal of hundreds of borrowers’ claims related to their mortgages. She successfully defended both judgments on appeal to the First Circuit Court of Appeals. She is a graduate of Arizona State University and of the University of Arizona School of Law.



Emil Petrossian

Petrossian is an experienced trial attorney and litigation partner at Glaser Weil’s offices in both San Diego and Century City. His practice covers all facets of complex commercial litigation in federal and state courts and arbitral forums, and he is routinely called upon to handle his clients’ most sensitive and pressing matters. He co-manages Glaser Weil’s recently launched San Diego office. He has received various accolades throughout his career and is recognized as one of the leading commercial litigators in California. While tenacious in the courtroom, he understands the many nuances of big-ticket litigation. He zealously protects and promotes the client’s business interests while working toward resolving disputes, not prolonging them. He is an active of the community and serves on the board of Teach Democracy. He is also a member of the Lawyers Club of San Diego. He represented Gensler, the world’s leading architecture and design firm, in an eight-figure indemnity dispute relating to the construction of the Shore Hotel in Santa Monica. He also won successful settlements for the Post Investment Group and CoreVest. He is a graduate of Whitman College and the Loyola Law School.

William W Eigner

Eigner has been called the “go-to-guy” for mergers and acquisitions and emerging companies. He serves as a catalyst for his clients’ success. His clients have grown with his involvement from a two-person start up to public companies or acquisition targets in the Silicon Valley, Europe and Asia. He serves as a director Athletiverse, EvoNexus and has been active in San Diego Venture Group and the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce. He serves or has served on the boards of Encore Semi, eSub, Solyahealth, 3_+ 2 Pharma LLC, Acenda and other companies. He’s a trustee emeritus of the San Diego Police Foundation, a former trustee and land chairman of the LaJolla Town Council. A partner at Procopio, his practice emphasizes M&A, venture capital, angel financing, seed capital and the financing, governing, operations, buying, selling and merging of growing and established companies. His M&A, financing and contracts practice includes work in various sectors, including telecommunications, software, cybersecurity, electronic commerce/internet, energy, clean technology, life science, and medical devices. He is a graduate of Stanford University and of the University of Virginia Law School.



Ronson J. Shamoun

Shamoun is the founder and CEO of RJS Law, the leading tax law firm in San Diego. He’s a three-time graduate of the University of San Diego, receiving his Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Accountancy, his Juris Doctor (JD) and Master of Law in Taxation (LL.M) from the University. His legal practice involves federal and state taxation, with an emphasis on criminal tax defense, tax controversy, and international tax and estate planning. He has substantial experience representing individuals and businesses before the IRS, Franchise Tax Board, the Employment Development Department and the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration. He’s dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of others. He provides sleeping bags and hygiene items to homeless individuals. He is a consistent financial supporter of the University of San Diego and established annual \$5,000 scholarships at both the USD School of Law and the USD School of Business. He annually donates billboard campaigns in San Diego to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and other charitable organizations. Among his many awards and honors are the Martindale Hubbell AV Preeminent award for Excellence in Legal Ability and Ethical Practice and has consistently been named one of San Diego’s best attorneys.



CONGRATULATIONS SCOTT LEVIN!
for being voted one of San Diego’s TOP ATTORNEYS



Divorce Done Right.
Mediation: A compassionate, child-focused, low-cost alternative to litigation

Divorce Mediation Lawyer & Conflict Resolution Specialist
Prenuptial & Postnuptial Agreements
Certified Divorce Financial Analyst



SCOTT F. LEVIN Esq.

858.255.1321

sandiegofamilylawyer.net



SERVING SAN DIEGO, LOS ANGELES AND IRVINE

RJS LAW
A TAX LAW FIRM

TAX AUDITS, CIVIL & CRIMINAL TAX LITIGATION

- IRS Audits
- IRS Appeals
- IRS Collections
- OIC / Settlement
- Criminal Tax
- Innocent Spouse Relief
- Payroll Tax
- OVDP / Voluntary Disclosure
- SBOE / Sales Tax
- FTB / State Tax
- Estate Tax
- International Tax
- Corporate Law
- Real Estate Law
- EDD / California State Payroll Tax

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



FULL SERVICE STAFF OF 9 ATTORNEYS & 2 CPAs

619-777-7700

RJSLawFirm.com

SAN DIEGO | 303 A STREET STE 400 SAN DIEGO, CA 92101
IRVINE | 7 PARK PLAZA STE 125B IRVINE, CA 92614 BEVERLY HILLS | 8404 WILSHIRE BLVD STE 210 BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90211

TOP ATTORNEYS



Joseph Leventhal

Leventhal is a partner and head of litigation for the San Diego office of Glaser Weil. He's an accomplished trial attorney with extensive experience in complex commercial litigation, class actions, and real estate, employment, and intellectual property disputes. He has led teams in both state and federal courts and achieved successful outcomes through appeal. His clients range from business executives to Fortune 500 companies. In addition to litigation, he provides pre-litigation counsel, helping clients navigate potential legal challenges and avoid associated costs. His proactive approach extends to advising clients before lawsuits are filed. His notable achievements include winning a \$600,000 award for Milacron in a breach of contract lawsuit, overturning significant sanctions against a global logistics company and a judgment for a real estate developer and owners' association against a parcel owner. He earned his law degree with honors from Georgetown University while working on Capitol Hill and interning in the Office of the Vice President. He earned his B.A. degree at UCSD.



Sara Neva
Procopio



Jamie Altman Buggy
Tyson & Mendes



Patrick Klingborg
Solomon Ward
Seidenwurm & Smith



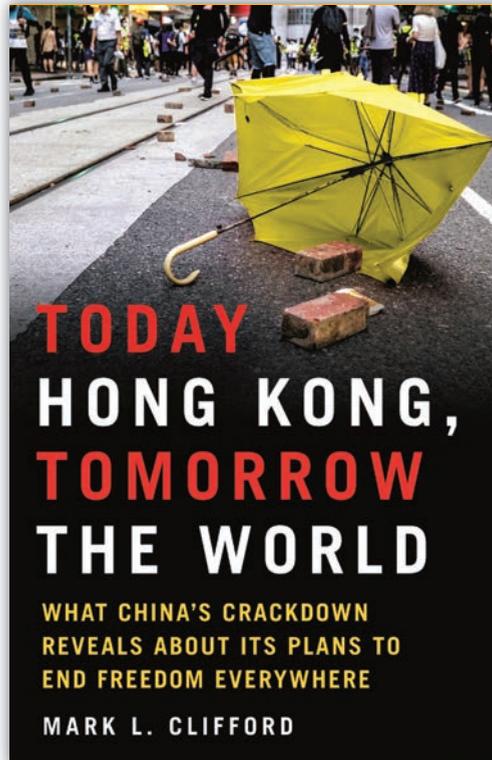
Hubert (Hugh) Kim
Wilson Turner Kosmo LLP



Deborah Yates
Solomon Ward
Seidenwurm & Smith

Conquered into Compliance: Hong Kong signals a looming peril?

*SD METRO Associate Editor Douglas Page interviewed Mark Clifford, president of the Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation. Clifford spent nearly 30 years in Hong Kong as a reporter and editor, becoming the top editor of *The Standard* and, later, the *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong's English-language daily newspapers. After leaving journalism, he was the executive director of the Asia Business Council in Hong Kong, which promotes economic growth in the region. He was on the board of directors of *Next Digital*, which published *Apple Daily*, a pro-democracy newspaper in Hong Kong that was raided and closed by the territory's government in 2021. *Next Digital's* CEO, Jimmy Lai, a critic of Hong Kong's government since Beijing's takeover of the territory, was jailed in December 2020. The Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation seeks the release of Hong Kong's 1,800 political prisoners. Clifford recently wrote a book, entitled *Today Hong Kong, Tomorrow The World: What China's Crackdown Reveals About Its Plans To End Freedom Everywhere*. This transcript was edited for brevity and clarity.*



St. Martin's Press, 306 pages, \$29.99

Hong Kong and its territories associated with the former British colony consist of nearly 430 square miles and about 7.4 million people. Given its size, why should anyone in the United States and the Western world care about how Beijing rules Hong Kong?

Hong Kong (HKG) was one of the freest places in the world, both economically and, in some sense, politically for over a hundred years. As goes HKG, I worry, so goes much of the world. If Beijing imposes its will on HKG and destroys freedoms there, with no real opposition from the rest of the world, then Taiwan is next. And after that, who knows? South Korea, Japan, the Philippines are looking at China's increasing assertiveness, aggressiveness, and willingness to try to stifle free speech.

It doesn't end in the Pacific. I'm seeing colleagues here, Chinese and Hong Kong colleagues in the United States and in London, where we also have an office, under pressure. I have a colleague who has \$130,000 bounty on her head. She's living in the United States, where she has asylum. Her parents have been detained in HKG, and the HKG government says they'll hunt her and others like street rats for the rest of their lives. I think there's a pretty good reason to be concerned that what started in HKG is not going to end with HKG.

This \$130,000 bounty is being provided by Beijing?

The HKG government. They're seeking to arrest and prosecute 13 different overseas activists. The \$130,000 bounty they're offering is HK\$1 million for each one of them. They're living in Australia, the U.S., and in Great Britain.

So, HK\$13 million is what the HKG government is prepared to pay?

Yes. Their families in HKG and around the world are being harassed because they were trying to exercise their political rights. None of them have been accused of any violent crime. Several are former legislators. Beijing or its minions in HKG don't respect freedom, even in free countries like the United States, Canada, Australia, and the U.K.

The people living in the United States with a bounty on their head, how do they get around without HKG operatives knocking on their door? Are they living incognito, under an alias?

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and others who've helped her out have let it be known to Chinese authorities and



Jimmy Lai

others not to mess around with her. And I think that those of the 13 who are living in the U.S. feel pretty good. I'm not sure that the people living in Great Britain and Australia feel that they've gotten the same kind of support from their host governments.

Editor's Note: SD METRO asked the FBI about this and received the following statement: "We're increasingly conducting outreach in order to raise awareness of how some countries' governments harass and intimidate their own citizens living in the United States. This violates U.S. law and individual rights and freedoms and will not be tolerated."

SD METRO also asked the People's Republic of China's Embassy in Washington for comment. While the Embassy wouldn't confirm the bounty, spokesman Liu Pengyu sent this statement: "The destabilizing elements engage in acts that endanger national security under the pretext of democracy and human rights. The Hong Kong police issued arrest warrants for the anti-China rioters who have fled overseas in accordance with the law. This is a necessary and legitimate act that is in line with international law and customary practice."

When you talk about Chinese students in the United States being coerced, what is going on?

The Beijing government is very assertive. They've used what they call a "united front" strategy, where a variety of different organizations, which don't necessarily look like government organizations, to monitor students and use other students to monitor other students, sometimes with a monetary inducement but, more likely, with a promise that their careers will benefit, or their families back home will be helped or hurt if they don't play ball.

It's a level of control only a totalitarian government could or would exercise. They aren't free to go to meetings and seminars, let alone to speak out or go to events.

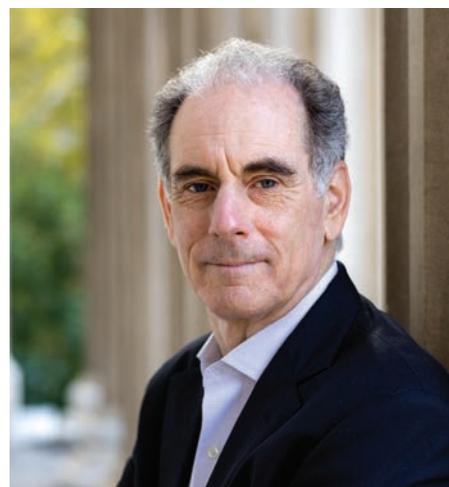
How long has your organization been around and what are you trying to accomplish?

We were set up about 18 months ago. We're focused on trying to get political prisoners out of jail in HKG. According to the Hong Kong Democracy Council which tracks this, there are about 1,800 political prisoners in HKG.

Some of them I know. I was on the board of directors of the company that published the main pro-democracy newspaper, Apple Daily. Seven of my colleagues are in jail just for practicing journalism. One of them, Jimmy Lai, who was the chairman and owned 70% of the company, is on trial for something that could see him put away for life. He is being tried under the National Security Law (NSL), which has a 100% conviction rate. He's a 75-year-old man in solitary confinement. He's been in jail for over three years.

A group of us who lived in HKG for the most part, chaired by the former U.S. Consul General in HKG, James Cunningham, founded this organization to try to give a voice to the HKG people at a time when the political situation in their home made it impossible. We think they're in jail for non-indictable offenses.

We're using every way we can to put pressure on our governments and on the



Mark Clifford

HKG and Beijing governments to live up to the promises they made to the people of HKG when China took over in 1997 from Great Britain. China promised that HKG would be able to enjoy their own way of life. They'd have freedom of press, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, all the freedoms that you and I have, and then some. They were going to have universal suffrage, to elect their own mayor, their own city council. It hasn't worked out that way. The lies the Chinese government told about HKG, and the crackdown they've engendered, is a tragedy. There's a lot at stake. Taiwan is the focus of the next place we're afraid China might move.

How is your group funded?

We have private donations. We don't have any government funding.

What sort of impact is your organization having?

It's hard to measure. I remind people we'd love to be out of a job, but we need to get people out of prison before we can be out of a job. And we're not doing a very good job so far. Things are moving in the wrong direction. On the other hand, we have a tremendous amount of support in Washington and London, and we get attacked by the HKG government. I guess it's a backhanded compliment.

Do you have people in HKG who can talk to the government?

Impossible. People like my colleague Frances Hui are here. She has asylum in the U.S., and the HKG government is pursuing her with its HK\$1 million bounty. Most of the people we work with would be at risk of arrest in HKG, and I certainly would be afraid to go back. The company that I was on the board of, Next Digital, all the directors ended up in jail for a time. I was the only director not in custody. It's not a very comfortable position when you have governments that want to lock you up just because they don't like what you're saying.

Can you shed some light on what HKG's NSL means? There are stories it's causing worry within the business community in HKG.

It's a vague and sweeping law that came about at the end of June 2020. It essentially criminalizes dissent. People have been tried. Jimmy Lai, the newspaper owner I mentioned, is being tried on collusion with foreign forces. It's a lengthy trial and there's a lot of smoke. He believed in democracy and was willing to put his money where his mouth was and was practicing journalism, and they wanted to lock him up for the rest of his life.

He's got six other colleagues who are in jail, and they've all pled guilty, but they're being held hostage while he's being tried. So that's an example of the kinds of things that people are being thrown in jail for. Whenever the government doesn't like you, and you're effective, you're a target of the NSL. Jimmy Lai's offense seems to have been that he met with U.S. officials a few years ago, like Vice President Mike Pence, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, and National Security Advisor John Bolton when they were in office. Scores of people are in jail on NSL charges.

And I think what you might've been referring to in terms of the concern of the business community is a new kind of parallel or companion law under Article 23 of the mini constitution that governs HKG. It passed on March 19, 2024.

It seems to broaden the number of offenses for what's already a vague catchall of opposing the government. People have been jailed for holding up blank pieces of paper, for having posters, for singing songs. The HKG government has asked Google and YouTube to take down songs that they don't like. Stuff you and I would regard as the most innocuous form of political participation, hardly worthy of mention, let alone arrest, is something they're throwing people in jail for.

Businesses in HKG wonder if it's Jimmy Lai today, is it going to be me tomorrow? Where does this stop? Nobody knows. Under this new Article 23, the boundary between acceptable and unacceptable behavior that's going to land someone in jail is further blurred.

It's important to remember HKG was one of the great business centers of the world. It was the financial capital of Asia. Now, it's

going nowhere economically. I just looked recently at the Hang Seng Index, which is like the Standard & Poor's Index for Hong Kong. In January, it was basically right where it was when the British left in 1997. So, basically, stocks on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange have flat lined over a period of more than 25 years. In comparison, the S&P has gone up more than nine times.

Has there been a lot of immigration out of HKG?

Several hundred thousand people have left. Some of the best and the brightest. A lot of expats have left, but I think, sadly, a lot of Hong Kongers -- people in their thirties and forties often with children -- left because they don't want their kids growing up under a Communist regime.

How hard is it for a HKG native to leave and immigrate?

Thankfully not that hard, especially to Great Britain. It has a special category of citizenship that makes it easy. There's a special visa that makes it easy for people to go to the U.K. and then within, I think, five years, apply for citizenship. The HKG government has made it harder to leave because it won't let people take their pension savings when they take advantage of this British visa. Nearly 200,000 people have gone to Britain, and quite a few have gone to Australia and Canada.

You mentioned that Great Britain, prior to handing over HKG to Beijing, negotiated with the People's Republic over the NSL.

They negotiated over what became a treaty called the Sino-British Declaration. And that did have some national security clauses in it, but it basically worked to get the Chinese to promise that they would leave HKG alone for 50 years. HKG could, and it still does, have its own currency, its own tax system, its own government administration.



"I'd rather be hanging from a lamppost (in Hong Kong), than give the Communists the satisfaction of saying I ran away." - JIMMY LAI

It was supposed to develop its own path to democracy, and those talks included a promise by Beijing that HKG would embark on a path to universal suffrage. And although there are elections in HKG, they were constrained. There wasn't a direct election for the mayor, for example. That was supposed to happen. The legislative council, which is a kind of city council, was also supposed to be fairer and more representative. And that hasn't happened.

The talks revolved around Britain trying to ensure that HKG would remain free for 50 years. And I think it's really quite an extraordinary promise by the Chinese. It's a shame they couldn't live up to it.

What is Great Britain's legacy in HKG?

Fair government, fair administration, rule of law, and economic liberty. There's an aspirational sense among Hong Kongers of trying to live up to these ideals. Jimmy Lai is in jail because he really believed in what he would call Western values, but he means the values that Britain brought in terms of free economy, and freedom of speech and worship. Jimmy is a devout Catholic, as are several hundred thousand people in HKG. The HKG Christian community is robust. Most are very proud of being Chinese, but they want to be free Chinese, a different kind of Chinese, not Communist Chinese. And so it's the battle between that Communist reality today versus the legacy of the free Chinese – that Britain instilled – that's at the heart of it.

You mentioned that many in the West in the 1990s were looking at China and seeing all this economic freedom and figured 50 years after taking over HKG, the People's Republic would be similar to the West. Was everyone fooled?

I count myself guilty. I co-authored a book with the incoming World Trade Organization director at the time, Supachai Panitchpakdi, and we were very optimistic that more economic freedom and liberalization would lead to more political and social freedom. I had earlier lived in South Korea and I'd seen that transition take place. I don't know that we were all fooled. I work with a lot of people who are very opposed to basically giving

China free pass on the WTO entry and some other issues. But yeah, I spent decades working for engagement and really believing that more trade would equal more political, social, and economic liberalization and that hasn't worked out.

China, if I'm understanding everything I've read, had a legal right to get HKG back. Am I right or wrong about that?

You're about 90% right. HKG was taken in three tranches by the British. The first was during the first Opium War, and they signed a treaty into perpetuity. The Chinese would say it was an unequal treaty, and they didn't really regard it as valid. But from a strictly narrow legal standpoint, Britain had the right to hold the island of Hong Kong forever.

In the second Opium war in the 1850s, it took a little tranche of mainland China, the Kowloon Peninsula, up to Boundary Street, and that was also supposed to be into perpetuity.

In 1898, they took a much bigger territory and signed a 99-year lease. And the end of that lease in 1997 is what prompted the Chinese to say, "Not only are we taking back the New Territories, but we're also taking it all back." And (British Prime Minister Margaret) Thatcher's like, "No, we have the right to keep it (Hong Kong Island and Kowloon) forever."

There's no way the British could have held out. The water comes from China. Most of the food comes from China. British territory was indefensible in the case of a blockade. But legally, China did not have the right to take back Hong Kong Island. There are people who just feel Thatcher wasn't tough enough. I think that's a little too facile.

Why was HKG so important to Beijing?

Parts of China (in the 19th century) had been occupied by foreign countries. Something like 80 bits of China were taken up by colonial powers and run as extraterritorial enclaves. China wanted them back. They symbolized humiliation, weakness, and defeat of China. Beijing was determined to rewrite what they saw as historical injustice, a historical wrong.

Does this spur on the Beijing government to be superior in technology to stand up to the United States

and other Western countries?

That's part of the spur. China is run by the same kind of unitary administrative system it has been for a long time. The size of the territory has changed and grown dramatically, but it's been ruled by a similar kind of government for a couple of thousand years. That's how the Chinese think about it. There's obviously been a lot of change of dynasties, revolutions, et cetera, but there's a long, proud cultural, administrative, governmental, and economic history. China was the largest economy in the world until the early 19th century, and it let itself be lapped by little England. The humiliations and suffering in the 19th century were useful spurs for Communist governments.

We can understand the pride of nationalism. But what's troubling is that there's a sense of victimhood by the Beijing government and of injustice that they've been wronged. There were a lot of bad things about colonialism, but here we are, the better part of 200 years on, and about 75 years since the Communist Chinese took over, and Beijing is still talking about things that happened 150 years ago.

China has 1.4 billion people. They're the world's second-largest economy. Why are they talking like they're the underdog, that they've been so wronged and need to lash out at HKG or Taiwan, where there are between 20 to 25 million people and a Democratic China? They threaten the Philippines and Vietnam. How do we draw the line between a legitimate nationalist spur in the sense of aggrieved and victimhood that becomes very, very aggressive and worrying? Xi Jinping's (president of the People's Republic) China has gone too far.

Editor's Note: To find out what China's actions toward Hong Kong could mean for Taiwan and the West, read or watch the interview at sandiego.com.

Page can be reached at
dpage@sandiegometro.com



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR
ATTORNEYS RECOGNIZED AMONG

SD Metro's 2024 Best Attorneys in San Diego



Joseph Leventhal
PARTNER AND HEAD OF
LITIGATION FOR THE SAN
DIEGO OFFICE



Emil Petrossian
CO-MANAGING PARTNER OF
THE SAN DIEGO OFFICE



Elizabeth Sperling
CO-MANAGING PARTNER OF
THE SAN DIEGO OFFICE

glaserweil.com
Century City | Newport Beach | San Diego | San Francisco

High stakes: Inside the multimillion-dollar battle for gambling rights in California

BY RYAN SABALOW AND JEREMIA KIMELMAN | CALMATTERS



Meadow views above Tongue River Canyon.

Powerful tribal casinos and their rivals in California's multi-billion dollar gambling industry are fighting an epic battle in the Legislature this year. Millions of dollars in tax revenues for local cities hang in the balance.

Pending legislation would let California's tribes sue their competitors, private card clubs, over their claim that card rooms are violating the tribes' exclusive rights to Las Vegas-style gambling.

Card rooms have responded with an enormous lobbying blitz. The Hawaiian Gardens Casino in Los Angeles County spent a staggering \$9.1 million on lobbying last year, the second highest amount reported to state regulators. Only the international oil giant, Chevron Corp., spent more.

"If you're going to attack us and try to take away what we've had for decades, then we've got to fight back," said Keith Sharp, the

card room's general counsel. "And so we're going to spend the money that we need to spend. I mean it's about survival at this point."

Cities also have a lot at stake with the card rooms. San Jose officials told legislators they could hire 80 police officers if they could add 30 more tables to their local card rooms. Nearly two thirds of the budget for the city of Hawaiian Gardens and almost half for the city of Commerce, also in Los Angeles County, come from local card rooms.

"Those games, we're very dependent on here in the city," said Commerce Mayor Hugo Argumedo. "They provide many of the programs and services that we offer to the residents in our community."

The legislation, Senate Bill 549, is backed primarily by a group of Native American tribes that run major casinos. The tribes are

among the most influential and biggest spending lobbies in Sacramento. Since 2014, California's candidates for state office have received about \$23.5 million from tribes. That's more than double what oil companies have given the state's politicians during the same years.

The state's card room industry, by comparison, has donated about \$3.8 million during the same timeframe.

A group of tribes contend the 80 or so privately-owned gambling halls are illegally offering games such as blackjack, baccarat and pai gow poker, and by doing so, they've for years been stealing hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue from historically disenfranchised tribal communities across California.

"It's not about killing card rooms. It's not about killing cities. It's about protecting what's ours," Tuari Bigknife, the attorney general for the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, told CalMatters. His tribe operates a large casino in San Diego County.

SB 549 is pending before the Assembly Governmental Organization Committee, which handles gambling legislation. A hearing hasn't been scheduled, but those following the bill say it will be heard later in April or in May.

Card rooms frame the issue as a David vs. Goliath fight, since their annual earnings are barely 10% of what tribal governments make from gambling at their 70 tribal casinos. The card rooms also have influential allies in local governments officials who say their cities could go bankrupt if their local gambling hall loses this legislative fight.

When the pandemic shut down gaming in Hawaiian Gardens, the city was forced to lay off much of its staff and cut services. Mayor Victor Farfan said it was a sign of what would happen if the card room was no longer able to play the disputed games.

"We're very, very limited in what we can do," Farfan said in an interview with CalMatters at Hawaiian Gardens City Hall, the card room visible from the



Hawaiian Gardens Mayor Victor Farfan

parking lot. "And so we're fortunate enough to have a revenue source that we do today."

Tribes, however, argue there are other ways for cities to raise money without infringing on tribes' gambling rights that California voters enshrined into the state's constitution.

"They can tax; they can issue bonds; they can do lots of things," said Bigknife, the attorney general for the Viejas tribe. "All this does is shut down illegal revenue."

Gold Rush gambling rules fuel conflict

The gambling dispute has roots in the Gold Rush, a time when unscrupulous gambling halls were fleecing miners. In response, the young Legislature prohibited gambling halls from offering games like the kind in Las Vegas where casinos are the "house" and take bets directly.

That prohibition lasted until 2000, when voters approved an initiative that gave tribes the right to negotiate compacts with the state to host certain house-banked casino games.

No one disputes that the privately owned card rooms can offer poker, since players bet against each other. The dispute

behind SB 549 involves traditionally house-banked card games, especially blackjack, the most lucrative of the disputed games.

Under the California constitution, the card rooms can't accept wagers from customers. The card clubs get around the prohibition by contracting with third-party companies that serve the role as the "house" or the "bank." These third-party employees typically sit at card tables next to the card room employees who deal cards to players. The third-party employee plays no part of the game except to collect players' bets and pay out winnings. The dealers must periodically offer the opportunity for the players to act as the bank. Almost every customer declines. The card clubs collect fees from each game.

The gambling halls say their business model has been approved by state regulators.

"Every game that (the tribes are) saying is illegal right now, every single one of them has been explicitly approved individually in every card room in the state of California," Ed Manning, a lobbyist for the card room industry, told lawmakers last summer at the bill's first hearing.

Tribal casinos, however, call the card

CASINOS

room business model an illegal sham, and they have been pleading with state regulators, voters and now lawmakers to end it.

The tribes have repeatedly urged the California Justice Department to step in and prohibit the disputed games. The past three attorneys general have discussed various regulations, but so far none have resolved the politically fraught issue.

Current Attorney General Rob Bonta last year proposed a new set of rules that card rooms say could make it difficult to keep playing the disputed games and tribes say don't go far enough. The proposed regulations are pending at the department's Bureau of Gambling Control without a schedule for consideration.

Meanwhile, card rooms and tribal governments have been donating heavily to Bonta since he took office in 2021. Since then the card room industry has donated at least \$287,000. Tribes have given at least \$222,000, according to OpenSecrets. Bonta said he is considering a campaign for governor in 2026.

Tribes seek standing to sue competitors

Getting no satisfaction from regulators, the tribes tried to sue card rooms for unfair business practices. But California's courts have ruled that because the tribes are sovereign governments, they don't have standing to sue under that particular statute.

The tribes next turned to voters. In 2022, the tribes put Proposition 26 on the ballot. The initiative, mainly about sports betting, contained a provision that would have allowed anyone, including tribal members, to file a lawsuit if they believed state gambling laws were being violated and the Department of Justice declined to act.

Voters overwhelmingly rejected the measure after more than \$170 million was spent trying to sway them.

Now, the tribes want lawmakers to give them a brief window to sue card rooms to



A blackjack training game demonstration at Gardens Casino.
Photos by Ted Soqui for CalMatters



The outside of the Gardens Casino. Hawaiian Gardens on March 14, 2024.
Photos by Ted Soqui for CalMatters

settle their dispute. SB 549 explicitly prohibits the tribes from seeking monetary damages, penalties or attorney's fees from card rooms. It would only let a court decide whether the gambling halls' business model is legal.

The tribes contend that if the card rooms are operating legally, they have nothing to fear.

"The card rooms should relish the opportunity to defeat the tribes on this issue and to prove up the legality of what

they're doing," Bigknife, the Viejas attorney general, told lawmakers at the hearing last summer.

Sharp, the general counsel for the Hawaiian Gardens Casino, said the bigger worry is that if SB 549 passes, the courts would become the de facto gambling regulator. It could force card room operators to seek a court's permission for any new game they'd like to play or any time they'd want to modify the hundreds of games they already play, he said.

"We'll be tied up in court forever, so the lawyers will make money," Sharp said. "That may be the (tribes') other strategy: ... Grind the card rooms down ultimately with legal fees."

Plus, the card rooms argue that if the tribes are given standing to sue them, it wouldn't cut both ways. As sovereign governments, the tribes couldn't be sued by the card rooms.

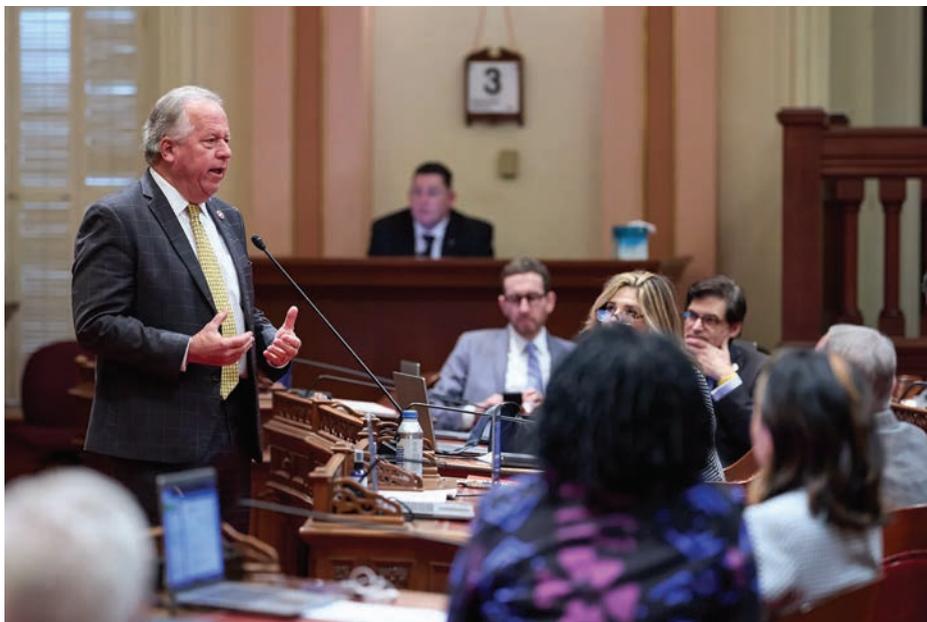
Bipartisan support for California gambling bill

SB 549 is authored by Fullerton Democratic Sen. Josh Newman, and it has nine co-authors including prominent Democrats, Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, the Assembly's majority leader, and former Senate President Toni Atkins. The bill's Republican co-authors include Senator Scott Wilk and Assemblymember Marie Waldron, both former minority leaders in their chambers.

Despite the support for the tribes from some of the Legislature's most influential members, it's anyone's guess whether the bill ends up making it to the governor's desk. This gambling dispute doesn't break down along partisan, regional or ideological lines. How lawmakers vote will most likely depend on whether they have a major card room or a tribal casino in their district.

Meanwhile, both sides have been spending millions of dollars to influence lawmakers.

Atkins' campaign, for instance, has



State Sen. Bill Dodd speaks during the first day of session at the state Capitol in Sacramento on Jan. 3, 2024. Photo by Fred Greaves for CalMatters



Shavon Moore-Cage, a member of AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) Photo by Ted Soqui for CalMatters

received at least \$215,000 from tribes since 2014.

"SB 549 allows tribes to bring their concerns about possible infringement of their constitutional rights to the courts, where this issue can be addressed by an impartial judicial system," Atkins told

CalMatters in an emailed statement. "After a history fraught with injustice, allowing tribes access to the courts to get an answer is a step worth taking."

ARGO AND THE EXPLODING GRENADE:

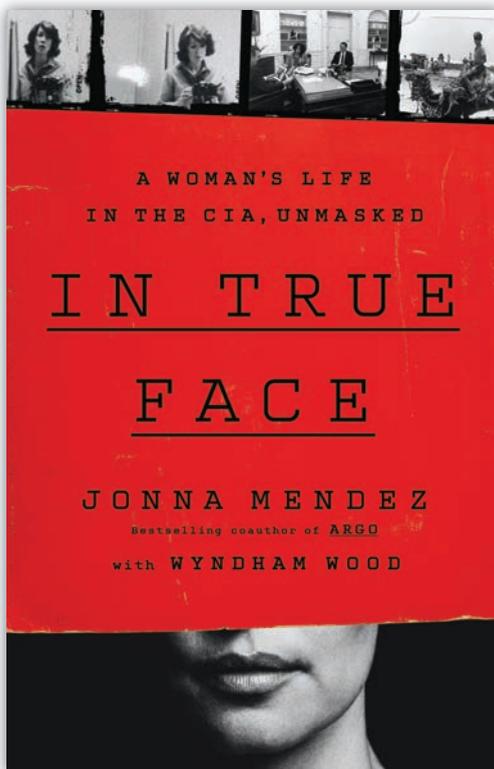
JONNA MENDEZ'S CIA CAREER

SD METRO Associate Editor Douglas Page interviewed former CIA Chief of Disguise Jonna Mendez. She's also the widow of Tony Mendez, the CIA operative who, with help from Canadian Ambassador Ken Taylor and his staff, extricated six U.S. Embassy staffers from Tehran in 1980 during the 1979 – 1980 hostage crisis. Academy Award winning actor Ben Affleck portrayed Tony in the movie "Argo," which was about the rescue. Jonna's new book, In True Face, details her 27-year career in the CIA. This transcript was edited for brevity and clarity. The full interview can be watched on our website, sandiegometro.com

How do you see your CIA career?

Tony and I were immersed in the work. In our office, which was mostly men, their average lifespan was 18 months after they retired. They died of heart attacks. They didn't have a life outside of the CIA. Their friends and everything they cared about was in the CIA. Tony and I had two very, very active lives, so we survived. But we didn't leave espionage. We started working with the International Spy Museum (in Washington DC) when they were building it.

There's a good chance many people



Public Affairs, 320 pages, \$30.00

don't know what the value of the CIA is. Can you describe what the CIA brings to the United States?

What we do, we do in silence, behind the scenes. The CIA's job is to discern the plans and intentions of our country's enemies. What are they going to do? When are they going to do it? We get the information and bring it back to the policymakers, so they have something to work with when they're making decisions. We send briefers to the White House every morning with the president's daily brief, giving details about the hotspots, showing what's going on and what's coming behind it.

Sometimes agents put their lives very much at risk and sometimes the consequences aren't so good.

The Moscow rules were rules of comportment if you were operating in Moscow. We added another rule about four years ago, and it's never fall in love with your agent. It didn't mean romantic love. It meant don't get too close. They're counting on you to protect them. We're doing

everything we can to keep them safe; even then, we still lose some.

They get arrested, they get executed. We lost one, it was so tragic. Everyone who worked with that man loved him and we added the last rule when they arrested him. They were forcing him to write a confession. He said, "I'll write the confession, but I want to do it with my own pen."

They brought him his pen. He's at a desk. He takes it out of the case, puts it in his mouth, bit down on the end of it, where we embedded what's called an L-pill. It's a cyanide pill. He said he would only work for us work if we gave him a way to take his own life if arrested. Initially, the CIA said "no," and he said, "Fine, I won't work for you." We caved and gave him a pen. We never thought he'd use it, but he did.

He was Russian and the Soviets put a rumor out -- it was very powerful -- that if they caught any of their fellow countrymen betraying the motherland, after the trial, they were going to put them into a crematorium feet first -- alive. He believed it. That's why he wanted a cyanide pill.

You talked about the work environment you entered. What were the differences between the work environment you entered and the time that you retired?

The organization was primarily men when I came in. We worked for the men. We were basically clerical. We were secretarial. I found my way out of that category and into professional occupations. It's still not anywhere near an equivalency, but it's improved.

One of the things that many might not know about the CIA or its predecessor, the OSS, is that there were women who made serious contributions. What makes Eloise Page stand out?

She was my role model. She was Bill Donovan's administrative assistant at OSS during World War II. Eloise ended up in Europe at the end of World War II, chasing Nazis and seeing that they were incarcerated. She was a ball of fire. She also became our first female chief of station.

What about Virginia Hall and her exploits during World War II?

She was another amazing woman. She went to Europe. She had languages. She had an accident at some point where she lost her leg prior to the war. She applied to the OSS, and they wouldn't hire her. She went to work for the British as a Special Operations Executive. They dropped her into Nazi-occupied France. She wrecked hell through southern France. She came back to the United States and the CIA hired her. She's celebrated at the International Spy Museum.



Jonna Mendez

Did their actions change any of the thinking at the CIA about what women could do for the agency?

Changed mine. If you asked the men who were of Eloise's generation and worked with her, they would call her "That old battleax." She was fierce and while that might be commendable in a man who's in a position of authority, it was considered not becoming of a woman who was in a position of authority. Those kinds of nuanced opinions have shifted considerably. And I would point out that in the upper levels of the CIA, women rule. Gina Haspel (director of the CIA from 2018 – 2021) wasn't one of a kind. There are a group of women at the top tier of CIA that have and continue to do wonderful jobs of guiding that organization. It's a little further down and especially in the operational area that women have so much resistance.

You described the section where you worked, the Office of Technical Services, as having entrenched misogyny. Was this all over the CIA or just in your section?

What I found in OTS was a large group of very, very capable men, most of them with technical credentials.

Tony Mendez, my husband, came in as a forger. A lot of women didn't come in with those kinds of skills. That didn't mean that you couldn't find your place.

Sometimes these men came in with film they needed developed. They gave it to me. What I didn't have, in terms of a degree, I think I made up for it in just being fastidious in the work.

It's probably hard for many to believe today, but many years ago, pictures were developed in a darkroom. You mentioned seeing nude pictures on one of the walls in the darkroom and you pulled them down. Can you describe your emotions and what you were thinking and how you felt after that?

I'd been trying to be one of the guys, thinking that's the way forward. That didn't work. I had worked there for some time and those pictures had been up on the wall for some time. And I just got sick of it. I put them in the trash. The men never said a word about it.

Was there a change in behavior or attitude from the men you were working alongside?

You built respect when they discovered that you could do what they could do and do it just as well. When you got to that level, there was a certain equality in how you were managed, and I got to that level. There was no reaching out, like, "Come on in." You had to push your way in.

Sometimes you woke up not knowing if you're going home that night. How unsettling was that?

I loved it. When I talk to women, they say, "How did you do that with kids?" And I tell them, "I didn't have children." And then you can see young women thinking, yeah, well, that would be a catch. With children, you'd either figure out how to make it work or, perhaps, that wouldn't be the career for you.

Given all your travel, did you ever find it wearing or look upon any particular destination with just drudgery?

No. I could always find something that I liked, just about anywhere. There was a city where it was hard to find that place - Dacca, in Bangladesh.

What was it like to live incognito?

You didn't always have the same name, and you didn't always

have the same story, and so you just developed a group of habits that no matter who you were, it would work. And that works like on an airplane. If somebody said, "Where do you work?" You would just turn it back to them. So, if you're talking to a heart surgeon, you don't want to be telling them that you're a heart surgeon too.

You always had identities that had accompanying paperwork, maybe some documentation, and you'd be able to talk about in some depth.

You talked about the Career Development Program and the hand grenade. Describe what happened.

That was an elite program. We were at a military training facility learning how to do some paramilitary things. Two of the people in the course were CIA employees with military backgrounds. So, they knew a lot about weapons. And we were on the firing range, and they taught us. They were showing us how simple it was to make a bomb. You'd go to Home Depot and buy a little plastic soap container and get some fertilizer and three ingredients and you got a bomb, and then we'd blow up a truck.

Part of it was fun. Part of it was scary, but working around live ammunition had a certain protocol. You never smoked when you were close to that stuff. You never had matches in your pocket. It was serious. I got promoted while I was there. The boss flew in to tell me. I had dinner with the boss. One guy in the class was not happy because he was not promoted. And he thought they were showing favoritism to me. He said something about it and was sitting with some Navy SEALs. I walked up to him and poured a beer on him.

So, the next day, on the range, I heard this voice, and it was him. He said, "Hey, Jonna." And I turned around and noticed he had a grenade. He rolled it toward me. They don't roll straight, they zigzag. And I thought, he wants me to run. He's trying to embarrass me. I decided not to run. I stood there and the thing rolled, and it went off. Now he had taken out any shrapnel. It couldn't hurt me. But it scared me to death. I couldn't believe that he did that, and I thought, would he do that to one of his male friends?

He apologized the next day. But I never forgave him. I saw him recently, and he's forgotten this. I know because he came up and gave me a big hug and told me how good it was to see me.

You mentioned a training program that prepared you for a hostile interrogation where you are the prisoner and you're being subjected to some harsh treatment. What was the biggest takeaway about yourself as you came through that exercise?

They put us through the most severe training scenario they imagined. It was a very tough course, and on that day two, you

almost forgot that it was a training course and you felt like, "Oh my God, can I last another day?"

We had had some POWs from Vietnam talk to us about how they dealt with long-term stress. One of them said, "Everybody had a project. Some played chess, some built the engine of cars; some built houses." He said, "I could just leave that confining place and go somewhere in my head. If you're in enough trouble, you can do that." So, they put me in a box, like a mattress box where you couldn't turn at all. It must've been like eight inches deep. You could go in sideways and come out sideways, and they closed the door and I had told them that I'm claustrophobic.

That's why they put me in that box. I was in there and I thought, "I can't stay in here. This is not going to work. How will I tell them that I need to leave the course?" And then I remembered that man and I started thinking, "Okay, if I could be somewhere, where would I be?" I went back to Kansas, where I'm from. It got me through that exercise. It was excruciating.

You talk about how Tony Mendez got the idea for the masks -- from watching a very popular movie, "Planet of the Apes." It would seem few would believe such an idea would come from a movie.

He became a friend of John Chambers, the Oscar-winning makeup artist that made those "Planet of the Ape" masks. Tony was an artist, so he was very interested in the creative process. We were already using stunt double masks from Hollywood. Our best mask was Rex Harrison.

He never knew we were exporting them all over the world. They proved useful. When we made full-face animated masks, we could have you in your blue shirt, your tie, brown hair and glasses. And we could take someone of a similar size and weight, stature and

put your face on person number two, put him in a blue shirt and a tie and brown hair, and then we can do what magicians do.

And we can play by having two people instead of one. It gave us enormous flexibility when we were working against surveillance



RJS LAW would like to congratulate
Ronson J. Shamoun
 for being recognized as a
 2024 SD Metro Magazine Best Attorney



Tax Controversy, International Tax,
 Wills and Trusts, Probate, Bankruptcy

2014-2018 **SAN DIEGO'S BEST** 2020-2023
OF REAGAN POLK

619-777-7700 SAN DIEGO | IRVINE | EL CAJON RJSLawFirm.com



TWO OF THE BEST REASONS COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS RETAIN HAHN LOESER TO ADDRESS THEIR LEGAL NEEDS

Thanks to our clients who continually challenge Partners Mike Gleason and Danielle Humphries to always be at their best when providing strategic legal and business advice. We appreciate your continued trust and support.

HAHN  LOESER

HAHN LOESER & PARKS LLP | 619.810.4300 | HAHNLAW.COM
 600 W BROADWAY | SUITE 1500 | SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

SAN DIEGO | CHICAGO | CLEVELAND | COLUMBUS | FORT MYERS | NAPLES

teams. They thought they had you the whole time. They thought you never left their site. And our guy is somewhere else.

You also mentioned that in certain cases, if you were wearing one of these masks, you need to be a bit of an actor, too.

The more advanced the disguises were, the more you needed to exercise the mask. You needed to wear it in public. You get out there wearing them. Even wigs and mustaches, and you think people are going to look at you funny. And so whatever kind of disguise we gave people, we insisted that they wear it in public.

You become the chief of disguise. What sort of pressure did you feel in that position?

I was elated. First, I didn't want the job. Then I was elated to get the job. Then it became a different ball game. It was about going into finance meetings and battling for money and battling for slots and all kinds of things that I had tried to avoid. Taking care of your employees, making sure that they were getting the training. I had an amazingly good team, but part of me wanted to be overseas doing the work and meeting with people, making a difference that way.

What was it like to go to the Oval Office and meet President George H.W. Bush?

I went with the head of CIA, Judge William Webster, who was very enthusiastic about our masks. Initially, they wanted me to go as an African American man. That was the first mask that I showed him. I put on a man's suit, put on a mask, put on gloves and met the director of CIA and he said, "Oh my God, we have to go to the White House and show this to the president." I said, "I don't have any identification. Shall we make something?" He said, "Oh, no. You're with me. You won't need any ID to get through the Secret Service." So, we thought about it, and thought still the Secret Service might, if they wanted to, talk to me, and I don't have a man's voice. He finally said, "Well, it's okay. We'll have you go as a woman, a different woman. Wear a female mask. It'll make the same impact."

I was going to be the first one to brief the president that morning. There was a horseshoe of people, including me, Judge Webster, Chief of Staff John Sununu, and National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft.

I told the president, who had been a director of the CIA, "I brought you some photos. Here's you in disguise. Remember these?" And he's going through these big, glossy pictures, and it's like, that was so good. He's enjoying that. And I said, "So I'm here to show you what we're doing now. It's quite different from what we did with you." I said, "So I'm going to show you this lady's disguise." I said, "I'm going to remove it and show it to you." And he said, "Oh, don't remove it. Hold on." And he got up and he

walks over and he's walking around me and he doesn't know what I'm wearing. He doesn't know it's a mask. And I don't know what he was looking for. He was looking for a seam, but he was looking for an edge, right, or whatever it was.

He couldn't see it. So he set it out and he said, "Okay, take it off." So I did that and I was holding it up in the air for him to see, and he was very, very cool. Sununu hadn't been paying any attention. He had a little pad and was making notes because he was going to talk next. When I took off the mask, I heard this little squeak come from him. He was startled. He looked up and I'm holding what looks like a decapitated head in my hand. The president loved it.

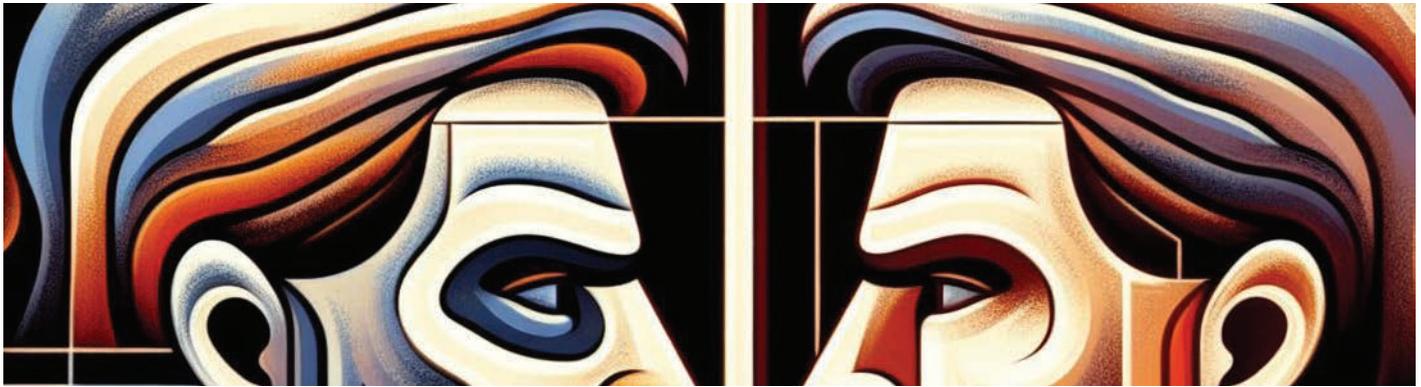
You become a mom at 47. What's more challenging -- working in intelligence or being a mom?

I'm not sure how to compare them. It was another challenge, another new beginning. I was up for it. I retired when Jesse was four months old and started doing fine art photography. We had a big art gallery. We had huge shows twice a year. Then came the movie "Argo," and we had to write the book, making sure that people who saw the movie understood they hadn't chased the plane down the runway.

In your book, you quote Ralph Waldo Emerson. "Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path to leave a trail." How does that apply to you and your career in the CIA?

What I was doing was unusual. I wasn't the only woman trying to push my way forward and make a new path. I wasn't thinking so much of women at that time. I was just bemoaning the fact that there wasn't an open track for me. I was laying a new trail. Eloise Page did it. There are others. I was very aware that it was uncommon what I wanted to do and did. Maybe that made it a little sweeter. I'm not sure, but I sure liked doing it.

Thank you, Jonna.



Interpersonal Edge: Differences between Narcissism and Loyalty

By Dr. Daneen Skube

Question: I have a long-term office friend I no longer trust. When I could help her professionally, she was always friendly. Now I've moved departments, and she's giving me the cold shoulder. Why is she acting this way? What is my best response?

Answer: There are people who will only be friendly if they can use you. They reveal themselves because when the benefits stop so does their loyalty. People who are narcissistic can be charming if you can help them. Charm, however, isn't a sign of loyalty.

Here are some red flags your office friend is using you:

- 1) They consistently shower you with flattery
- 2) They always agree with you
- 3) They are delighted when you do what they want
- 4) They devalue you when you frustrate their entitlements

Self-absorbed people will do something called "love bombing" when they first meet you. Love bombing is a firehose of flattery and compliments that appeal to your need for self-esteem. People secure in their value and identity find this behavior suspicious.

When a workplace friend doesn't know you, yet constantly says you walk on water, be careful. Their flattery is a weapon to get you addicted to their praise. When you see a workplace friend behaving this way, slow down, and back up! They're probably not your friend.

Narcissists look at others only as a resource. The Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of the Tibetan people, commented on this problem: "People were created to be loved. Things were created to be used. The reason the world is in chaos is because things are being loved and people are being used."

You don't need to fix that problem. You want to notice when someone loves things and uses people is trying to befriend you.

What you can do is see them, don't trust them, and avoid them

if possible. They are not friendship material in or out of the workplace.

You may be feeling betrayed or disappointed that your office "friend" has turned out to be a narcissist. In the school of hard knocks, you just finished the class entitled, "How to spot a Narcissist." Even though you may feel victimized, you have learned an invaluable lesson.

Within your disappointment, you've also received a gift of discernment. You now will be able to see who is capable of loyalty and who will just use you.

The last word(s)

Question: My boss appears unaware that no one is following his directions. Is there a way a leader can notice when he's not actually leading?

Answer: As John C. Maxwell, an American author and pastor, observed: "He that thinketh he leadeth and hath no one following him is only taking a walk."

Your boss may take longer than you'd like to become aware that he is only taking a walk, but he'll eventually notice that no one is behind him.

Daneen Skube, Ph.D., is an executive coach, trainer, therapist and speaker in Seattle and appears on FOX Channel's "Workplace Guru" on Monday morning. She can be reached at interpersonaledge@comcast.net.

©2024 Interpersonal Edge. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Editor's Note: SD METRO Associate Editor Douglas Page's interview of Dr. Skube can be watched on sandiegometro.com.

Arizona's aridness is Southern California's AI Therapy

By Marlise Kast-Myers | Photos by Benjamin Myers

Before marrying Benjamin, I had a habit of setting New Year's resolutions of lofty goals-turned-faded letdowns. From publishing books to running marathons, those big dreams led to late nights, missed deadlines, and self-inflicted exhaustion. A realist at heart, Benjamin taught me to crumple date-induced ambitions and simply find motivation in myself rather than a flip of the calendar. That is until recently.

Tiptoeing toward us was 2024 holding a mirror of tired reflections. Coffee was my fuel and bedtime was my bestie, as we juggled four jobs between the two of us. Oddly enough, we're wired that way, taking on more than we should because we're driven by ourselves.

And so, we ironed out that crumpled sheet of blankness and wrote in bold letters: "Relax. Rest. Recover. Reconnect. Rejuvenate. Restore."

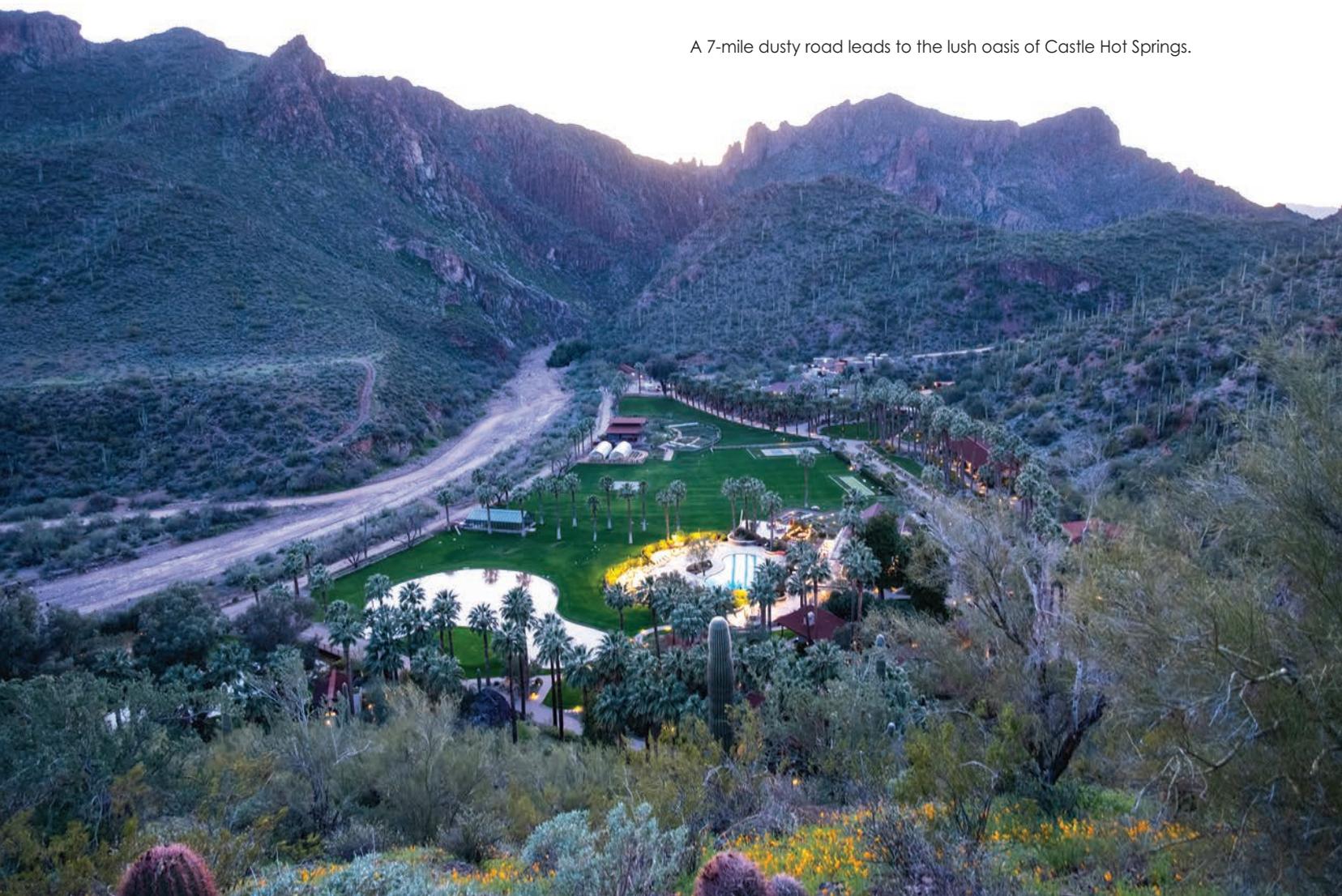
That was our goal, to get away for four days and come back new and improved.

Enter Arizona. Its proximity to San Diego made the spontaneous getaway uncomplicated, not to mention, we heard of two properties that had the power to push the reset button on life.

Tucked into the untamed Sonoran Desert, CIVANA Wellness Resort & Spa would start our path to wholeness, followed by Castle Hot Springs which would continue our journey to healing in the foothills of the Bradshaw Mountains. Two nights at each resort was what we decided to do to unplug from the world and reconnect to ourselves.

Simplicity was our priority, not budget. And so, we flew via JSX hop-on jet service. As first timers, we learned that the public charter traveled to more than 40 destinations, including Scottsdale. Gone were the security lines, the crowded terminals, and the hidden fees, meaning we could park and arrive just 20 minutes before takeoff. Included in the \$279 ticket price were cocktails, Wi-Fi, business-class legroom, and oversized baggage.

A 7-mile dusty road leads to the lush oasis of Castle Hot Springs.



Trust me, we were carrying some serious baggage (figuratively, of course).

The past year wrung us out, and now Arizona was hanging us out to dry with a bad start. Somehow the rental car agency had “sold out” of vehicles. For over two hours, we stood in line hoping for a set of wheels that would take us to utopia.

Mentally, I was at a dangerous place and on the verge of getting ugly, the type where my husband walks away and pretends I’m a stranger. Stepping out of line, I went directly to the parking garage and showed an attendant our reservation. To my surprise, he handed us a set of keys and we were off, that is until we were stopped five minutes later for potential car theft.

Back to the airport we went, waiting another 45 minutes for a vehicle we hadn’t reserved, costing double the original price. And of course, things got ugly. That’s when a text message arrived from our house sitter, informing me that my pet turkey had gone missing.

Teetering between anger and sadness, I had nothing to say. Traffic was at a standstill, we hadn’t eaten all day, and my pre-booked meditation class was starting in five minutes.

And so, I bit down on my knuckles and screamed.

“Well, this is certainly off to a good start,” Benjamin said.

Everything I had aimed to quell was boiling at the surface, and now all I wanted to do was wash away the day.

Somehow, CIVANA sensed that, greeting me with a pool where I swam laps alone at sunset. Within minutes, I could feel the stress dripping off my body. The setting certainly helped, a 1960’s mid-century modern hotel in a town appropriately named “Carefree.”

Originally designed by Frank Lloyd Wright’s understudy, Joe Wong, the property was resurrected in 2018 as CIVANA Wellness Resort. The \$40 million dollar facelift was tight, with 144 neutral-toned rooms in stone, wood, and glass reflective of the desert.

Never did I expect cacti to be so esthetically soothing, saluting the marbled sky and fading into the starry night. Webbing out from the 20-acre resort were pebble-framed trails that led to the café, restaurant, fitness studios, and 22,000-sq-ft spa.

Boldly launching during the pandemic, CIVANA is clearly the cool kid on the block, luring wellness-focused millennials with its price point and a mindset that self-love is okay.

Apparently, women got the memo. Bachelorette parties, girls’ getaways, and sister retreats left my husband saying, “I feel very alone.”

In my opinion, that was actually the point, for us to be (or at least feel) alone in our united solidarity. CIVANA went out of its way to do that through their pillars of discovery and nourishment. Starting with the latter, we dined at Terras with mouths-wide-open during dinner of eggplant hummus, seared scallops, and Faroe Island salmon.

“I think I need some carbs,” I whispered.

The veggie-forward menu had gluten free, grain free, dairy free, and other “free” (not to be confused with “complementary”) options; An entrée alone runs about \$50, but throw in the resort perks, and



Reaching new heights at Arizona’s only Via Ferrata Adventure course, located at Castle Hot Springs.

25TH ANNUAL **40 UNDER 40**

NOMINATE YOUR FAVORITE SAN DIEGANS UNDER 40 YEARS OF AGE FOR OUR 25TH 40 UNDER 40 ANNIVERSARY.

NOMINATIONS ARE DUE BY APRIL 15TH



Hotel Emma lures with a style of industrial-meets-smokeasy.

the price tag doesn't seem so heavy.

Included in the \$500+/- nightly rate are bikes, hiking trails, wellness guides, aqua therapy, and over 100 movement, personal growth, and spiritual classes. I opted for yoga, cardio strength, and “Band and Buns” while Benjamin zenned out with breathwork, meditation, and sound-healing.

In true “us” form, we packed our schedules with classes and spa treatments. Of course, there were gardens and labyrinths to quiet the mind, open the heart, and ground the body. Benjamin explored them. I did not, because I was too busy running to my next class. Like students on campus, we would wave in passing or meet up for lunch over smoothies and antioxidant bowls. Shaking my empty water bottle, I tapped my forehead.

“I already feel so hydrated. . . Oh, look, they have hard Kombucha!”

Despite our resolutions, we were on vacation—a time to let go, raise a glass, and toast to the fact we were reaping the benefits of our environment. Others got it, eating breakfast in bathrobes, sipping post-spa margaritas, and ditching workouts when suffering and leisure no longer aligned.

I was sad to leave CIVANA, having just awakened the 2.0 version of myself. As we packed the car for Castle Hot Springs, I felt

healthy, alive, and poised for what was next. During the hour drive, we passed spiny saguaro cacti, a wild donkey and a world of Winnebagos. Tumbleweeds rolled across desert plains, as if each one had a destination and a deadline.

“Is this where they filmed *Breaking Bad*?” I asked.

My husband didn't respond but mumbled something about our rental car being put to the test. In our wake was a plume of dust, leaving behind any sign of civilization. Thoughts of his tire-changing skills crossed my mind, along with my sudden desire to adopt a burro.

And then, there it was, an oasis thriving in the barrenness. Greeting us at parking was a valet who whisked us via golfcart through a private gate, down a palm tree-lined pathway, to Arizona's first luxury resort. At the center of the 1,200-acre property were pools and ponds dotting manicured gardens and vibrant lawns so perfect, you'd swear you were living in an AI post.

Castle Hot Springs existed to help people come up, and then slow down with mindful activities, rugged nature, and soft adventure. While rates were three times that of CIVANA, it was one-size-fits-all with an inclusive experience covering tours, meals, gratuities, resort fees, in-room amenities, valet, cart service, and endless



The 22,000 sq-ft spa is the heartbeat of CIVANA.

activities. Hiking, archery, paddleboarding, biking, horseback riding, pickleball, gardening, stargazing, wine-tasting, yoga – you name it! – and they had a personal guide to take you from adventure to relaxation.

The diamonds of this jewelry box, however, are the hot springs that have been replenishing souls since 1896. From the Yavapai Tribe who soaked for medicinal purposes, to the prospectors who sold the land to the Murphy brothers for development, word spread of the healing waters and fertile soil in the Bradshaw Mountains.

The Rockefellers, Wrigleys, Vanderbilts, and Roosevelts all escaped to this sanctuary of wellbeing that pioneered Arizona's first tennis courts, golf course, and telephone. In 1943, it served as a military rehabilitation center for injured veterans, including future president, John F. Kennedy. Despite its curative properties, Castle Hot Springs went up in flames in 1975.

For over 40 years, the charred resort sat desolate, ready for someone to resuscitate its heart so that it might once again breathe life into others. Along came Cindy and Mike Watts, who first spotted the land while flying over during quail-hunting season. For around \$2 million dollars, they purchased the skeleton resort with only three buildings remaining. After a five-year historic restoration, Castle Hot Springs finally had the resurrection it deserved, earning accolades for being among one of the world's best hotels.

Understandably so. Designed with luxury and relaxation in mind, 30 bungalows and cottages boast stone tubs, covered decks, telescopes, and indoor-outdoor fireplaces. Each room is strategically located at the water's edge so you can fall asleep to the sound of the babbling creek.

Clearly, we had found our healing place. Pulling back the curtains, my husband inhaled deeply and closed his eyes.

"Oh look, a hiking trail," I clapped behind him.

Alas, it was, and 17 of them to be exact. From aerial walkways and agave farms to canyon caves and mountain summits, we explored as many as we could in between yoga, massages, biking,



CIVANA Wellness Resort is nestled in the Sonoran Desert, just outside Scottsdale.

rock climbing, and farm tours. The latter ignited an unparalleled appreciation for the kitchen, where the chef and farmer work in unison; so much so, that they create the daily 4-course tasting menu together.

During our tour through the "living pantry," we tasted leafy greens and fragrant herbs that made their way from farm-to-fork later that night. With over 3-acres under cultivation, the team of agronomists harvest more than 150 varieties of crops each season. Nova Scotia halibut with beluga lentils or Colorado lamb with pistachio butter and sweet potato fondant? Choices, choices.

If only we had more time and doggie bags to take home the feeling of Castle Hot Springs when life turned south. It was the type of place that coated you in experiences over accommodations, and memories over moments. We felt it during our bike tour, cruising down a network of singletrack trails, mining roads, and narrow canyons. It hit us again during our multiple soaks in the thermal pools.

We slept deep that night, so deep in fact, that when we awakened, it was time to go – at noon. Driving back to the airport, we once again sat in silence. Only this time, I wasn't thinking about rental cars and traffic and the meditation class I was about to miss.

Instead, I was thinking about the miracle of an oasis that withstood the flames of the past to extinguish the pain of the present. I thought about how those restorative waters had the power to plunge me out of exhaustion and emerge me anew with a deeper understanding and appreciation of loving myself. I thought about how cultivating wellness—from the food that I eat to the hours that I sleep— is a purposeful journey, not a prescribed destination. I thought about how two resorts in the Arizona desert revealed the importance of staying aligned in 2024, versus reaching a point of pushing reset.

How neural inhibition could reduce alcohol use

A Scripps Research team shows that suppressing the activity of certain stress neurons may decrease alcohol use—but not anxiety—in comorbid cases of post-traumatic stress disorder and alcohol use disorder.



“Understanding the neurobiology of PTSD-AUD is key for development of future intervention strategies for this devastating comorbidity,”

LA JOLLA, CA—Neuroscientists at Scripps Research have found that inhibiting neurons involved in the body’s stress response may reduce alcohol consumption in people who have both posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and alcohol use disorder (AUD) – even if they still experience trauma-related anxiety.

The findings were published March 21 in *Molecular Psychiatry*. These discoveries are helping untangle the complex role that stress and trauma play in neurological disorders like PTSD and AUD, while also informing the development of new treatment options for people who experience both these conditions simultaneously.

“Traumatic experiences in life can increase vulnerability to alcohol drinking and exacerbate symptoms of depression and anxiety,” says senior author Marisa Roberto, PhD, the Schimmel Family Endowed Chair and vice chair of the Department of Molecular Medicine. “Alcohol is often used as a coping strategy to blur trauma-associated memories and diminish negative emotional states.”

PTSD and AUD are often comorbid, so understanding their underlying neurological mechanisms in tandem is crucial. About 6% of the U.S. population will develop PTSD at some point, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and people with PTSD have a 30% lifetime prevalence of AUD.

However, few pharmaceutical therapies exist to treat the disorders together.

Roberto’s team previously created a model in which rats develop symptoms similar to what people with comorbid PTSD and AUD experience: aggression, anxiety, hyperarousal, disturbed sleep and increased alcohol consumption.

In this new study, they compared these rats with those that did not exhibit anxiety-like behaviors by giving each group access to both alcohol and water.

Compared with unstressed rats, those that were stressed exhibited higher levels of peripheral stress hormones, and various

genes in the central amygdala, including one that encodes for the neuropeptide known as corticotropin-releasing factor (CRF), were also shown to be altered in stressed rats.

CRF exists in the central amygdala, a part of the brain that’s altered by excessive drinking and is responsible for processing fear. Stress causes neural release of CRF, which plays a key role in regulating physiological responses to the emotion.

Prior research with rats has shown that inhibiting neurons that express CRF reduces alcohol consumption.

After identifying that the stressed rats expressed higher levels of CRF in the amygdala, the researchers then inhibited CRF-producing neurons in the stressed group. As expected, they found that this decreased alcohol consumption—but it didn’t mitigate anxiety as they initially thought it would.

“We were surprised to see that the anxiety phenotypes were not reduced when silencing CRF expressing neurons in the central amygdala, suggesting other neuropeptide co-factors might be at play,” says the study’s first author, Bryan Cruz, PhD, a postdoctoral fellow at Scripps Research.

The results suggest that CRF plays a role in alcohol use among those with comorbid PTSD and AUD. Still, the researchers conclude that future studies need to disentangle the neurological mechanisms behind stress-related alcohol consumption and trauma-induced anxiety.

“Understanding the neurobiology of PTSD-AUD is key for development of future intervention strategies for this devastating comorbidity,” says Roberto. “We speculate that other neuropeptides with anti-stress properties may be involved in PTSD-AUD.”

This work and the researchers involved were supported by funding from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and the Schimmel Family Chair and Pearson Center for Alcoholism and Addiction Research.

Charting New Waters

Debra Rosen's Post-Retirement Odyssey

by Sheila Alston



After 14 remarkable years as the President/CEO of the North San Diego Business Chamber, Debra Rosen bid farewell to her esteemed role in June last year. Her tenure was marked by transformative leadership, guiding the chamber through financial adversity to prosperity and fostering a vibrant business community.

Under her stewardship, the chamber witnessed a remarkable turnaround, overcoming significant financial hurdles to emerge stronger than ever. Former board chair Trudy Armstrong attested to Rosen's dynamic leadership, highlighting her pivotal role in rebuilding the chamber and instilling confidence in its future.

But retirement for Rosen wasn't just about bidding adieu to boardrooms; it was about embracing new horizons with her husband, Mike. Their meticulously planned adventure took shape over five years, culminating in the purchase of a Catamaran in Australia in 2019. Their journey commenced with setting sail on the Baja Ha Ha in October 2023, sailing from San Diego to Cabo San Lucas amidst a community of boating enthusiasts from across the continent.

Rosen's spirit of adventure and zest for life continue to inspire, as she embarks on a voyage of discovery, exploring the azure waters of the Sea of Cortez and beyond. Their travels promise encounters with new cultures, breathtaking landscapes, and the freedom of the open sea.

While this article provides a glimpse into Debra Rosen's exciting new chapter, the full story of her Baja adventure awaits. **Scan the QR code to delve deeper into "From Boardroom to Baja Beaches - The Baja Ha-ha Adventure!" and join Debra on her exhilarating journey beyond the business world.**



www.localumbrellamedia.com/baja-ha-ha-adventure/

We offer the following services and ask that you give us the opportunity in your next commercial real estate transaction so we can make your experience a positive one.

SALES & LEASING

- OFFICE & RETAIL
- MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING
- INDUSTRIAL & WAREHOUSE
- AUTOMOTIVE & SELF-STORAGE
- 1031 TAX DEFERRED EXCHANGES
- VACANT LOT & LAND DEVELOPMENT
- NATIONWIDE & INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENTS



527

TOTAL TRANSACTIONS
IN 2023



+/-304

CURRENT ACTIVE LISTINGS



6.62 M+

SQUARE FEET UNDER
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT



50+

REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS

Martin F. Alfaro

Experience. Integrity. Results.

"Always looking after your best interest"

Lic# 01230078

Office (619) 469-3600

Direct (858) 598-2890

Cell (619) 252-2452

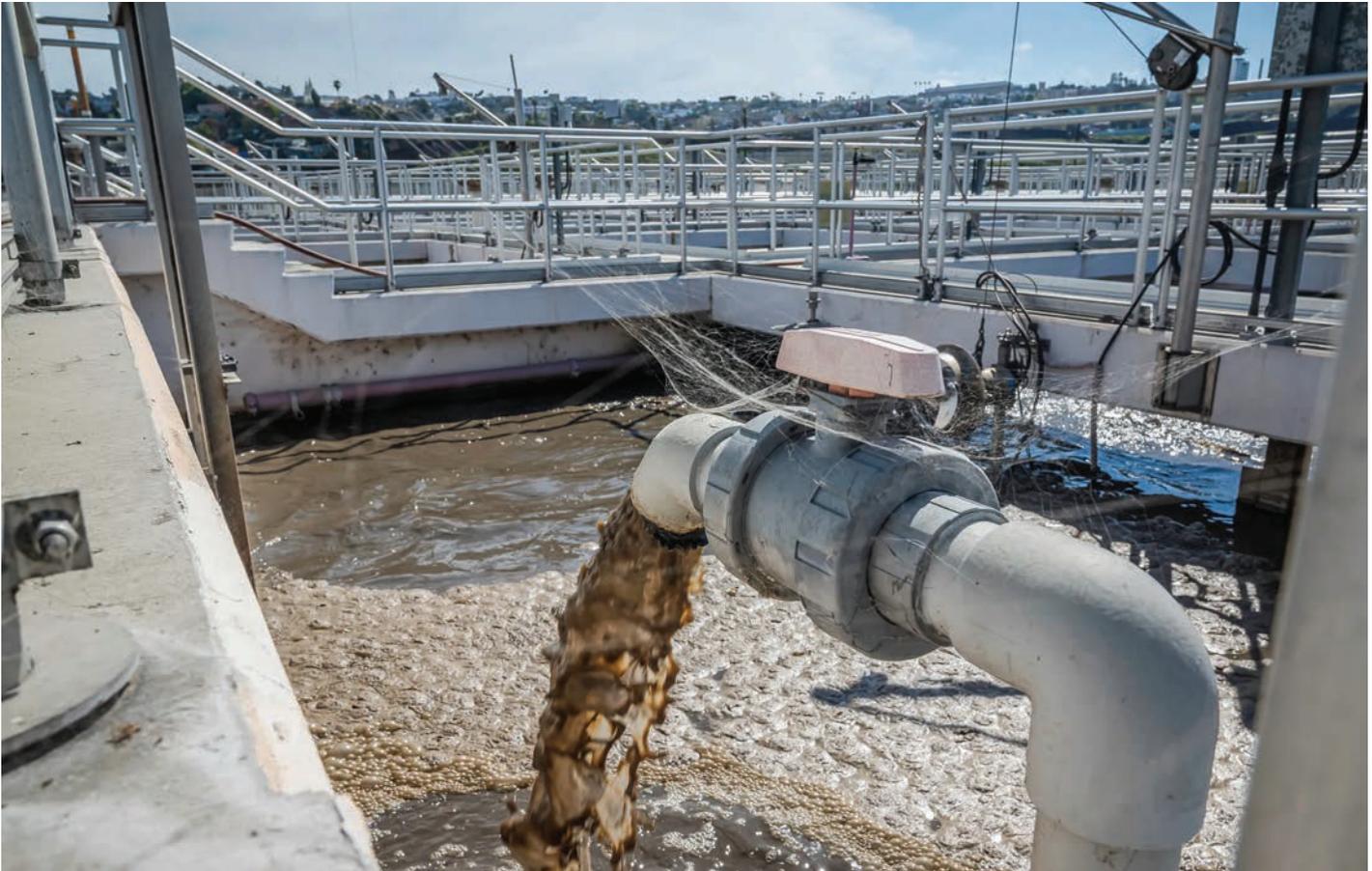
pacificcoastcommercial.com



**PACIFIC COAST
COMMERCIAL**

SALES - MANAGEMENT - LEASING





The South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant in San Ysidro, California, on the U.S.-Mexico border on March 28, 2024. / Photo by Vito di Stefano for Voice of San Diego

Environment Report: US Steps up Watchdog Role Over Tijuana Sewage System

BY MACKENZIE ELMER | VOICE OF SAN DIEGO

The IBWC will begin monthly inspections of a key wastewater pump that keeps sewage from spilling into the Tijuana River, among other collaborations.

Years ago, in a moment of despair over the utter dead-end that solving the Tijuana River sewage crisis seemed to be, I asked U.S. officials why we don't just cross the border and start fixing broken pipes in Mexico.

Nations can't just cross each other's borders like that, MacKenzie, the kindly federal official told me. At least, they shouldn't. It would be a rude mistake. Mexico could consider such federal intrusion without permission as an act of war.

But President Joe Biden's pick to rein in cross-border sewage

spills has found a way to leverage her relationships with Mexico to encourage more collaborative U.S. involvement. Maria-Elena Giner announced to reporters during a press conference last week that the International Boundary and Water Commission (the binational agency that deals with cross-border water issues) will start monthly inspections of a key sewage pump and trash shredder in Tijuana that feeds wastewater into San Diego for treatment. That's new for the IBWC.

Giner credited her Mexican counterpart, Adriana Reséndez

Maldonado, and Baja California's governor, Marina del Pilar Avila Olmeda, for working to coordinate meetings between the officials from both countries to work on the problem.

The pump, named PBCILA (don't ask me what it stands for), has been a thorn in the IBWC's side for years. Its only job is to pump polluted water out of the Tijuana River and send it to be cleaned at treatment plants on both sides of the border. Mexico paid to fix up PBCILA back in 2021. Before then, the damn thing shut down randomly. Sometimes there was a reason, like, when it's raining and there's too much water for the pump to handle. Sometimes, it shut down without any explanation.

The South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant in San Ysidro, California, on the U.S.-Mexico border on March 28, 2024. / Photo by Vito di Stefano for Voice of San Diego

Now we know one reason: No one was paying the PBCILA power bill. Giner shared with reporters that the IBWC's been picking up the tab.

"No more excuses that they have to shut off the electricity because they can't pay," she said.

How much PBCILA's power bill costs the already cash strapped IBWC is unclear. I'm still waiting to hear back on the amount.

Summertime is PBCILA's moment to shine. When summer

hits Baja California, the Tijuana River shouldn't be flowing. It's a seasonal river, meaning it should run dry during the dry season. But the river's been flowing year-round for at least a year, which means spills – be it sewage or treated wastewater from Mexican plants up river – are still happening.

The IBWC also plans to team up with its Mexican counterpart, called CILA, to survey the river on the Tijuana side this summer for the first time. The goal? Figure out once and for all where and how sewage and other spills get into the Tijuana River channel.

Here's another thing I'm watching: Recall when a sewer pipe running through a Tijuana border canyon snapped in half last year? Mexico finished restoring the pipe but it's not online yet. Because that pipe isn't currently transporting Tijuana sewage to a wastewater treatment plant on the coast, there's more sewage making its way into the Tijuana River – which spills directly below the city of Imperial Beach.

Giner said there's not much she can do to get Mexico to use its own pipe.

"That is an area outside of my control, but not outside my influence," Giner said.

She said she'll be back in town in a few weeks to hold meetings with the feds in Mexico specifically about that pipe.

Sunday Funday

ANNIVERSARY PARTY & FUNDRAISER

4/14/2024 1PM-6PM
AT 1899 MCKEE ST SAN DIEGO 92110

Food & Drink

RAFFLE

BID

FASHION SHOW BY:

GET TICKETS AT: [ITSALLABOUTTHEKIDS.ORG/FUNDRAISERS](https://itsallaboutthekids.org/fundraisers)

20 YEARS

it's all about
The Kids

8 YEARS

Determined and Dedicated Injury Attorneys

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS AWARDS

SCAN ME

FEATURING SAN DIEGO'S BEST HOUSE MUSIC

S U L E I L

DJ ALA CRIS HERRERA

WATERPARK JONES CANDI CANE

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS:

KIDS ARE FREE*
*UNDER 18 W/
ADULT

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #3175
SAN DIEGO, CA



AND IT'S JUST THE BEGINNING OF YOUR ASCENT.

Congratulations
from Alaska Airlines
to San Diego's
Best Attorneys.
Your ambition and
success are what
keeps taking you—
and San Diego—to
new heights.

Alaska
AIRLINES

