

San Diego Newsline

Downtown San Diego news — the budget, public safety, business, and the civic life of America's Finest City

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DOWNTOWN

Gaslamp Urban Pickleball



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Be Part of History — San Diego’s First-Ever Urban Pickleball Courts

A Better Deal Is in Play. With support from our community partners, we’re excited to offer a new lower registration price.

Play on Fifth Avenue under the lights, with live DJs, prizes, and paddle hour specials — only for six Thursdays this summer. Now – Sept 3 | 4 PM – Sunset | 5th & Island | \$35 registration

Gaslamp Urban Pickleball is making history as San Diego’s first-ever street-style pickleball event — right in the heart of the Gaslamp Quarter in Downtown San Diego .

From July 30th to September 3rd, Fifth Avenue transforms every Thursday into a vibrant, open-air San Diego pickleball court , complete with live DJs, a game day market, and Paddle Hour specials at local restaurants and bars.

Whether you’re a local or visiting San Diego , this is one of the most exciting new things to do in Downtown San Diego this summer.

Play on San Diego’s first-ever urban pickleball court—set right in the streets of Downtown

Happening every Thursday, July 30th–September 3rd, from 4PM to sunset, right on 5th Avenue

Court-side beats by live DJs to keep the energy high while you rally

Game Day Market featuring sports apparel, gear, wellness brands, and more

Try your luck at the Wheel of Serves—win prizes, merch, and exclusive giveaways!

Paddle Hour Specials at nearby

bars and restaurants to keep the fun going after the match

All skill levels welcome—from first-time players to seasoned paddle pros

Dates: Every Thursday, July 30th – September 3rd

Location: 5th Avenue between Island & K, Gaslamp Quarter

Prime Time Play : 8 Courts in Action from 4pm to Sunset

Cost: \$35. Pre-registration recommended. (includes court time, t-shirt, access to the Game Day Market, and exclusive Paddle Hour perks)

Your own paddle (limited rentals available)

Water bottle (refill stations available)

Open during gameplay starting at 4 PM.Need a break between games?

Head over to the Zero Proof Garden for refreshing zero-proof drinks, wellness beverages, hydration stations, and laid-back lounge vibes.

The Zero Proof Garden is the perfect place to cool down, recharge, and hang out while enjoying the energy of Gaslamp Urban Pickleball in Downtown San Diego.

Shop, explore, and discover local favorites at the Gaslamp Urban Pickleball Game Day Market. Featuring local vendors, pickleball gear, sports apparel, wellness brands, lifestyle products, giveaways, and more.

REGISTER NOW! GASLAMP URBAN PICKLEBALL Open Play – Ladder Style Format

Embarking on his DJ journey in 2012 in San Marcos, Texas, he quickly found his rhythm with two weekly residencies and was soon named Best DJ of 2013 at Texas State University by Study Breaks magazine. Within just a few years, he secured four nightclub residencies across San Marcos and Austin, cementing his status as one of Central Texas’ most promising talents.

His career took off with performances at X-Games Austin 2014 and multiple SXSW showcases (2014–2016) , sharing stages with world-renowned acts including The Chainsmokers, SLANDER, Borgeous, MAKJ, HeroBust, Dieselboy, Dada Life, Getter, Kill the Noise, Boombox Cartel, Kayzo, and Zomboy .

After relocating to San Diego, he landed his first residency at El Chingon , where he quickly built a following and expanded to venues across the city. Known for his high-energy sets and ability to ignite any dance floor, he continues to craft unforgettable experiences for every crowd he plays.

Happy Hour specials are available only with a Gaslamp Pickleball wristband.

Happy Hour specials are available only with a Gaslamp Pickleball wristband. Specials provided by individual venues. Must be 21+ with valid ID to purchase alcohol. Please drink responsibly

Everyone’s favorite side quest—now with swag.

Step up to the Wheel of Serves , the Gaslamp’s own

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

Courts · Transit · Public safety

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Gaslamp Urban Pickleball

pickleball-themed prize wheel loaded with exclusive giveaways from local businesses and event sponsors.

Pre-Register to Play REGISTER NOW! Spots are limited—secure your court time now.

Exclusive Paddle Hour drink & dining deals

The chance to rally, vibe, and play in the heart of Downtown San Diego

Know Before You Play Do I need to bring my own paddle? Bringing your own paddle is encouraged, but if you don’t have one—no worries. We’ll have a limited number of paddles available on-site for use.

Participation is \$45 per player . This includes court time, access to the Game Day Market, t-shirt, exclusive Paddle Hour deals, and a chance to spin the Wheel of Serves for prizes.

Walk-ups are welcome, but pre-registration is highly recommended to guarantee your spot. Space is limited and fills up fast.

All skill levels are welcome—from first-timers to seasoned players. Whether you’re here to learn, compete, or just soak up the energy, there’s a space for everyone on the court.

This is casual open play —rotating games, good vibes, and no brackets. It’s a social experience, not a competitive bracketed event.

Yes! All ages are welcome. Just note that some Paddle Hour specials are only available to guests 21+.

There are several convenient parking options near the court:

Park It on Market Garage 614 Market St, San

Diego, CA 92101 One block from the court with affordable hourly rates.

6th & K Parkade 289 Sixth Ave, San Diego, CA 92101 Close to Petco Park and a short walk to 5th Ave.

Gaslamp City Square Garage 421 Fourth Ave, San Diego, CA 92101 Centrally located in the heart of the Gaslamp.

Street Parking Metered parking is available throughout the district. We recommend using the ParkMobile app for easy payment and time tracking.

Pro Tip: Arrive early to get a good spot and enjoy Paddle Hour specials before your match.

Gaslamp Quarter Association news release · Jul 17, 2025



Illustration from a photo by Lance Cpl. Katalynn Rodgers · Wikimedia Commons, Public domain

COUNTY

EMS Trainees and Their Families Connect With Career Path, Mentors

T rainees in San Diego County Fire’s new Emergency Medical Services Corps demonstrated hands-only CPR and equipment in an ambulance for family as a way to share what they’re learning and introduce them to their real-world coaches and instructors .

County Fire operates the EMS Corps, a five-month, hands-on rigorous training program for juvenile justice or child welfare systems-involved young adults, ages 18-26, to prepare them for careers as emergency medical technicians.

The Family Night was hosted in Chula Vista Friday by SBCS , formerly South Bay Community Services, for the first group of EMS Corps trainees, who just started the program two weeks ago. SBCS is one of the key providers for the program.

“The County is committed to guiding justice –involved or child welfare-related youth

find successful career paths like this one,” County Fire Director Jeff Collins said. “It also addresses a national workforce shortage in the EMS field.”

Trainees are paid a stipend while they receive emergency medical technician training and mentorship from experienced EMTs, firefighters and paramedics. The program helps students gain practical skills, confidence and a pathway into a high-demand career.

“Programs like this are closing the opportunity gap for youth who don’t have as much support as their higher income peers,” said SBCS CEO Kathryn Lembo. “It’s more than job training—it’s an incredible support system helping these motivated young people gain stability, skills, and confidence for a self-sufficient future they can be proud of.”

The trainees also receive academic tutoring, job placement assistance, and other supportive services as part of the program.

Applications for the second cohort of EMS Corp will open in September and adults 18-26 are encouraged to apply. Two more cohorts are also planned for 2026. Learn more at sandiegoemscorps.org .

EMS Corps partners also include Southwestern College , American Medical Response , Falck , Premier Ambulance , San Diego Workforce Partnership , The Children’s Initiative , Logan Heights CDC , and Project AWARE .

County of San Diego news release · Jul 21, 2025

COUNTY

County Library Food Programs Feed Thousands

Everyone knows libraries offer books. But 16 County Library branches are meeting a different kind of community need this time of year – summer meals and food pantries.

The food programs serve those in isolated communities and places where the need is highest.

In addition to the summer meals and summer food pantries, some branches offer year-round pantries, meals for seniors and after-school snacks. In all, that’s 25 food programs at 16 branch locations.

Feeding San Diego provides

the food at County libraries, helping to reach children who typically rely on school meals but may not get enough to eat during the summer months. The organization reports that one in seven children in the county face food insecurity.

Over the past year, more than 556,600 pounds of food have been distributed at library locations, reaching 27,833 households.

Feeding San Diego uses federal grants to pay for the summer meals. A state library grant provides programs, books and supplies during the food programs to encourage the use of the library, reading and learning.

“By offering meals and food resources alongside our summer programs, we’re able to support families not only through learning opportunities but also by helping meet essential needs — especially in high-need or isolated areas where access to food can be limited during the summer months.” said County Library Director Migell Acosta.

The Library says the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

“Our sites and meal services have expanded over the last three years, serving more children and families than ever.” said Library Youth Services Manager Jodi dela Pena.

These food programs are another example of how libraries are evolving into central places where the community gathers. County Library offers something for most everyone in the way of cultural events, classes ranging from crafts to Zumba , magic shows, chess and music clubs, writers’ groups and of course, story time. The Library also offers a free online Library High School , Cool Zones during the hot summer months and much more.

You can find out more about the County Library’s 33 branches and their programs at sdcl.org . To find out more about food distribution sites around the county, visit 211 .

County of San Diego news release · Jul 18, 2025

COUNTY

Volunteers Provide Comfort for County Shelter Animals with Handmade Beds

At the County’s Carlsbad

animal shelter, a volunteer group known as Kennel Comforters gathers the first weekend of every month to make cozy, handmade beds for shelter animals.

Volunteers form an assembly line to cut, stuff and sew washable beds of all shapes and sizes—from small round ones for cats to larger flat mats for dogs.

The group began partnering with the County about 15 years ago and now provides beds for both the Carlsbad and Bonita shelters, as well as other animal care facilities across the region.

On a typical weekend, they make between 65 and 70 beds. Volunteers take donated fabric home in advance to prep, so that by the time they arrive at the shelter, they can focus on assembly.

The group originally made only small, round beds for cats but has since expanded to meet the needs of shelter staff, creating flat mats and custom sizes as needed. Each bed is finished with a heart-shaped stitch—a detail that started as a personal touch and has since become the group’s signature.

Longtime volunteer Carole Lee says the work helps her feel like she’s making a difference.

“I would love to take them all home,” Lee said, “but since I can’t, I make them a bed.”

Kennel Comforters welcomes volunteers of all ages and skill levels. While sewing requires experience with a machine, there are plenty of other ways to help—from cutting and prepping fabric to stuffing and organizing supplies. Even kids can help out.

The County’s Department of Animal Services provides space and support at the Carlsbad shelter, including a dedicated storage closet for supplies between sessions.

For more information or to get involved, visit Kennel Comforters’ Facebook page .

You can also support local animals in need by donating to the Spirit Fund to help provide free veterinary care, or by volunteering at a County animal shelter.

County of San Diego news release · Jul 18, 2025

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BUSINESS
City of San Diego Budget

This year’s budget discussions for the City of San Diego focused on how to balance City needs and priorities with the City’s current financial restraints. Mayor Todd Gloria has emphasized producing a budget that maintains core services without further jeopardizing the City’s long-term financial stability.

The San Diego City Council passed its \$6 billion FY2026 budget on June 23 rd by a vote of 6-3. Earlier in the process, the Council approved the proposed budget, with a handful of modifications that increased the City’s spending for the upcoming fiscal year on various programs and services. Mayor Gloria

utilized his ability to line-item veto a number of these modifications, which came back to the Council on the 23 rd . Opinions on Council were mixed when it came to a full override of the proposed vetoes. Ultimately, the Council passed a budget that restored funding to select priorities, including City lakes, brush management, and other community services, by overriding some, but not all, of the Mayor’s vetoes.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jul 18, 2025

BUSINESS
2025 North American Forum

VP Kenia Zamarripa participated in the North American Forum, a trilateral effort founded in 2004 to bring together business, government, and academia leaders from Canada, Mexico, and the United States to advance a shared North American vision. The NAF helps promote policy agendas in each country to encourage trilateral cooperation and respond to shared priorities to boost economic

competitiveness; energy, the environment, and climate change; and regional security. Key topics included manufacturing uncertainty, Chinese transshipments, resource sharing, and the importance of resilient supply chains. In addition, delegates recognized the challenges presented by having new political leadership in each country which requires engagement from a variety of stakeholders, and how the unstable trade dynamic has taken a toll on diplomatic relationships.

Following the NAF, a joint statement was released by Co-Chairs Ambassador Thomas Shannon (U.S.), Dr. Jaime Zabudovsky (Mexico), and Goldy Hyder (Canada) to memorialize key discussion points and conclusions from this year’s conversations.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jul 18, 2025

BUSINESS
USMCA Forum & Trade Update

The Chamber hosted its second International

Business Affairs Forum of the year and second in-person IBA forum since the pandemic to discuss success stories and policy and industry challenges as North America engages in a revision of the trilateral USMCA agreement. The conversation featured Consul General of Canada in Los Angeles, Zaib Shaikh, Consul General of Mexico in San Diego, Alicia Kerber Palma, and Chamber International Business Affairs Chair, Lalo Acosta. With a full house, including elected officials from both sides of the border, panelists took a deep dive into the multiple impacts of recently imposed tariffs, the threat of tariffs, and how businesses in each country have leveraged the agreement to boost economic development. The conversation also highlighted a need for businesses to engage and elevate their concerns to the federal administration and make the economic case for free trade agreements and supporting policies, including leveraging Chamber-led delegation trips to Washington, D.C. and Mexico City.

Earlier this month, VP of International and Public Affairs, Kenia Zamarripa and Board member David Perez Tejada also joined Consul General of Canada in Los Angeles Zaib Shaikh and Consul General of Mexico in Los Angeles, Carlos Gonzalez Gutierrez, to celebrate USMCA’s fifth anniversary and celebrate Canada Day.

Following these series of events, the federal administration released a letter addressed to Canada’s Prime Minister, Mark Carney, imposing a 35% tariff starting August 1 st . Another letter was also addressed to Mexico’s President, Claudia Sheinbaum, imposing 30% tariffs also starting August 1 st . Both countries have announced ongoing negotiation talks with the federal administration to ensure a trade deal that benefits all. While this tariff will not affect goods under USMCA, key leaders are already negotiating the revision of the agreement looking ahead of 2026.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jul 18, 2025

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON



Volunteers give comfort, no cost to you

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

Public Employee Unions Create a Hidden Crisis in Government Operations

Unchecked public employee union power drives up costs, erodes accountability, and holds taxpayers hostage, especially in California, according to Jon Fleischman.

Public employee unions place their own priorities above the general welfare of citizens, producing a structural imbalance unlike anything seen in the private sector.

Unlike unions in competitive industries, government unions effectively control both sides of the bargaining table by negotiating with elected leaders who often received union backing during their campaigns. This arrangement allows unions to secure generous pay and benefits without the discipline of market forces.

Research from the California Policy Center shows that unions in the state collect more than \$1 billion in dues annually. Data compiled by Transparent California indicate that average public employee

compensation surpassed \$100,000 by 2024 while private-sector wages stayed largely unchanged.

Nationally, the Freedom Foundation estimates that unions gather roughly \$6 billion in dues each year, which directly feeds their political influence machine.

The roots of the current situation in California reach back to 1968, when then-Governor Ronald Reagan signed the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act granting local employees collective bargaining rights. The framework expanded in the 1970s with the Dill Act covering state workers.

The most consequential move occurred in 1999 when Governor Gray Davis approved Senate Bill 400, which dramatically enhanced pension benefits and created the widely criticized “3% at 50” retirement option for public safety workers. That measure helped produce an estimated \$300 billion unfunded liability.

Both President Franklin D. Roosevelt and labor leader Samuel Gompers warned against public-sector collective bargaining. Roosevelt wrote in a 1937 letter that "the process of

collective bargaining, as usually understood, cannot be transplanted into the public service" and that a strike by public employees "manifests nothing less than an intent on their part to prevent or obstruct the operations of Government until their demands are satisfied. Such action, looking toward the paralysis of Government by those who have sworn to support it, is unthinkable and intolerable."

In 2021 the California Correctional Peace Officers Association negotiated a 2.5% salary increase and \$5,000 bonuses for its 26,000 members, then contributed \$1.75 million to support Governor Gavin Newsom during his recall election, as reported by The Sacramento Bee.

No union spends more on politics than the California Teachers Association. The group focuses on member benefits rather than student welfare, which helps explain why Newsom moved quickly to close schools during the pandemic but delayed reopening them.

While private-sector workers faced widespread layoffs, public-sector compensation increased by

12 percent between 2020 and 2023. Unfunded pension obligations now burden taxpayers with hundreds of billions in future costs.

Similar dynamics appear in other states. Time magazine has described how union contracts in major cities severely limit mayoral authority over essential services, particularly education. The Freedom Foundation's research links union spending to pension shortfalls in Illinois, New York and elsewhere.

Although the 2018 Janus v. AFSCME ruling ended mandatory dues, pressure tactics persist. Analysis by the Mackinac Center finds that public compensation generally runs 10 to 14 percent above comparable private-sector levels. In California, Transparent California data show some police officers and firefighters earning over \$200,000 a year with overtime.

Several concrete changes modeled on Wisconsin's 2011 reforms that saved billions in taxpayer funds are needed. Among them: ending collective bargaining rights for public employees, strengthening right-to-work rules, requiring voter

approval for pension enhancements, banning the use of dues for political contributions and pursuing court challenges to limit union power.

Without such steps, salaries and benefits will keep climbing to unsustainable heights, government payrolls will expand, and California will face pressure for steep increases in property, sales and income taxes. Essential services from education to infrastructure will be squeezed while public trust in government erodes.

Elected leaders must recognize that voters' interests diverge from those of the public employee unions that finance their campaigns.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Jul 23, 2025

ABOUT THIS PAPER

San Diego Newsline covers downtown San Diego first — City Hall, the Gaslamp Quarter, East Village, Little Italy, Barrio Logan and the waterfront — and the county around it. Every item names its source; read the originals and our standards at sandiegonewsline.com.

MORE NEWS

COUNTY

Probation Youth Shine at Theater Camp

Three Probation youth not only got to help build theater sets backstage at the La Jolla Playhouse, they also got to build their self-esteem and their resumes.

The youth are students at the Youth Transition Campus and the week-long Tech Theatre Training camp is done in partnership with the theater, the San Diego County Office of Education and the County Probation Department.

“Programs like these support the long-term success of Probation youth by enriching their lives with creativity, structure, and opportunity,” said Mike Whatley, Probation division chief.

Whatley explained several reasons why programs like the theater camp are important for probation-involved youth. The young people get hands-on technical and creative skill

development, and they get to see themselves as capable and talented individuals, sometimes for the first time. This can help them build their self-esteem and give them a sense of purpose, he said.

Additionally, it puts them in a professional environment where they are encouraged to practice healthy communication, responsibility and collaboration.

Justice-involved youth have more often than not experienced trauma or instability in their lives. Experiences like the camp expose them to new possibilities and interests, and the arts provide a therapeutic outlet, Whatley said.

Theater teachers and technical staff lead the students through rigorous standards-based coursework that includes making props, scenery and pieces of the sets, as well as, lighting design, costume design and

special effects makeup.

At the end of the camp, they earn course credit and a certificate of completion from the La Jolla Playhouse. Both can be listed on the student's resume to support a career in theater or other professional goals.

The camp and similar programs help support County Probation's works to help justice-involved youth grow, heal, and build better futures.

County of San Diego news release · Jul 23, 2025

COUNTY

Wild Bat Found Outside in Oceanside Tests Positive for Rabies

County public health officials are looking for people who may have come in contact with a bat found on a sidewalk in Oceanside, on Westport Dr. between Point Sur and Marina Del Rey Ave. on July 18, 2025 that later tested positive for rabies.

If you or someone in your

family or group were in the area and had direct contact with the bat, or you know of someone who may have touched the bat, you are urged to contact County Public Health Services as soon as possible at (619) 692-8499.

“Human rabies is usually fatal without prompt post-exposure vaccine and treatment,” said Dr. Sayone Thihalolipavan , County public health officer. “Rabies transmission can happen from a bat bite or if a bat’s saliva comes in contact with a cut or abrasion, or with mucous membranes, such as the eyes, nose or mouth. Although bats can carry rabies, they are an important part of nature in San Diego County. It is important to respect the space of wildlife and do not touch them.”

So far in 2025, the County has detected seven rabid bats in the county. There are many species of bats found in San Diego County that feed on insects such as mosquitos. Other bat species feed on

nectar from plants and pollinate them in the process. You may see bats occasionally around sunset when they are most active.

It is important to appreciate wildlife from a safe distance and not touch them. If you do come in contact with a bat, wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water and seek medical advice immediately.

Rabies is a preventable viral disease that is most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal.

Symptoms of rabies in people can take weeks to months to develop after being exposed to a rabid animal. Once symptoms develop, rabies is almost always fatal. However, prompt post-exposure treatment following exposure to the virus will prevent the disease.

Find more information about bats and rabies on the County's website.

County of San Diego news release · Jul 22, 2025

The news, every day. sandiegonewsline.com