

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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COUNTY

Nine Animals Impounded from Julian Animal Wellness Center



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County Animal Services and San Diego Sheriff’s deputies served a search warrant Friday at Urban Feline, a holistic animal wellness center in Julian, and impounded nine animals in need of immediate veterinary attention.

Animal Services obtained a search warrant for the property after an earlier investigation of alleged neglectful treatment of a dog, said Vaughn Maurice, director of County Animal Services. The business owner, Andres Zepeda, was advised by an animal control officers at the time of the original investigation to seek veterinary care for the dog and was given time to do so, he said.

While animal control officers did not find the dog from the original investigation at Urban Feline, they found five cats and four dogs that required immediate veterinary attention and transported the nine pets to a veterinarian for evaluation and care.

The Department of Animal Services promotes the humane and responsible care of pets by providing the unincorporated areas of San Diego County with 24-hour animal rescues; helping those who can no longer care for their pets; investigating and stopping animal cruelty or neglect; enforcing state and local laws related to animals as needed; and educating the public about responsible care which includes animal welfare, restraint, and licensing benefits.

County of San Diego news release · May 9, 2025



Illustration

COUNTY

Local Mom Who Survived Cardiac Arrest for 86 Minutes Celebrates One Year Anniversary

A year ago, Michelle Alvarado faced death, only to be saved by an extraordinary medical procedure.

Recently, she celebrated that one-year anniversary with Nick Black, the National City Fire Department paramedic who made the right call at the right time and helped save her life.

Last May, Michelle experienced sudden cardiac arrest.

Nick made the critical decision to have her ambulance bypass the nearest hospitals and take Michelle instead to Sharp Memorial Hospital. There, she was treated with an established medical procedure as part of an innovative County of San Diego pilot project used to treat patients in cardiac arrest.

For 86 minutes, Michelle received CPR by Nick, multiple first responders, and the Emergency Department team to keep her blood pumping until she could be placed on ECMO.

ECMO, or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, is a medical procedure for critical patients with life-threatening heart or lung failure. An ECMO machine is used to pump blood out of a patient’s body, add oxygen, remove carbon dioxide, and then pump the blood back into the body.

ECMO saved Michelle’s life and was available to her because of a unique program that can be found in only a few locations around the world. In 2022, San Diego County brought

together local medical leaders to create the San Diego Resuscitation Consortium (SDRC) , with the goal of saving more lives using ECMO. A new system of care was established, and in 2023, the County launched the “Extracorporeal Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (ECPR) ” pilot program.

As part of the pilot program, paramedics identify eligible cardiac arrest patients in the community and transport them to one of three participating local hospitals, Sharp Memorial, Scripps La Jolla and Sharp Grossmont. Emergency physicians are available around the clock to immediately initiate life-saving treatment.

On November 7, 2024, UCSD Medical Center Hillcrest joined the pilot program, becoming the fourth approved ECPR Receiving Center in San Diego County. The program is setting a new standard and transforming cardiac arrest care worldwide.

Not all patients suffering sudden cardiac arrest are good candidates for the program. For those who are, ECMO can bring them back from certain death. Patients like Michelle Alvarado are living proof.

County of San Diego news release · May 9, 2025

COUNTY

Justice-Involved Youth Celebrated Positive Support People

In recognition of Mother’s Day, San Diego County Probation juveniles got to invite and celebrate a person or people that have offered them positive support.

Probation collaborated with the San Diego County Office of Education to host the family engagement event Friday at the Youth Transition Campus. The event drew 117 parents or other supportive adults and allowed young people to reconnect and share a meal with them.

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

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Justice-Involved Youth Celebrated Positive Support People

“Probation staff and leadership are proud to host engagement events that uplift the voices of our youth and honor those who stand by them during their journey of transformation,” said Mike Whatley, a Probation division chief. “By fostering supportive relationships and celebrating family engagement events, opportunities like this help build the emotional foundation necessary for successful reintegration and long-term personal development.”

Probation also recognizes the invaluable role that positive support people play in the lives of our justice-involved youth. The person, or persons, invited may have been a parent, guardian, mentor or other meaningful figure.

Participating youth welcomed their chosen positive support person to the facility and had an opportunity to express their gratitude to them with a framed portrait of themselves, a rose, and a hand-written appreciation card, said Whatley.

The Probation and San Diego County Office of Education collaboration exemplify a shared commitment to restorative practices and youth rehabilitation.

County of San Diego news release · May 13, 2025

COUNTY

County Names New Public Health Officer

Dr. Sayone Thihalolipavan has been named as the County of San Diego’s new Public Health Officer. Dr. Thihalolipavan most recently served as Public Health Medical Officer within the County’s Medical Care Services Department.

“We are excited to have Dr. Thihalolipavan accept this leadership position in the Public Health Services department,” said Kimberly Giardina, who leads the County’s Health and Human Services Agency as the deputy chief administrative officer. “He had a distinguished health career prior to joining the county and over the last decade has proven to be a leader in community engagement and collaboration on issues as diverse as the pandemic, opioid crisis and care coordination for vulnerable populations.”

Dr. Thihalolipavan (THIH-a-lo-li-PA-van) replaces Dr. Ankita Kadakia, who had served as interim public health officer following the July 2024 retirement of Dr. Wilman Wooten. Dr. Kadakia will return to her previous position as deputy public health officer and the County is grateful for her leadership and contributions in the interim position.

“I am humbled and honored to have been trusted with this opportunity,” said Dr. Thihalolipavan who will lead the County’s Public Health Services department. “I’m truly looking forward to continuing to serve San Diegans from our more populated coastline to our rural areas along with my amazing County colleagues and the broader public health community.”

A board-certified physician in Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Dr. Thihalolipavan started his career in New York City’s Department of Health and Mental Hygiene as the Medical Director of Tobacco Control and Chronic Disease Prevention. He joined the County of San Diego’s Health and Human Services Agency in 2015 as the Deputy Public Health Officer in Public Health Services.

Community engagement is a key focus for Dr. Thihalolipavan. His efforts include focusing on a collective impact approach that brings stakeholders together to serve all San Diegans, including historically disenfranchised communities and populations.

“Dr. Thihalolipavan is a great choice as the new Public Health Officer for San Diego County,” said Paul Hegyi, chief executive officer for the San Diego County Medical Society. “He knows this community well and always seeks out stakeholders to find the best solutions and help build a healthier San Diego region.”

Dr. Thihalolipavan played a pivotal role in multiple County public health responses, and these include the Covid-19 pandemic, Hepatitis A, meningococcal, Zika, and the opioid epidemic among others. During the Covid-19 pandemic, he drafted and reviewed health alerts, public communications and health orders, supported the reopening team, and routinely interfaced with various sectors.

He led the development of the County’s first naloxone distribution program in 2018. He continues to actively support collaborative efforts with health and safety partners to end the opioid epidemic as an executive committee member on the County’s Substance Use and Overdose Prevention Task Force.

Dr. Thihalolipavan holds a Master’s in Public Health from Columbia Mailman School of Public Health and a Medical Degree from New York University School of Medicine. He has been recognized with distinguished awards, including the San Diego County Top Doctors award in 2022 and the Kresge Foundation Emerging

Leaders in Public Health award in 2018 and has led or contributed to various peer-reviewed publications.

County of San Diego news release · May 12, 2025

COUNTY

Edgemoor Skilled Nursing Facility is a Source of County Pride

This week is National Skilled Nursing Care Week, a time to acknowledge the vital role skilled nursing facilities have in our communities and the valuable contributions of caregivers and staff.

In San Diego County, Edgemoor Skilled Nursing Facility is nationally recognized, providing high-level, specialized care for adults 18 years and up who require 24-hour support and rehabilitation.

Most Edgemoor residents have been diagnosed with a physical, cognitive or behavioral condition that requires complex, long-term care and support. Board-certified physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers and recreational therapists provide consistent and compassionate care daily and onsite.

Residents who typically find a home at Edgemoor are those who need advanced care, are covered by Medi Cal insurance and cannot be placed in other settings.

Despite primarily serving a clientele with limited means but requiring highly specialized care, Edgemoor regularly rates as a five-star facility and has been named one of the top nursing homes in the state and nation for over a decade.

County of San Diego news release · May 12, 2025

COUNTY

Update on Restaurant Salmonella Outbreak

To date, the County has recorded 37 probable and

Courts · Transit · Public safety

confirmed cases of people who have gotten sick with Salmonella after dining at the Aladdin Mediterranean Café in the Clairemont San Diego area between April 25 to May 1.

The restaurant voluntarily closed on May 1. Operators have since been working closely with the County’s Environmental Health and Quality Department (DEHQ) along with Public Health Services on the investigation into the outbreak.

The ages of those impacted range from 1 to 90 years old, with nine people hospitalized. The source of the Salmonella outbreak has not been identified and the investigation is ongoing.

The County continues to work closely with the restaurant operator. The restaurant will remain closed until it is safe to operate, and when its management is ready to reopen.

Salmonella causes an infection called Salmonellosis. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea that might have blood or mucous, abdominal cramps and fever. Symptoms generally begin 12 to 72 hours after eating contaminated food. Illness from salmonella can last 4 to 7 days. Most people recover without treatment.

People who dined at Aladdin Mediterranean Café between April 25 and May 1, 2025 and feel ill with any of the symptoms listed should contact a healthcare provider as needed.

People who are still ill or have recovered after dining at Aladdin Mediterranean Café can report their illness to DEHQ by calling (858) 505-6814 or through this form if on a desktop or laptop device and by emailing it to fhdepi@sdcounty.ca.gov .

County of San Diego news release · May 8, 2025

BUSINESS



Illustration

BUSINESS

Member Spotlight: Kevin L. Cadora – Leading Family Law Advocate in San Diego

Kevin L. Cadora is the CEO and founding partner of Fair Cadora , APC , a San Diego-based family law firm. As a California Board-Certified Family Law Specialist and a certified mediator and divorce coach, Kevin brings over 22 years of experience in

family law to every case. He has dedicated more than two decades of his career to helping families navigate divorce, custody disputes, and other complex family legal matters with skill and compassion. Kevin’s reputation as a seasoned litigator with a wealth of legal knowledge is matched by his friendly, down-to-earth approach that puts clients at ease.

Expertise and Compassion in Family Law

Kevin’s extensive credentials mean clients receive top-tier expertise. He is recognized by the State Bar of California as a Family Law Specialist, a mark of

excellence and dedication to the field. In addition, Kevin serves as a mediator , helping couples find amicable solutions outside of court when possible. As a certified divorce coach , Kevin understands the emotional toll of family transitions and offers guidance beyond legal strategy. Kevin helps clients make clear, confident decisions for their futures. This combination of legal acumen and personal support ensures that clients have a strong advocate in the courtroom and a compassionate counselor through what can be an overwhelming process.

Commitment to Client Advocacy and

Professionalism

At Fair Cadora , Kevin has fostered a culture of client advocacy, professionalism, and unwavering support. He and his team understand the complexities and sensitivities involved in family law cases and are committed to helping clients achieve their goals during difficult emotional times. While Kevin is prepared to fight vigorously for his clients’ rights in court, he always strives first for peaceful resolutions, treating all parties with civility and respect. Clients of Fair Cadora are treated with the utmost care, receiving honest and straightforward legal advice to navigate the legal process

confidently. Whether it’s a contentious divorce, a complicated property division, or a sensitive child custody matter, Kevin and his firm tirelessly protect their clients’ interests and well-being.

Your Trusted Family Law Resource – Contact Fair Cadora

This spotlight is a reminder to the San Diego community that Kevin Cadora and the Fair Cadora team are here to help when you need experienced, compassionate legal counsel. If you or someone you know is facing a divorce, custody dispute, mediation, or any family law

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BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

San Diego commerce & the regional economy

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Member Spotlight: Kevin L. Cadora – Leading Family Law Advocate in San Diego

challenge, consider contacting Kevin and his firm for guidance. Fair Cadora has a proven track record of professional excellence and personalized support – exactly what you need during life’s most challenging moments.

For more information or to schedule a strategy session:

Visit: www.faircadora.com
Phone: 619-255-8500 Email: kevin@faircadora.com Office:

9635 Granite Ridge Drive, Suite 150, San Diego, CA 92123

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · May 13, 2025

BUSINESS

Member Spotlight: Brain Treatment Center & Braincare Performance Center, clinically powered by Wave Neuro technology

You invest in your business – when was the last time you invested in your brain?

Running a business, managing teams, and staying on

top of everything takes mental clarity, focus, and resilience. But stress, anxiety, and burnout can make it harder to perform at your best. What if there was a way to reset and optimize your brain function?

At Brain Treatment Center (BTC) in San Diego and Brain Performance Center (BPC) in Cardiff, we use MeRT (Magnetic e-Resonance Therapy) – a groundbreaking, drug-free treatment designed to help your brain work at its best. MeRT helps improve mental clarity, focus, and overall brain function by

encouraging healthier brain-wave activity. It’s personalized to your unique brain, making it more precise and effective than traditional approaches.

Business owners, professionals, and athletes looking to boost focus, energy, and performance

Individuals struggling with stress, anxiety, depression, or PTSD

Those recovering from concussions, brain injuries, or neurological conditions

Anyone who wants to feel sharper, more balanced, and in control

If you’ve been feeling mentally drained or not at your peak, now is the time to take action. Visit BTC or BPC’s website or call today to see how this technology could help you think clearer, feel better, and perform at your best.

Brain Treatment Center – San Diego
braintreatmentcenter.com
619-255-2101

Brain Performance Center – Cardiff
braincarecardiff.com
858-306-1070

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Apr 30, 2025

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Nine animals rescued from the wellness center we funded

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

Opinion — the views of the writers named, not news reporting

COMMENTARY

California Policy Center Urges New Federal Transit Chief to Reject \$5.1 Billion for San Jose BART Extension

The California Policy Center argues that the costly BART project through downtown San Jose represents poor value, outdated planning and should be canceled in favor of innovative alternatives.

When Marc Molinaro assumes his role as the new

federal transit administrator, he will have a chance to prevent taxpayers from spending an additional \$5.1 billion on what a prominent transit advocate has called "the worst new transit project in the United States," according to co-authors Edward Ring and Marc Joffe.

Ring and Joffe argue that the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority’s (VTA) extension of San Francisco’s BART system through downtown San Jose

is a textbook case of wasteful spending. The project is now projected to cost more than \$12.7 billion and not open until 2039.

At roughly \$2 billion per mile, the extension’s price tag matches that of New York City’s heavily criticized Second Avenue Subway. Yet because San Jose has far lower population density than Manhattan’s Upper East Side, it cannot generate comparable ridership, making its cost-benefit profile far worse.

Ring and Joffe point to several factors driving up expenses. These include the use of project labor agreements, which limit the number of bidders, impose higher union wages and enforce union work rules.

Even more puzzling, they write, is VTA’s choice of a single-bore tunneling method using a massive 54-foot-diameter tunnel-boring machine brought from Germany. The agency hopes this will minimize street-level disruption

to businesses, but it will require removing far more soil and rock, extend the construction timeline and place platforms 75 feet underground.

The authors note that a pair of 20-foot-diameter tunnels over five miles would displace about 614,000 cubic yards of earth. The chosen 54-foot single-bore tunnel would displace 2.23 million cubic yards. Commuters would then face long escalator rides,

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COMMENTARY (CONTINUED)

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California Policy Center Urges New Federal Transit Chief to Reject \$5.1 Billion for San Jose BART Extension

erasing much of the time advantage over surface transportation.

Under pressure, VTA staff have grown “open minded to re-looking at every aspect of the project,” according to a VTA official. The agency has hired an independent engineering firm to study alternatives, including twin-bore tunnels, a hybrid approach and a narrower 34-foot single-bore option that would reduce excavation to 887,000 cubic yards.

Ring and Joffe question whether any of these designs make sense. They observe that separate tunnels for each track are standard because they simplify construction, maintenance and safety while making it easier to

switch tracks.

Regardless of the final choice, the projected opening has slipped to 2039. They also criticize VTA’s decision to build a redundant two-mile segment between San Jose’s Diridon station and Santa Clara, which is already served by the recently electrified Caltrain line that cost \$2.4 billion.

The authors argue that BART trains could simply continue to an existing railroad yard in Hayward rather than requiring billions in duplicate infrastructure. They question whether the entire extension is needed at all.

Ridership forecasts have repeatedly proven unreliable, Ring and Joffe write. A 2012-based study projected 54,600 weekday riders, later revised downward to below 33,000. The Federal Transit Administration now uses the lower figure, yet VTA has not updated its public materials.

Even that reduced estimate

may be optimistic. The authors point out that VTA’s Phase I BART extension over-estimated ridership by nearly tenfold; actual September 2023 weekday boardings were only 2,349 against a projection of 23,000.

Successful mass transit typically serves “hub and spoke” regions with a dominant central business district. While San Francisco once fit this model with nearly 500,000 daily inbound commuters before the pandemic, Silicon Valley features a multi-nodal layout with employment scattered across office and industrial parks. Downtown San Jose is merely one node among many.

By the time the extension opens in 2039, robotaxis, electric bikes, scooters and other innovations will be widespread, the authors predict. Waymo already operates in San Francisco and nearby communities and has applied to expand service in the BART corridor, with supportive

letters from San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan and Rep. Sam Liccardo citing safety and upcoming events like the Super Bowl and World Cup.

Even on climate grounds, the project falls short, Ring and Joffe argue. One of them previously estimated that the extension would replace just 0.4 percent of passenger car trips in Santa Clara County at the revised ridership level. By 2039 most vehicles are likely to be electric, sharing the same power sources as BART trains, while construction itself will increase greenhouse gas emissions in the interim.

Ring and Joffe conclude that the new federal transit administrator would serve taxpayers and Santa Clara Valley commuters well by denying the \$5.1 billion in federal funds and pressing VTA to pursue forward-looking alternatives. As a global hub of innovation, Silicon Valley should focus its creativity on the future of transportation rather than a

megaproject that may be obsolete before it opens.

Edward Ring is director of water and energy policy at the California Policy Center, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president. He is also a senior fellow with the Center for American Greatness and a regular contributor to the California Globe. Marc Joffe is president of the Contra Costa Taxpayers Association and a visiting fellow at the California Policy Center.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · May 14, 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

Upcoming Work on Border Sewage System May Temporarily Increase Tijuana River Valley Flows

The second and final phase in the connection of a sewer line in Mexico (the new International Collector) will begin soon and may temporarily increase wastewater flows to the U.S.

The completion of this line is critical for preventing potential catastrophic failures and increasing reliability of Tijuana’s wastewater infrastructure. The line moves untreated wastewater to both to the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (ITP) in the U.S. and the San Antonio de los Buenos Plant in Mexico.

Expected to begin May 13 and take about a week to complete, the work may temporarily increase transboundary sewage flows into the Tijuana River Valley. Water at South County beaches may also experience more pollution during this work as some untreated wastewater is diverted directly to an ocean outfall south of the border.

The US International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will be in continuous contact with the construction and project managers in Mexico to monitor progress and share updates. The USIBWC has been working extensively with Mexico to mitigate

wastewater spills as much as possible and have coordinated bypass lines to pump as much wastewater as possible to the ITP.

A collaborative partnership that includes the USIBWC, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (SDRWQCB), San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD), and the County of San Diego has been working together since 2024 on the sewage treatment issues, progress updates and health concerns.

People in affected communities can take steps to reduce the impact of the hydrogen sulfide (H2S) odors by:

Limiting their outdoor activities if the smell from the odors is bothersome.

Keeping doors and windows closed to prevent the odor from coming indoors. Air out your home or building when odor is not present (by opening doors and windows, for example).

Increasing air circulation indoors with fans or using central or portable air conditioning on recirculation, if available.

Running an air purifier with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, activated charcoal and potassium permanganate, is particularly effective for H2S odors. SDAPCD offers free purifiers

for people in the three principally affected zip codes . People interested in purchasing their own air purifiers can find a verified model with potassium permanganate on the California Air Resources Board website .

People who are more sensitive to air pollution such as those with asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or other chronic lung conditions should have their rescue medication(s) readily available. If symptoms from strong odors are persistent, worrisome, or get worse, people should seek medical care.

SDAPCD monitors odor complaints and hydrogen sulfide levels for communities near the river valley.

More information about the ongoing pollution in the Tijuana River Valley and South County beach water is available from the SDAPCD , IBWC and the County ’s dedicated South Region Health Concerns webpage. The County also recently launched an interactive online dashboard and map displaying current environmental conditions in South County including beach water quality and sewage odor data.

County of San Diego news release · May 9, 2025

COUNTY

Wild Bat Found Inside Safari Park Tests Positive for Rabies

County public health officials

are looking for people who may have come in contact with a bat found at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park on Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at 10:45 a.m. that later tested positive for rabies.

The wild bat was not one that is on habitat at the Safari Park. Park visitors who had no physical contact with the bat are not at risk for rabies.

The bat was found at the base of the public elevator in the African Loop near the hot air balloon ride. There is only one public elevator in the park.

A trained staff member collected the bat safely. The County Public Health Laboratory confirmed the bat was infected with rabies.

If you or someone in your family or group were in the area of the elevator and stairs on May 7 before 10:45 a.m. 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. Ankita Kadakia, County interim 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 three 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 direct contact with a bat, wash the affected area thoroughly with soap and water and get 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 · May 9, 2025

Downtown, City & County