Kickin’ It Old School
San Juan-based senior basketball team gets better with age

Members of the 75-and-up, San Juan-based Team USA are the reigning national and international champions in their age group.

Shea Homes and Hamilton Oaks Denied, San Juan Hills Gets New Stadium
San Juan Inventor to Appear on PBS Reality Show
SJC Little League Team Makes Historic Run

EYE ON SJC/PAGE 4
SJC LIVING/PAGE 14
SPORTS/PAGE 18
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SAN CLEMENTE
Faulty computer modeling” and “manufacturing issues” were the primary sources of problems at San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, a 94-page inspection report from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission says. The two factors helped cause the premature wear of tubes on the relatively new steam generators and the radiation leak January 31 that led to Unit 3’s shut down. The Unit 2 reactor had already been offline for upgrades January 9. Neither reactor has produced power since. The report also states that plant owner Southern California Edison complied with federal regulations when it proposed the replacement steam generators in the first place. But anti-nuclear groups called the commission’s report a “dangerous cover-up.” SCE must submit its formal response to questions raised by the NRC, which the utility must do before it can restart the reactors.

DANA POINT
City Council on July 17 voted to seek outside help with improving water quality at Doheny State Beach. The beach has for years appeared on Heal the Bay’s annual “Beach Bummers” list—a report card grading the cleanliness of state beaches. Doheny received an “F” for high levels of bacteria in winter months, rainy weather and at the San Juan Creek outlet but often fares better in dry summer months. Councilman Bill Brough criticized the state’s lack of responsiveness to the issue, saying they’d rather take a regulatory angle than a helpful one. “We’ve exhausted what we can do at the city level,” said Mayor Lara Anderson. “We need help fixing it.” The city will request funding from state, local and private entities and pursue research grants via California’s Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program.

THE LATEST:
Changes to a site plan for development at The Oaks.

WHAT’S NEXT: The new provisions are effective 30 days from the council’s approval.

FIND OUT MORE: For the full story, visit www.thecapistranodispatch.com.
—BP

WHAT’S NEXT:
The Stallions will host their first home football game August 31 against Canyon High School of Anaheim Hills. Flowers also noted that the next stage of fundraising will equip the stadium with extras.

FIND OUT MORE: For updates, visit www.thecapistranodispatch.com.
—Stacie N. Galang

SANTO DOMINGO BEACH
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—BP
Believe it or not, the basketball courts inside the San Juan Capistrano Community Center are home to a basketball team that is known around the country as well as around the globe.

One can find them practicing there multiple times a week, when they show up to play pick-up games against some of the “young gun” 60-year-old squads. This San Juan-based team, dubbed Team USA, is a 75-year-old-and-up basketball team that has taken the country, and world, by storm for the past 16 years.

Don’t let their gray hair fool you. Team USA has as much drive as any other team on the court, if not more. That’s why they’re the 2011 USA Senior Game Champions and 2011 FIMBA 75-and-up World Champions, as well. Wherever they go, be it Pittsburgh, Utah or Brazil, championship titles follow.

The team is run by player-manager Bob Messersmith, 79, a San Juan resident. It was Messersmith who brought all of the players together, scouring the state and the rest of the country for friends and players who could play ball and at the same time, not pull the “I’m too old” excuse on him. If there’s one thing Team USA, and especially Messersmith, hates, it’s that excuse.

“Yesterday is history ... So don’t tell me about little things. You got aches and pains? Everyone’s got aches and pains. It’s how you deal with the challenges of your life, that’s the big thing,” Messersmith said. “(People) aren’t here to take up space ... So do something. That’s our team mindset, and it’s why we have been successful.”

When Team USA showed up to play in the Pan-American games in Costa Rica in 2002, everyone on the team was 65 and older. They were hoping to play against other teams their age, but the oldest squads there were 55 and up. Team USA suited up against teams that were 10 years their junior and ended up winning every game en route to a first-place finish.

Since then, they have won a national or world event title every two to five years. They’ve won at 65, 70 and most recently, at the 75 age bracket. According to Messersmith, team USA even inspired other states and countries to send older teams to these events.

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“You got aches and pains? Everyone’s got aches and pains. It’s how you deal with the challenges of your life, that’s the big thing.” –Bob Messersmith

The team held an impromptu scrimmage against a 60-and-up senior team on their home court at the San Juan Community Center gym on Friday, July 20. Even with the age difference, Team USA was able to hold their own.

Duf (a nickname, pronounced “Doof”) Sfreddo, 77, is the dynamo of the squad and resident joker. As the team warmed up for their scrimmage, Sfreddo’s voice carried above all the others, and his style of play was a reflection of his lively personality. On defense, he swats at balls that are poorly protected, runs the fast break on offense and incorporates no-look passes in his arsenal.

The style in which the men play nowadays is a bit more calculated than it was when they were, say, 60. With bum knees, it’s hard to sprint down the court on every possession. But when the team has a breakaway they run it with precision.

San Clemente resident Ernie Miller, 77, is the ball handler of choice and designated spot-up shooter and three-point threat. Miller, who plays on two artificial knees, comes from the basketball-crazy state of Indiana, where he honed his long-range shot playing high school ball. According to Messersmith, who keeps stats of his players throughout the year, Miller had a higher three-point shooting percentage than Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant did in 2012.

During the scrimmage Miller received a behind-the-back pass from Sfreddo and drained the open look for three points with ease, like he could do it in his sleep.

Bill Bergman, 76, is Team USA’s quiet, reserved defensive stopper and is referred to as the “kid” by his teammates. At 6-feet-6-inches tall, the team’s youngest player is the tallest guy in the gym and sports a massive wingspan that alters any shot attempt taken near him. Bergman has to be goaded on by Messersmith to be a little more active on offense at times, but that’s just because he loves playing defense so much. He’s usually the first one back down the court after an offensive possession, which is rare for a big man.

Every team has the player who carefully analyzes every move and thinks two steps ahead of the opposition. Ron Pearce is that man for Team USA, according to Messersmith. Pearce has been playing basketball all his life but admits he’s had to change his style in recent years.

“We try to stay alive as we’re playing ... We try to do it old school,” Pearce said with a laugh.

Rounding out the squad of locals on the team is Conrad Bohnen, 83, the team’s elder statesman. When he was 19, Bohnen, a Vancouver, British Columbia native, was a part of one Olympic-hopeful Canadian basketball squad that never qualified.

And then there’s Messersmith, the team’s leader. Along with Pearce and Miller, Messersmith has been with the team since the beginning. Messersmith plays every now and then, but what he really enjoys is managing the egos and personalities of a team that refuses to sit down and quit.

In 2013, Messersmith will take Team USA to Cleveland to play in the USA Championships, with an eye set on a goal even further in the future.

“I can’t wait for the 85-year-old bracket,” Messersmith said. “I’m looking forward to getting old.”

With that kind of attitude, one can be sure Team USA will continue its success in Cleveland next year, when the players will take the floor all over the spry age of 80.
Tuesday, July 24

SUSPICIOUS PERSON/CIRCUMSTANCE
La Nostia Avenue/Via Entrada (12:04 a.m.) A call was reported that someone was walking with a flashlight along the Via Entrada entrance of San Juan Hills Golf Club.

Monday, July 23

PETTY THEFT
Camino Capistrano, 32100 Block (4:09 p.m.) Two females were detained for petty theft at the Rite Aid. The two were cooperative, and both were eventually taken into custody. One woman, 38, listed her occupation as housewife.

Sunday, July 22

DISTURBANCE
Paseo Bariona, 27700 Block (10:39 p.m.) A call was received about a man and a woman in a verbal, possibly physical, fight. The woman was described to have blonde curly hair, but no further description was given because it was too dark.

Saturday, July 21

DISTURBANCE
Ortega Highway/Interstate-5 (10:50 p.m.) A man pumping gas at Chevron called to complain that an unknown woman was standing in front of his motor home and refusing to move. The woman was described to be in her mid 40s with brown hair, wearing a multicolored shirt and blue jeans.

BURGLARY REPORT
Junipero Serra Road, 26300 Block (6:22 p.m.) A grey Chevrolet Tahoe was reportedly broken into while parked at JSerra High School. The vehicle’s owner stated he was watching a soccer game and returned to his car to find a broken window and several items missing from inside the vehicle.

The Capistrano Dispatch July 27-August 9, 2012

Page 5 www.thecapistranodispatch.com
Grillo Fills Vacancy on Bond Oversight Committee

San Juan resident Angela L. Grillo is the newest member of the Citizens’ Bond Oversight Ad-Hoc Committee, after the City Council appointed her on Tuesday, July 17. A subcommittee of Mayor Larry Kramer and Councilman Sam Allevato nominated Grillo from a three-applicant pool to fill the vacancy.

Although the bond oversight committee does not have any decision-making authority, its members review and provide recommendations to the council for the expenditure of bond proceeds and whether such spending complies with the scope of Measure Y, part of a 2008 ordinance that approved up to $30 million for the preservation and enhancement of San Juan open space. The committee has a fixed end date of 180 days after all Measure Y bonds are spent.

Grillo is the founder and owner of South County Financial Planning in San Juan. After an initial foray as a computer programmer, Grillo has been in the financial services industry for more than 14 years. She also serves on the board of directors for several non-profit organizations, including the Orange County chapter of the Financial Planning Association, Women Investing in Security & Education and Team of Advocates for Special Kids.

City Council Approves Contract for City Attorney

On Tuesday, July 17, the City Council approved a new contract for its city attorney services with Costa Mesa-based law firm Rutan & Tucker, LLP. San Juan Capistrano’s proposed city attorney and assistant city attorney are Hans Van Ligten and Patrick Muñoz, respectively. Rutan & Tucker also provides city attorney services in 11 other cities, including nearby San Clemente and Dana Point, where Muñoz is the city attorney.

The agreement goes into effect August 28 and will cost the city a monthly retainer of $10,000, plus a rate of $229 per hour for non-retainer services and $75 to $200 per hour for paralegal services.

Current City Attorney Omar Sandoval and his law firm, Woodruff, Spradlin & Smart, turned in their 60-day notice on Thursday, June 28. The firm has worked with the city since 1997. Sandoval will continue to serve San Juan for the duration of the 60 days.

Youth Mariachi Program Performs at Council Meeting

Council members and residents at the City Council meeting on Tuesday, July 17 were treated to a special performance by Mariachi For All of the Capistrano Community Mariachi Program. Nine-year-old singer Michelle Moz was accompanied by 13 performers dressed in traditional garb in a performance of “When the Swallows Come Back to Capistrano,” arguably the most famous song performed by American composer Leon René. The mariachi program is a family-run non-profit that caters to the youth of San Juan and surrounding areas. To view the video of their performance, visit www.thecapistranodispatch.com and click onto the video section. For more information about the program, visit www.capcomariachi.org.

San Juan Boy Scout Achieves Eagle Scout Rank

San Juan resident Bryan Cosby achieved the highest rank in the Boy Scouts, Eagle Scout, on Thursday, June 14. A lifelong San Juan resident, Cosby first joined the Scouts as a member of Pack 12 before transitioning to Troop 12. For his Eagle Scout project, Cosby planned, funded and built a $1,000 storage shed for Capistrano Valley Christian School. He enlisted the help of his scoutmaster Chuck Bolt and his fellow Boy Scouts. Today, the shed stands behind the school chapel and is visible from Del Obispo Street.

Open Space Foundation Receives OK for Monument and Donations for Dog Park

The Open Space Foundation received two favorable City Council decisions that will help them complete two ongoing projects. The council approved two separate one-year site access licenses. One will allow the foundation to complete construction of a stone-faced, brick-topped monument with a brass plaque at the 2C Ranch, the last working cattle ranch in San Juan. The other will give the foundation enough time to collect donations that will fund improvements to the Dr. Joe Cortese Dog Park.

SJC Resident Receives Capo Beach League of Women Voters’ Leadership Award

San Juan resident Marilyn O’Brien received the Capistrano Beach League of Women Voters’ Maud Wood Park Award for outstanding leadership at the League’s annual meeting. O’Brien has served as president for several terms, led several league studies, chaired or been active on annual meeting. O’Brien has served as president for several terms, led several league studies, chaired or been active on meetings, and helped the league with its election-year candidate forums and ballot measure studies for the public. For more information about the league, visit www.lwvcba.org.

Photography Art Club Releases Book on San Juan

The Photographic Art Club has released their newest project, “San Juan Capistrano Treasures,” a keepsake photo art book on San Juan, its people and its lifestyle. The book is divided into chapters on history, the town, lifestyle, events and the arts.

“Thirty-two of our club photographers spent over a year capturing the very essence of what makes San Juan Capistrano unique,” club president Frank Ritenour said in a news release. “We believe this is the perfect gift for those who love and care about the community.”

The 8-by-10, hardcover book is available for sale by calling Ritenour at 949.369.7871. Part of the proceeds will go toward supporting photography classes for kids. The book will be on display at the Second Saturday Art Show. The Photography Art Club meets the last Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Wind & Sea Restaurant in Dana Point. For more information about the club, visit www.meetup.com/photographicartclub.

Marco Forster Student Selected to Attend Science and Math Camp at UCI

Marco Forster Middle School student Emma Bunmin was selected to the American Association of University Women’s Tech Trek, a weeklong science and math camp for girls. Bunmin was recommended by her science teacher, Jeanette Boyle, and chosen by the organization’s San Clemente-Capistrano Bay branch’s committee. Selection was based on a written essay and interview. Tech Trek is intended for girls who have just completed the seventh grade and encourages them to pursue an interest in science, math and technology. Camp activities include field trips, hands-on learning experiences and meetings with women in science and math careers. The camp is held July 22 to 28 at the University of California, Irvine. For more information, visit www.aauw-sccb.com.

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City Can Now Sell Land Near Marbella Plaza

After nearly seven years, city reaches settlements

By Brian Park
The Capistrano Dispatch

The city can finally sell a plot of land it first acquired more than 20 years ago, after reaching a settlement agreement last week with a developer, who had at one time tried to purchase the land.

Centra Realty Corporation attempted to purchase a 3.45-parcel of land off Rancho Viejo Road, just north of Marbella Plaza, from San Juan Capistrano in August 2006. However, in late 2011, SJ Lot 217, LLC, identified in legal documents as Centra’s successor, filed a lawsuit against the city demanding that their $150,000 deposit be returned.

San Juan had initially received the land in 1988 from the Marbella Development Company, under the condition that it would serve a public or institutional use. After a failed attempt to move the fire station on Del Obispo to the land, the city declared the site “surplus property” in 2005 and entered into a purchase agreement the next year with Centra, who planned to use the land for a commercial office building. The city also briefly considered the land as a possible site for a future city hall.

Marbella sued San Juan in 2008, the first of two lawsuits, because the city had violated its restrictions on land use. The lawsuit was eventually resolved and land-use restrictions were lifted, provided that Marbella receive 25 percent of proceeds from the sale of the land.

Under the terms of the city’s latest settlement, San Juan will return the $150,000 deposit to SJ Lot 217, including any interest earned. Additionally, the city must put the property up for sale within 20 days, but has full authority to determine sales price and to accept, reject or counter any offer.

If the land is sold, SJ Lot 217 is entitled to 15 percent of net sale proceeds, with limits set at $3.125 million and $4 million.

Three Pull Papers for Council

Nearly two weeks since the opening of the candidate filing period for the November 6 election, two relative unknowns and one City Council incumbent have pulled papers while another incumbent remains undecided about a reelection bid.

Residents Melissa Abbott and Tom Marantz will vie for two City Council seats on the ballot, and incumbent Councilman Sam Allevato has already pulled nomination papers to seek his third term on the council. Councilwoman Laura Freese has yet to decide if she will run for reelection.

Marantz, 33, has lived in San Juan Capistrano since 2010. He served eight years in the U.S. Marine Corps, before returning home from deployment in 2003. He is currently an information technology administrator for an engineering company and resides in a Habitat for Humanity home off Alipaz Street, with his wife, a 6-year-old son and a 4-year-old daughter.

Although a newcomer to the political scene, Marantz said he has closely observed City Council meetings and said a fresh approach is required to manage some of the city’s biggest issues.

“I have an issue with our expensive water and some of the traffic issues that I don’t think have been addressed properly. We have a lot of development issues that are coming up, and I thought I would be able to better address those problems moving forward than current members,” Marantz said.

Abbott was out of town and unavailable for comment at press time, according to family members who answered the phone.

A 36-year resident of San Juan, Allevato was appointed to the City Council in 2004 and served two years as mayor. Allevato has also served on the Northwest Open Space Committee, the Planning Commission and the former Redevelopment Agency.

Freese has lived in San Juan for more than 15 years and was elected to the council in 2008, including one year as mayor pro tem. She served as vice chairwoman of the former Redevelopment Agency for one year and another three as chairwoman. She has also been a member of the Historical Society, Mission Preservation Society, Fiesta Association and the Chamber of Commerce.
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Out of the Dark and Into the Light, San Juan Shines in 2012

All across town, community and business events are a good sign that things are on the rise and new events are appearing in our town such as the Chamber of Commerce. New events have increased for the Fiesta Association Viejo Riding Park. Membership seems to have something fun to do again. The San Juan Hills Golf Club downtown is starting to buzz with activity again. Our town seemed to be in a funk.

For seven months or $700 million. The words, and bingo, the truck route is closed our military supply truck route because of our deadly mistake, Pakistan seven months ago. Because of our deadly mistake, Pakistan offered Pakistan a sincere, “We’re sorry,” apology for our accidental killing of 24 Pakistani soldiers seven months ago. Because of our deadly mistake, Pakistan closed our military supply truck route through their country: Our most direct supply route to Afghanistan.

The U.S. offered many apologies, but we hadn’t said, “We’re sorry.” Two words, and bingo, the truck route is now reopened. How much did the route closure cost us—$100 million per month for seven months or $700 million. The detour around Pakistan went through Russia and Central Asia. Google a map of Central Asia to see just how far the supply detour was. It cost $100 million a month for a simple detour through several neighboring nations. All in a days work, in war. Seems like, listening to the news, the political air is filled with this and that expense—state budgets, federal budgets, city and county budgets, campaign war chests, money owed, money promised, money swindled, CEO payouts and, of course, money lost—poof, gone to whose?

Millions, billions and trillions—dollars here, there, everywhere. But usually not in the place where it’s needed most, except in war. It cost $100 million a month for a military detour. Ironically, that’s the cheap part of war. Two words saved us $100 million a month. That’s $50 million a word. War talk ain’t cheap. Wonder what the savings is for three words: “We’re going home.”
The final episode of the most innovative comic book/movie franchise of the last decade arrives in DC Comics and Chris Nolan’s The Dark Knight Rises. After a reluctant acceptance of Batman Begins (2005), Katie Holmes dropping out of the The Dark Knight (2008) and the sudden, shocking death of Joker actor Heath Ledger months before the release of the second film, the sequel becoming one of the most critically and financially successful movies of all time was certainly overwhelming. Now, four anticipated years later, the saga ends with The Dark Knight Rises. The story picks up eight years later, and nasty, masked terrorist Bane (Tom Hardy) is ready and willing to take the Joker’s place. Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) has become heavily reclusive, but cat burglar Selina Kyle (Anne Hathaway), optimistic cop John Blake (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) and socialite Miranda Tate (Marion Cotillard) might help him save the day. Michael Caine, Gary Oldman and Morgan Freeman return for the finale, and Matthew Modine and Juno Temple are added as sidekicks. Bale, Hathaway and Gordon-Levitt lead the film effortlessly, and Hardy and Cotillard are visually impressive despite some awkward lines. The tragedy of the recent Colorado shootings has movie-goers understandably cautious to see The Dark Knight Rises. But those who do will find one of the most thrilling, action-packed, star-studded, surprising and, ultimately, entertaining endings to an era of Batman or any superhero. — Megan Bianco
San Juan Inventor to Appear on PBS Reality Show

Eric Huber has always had a mind for innovation, and now he’ll share it with a national audience.

By Brian Park
The Capistrano Dispatch

A lexander Graham Bell gave us the telephone, Thomas Edison is synonymous with the light bulb and George Washington Carver did some amazing things with peanuts.

Those inventors’ exploits are well known, but here in San Juan Capistrano, one resident is making a name for himself, thanks to his newest creation, a microwavable steam sponge.

Eric Huber, a 13-year San Juan resident, is set to appear on an upcoming episode of the reality television show “Everyday Edisons,” which airs on PBS and showcases inventors and their creations. He was one of 10 inventors selected, from a pool of over 11,000 product submissions, to be featured on the show.

Huber will be on the eleventh episode of the season, which has already been taped and will be broadcast later this summer. In the episode, called “Hot and Steamy,” Huber will showcase his product—a triangle-shaped sponge with an affixed water container that can be microwaved and used as a steam cleaner.

In only its second go-around, the film festival will truly be a community affair.

Film Festival to Provide a True Moment in Time for Residents

In its second go-around, the film festival will truly be a community affair.

The second Annual West Coast Film Festival will be in San Juan Capistrano August 19-23. The festival opens with the Olympic classic film Chariots of Fire. Movies will include Deliverance with Jon Voight and Burt Reynolds; Viva Las Vegas with Elvis Presley and Ann Margaret and special tributes to Steve McQueen and Ernest Borgnine.

A sneak preview is also included in the week’s activities.

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San Juan Baseball Senior All-Stars Make History

By Steve Breazeale
The Capistrano Dispatch

When the San Juan Capistrano Little League Senior All-Stars defeated the All-Stars from North Anaheim in the Senior League sectional championship game on July 18, a massive dog pile took place on the mound. Not only was the team celebrating a gritty, 7-5 victory—they were making history. Up until that final out, no team in the history of San Juan Little League had won a sectional championship.

For most on the team, including pitcher/shortstop Mario Morales, 16, the win was the payoff for eight years of hard work. The San Juan team is a close-knit group that has been playing ball together since they were in elementary school.

“I’m glad I could share this experience with my friends,” Morales said. “I’ve been with most of them for eight years so it was great. The dog pile at the end of the sectional win was my favorite moment.”

This season was the last for many of the teams’ players, like catcher Steve Cervantes. Cervantes, 16, has been playing with this same group since he was 9 years old and attributed the teams’ success to its chemistry.

“(During the tournament) everyone was doing their job and that usually helps everyone in the end,” Cervantes said. “When one guy is doing well it spreads around, and everyone feeds off one another.”

Pitcher Grant Littlejohn got the nod to start and kept North Anaheim at bay for most of the match, giving way to reliever Caleb Ward, who allowed zero runs out to a buoy in the water and loop back to the starting point.

From there, the contestants will hop on their bikes and ride through Dana Point and into San Juan Capistrano, until they reach Ortega Highway, where they will have to navigate the twists and turns of the famed road.

Once the bikers return to the starting point at Doheny Beach, they will run about half a mile up Pacific Coast Highway and back.

The triathlon is open to all ages, men and women, and features an “elite” men’s and women’s age group. Cost is $295 for an individual triathlon, $395 for a triathlon relay and $250 for the aquabike race. Visit www.orangemantriathlon.com to register.

—Steve Breazeale
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- Remember to water in the early morning (between 4-8 a.m.). Watering early when the sun is low and winds are calm:
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- Create a custom watering schedule at [www.bewaterwise.com/wat_index_02.html](http://www.bewaterwise.com/wat_index_02.html).

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