Peninsula Beacon

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BINGO!
Every Thursday at the U.P.S.E.S. Hall
Bingo Early Birds start at 6:30pm
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This home along Sunset Cliffs, often referred to by locals as the Hippie House, is now owned by the band Liquid Blue, recently named by the Guinness Book of World Records as the "World's Most Traveled Band." Photo by Jim Grant

'The World's Most Traveled Band' cinches OB ties

By **BART MENDOZA** | The Beacon

The band members of Liquid Blue. Courtesy photo

Lots of musicians call San Diego home. But even in a crop that includes chart toppers Jason Mraz and Blink 182, Liquid Blue is a standout.

The band is one of the best cover bands to be heard, performing award-winning, socially conscious original music. But what makes the band unique is the amount of roadwork it does, playing to ticketed crowds of up to 65,000 in over 100 countries to date, even becoming the first U.S. band signed to a Chinese label. All that jet lag has earned band members a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records, officially being dubbed the "World's Most Traveled Band."

Led by guitarist Scott Stephans, the group was

SEE **BAND,** Page 6

Creek to Bay Cleanup to draw 6,000-plus helpers April 26

I Love A Clean San Diego's (ILACSD) signature event, the Creek to Bay Cleanup, is gearing up for its 12th installment on Saturday, April 26 to help restore the pristine nature of the region's waterways and beaches.

The event will run from 9 a.m. to noon as part of the national Great American Cleanup, including cleanup sites in Ocean Beach, Pacific Beach, La Jolla, Mission Beach and Mission Bay. Thousands of volunteers will gather at more than 90 coastal and inland sites around San Diego County to help preserve the local environment by cleaning and beautifying these outdoor areas.

Twelve years ago, ILACSD hosted its first Creek to Bay Cleanup with only 27 cleanup sites and 2,000 volunteers. The event has continued to grow and is now one of the biggest cleanup events of the year in San Diego County. In 2013, about 6,000 volunteers removed 100 tons of debris from their local commu-

SEE **CLEANUP,** Page 4

Volunteers put a big dent in removing debris from beach, bay and inland locations during a previous Creek to Bay Cleanup. This year's massive event takes place April 26. Photo by Don Balch

Plans for Point Loma aquatics center site now paddling ahead

By **DAVE SCHWAB** | The Beacon

After years of delay, plans for a public pool at Liberty Station in Point Loma are finally beginning to move along, although proponents can't yet claim swimmingly. The city has put out a request for proposals (RFP) to seek a concessionaire to build and operate the proposed facility — a community component sought by residents for at least a decade or more.

The public's initial response to the idea was positive.

"Families for a Point Loma Swimming Pool has been working toward the development of an aquatic center in NTC Park since 2000," said Julie Cramer, spokeswoman for the grassroots group. "While the project has taken some time, the need in Point Loma and the surrounding communities for an aquatic center continues."

Cramer credited City Council District 2's last two councilmembers, Byron Wear and Kevin Faulconer, along with city staff, as having been "instrumental in keeping this project moving forward. This aquatic center offers the opportunity for people of all ages to come together and enjoy a range of swim and fitness activities. Located at NTC Park, the aquatic center will be a true community asset."

The head of the Peninsula Family

SEE **POOL,** Page 4

Participants take in the sights of Peninsula homes and gardens during a previous Point Loma Garden Walk, sponsored by the Dana Unit of Rady Children's Hospital. Courtesy photo

Garden Walk set to woo lovers of Peninsula's exquisite home beauty

By **DAVE SCHWAB** | The Beacon

The 13th annual Point Loma Garden Walk will again showcase eight gorgeous Peninsula home gardens to raise money to support the Dana Unit of Rady Children's Hospital Auxiliary. The event will be held in Roseville, the oldest settled part of Point Loma, on Saturday, April 26 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This year's walk spotlights the select home gardens — some with interior tours — and includes a popular Garden Boutique and Dana Diamond Tour, as well as featuring a private shuttle to the gardens with lunch in a home not on the regular tour.

"The Garden Walk is San Diego's

SEE **GARDEN,** Page 4

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BAND

CONTINUED FROM **Page 1**

formed in 1996. It's a flexible lineup of seven, with an "A Team," a "B Team" dubbed Aqua Blue and a stripped-down version of the group called Acoustic Blue. With an incredible repertoire of more than 650 cover songs, the ability to sing in several languages and a slew of worthy originals, it's easy to see why the band rarely has a day off.

Band members purchased Ocean Beach's legendary Hippie House in 2013, installing a state-of-the-art recording studio in the process. Perennially on the road, the next 60 days will find the group performing in China, Japan and Korea, as well as dates throughout the U.S.

Local fans can catch the group on July 18 at 6:30 p.m., when it performs as part of the annual free Point Loma Concert Series at Point Loma Park. Meanwhile, Acoustic Blue will perform at Wonderland OB on May 7 at 6:30 p.m.

Surprisingly, according to Stephans, the logistics involved in travel these days aren't as rough as might be expected.

"In our early days, we played some tours where the band was required to take their own speakers," he said. "It was brutal. Today, almost everything is taken care of, from hotels and transportation to having a backline. We just fly in, All we have to do is bring our guitars and maybe a rack of pedals. It's much easier than having to haul things around."

While there are language barriers in some places the band has played, he said some music is universal. "Different areas do have slightly different tastes in music," Stephans said. "Canada and Australia, for example, like things that are a little more rock. But something like a Michael Jackson hit would be known pretty much anywhere you played."

He said the computer age has added a new wrinkle to music.

"Everything gets everywhere at the same time now, goes viral or whatever," said Stephans. "So it doesn't matter where you go, the bigger modern hits are known. I figure something like the latest Pharrell track, for example, falls into that category."

While Liquid Blue is known for its wide range of cover tunes, it has also achieved acclaim for its originals. The band has two albums to its credit: "Supernova" (2004) and "Earth Passport" (2010), the latter yielding a No. 3 Billboard dance chart hit.

With everything from 50 Cent to Rhianna and Frank Sinatra to ZZ Top on that list, it's an undertaking that has already been under way for two years.

Fast approaching the 20th anniversary of the band, Stephans said he is happy with what the band has accomplished.

"I've never been driven for monetary reasons," he said. "It's a cliché, but I actually believe that if you do something you believe in, something you like, things will follow. It's that combination of the joy of doing something and trying to make a difference that makes being a musician special."

While the band has certainly been a success from the financial and business end, Stephans insists that wasn't the whole idea.

"The goal was travel and to put out socially conscious music," Stephans said. "In retrospect, we achieved some of that. We certainly did a lot of travel."

"If you can travel by playing music, I think it's great," he said. "Being a musician is one of the few vocations that you can do that with," he said.

• **LIQUID BLUE** performs at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, July 18 at the Point Loma Summer Concert Series, **POINT LOMA PARK** at Catalina Boulevard and Varona Street. All ages. Free. www.plconcerts.org.

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