



VOLUME FIVE, NUMBER SIXTY

MISSION VIEJO, CALIFORNIA

November/December 2020

# MISSION VIEJO REPORTER



## **Tiny Lights of Mission Viejo**

700,000 LIGHTS MAKE A WINTER WONDERLAND

## **AGUAJE DEL CUATE**

Mission Viejo's First Stagecoach Stop

## **LA PAZ ROAD BRIDGE**

MISSION VIEJO'S FIRST CONSTRUCTION PROJECT



**MISSION VIEJO  
REPORTER**

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COVER: Mission Viejo Mayor Brian Goodell - photo by Tanaka Photo



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## EDITORIAL STAFF

EDITOR & PUBLISHER  
Dave Leckness

DESIGNER  
Luke Brown

LAYOUT DESIGN  
Travis Brenier

PRODUCTION MANAGER  
Jason Givin

PROOFREADER  
Joanne Suttle

NATIONAL AFFAIRS DESK  
Dr. D.L. Avery

REPORTER  
Kathy Kuiper

REPORTER  
Cris Wilson

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Dave Leckness  
Editor



## MAYOR'S MESSAGE



by Brian Goodell  
Mayor  
City of Mission Viejo

Serving as Mayor during this pandemic has been surreal. However, despite the insanity and uncharted waters, our City has had a productive year.

To support our restaurants and essential businesses, we created and delivered "We're Open" banners; provided free permits for outdoor dining; and kept our building counter open to process permits. We assisted residents – young and old – hit hard by COVID-19 by hosting food, hygiene products, school supply and blood drives, while expanding our Park-It-Market and Grab-and-Go lunch programs. Our staff made thousands of wellness checks on homebound seniors and distributed PPE to our frontline workers. We thanked our incredible first responders and frontline personnel with life-size artistic signs and meal programs.

From the beginning, safety plans were created and up-to-the minute news and information disseminated to help keep residents informed, safe and healthy.

Projects were also approved or moved ahead including the Trumark residential and Shea Homes developments; a new grocery store and Raising Cane's eatery for the Office Max location on Crown Valley Parkway; and the Amazon Distribution center, generating 350 new jobs for our City. For the benefit of our community, we completed park renovations and capital improvement projects – including at our newly renamed golf course.

In response to the economic impact of COVID-19, we proactively reduced our General Fund operating budget by \$4.7 million. Although, since our revenues have fared better than anticipated, our City will end the year with a \$3.5 million budget surplus.

I am happy to report that I worked closely with other mayors throughout Orange County to advocate for our citizens and equitable resources from the State.

2020 has indeed been a challenging year, but I am grateful for the many things (too numerous to list in this article) our City has accomplished – and for the resilience and spirit of our community. It's been an honor to serve as your Mayor, even during a pandemic.



## AROUND TOWN MISSION VIEJO IS COMING BACK TO LIFE



by Trish Kelley  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Co-founder Mission Viejo  
Community of Character

Mission Viejo is coming back to life, after 7 months of COVID-19 measures! While there are still some restrictions and virtual events, we are following careful protocols and guidelines and have begun to return to some "normal" activities. It was wonderful to attend two park ribbon cuttings for the successful completion of renovations at Christopher Park and Craycraft Park. Thank you to the Boy Scouts who did their Eagle projects at Craycraft Park—Jeff Lee, Harrison Hurst, and Jake Quinlin.

The 10th Annual "Tee it Up for Marines" Golf Tournament at Camp Pendleton was another wonderful success! We are grateful that we were able to hold



this event, which provides significant funding to benefit our adopted Marines of Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division. Thank you to the generous donors, golfers, volunteers, and City staff who contributed to the success of the tournament!

The City of Mission Viejo anticipated dramatic reductions in revenue as our businesses and families have suffered losses; however, we have received good news on the budget front. Because we drastically reduced expenditures and since revenues came in higher than projected, we currently have a \$3.5 million



surplus, which we have placed into reserves and we also will fund some of the projects we have deferred. Thank you all for your patience during these trying times. These difficult months have brought out the best in you all and I have seen many acts of kindness, "neighbor helping neighbor," and generosity by our wonderful Mission Viejo family!





# AGUAJE DEL CUATE

## Mission Viejo's First Stagecoach Stop

This section of Cabot Road in 1776 was called El Camino Real and it ultimately connected all the California missions. Then in the early 1800's, it was used as a stage line that connected San Diego and Los Angeles, and in 1887 the railroad was built along the route. In the 1930's, it became Highway 101 and finally in 1960 it became known as Interstate 5.



Oso Exit - Train Tracks, El Camino Real, & 5 Fwy

El Aguaje Del Cuate, an ancient natural spring that was nearby, became a Stagecoach stop and a horse exchange for the Seeley and Wright Stage Line. It also

marked the boundaries where 3 local ranchos all came together - Rancho Trabuco, Rancho Mission Vieja, and Rancho Niguel (later known as the Moulton Ranch). The water source for the spring was obliterated by construction work by the Santa Fe Railroad during 1887-1888.



The plaque reads:  
"Historical Site Aguaje del Cuate  
- Historic Highway 101"

An ancient spring near the railroad tracks played an important role in California's transportation history.

A portion of California's Highway 101 and El Camino Real passed by the Aguaje del Cuate. In the late 1860's the Seeley and Wright Stage Line established a horse exchange facility by the spring.  
- City of Mission Viejo Heritage Committee"



A photograph (above) and flyer (right) advertising the Seeley and Wright Stage Line.



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FROM OUR **IMAGINE THAT** DEPT.

# LECKNESS BLVD?

## MISSION VIEJO STREET NAMES

Article by Mission Viejo resident Lindsey Jauregui

Progress sometimes means changing the names of streets. Over the years we've had a few. One of the first was back in the Nineties, a popular Mission Viejo physician Roger Guevara prompted the name change of El Regateo to "Dr. Guevara Way." About twenty years ago **Diseño Drive** became **Peter A. Hartman Way** named after a popular school superintendent, and what had been **Via Curacion** was altered to **The Shops Boulevard**.



What about others? The Nightstalker crime back in 1985 was probably one of the most frightening events in Mission Viejo. Of course, we don't want to honor a brutal criminal by renaming a portion of Chrisanta Drive as "Nightstalker Lane" or "Ramirez Road." However, what if **Via Zaragosa** were to be renamed as "Via Romero," to honor the local boy who helped to put an end to the Nightstalker's depredations? (James Romero was the thirteen-year-old who remembered the license plate number as The Nightstalker drove away.)

What about our very own NASA astronaut **Michael Lopez-Alegria**, who grew up in a house on **Terreno Drive**. What if Terreno Drive were to be renamed "Lopez-Alegria Drive" or "Space Shuttle Alley? Many have thought of changing **Marguerite Parkway** to "Leckness Boulevard" or "Dave's Highway" after former Mission Viejo Mayor and current **Mission Viejo Reporter** publisher **Dave Leckness**. Oh well, you never know. 😊



# LA PAZ ROAD BRIDGE

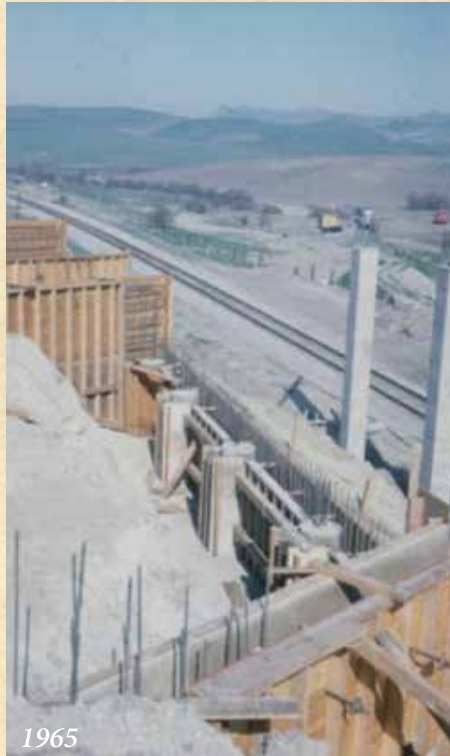
## MISSION VIEJO'S FIRST CONSTRUCTION PROJECT



La Paz Area and Railroad Tracks



La Paz Bridge Construction



La Paz Road Bridge

It was back in 1960, when the O'Neill family saw that they had 5.5 miles of land that bordered the new Interstate 5 freeway, and that this land would make for a beautiful new community. When construction finally began in about 1965, the first hurdle was to get men and equipment over the railroad tracks. La Paz Road was to be the first exit developed for the new Mission Viejo community.

The La Paz Road project provided a bridge over the railroad tracks, providing freeway access to the undeveloped ranch land and allowing bricks, wire, lumber, pipes, and even trees (all trees in Mission Viejo were planted by man – except two. See January 2017 issue) to be transported into our community.



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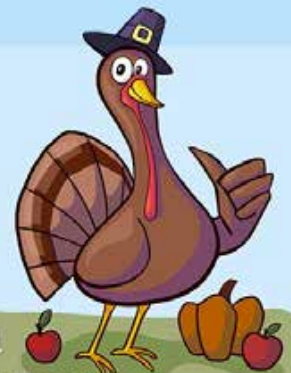
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# Ask Aunt Sandy

- WITH MISSION VIEJO'S SANDRA FERGUSON



Mission Viejo's very own advice columnist is a straight shooter and slightly humorous.

## SPANKING?

Dear Aunt Sandy,

Years ago my kid attended La Paz Jr High. I believe, a teacher spanking a student for starting a fight or talking back in class might just do the trick and teach these kids some needed respect and discipline. Some states are bringing corporal punishment back into schools. If you agree with me, could you help get the word out.

- A Good Spanking

Dear Lost In Translation,

Fifty years ago, teachers and principals could get away with that crap. I'm sure my gym teacher Miss van Dyke enjoyed delivering punishment. In fact, she drilled holes into her paddle to lessen the wind drag. Although the pain and welts have gone away, my stuttering disorder continues. All but 19 states completely ban corporal punishment in schools for good reason...it's wrong. Most experts agree that it's child abuse and note that students continue to misbehave even after repeated spankings.

Questions like: Who decides? Are parents notified? How hard, and how many times? These questions are the reason it should be left in the stone age. You get no help from me Mr. Spanker.

- Aunt Sandy

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# THERE'S GOLD IN THEM THAR HILLS!

## Mission Viejo's Lost Treasure

In the 1800's, French pirate **Hippolyte Bouchard** and his two ships, both displaying the flag of Argentina, terrorized the coast of California.

Not long after conducting a particularly vicious raid on the settlement of Santa Barbara, his ships were next sighted off what is now Dana Point, but messengers from Los Angeles had alerted the padres at Mission San Juan Capistrano about Bouchard and his 140 men. Quickly, the mission's treasures were secreted away and buried near an adjacent creek, called Arroyo Trabuco San Francisco de Solano. Explorer Gaspar de Portolà and his men had built an adobe and camped at the site in 1769, one of the soldiers had lost his musket, or trabuco, and the name had stuck.



Plaque at the Trabuco Adobe in remembrance of the Portola Expedition

Before soldiers from Los Angeles could arrive, Bouchard's men looted the mission and damaged several of the buildings, but the treasure at the Trabuco adobe remained safe.

Years passed. During this time it was rumored that great wealth was buried at the adobe. Many arrived with shovels, and digging commenced. But while stories were told of unearthed gold coins and other valuables, it is probable that other treasures remain.

A few years later **Don Juan Forster**, purchased the ranch. Ultimately, the adobe and the Plano Trabuco came under the ownership of the **James Flood** and **Richard O'Neill** families.

Today, what is left of the Trabuco adobe is part of O'Neill Park and enclosed within a small wooden structure visible from the Arroyo Vista road leading to the Tijeras Creek Golf Club. A plaque adjacent the structure honors the Portolà expedition, but visitors are discouraged from bringing shovels.



While Hippolyte Bouchard is remembered today in California as a pirate, in his adopted homeland of Argentina, the French mariner is considered a national hero. They even made a stamp in honor of his adventures.



The Arroyo Trabuco San Francisco de Solano Adobe as it looked in the 1930's. Located near the Mission Viejo skatepark at Beebe Park.

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*Alisha Edmond Wexler*



*Caroline Lowe Altamirano*



*Danielle Campbell*



# LEAVING A MARK

## Mission Viejo Resident Designs City Seal

In April of 1989, the Mission Viejo City Council authorized **Carl Glassford** to design the City's logo. Carl was a Mission Viejo resident and an art director for Walt Disney Productions. The fee he charged was just \$750 dollars. This included three comprehensive design layouts with minor modifications, if required.

The dominant symbol chosen to represent the modern community was the **Mission Bell Streetlight**, and its ties to local history, set before the backdrop of landmark **Santiago Peak**.

In the middle, **The Lake** is displayed signifying outdoor activity.

At the left, is the **"Rafter M"** brand used for decades by Rancho Mission Viejo.

Balancing it to the right is a symbol of modern history—the **Olympic torch**. It was chosen because the cycling venue of the 1984 Olympic Games were in Mission Viejo.

The date of incorporation, **1988**, is depicted as if it were branded on the land.



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# THE LUSK Kidnapping

## Mission Viejo Resident Left For Dead

It was a clear day in Newport Beach in 1970, when 18-year-old Mission Viejo resident **John Lusk** was delivering some tickets for his uncle to the home of the prominent Irvine Family. John parked his car in the guest parking and proceeded to the estate with the tickets for U.S. Senator George Murphy's reelection party at the new Anaheim Convention Center. Upon completing the delivery, he pulled his 1964 Cadillac Coupe de Ville onto northbound Coast Highway, not noticing the blue Mercedes Benz convertible that was following him.



John Lusk today

Next stop was "Richards" market, in the Lido Isle shopping center, and meeting with the catering manager; they both loaded up trays of appetizers in the back seat and said farewell. As John was about to get into the driver's seat, a person came from behind and stuck a small caliber revolver in his back ordering him to "get in and slide over". Confused and shaken by what was happening, he did as he was told. He was then ordered to get on the floor and to not look at the kidnapper. The kidnapper explained that he was going to ransom him to the Irvine Family. Immediately, young Lusk explained that he was NOT an "Irvine" family member and had merely been there on a delivery. The kidnapper was confused and wanted to know why the young man was driving such a fancy car. John explained that it belonged to his step mother. Frustrated, the kidnapper told him to call his uncle and demand \$200,000 in small bills to be taken to the entrance to Disneyland. The kidnapper then threw John Lusk into the dark, hot trunk and left him for dead.



The police delivered the money as told; however, the kidnapper went to the wrong entrance. The Newport Beach Police Department set up a phone surveillance at the Lusk residence. **Detectives Ken Thompson and Sam Amburgy**, along with **Chief of Police Glavis**, accompanied the elder Uncle Lusk back to Disneyland for another attempt at the ransom drop. Again, the kidnapper went to the wrong area. Back to the residence to await another call. This time, the kidnapper wanted the money taken to LAX Continental Airlines terminal by the escalators.



This was done, and the kidnapper was caught and revealed where he had left young Lusk locked in the trunk of his car some thirteen hours earlier. John Lusk was alive and well, though quite shaken from the experience. As the air in the trunk got more contaminated by carbon dioxide, John survived by letting the air out of the spare tire that was in the trunk with him. Today, John and his wife **Rose** live in the community of Casta Del Sol.

## Cereset Your Stress

### - Can You Overcome It Without Medications?

#### Part 1 of a 6 Part Series

The impact of stress causes so much pain in our lives. From emotional debilitation, brain fog and memory problems and just not being able to perform our best, we all suffer from its effect during our lifetime. Prolonged stress and traumatic experiences manifest a range of misery including anxiety, lack of deep, quality sleep, moodiness, and many other challenges.

No matter what the level of impact is, we all want to be rid of it as soon as possible and get back to our normal, happy selves. But how do you do that without taking medications? We do what we have been conditioned to do and that is to get relief as quickly as possible through a colored pill or two or three. Be empowered again. Trust your brain's ability to balance itself without drugs!

There is a valid reason why we get these uncomfortable side effects from stress. Our brains were designed for moments of stress occasionally. In the caveman days when we were hunters and gatherers, we would come across a dangerous situation and our brain would switch from its normal state of "Rest and Digest" into "Fight or Flight." Borrowing energy and resources from other body functions and elevating stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline, it would give us the instant ability to run faster, jump higher and even outsmart the enemy.

After the threat was over our brain would return to its homeostatic state and we would have normal digestion and hormone levels once again. The animal kingdom is still able to do this but we humans aren't. With this chronic stress, our brains are getting stuck in the "Fight or Flight" or "Freeze" states and the symptoms can be unbearable over time.

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**“Quotable  
 Quotes”**

## Mission Viejo Reporter

List of the great quotes of all time

**THE WAY YOUR STAFF DRESSES DETERMINES THE  
 TYPE OF CUSTOMERS YOU WANT TO ATTRACT.**  
 - ANONYMOUS

**He who travels fastest goes alone.**  
 - Merle Haggard

The world is gone from sailin' ships to rakin'  
 mom's backyard.. - Jimmy Buffett

The difference between a good hiker and a bad  
 hiker is a good hiker knows when to turn back.  
 - Eva Szilagyi

We don't go on because we're ready. We go on  
 because it's Saturday Night.  
 - Lorne Michaels,  
 - Producer, Saturday Night Live

*The best way to give advice to your children  
 is to find out what they want and advise them  
 to do it.*  
 - Harry Truman

Show me someone who never gossips, and I'll  
 show you someone who isn't interested in people.  
 - Barbara Walters

It's nothing personal, It's just business.  
 - Donald Trump

When I read about some squirrely guy who claims  
 that he just don't believe in fightin', I wonder just  
 how long the rest of us can count on being free.  
 - Merle Haggard,  
 - "The Fightin Side of Me"

**It's a shallow life that doesn't give a  
 person a few scars. - Garrison Keillor**

**Teamwork is a lot of people  
 doing what I say. - Anonymous**

The true measure of a man is how he treats  
 someone who can do him absolutely no good.  
 - Ann Landers

The reasonable man adapts himself to the world;  
 the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt  
 the world to himself. Therefore, all progress  
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 - George Bernard Shaw

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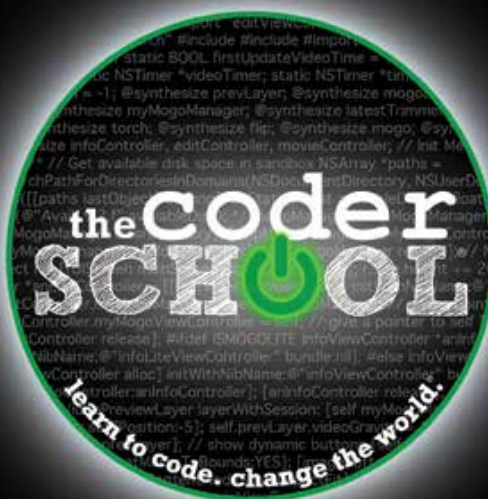
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## Tiny Lights of Mission Viejo

Beginning October 1 and finishing on Thanksgiving, the City installs all of its beautiful holiday lights.

Here are some fun facts:

- 10,000 strands of lights
- 70 lights per strand = 700,000 LED lights
- Begin installing lights October 1 of each year; and finish by Thanksgiving. All are taken down and stored by the end of January.
- It takes 3 different contracting firms along with a City staff to coordinate and install all of the decorations.
- The star on the Community Tree at La Paz and Chrisanta is 4 feet across.
- It takes 2 large shipping containers to store all of the lights.
- Over 700 extension cords are needed.
- Over 23,750 feet of electrical tape is used. That's 4.5 miles of tape.



People come from all over Orange County to look at the 700,000 tiny lights!

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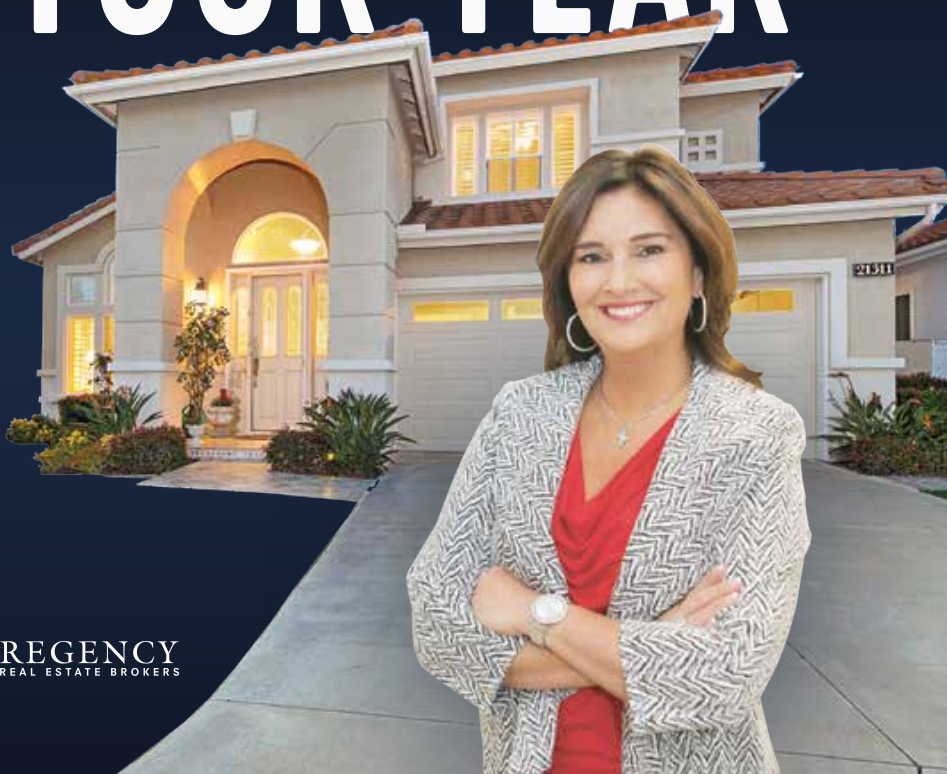
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## **SOUTH COUNTY LEXUS PRESENTING ATHLETE OF THE MONTH Pam Azoff, Yoga**

We spotlight a local person who personifies the typical Mission Viejo resident; active and family centric. **Pam Azoff** wouldn't categorize herself as an athlete, let alone an athlete of the month! Pam became dedicated to yoga through almost daily sessions for the love of inner peace and strength that it brings to her. Separate of that, Pam is a lifelong (if you consider age 9) resident of Mission Viejo.

Her family moved to Mission Viejo from Chicago in 1973 to the home her parents still live in today. She graduated MVHS in 1982 and proudly watched her daughter do the same years later. After marrying, Pam moved to Boston for a year, came back to Orange County to start a family, relocated again to Texas, where she grew her family, eventually returning to Mission Viejo for good in 1995.

Her day begins with a long walk with her sibling wheaten terriers and then its off to yoga. She works as the research and development director of her family owned business, **KM56**, an event company that produces all scale projects. Pam enjoys live music, poke bowls, and great living in her hometown. And... If you are ever need to put an event together, reach out to Pam at KM56.



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