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NO. 3 VOL. XXXVII



The Pickleball Fashionista:

Aubri Steele designs chic clothing for pickleball players with the rallying cry, "be civil, play nicely."

SAN DIEGO'S 2022

WOMEN *of*
ACCOMPLISHMENT

SEE PAGE 8

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COVER STORY:

The Pickleball Fashionista

Aubri Steele, a Solana Beach wife and mother of five teenagers, not only plays a game with a funny name, but designs clothes for pickleball players, a business she started when the pandemic forced shut-in families to devise ways to entertain themselves during COVID-19. The business, like the sport, is growing. Page 18



San Diego's 2022 Women of Accomplishment

Our selection of San Diego women who have achieved remarkable success in their business or organizations.



Turkey Unmasked

Writer Marlise Kast-Myers and her husband Benjamin Myers opted to take a much desired trip to Turkey when rumors started circulating about a travel ban due to the pandemic. She says the trip only came about when three things aligned: finances, timing and motivation.



Biden's Border Chaos: Opinion by John Kass

Writes John Kass: "Can a nation survive without borders? How long can political leaders rationalize their own refusal to enforce the law and protect the borders?"

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SAN DIEGO SCENE

Illustration courtesy of General Atomics.

General Atomics introduces Gambit New Autonomous Collaborative platform designed to lead from front

New Autonomous Collaborative platform designed to lead from front

General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc. announces its newest UAS platform: Gambit.

Like the chess opening move that inspires the name, Gambit is about initiative, leading from the front, using advanced sensing to grab the tactical advantage and open a world of possibilities.

Gambit is an Autonomous Collaborative Platform (ACP) designed through digital engineering to speed its time to market and lower acquisition cost, and it will deliver an extended and enhanced sensing capability. The jet-powered platform is being built for air dominance and will heavily leverage advances in artificial intelligence and autonomous systems. Working alongside human-piloted aircraft, Gambit will enable pilots to see deeper into hostile airspace, detect threats first, and provide time and space for critical decisions and actions.

“GA-ASI has led the way in integrating UAS into every aspect of military operations,” said GA-ASI President David R. Alexander. “Now we’re once again pushing the boundaries of what’s possible with unmanned aircraft, software, mission systems integration and more.”

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Ronson J. Shamoun, Principal Attorney and CEO of RJS LAW, is an Adjunct Law Professor at the University of San Diego—School of Law where he teaches a Tax Practice and Penalties class. He was recently presented with the following awards:

- San Diego Metro Magazine- Best Attorney 2016
- San Diego Magazine- Top Attorney 2016
- San Diego Business Journal- Best of the Bar 2014, 2015 & 2016

- Martindale Hubbel's- AC Preeminent Rated 2014, 2015 & 2016
- San Diego Daily Transcript- Top Attorney 2014 & 2015
- San Diego Metro Magazine- 40 Under 40 - 2015

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Apple's Rise to the Top of Gaming



Visual Capitalist - The tech giant doesn't make games of its own, but revelations from its court case with Epic Games reveals that it tops the industry with is lucrative marketplace

In 2020, Apple generated an estimated \$13.5 billion dollars in gaming revenue—even though the tech giant doesn't actually make any games or gaming consoles.

So how does Apple generate all this money from gaming? A key driver of Apple's gaming revenue is the 30 percent fee it collects from all app spending, including in-app purchases, subscriptions, and premium app fees.

Through this significant fee structure, Apple has seen its gaming revenue steadily increase over the last few years. Here's a look at the company's estimated gaming revenue from 2018 to 2020:

2018: \$9.5 billion. Percent of total app revenue: 71.7 percent

2019: \$11 billion. Percent of total app revenue: 69 percent

2020: \$13.5 billion. Percent of total app revenue: 66.7 percent

As the data above shows, a majority of Apple's App Store revenue comes from games. And because of hefty fees, Apple made more profits off of games than some of the most reputable gaming companies who designed them.

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Elizabeth Babcock named the new president and CEO of Forever Balboa Park



Elizabeth Babcock

Forever Balboa Park, the City of San Diego's nonprofit partner in sustaining Balboa Park, has named Elizabeth C. Babcock, current chief public engagement officer and Roberts-Wilson Dean of Education at the California Academy of Sciences, as the new president and CEO of the organization. She will begin her new role in April.

During her 10+ years at the California Academy of Sciences, Babcock proved her ingenuity and ability to inspire curiosity and interest in visitors to the institution. She also directed teams in developing and delivering a variety of innovative educational programs within and beyond the museum's walls.

Dr. Babcock's career accomplishments include:

- Directed a \$13 million budget at the California Academy of Sciences and grew offerings to 3.2 million annual in-person learning engagements and 20 million online views of education products and programs.
- Expanded and diversified program offerings in her last position by personally securing \$4+ million in grants each year.
- Cofounded and served as volunteer Chair of ChangeScale, the Bay Area's Environmental Education Collaborative, serving over 180 environmental education organizations and 35+ member organizations and universities.
- Honored as a White House Champion of Change in 2013 for her leadership in museum and library partnerships.

Budget Blinds names retired Marine Corps major as 2022 Franchisee of the Year



Lloyd Biggs and wife Angela

An Oceanside man who entered franchising after serving the United States Marine Corps for 34 years and now co-owns and operates five Budget Blinds businesses throughout North County, has been honored with the top 2022 franchising honor from Budget Blinds, North America's largest window covering franchise.

Lloyd Biggs accepted the 2022 Budget Blinds Franchisee of the Year Award on behalf of his team of 15 from Budget Blinds President Doug Phillip during the 2022 Budget Blinds Virtual Key Initiative Meeting for Budget Blinds franchisees earlier this year.

The annual award recognizes the one franchisee out of more than 900 Budget Blinds business owners in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico who best models Budget Blinds values, provides uncompromising customer service, and contributes to employees and the local community.

Biggs and his business partner, Adam Berryman, own Budget Blinds franchises in Carlsbad, Oceanside, San Marcos, Vista and North San Diego, which they operate as a family and community enterprise under the umbrella of Budget Blinds of North County San Diego.

Biggs invested in his first business in 2015 to replace the stresses of corporate life with a company that could grow with his family and community. Currently, his wife, Angela, helps manage the business.

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St. Paul's Manor to undergo \$17 million renovation

St. Paul's Senior Services launches a \$17 million capital campaign for extensive renovations to St. Paul's Manor, an independent living community in Bankers Hill, supporting seniors of modest means for over 60 years. The Manor is the flagship of St. Paul's Senior Services, a community that has given quality of life to thousands of independent seniors since it first opened in 1963. Now, the Bankers Hill building is in much need of both cosmetic and infrastructure updates throughout the 11-story building.

Construction will begin this year. Enhancements will include updates to the building exterior, common areas which will feature a "pub" area for socializing, upgrades to the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing infrastructure, and cosmetic and structural updates to the 134 apartments as well. Construction should be completed by the fall of 2022 though applications for premium apartment selection are currently underway for potential new residents.

St. Paul's has received \$7,800,000 in gifts and pledges of its \$17 million fundraising goal.



St. Paul's Manor rendering.

Sudberry Properties' 260-unit apartment and retail project nearing completion at Scripps Ranch

The Hub at Scripps Ranch, Sudberry Properties' apartment-retail development, is nearing completion at the former site of Pacific Southwest Airlines' Reservation Center and Flight Training Center.

The development will include 260 luxury apartments and 10,700 square feet of retail and restaurant space. A leasing office has opened. Apartment residents in the initial phases have started moving in. The property is located at the gateway to Scripps Ranch at 9840 Carroll Canyon Road.

The Hub features one- to three-bedroom apartments, ranging from 614 to 1,391 square feet, with rents starting at \$2,600 per month. Interior amenities include private patios or balconies (most locations), 9-foot ceilings, hardwood-style flooring in main areas, carpeting in bedrooms, fully equipped kitchens with GE Energy Star stainless steel appliances, quartz countertops, and full-size washers and dryers. The smoke-free apartment community is pet-friendly, with some breed restrictions in place.



View of fire pit and pool at Sudberry Properties' The Hub at Scripps Ranch.

Alejandro Orfila: 1925-2021



Alejandro Orfila was awarded an honorary degree from the board of trustees of California State University and Cal State San Marcos.

Alejandro Orfila, former Argentina ambassador to the United States, secretary general of the Organization of American States and owner of the very successful Orfila Winery in Escondido, has passed away. He was 96, and a long-time resident of Rancho Santa Fe.

He joined the Argentine foreign service in 1946, posted initially to Moscow and subsequently to Warsaw, New Orleans and San Francisco before being named Ambassador to Japan in 1960. In 1973 he was named Argentina's Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States until July 1975 when he was named Secretary General of the Organization of American States

(OAS). As secretary general of the OAS, he facilitated the signing of the Panama Canal Treaty with President Carter and General Torrijos. In 1979, he arranged the visit of Pope John Paul II to the OAS.

Orfila was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters by the Board of Trustees of the California State University and California State University San Marcos.

Orfila retired from his political career and entered the business world as a consultant and investor in the fields of international finance and real estate.

In 1989 Orfila and his wife, Helga

Leifeld, moved to Rancho Santa Fe, and in 1993 they purchased Thomas Jaeger Winery and renamed it Orfila Vineyard and Winery. With winemaker Leon Santoro, the winery was put on the map and began to win numerous awards for its quality wines.

He was decorated by nations around the globe: Spain, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, the Vatican, Thailand, Japan and Greece. He received numerous honorary degrees from universities in the United States and Latin America.

A man of many interests, Orfila loved life and people with his savvy wit and infectious charm. He is survived by his wife, Helga, his former wife and their four children and grandchildren.



HAHN LOESER CONGRATULATES PARTNER DANIELLE C. HUMPHRIES

for her distinction as a 2022 *SD Metro* "Women of Accomplishment" awardee. Danielle's commitment and dedication to her clients and her community make her truly deserving of this honor. She is a champion and mentor for many women, an advocate for change and inspiration for others to get involved in their communities. Congratulations to Danielle and all of the *SD Metro* "Women of Accomplishment" honorees!

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SAN DIEGO'S 2022 WOMEN *of* ACCOMPLISHMENT



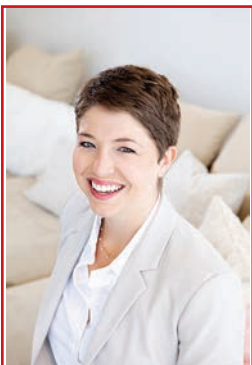
ERICA M. PINTO

Erica Pinto is the chairwoman of the Jamul Indian Village of California. She is a poised and effective leader. Throughout the tribe's history, no other leader has made such significant changes in improving the quality of life for members and its neighbors. Her efforts have resulted in more than \$100 million in public benefit and safety improvements for the residents of San Diego County and under her leadership, nearly 1,000 permanent jobs have been created for members of the tribe, and the surrounding region. She is a co-founder of the Acorns of Oaks Tribal program, which organizes activities focused on culture, youth development, health and fitness and technology. She serves on the board of the Southern California Tribal Chairman's Association. She is chair of the board of the Southern Indian Council. Since becoming chair of JIV, she has led it through significant economic progress on its path to self-reliance. She led the tribe to overcome 40 lawsuits opposing the casino's construction. Pinto has been honored with the American Indian Chamber of Commerce of California's highest award in recognizing her work on behalf of Indian businesses and community growth for native people.



TERESA CAMPBELL

Teresa Campbell is president and CEO of the San Diego County Credit Union. She is a dedicated influential and innovative leader. SDCCU's impressive blend of products and services are leading the way for overall credit union successes. Under her leadership, through a continued focus on delivering exceptional customer service combined with hard work and dedication, SDCCU has maintained its stance as an industry leader and has achieved continued growth and success. In the 11 years that she has served as CEO and president, SDCCU has more than doubled its membership from 204,000 in August 2010 to over 427,000 now. Along with doubling its growth in membership, SDCCU's assets have followed suit, growing from \$5 billion to \$ 10.8 billion. SDCCU managed through the difficult COVID-19 period, even as it was impacted by elevated unemployment in local communities. Its net worth remains outstanding at 14.4 percent which is well above the seven percent minimum capital level for "well capitalized credit unions" established by the National Credit Union Administration. SDCCU has been named a Live Well San Diego Public Health Champion by the County of San Diego and Outstanding Philanthropic Business Corporation.



LAUREN ROWLEY

Lauren Rowley is the chief financial officer at Stella. She has facilitated \$1.3 million in funding across 14 women-led startups over the past year. She knows that women and underrepresented founders are vastly underfunded, and she tackling this hard problem head on. Startups backed by venture capital are significantly male (89.3 percent), based in Silicon Valley (35.3 percent and Ivy-educated 13.7 percent). Rowley has been laser-focused on engaging more entrepreneurs, investors and community advocates. To date, Stella has raised \$30 million in funding for women-led startups. To help women learn more about the innovative economy and gain access to tools and funding more quickly, she will be hosting online courses throughout the year. She is a board member of Village Up San Diego and the young leaders group of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce. She is a graduate of Kansas University and the UC San Diego Rady School of Management.

RUTH-ANN THORN

Ruth-Ann Thorn is a pioneer businesswoman. She is a true native tribal member of the Luiseno Indians. The Luisenos were hunter-gathers and moved from place to place frequently as they gathered food for their families. Luiseno men hunted deer, rabbits, and small game, and went fishing in rivers and streams. Luiseno women gathered acorns, nuts, beans and fruits. Today, those acorns and other land-based plants are part of the ingredients for her new national business endeavor, N8IV Beauty Skin Care. She is one of the few female native tribal chairwomen in the country. Under her leadership, she has taken the economic development arm of the Luiseno Native Tribe, REDCO, and elevated it to new heights shepherding the business growth and prosperity for future tribal generations. The Luiseno Indians have inhabited the Temecula Valley for thousands of years. Thorn is taking the rich Luiseno heritage of the past and elevated it into successful business commerce of the future. She is also managing the helm of Rincon Reservation Road Brewery. Under her leadership, the brewery has a new expansive tasting room open in Valley Center with their proprietary native Luiseno beer now available in many local retailers such as Costco, BevMo and others. She is also a single mother of a budding artist, Bella Thorn, a high schooler in Valley Center whose paintings have collectors as far away as Dubai.



FRANCESCA SAN DIEGO

Francesca San Diego is the vice president of finance and a member of the executive management team at PBO Advisory Group, a leading local outsourcing and consulting firm. She works with companies across the region to manage and staff accounting, financial, regulatory compliance, human resources and business advisory projects. Since joining PBO in 2015, she has been vital in managing the company's growth and its resulting opportunities, as well as inevitable challenges. Not only has she been a key player in helping PBO Advisory have its most profitable years since 2018, she has played an integral role in helping to rebrand the company, expand its service offerings and making strategic hiring decisions that launched the company into new directions. San Diego was integral in securing over \$40 million of forgiven PPO loans and \$62 million in Employee Retention Tax Credit Refunds for PBO clients. These funds were used to support many local San Diego businesses in retaining employees and continuing business operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Congratulations to Cheryl Nieman Brechlin for her recognition as one of SD METRO's "Women of Accomplishment!"

An integral part of our firm, she is a skilled real estate lawyer – representing developers, property owners, businesses, investors and tenants in complex transactional real estate and corporate matters.



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Congratulations to Francesca San Diego on being named one of San Diego's 2022 Women of Accomplishment!

We congratulate all of the honorees for their hard work and achievements.



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WOMEN OF ACCOMPLISHMENT



CHERYL NIEMAN BRECHLIN

Cheryl Brechlin is an expert in both transactional and litigation work at CGS3 Law. She was just promoted to senior counsel. CSG3 is a rapidly growing commercial real estate law firm. Unlike most transactional attorneys, she honed her skills as a “big law” litigator in the firm’s Los Angeles office, gaining crucial hands-on experience that has given her the common sense, client-centric approach necessary to succeed in the fast-paced world of commercial real estate. She brings a competitive edge to each commercial real estate deal she works on. Brechlin represents developers, property owners, businesses, investors and tenants in complex transactional real estate and corporate matters, as well as handling day-to-day operations in high stakes litigation for landlords and financial institutions. She is active in the community and has been a mentor with Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters of Los Angeles, and is a member of the City of Hope. She has earned many accolades for her work and has been recognized among the “Ones to Watch” for Real Estate Law in the Best Lawyers in America, and has been a 40 Under 40 honoree by SD METRO Magazine.



PATRICIA FERMAN

Patricia Ferman is the principal landscape architect for the City of Chula Vista. She is known for being highly creative and motivated with 20 years of experience designing and implementing functional and attractive public outdoor spaces using compete-streets principles, water conservation measures and city codes and regulations in a collaborative design process with stakeholders. She was born in El Salvador is was the first in her family to earn a college degree. Her bachelor’s degree in landscape architecture is from UC Davis. Her award-winning projects such as Third Avenue Streetscape and F Street Promenade are recognized examples of her passion to improve public mobility, create safe and high-quality pedestrian environments and conserve precious energy and water resources. Ferman won the Circulate San Diego Complex Streets Award for the F Street Promenade Streetscape Master Plan. Over the past 19 years she has enhanced the quality of life for people working and living in Chula Vista.



DANIELLE C. HUMPHRIES

Danielle Humphries is a partner at Hahn Loeser and Parks LLP and is chair of the firm’s San Diego Trusts and Estates Practice Group. She has earned a stellar reputation as a trusted legal adviser with experience, insight and sophistication. She serves as general counsel for familie, managing a multitude of legal issues, including trust and estate related issues, wealth preservation and protection, philanthropic planning and tax planning. She has extensive experience representing fiduciaries and beneficiaries in complex trust and estate administration and litigation. Her representation of fiduciaries includes advising individual and corporate fiduciaries on risk mitigation and their duties and responsibilities in the administration of trusts and estates. Humphries is an extraordinary role model and advocate for gender parity within the legal industry. She is a steering committee member of the firm’s Women’s Leadership Initiative and is looked to as a mentor by women lawyers. She is a volunteer for Promises2Kids, and is an active board member and chair of the Philanthropy Committee. She was recently named Best Lawyers in America for Litigation -Trust and Estates, 2021-22. She is a graduate of the University of San Diego School of Law.



MARLISE KAST-MYERS

Journalist and author Marlise Kast-Myers has traveled to more than 80 countries and has lived in Switzerland, Dominican Republic, Spain and Costa Rica. Before settling in Southern California, she completed a surfing and snowboarding expedition across the world. Following the release of her memoir, “Tabloid Prodigy,” she co-authored over 30 Fodor’s Travel Guides including books on Cancun, San Diego, Panama, Puerto Rico, Peru, Los Cabos, Corsica, Riviera Maya, Sardinia, Vietnam and Costa Rica. She has served as a photojournalist for Surf Guide to Costa Rica and authored day and overnight hikes on the Pacific Crest Trail. Based now in San Diego, she and her husband, Benjamin, live in the historic Betty Crocker Estate where they operate an antique business, Brick n Barn. Her website is www.marlisekast.com.

Congratulations

Erica M. Pinto

CHAIRWOMAN, JAMUL INDIAN VILLAGE

2022 WOMEN OF ACCOMPLISHMENT SAN DIEGO METRO MAGAZINE

It is with great pride that the Jamul Indian Village of California extends our congratulations to our Chairwoman, Erica M. Pinto, for being named a Woman of Accomplishment by San Diego Metro Magazine. Her list of accomplishments is extensive and distinguished, but all focused on improving the quality of life for our Tribal Members and neighbors. Her exemplary leadership as Chairwoman has resulted in over 1,000 permanent jobs for members of our Tribe and the surrounding region, plus more than \$100 million in public benefit and safety improvements for the residents of San Diego County. We thank her for the hard work recognized by this honor, and congratulate all of the other Women of Accomplishment that share it with her.



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WOMEN OF ACCOMPLISHMENT



CHERI PIERRE

Cheri Pierre has been recognized as one of San Diego's most influential leaders as CEO of Computers 2 Kids. Her strong leadership has helped grow Computers 2 Kids by 200 percent during the global pandemic, expanding services nationwide in response to the growing digital disparity through creating the Computers 2 Kids Technology Assistance (TAP) program scheduled to launch this summer. She owns Pierre and Associates a consulting firm that provides businesses entrepreneurs and organizations with the tools and expertise they need to manage their corporate impact ability. She specializes in helping under-resourced nonprofit organizations, small businesses and entrepreneurs implement sustainable solutions usually reserved for large, multinational companies. Her global positions in Washington and Germany included working with the World Bank, InterAmerican Bank, VUBI, government ministries and executive offices of the German Ambassador. Pierre is board treasurer for Lamp of Learning and has served as board chair of ArtsBusXpress. She is a graduate of San Diego State University.



PORSHA VOGT

As the owner of Golden Care, Porsha Vogt enables seniors in Carlsbad and San Diego County to live safe, happy lives in their own homes for as long as they can. Her mission and the mission of Golden Care includes assisting family members with elder care for their loved ones while maintaining their own professional and personal lives; creating a family-oriented environment staffed by professional caregivers that go the extra mile to serve seniors; and increasing respect and concern for seniors in our society. She is business management graduate of the University of Colorado and brings her background in finance and entrepreneurialism to the service of seniors and their loved one through Golden Care.



FELICIA W SHAW

Women's Museum of California



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San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation

From the staff at Computers 2 Kids

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Throughout her career, and especially during the last 2 years, Chéri has been an exceptional leader, keeping C2K up and running safely and successfully, ensuring our essential work gets done and computers are given to children in need.



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TURKEY UNMASKED

By Marlise Kast-Myers | Photos by Benjamin Myers

As a world traveler, I had put one destination on hold until three things aligned: finances, timing, and motivation. But with rumors of a travel ban on the horizon, I accepted the reality that money burns, time melts, and memories are the only impressions we can brand on our minds.

Before masked smiles and elbow bumps became an international form of communication, my husband Benjamin and I stacked hands on Turkey, going all in on what would be our last trip for 18 months. We'd been craving the sub rosa side of Turkey by dividing our trip into three parts: city, country, coastal. It was our own geographical version of "Eat, Love, Pray" without the soul-searching.

From LAX, we traveled nonstop with Turkish Airlines, offering complimentary city tours and hotel accommodations for layovers over five hours. For us, part of going "all in" meant this would be a journey of firsts (and possibly lasts) including flying Business Class. I just had to try everything including Turkish delight, turndown service, and Versace amenities. Fifteen hours later, we landed at the Istanbul Airport — the world's largest, costing \$12 billion.

We checked into Ciragan Palace Kempinski Istanbul, adorned with marble columns and chandeliers bigger than my truck. As the only Ottoman palace-cum-hotel on the Bosphorus, it introduced us to this narrow strait between Europe and

Asia.

The best water views were from the hotel's restaurant, Tuğra. Black-tie waiters, candle-lit tables, and paintings by Fausto Zonaro had me wide-eye my husband in financial fear.

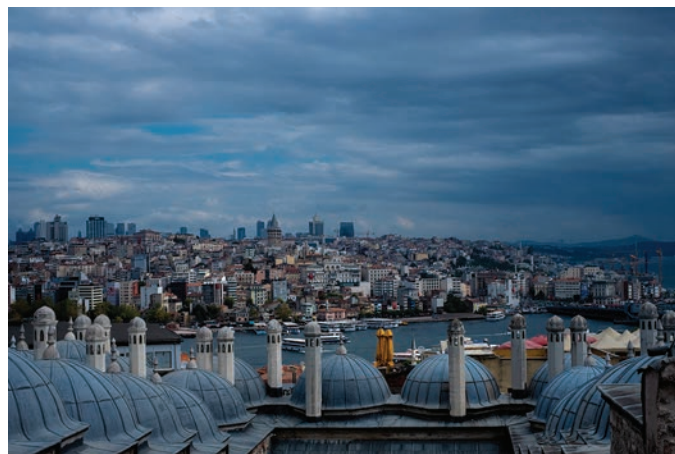
Ottoman and Turkish dishes of lamb shank and duck tandir were served with oil-bathed olives, hummus, eggplant, feta, and other meze. Benjamin leaned over and whispered, "Exhale. An entrée costs less than \$30."

Living large without regret, we decided to go full-Sultan-mode. By day we would sightsee, and by night we would sink into tasseled pillows while devouring desserts from housekeeping: Dried fruits, flaky baklava, and chewy lokum cubes of

Beneath Cappadocia are 36 underground cities dating back to B.C 3000.



Courtyard view at Ciragan Palace Kempinski Istanbul.



Cityscape in bustling Istanbul.

pomegranate, orange, and honey.

Calories were burned during our four days in Istanbul with Sea Song Tours. From the meditative Süleymaniye Mosque, to the Constantine column of the Byzantine Hippodrome, history came alive in this tangible textbook.

While Benjamin absorbed insights on religion and architecture, I found myself charmed by the 250,000 stray dogs and cats that roamed the city. These healthy-looking fur-babies were everywhere, passed out on pavement with bellies to the sky. Local government provides food and medical care, so technically, they are “home” at the gates of a 16th century mosque.

How could they not be? Between the mosaics and domes of Hagia Sophia, we too felt the comforting reverence of this architectural masterpiece. Built in 537 AD, this Orthodox cathedral-turned-Ottoman mosque honors both the Christian and Muslim faiths as a tribute to one of the most important Byzantine structures created.

Religious freedom seemed almost celebrated in Istanbul, morphing my preconceived ideas of a turbulent nation into one of peace. On the Asian side of the Bosphorus, the artisan neighborhood of Kuzguncuk — known for its colorful townhouses with gingerbread balconies — had mosques, synagogues, and churches practically sharing walls. English worship belted from Christian churches as the Islamic call to prayer rang from 3,000 mosques in the distance.

In a city of 15 million, this testament of religious pluralism and multicultural identity triggered a sense of coexistence and prosperity. Waterfront mansions framing the Bosphorus put Beverly Hills to shame, yet despite the affluence, locals were unpretentious and inviting, especially in Bomonti.

This Brooklyn of Turkey has a community vibe where everybody knows their neighbor. At the House Hotel we

connected with locals who invited us for Turkish coffee at Halisünasyon and dinner at Bâtard. We stumbled on farmers markets, the Ara Güler Museum, and Glories Chocolate to sample truffles with rose hips and lemon.

Void of burkas, brawn, and bluster, Istanbul was brilliantly alive, poised in an urban posture with European game. I was hooked on Karaköy, a maritime trading center turned trendy art-, fashion-, and food district. Framing cobblestone alleys were funky cafés and hookah bars, stowed beneath grand-old apartments veined with ivy and graffiti, as if the hipster offspring of Marseilles and San Francisco.

Paradoxical Istanbul calmed us in the Serefiye Cistern, and awakened us in the Grand Bazaar. Among merchants haggling copper and carpets were courtyards delivering respite from chaos. Pungent aromas of leather, coffee, tobacco, and spices were landscaped by a vibrancy that dismantled false perceptions of a dark and monochromatic city.

Our second hotel certainly helped. In the Zorlu Center of the Beşiktaş district, Raffles Istanbul is the nucleus of some 3,000 boutiques, restaurants, and galleries. This cosmopolitan property boasts an impressive art collection, Michelin Star chefs, and the largest spa in Istanbul.

From the hand-blown chandeliers, to the custom murals in every room, design is in the details with Byzantine silks, Turkish textiles, and gold mosaics. After Pan-Asian fusion at Isokyo, we headed to the spa for a traditional hammam treatment.

If laying naked on a marble slab wasn't foreign enough, we then had our hair washed, our bodies scrubbed, and buckets of water poured down our thighs. With sandpaper mitts in full motion, I rolled over to find Benjamin buried in a mountain of foam. “I think I'm missing a mole,” I whispered.

Post-exfoliation, my skin felt like butter and my hair like silk.

TRAVEL

Yet, once was enough as we embarked on the “country” portion of our trip to Cappadocia.

Carpeting the Anatolian steppes of central Turkey were fairy chimneys, cliff-hewn pigeonholes, and Dr. Seuss-like rock formations sculpted by centuries of wind and rain. Beneath this moonscape are 36 underground cities including Kaymakli, dating back to B.C 3000. Complete with storage, stables, and cellars is this human ant-farm that sheltered 2,000 people during Arab-Byzantine wars.

To maximize our experience, we leaned on Ismail from Travel Atelier. From the rock sanctuaries at Göreme National Park, to the tandir lamb at Aravan Evi, Ismail delivered on all fronts, including a last-minute hot air balloon ride at 4 AM.

Floating 1,500 feet above Rose Valley, we were one among 100 hot air balloons peppering the sky.

Perhaps the most impressive vantage point of the balloon colony was from our hotel, Argos in Cappadocia. In the hilltop village of Uçhisar, this ambitious transformation project turned 51 caves into luxury rooms with reading nooks and in-suite plunge pools.


From their SEKI Restaurant are sweeping views of Pigeon Valley with vineyards, apricot orchards, and stone spires jutting from the earth. It's in this historic cradle of silence where monks withdrew into solitude, and today, travelers enter a monastery of stillness, stirred only by the songs of nightingales and pigeon wings.

Our trip could have happily ended there, but eastward we went to Alaçatı on Turkey's Çeşme Peninsula. This seaside playground near İzmir is famous for its beaches, vineyards, and stone houses, but it was boutique hotel, Alavya that wooed us.

Six historical houses face an open courtyard of white mulberry and olive trees, where a lap pool, garden restaurant, and yoga pavilion find shade beneath the canopies. Elegant rooms have beamed ceilings, linen robes, patchwork rugs, and Carrera-marbled bathrooms. Our breakfast was almost sinful, with mounds of figs, plums, olives, and cheese soaked in honey.

We would have never left our hotel had the town not been our winning temptress, enticing us with whitewashed storefronts draped in bougainvillea. Lazy dogs posed beneath Greek-blue shutters in Instagram-able moments, perfected only by kissing couples, yellow sundresses, and shiny Vespas.

That evening we dined at Asma Yaprığı (Vine Leaf), where Chef Ayse Nur invites guests into her kitchen. Among the pyramids of Mediterranean-and-Turkish dishes were braised



Over 100 hot air balloons float 1,500 feet above Rose Valley.

artichoke, stuffed zucchini flower, and baked pumpkin with sundried tomatoes.

Despite our morning desire to beach-lounge, we couldn't leave Alaçati without visiting the wine region. As the birthplace of *vitis vinifera* (grape vine), Turkey's Aegean Coast accounts for 20% of the country's wine production. After an hour's drive we arrived in Urla, where we traced seven vineyards pouring award-winning blends like Urla Vourla and Nero D'Avola.

Finally, we got our day in the sun in Bodrum on Turkey's southwest coast. This gateway to beach towns and 5-star resorts landed us at Mandarin Oriental. Golf carts zipped guests between nine restaurants, a private beach, and rooms with views of Paradise Bay.

As hot air balloons are to Cappadocia, so are sailboats to Bodrum. Joining the masses, we cruised the mesmerizing peninsula to cradled coves, where we sprung from the top sundeck into the turquoise sea. I must have snorkeled for five hours, hovering over florescent coral and chasing schools of glitter. We lunched on roasted octopus, tuna tartar, and lobster tagliolini. And then, I stretched out on the bow, lulled to sleep, and dreamt of Turkey.

In my dream were utopian visions of a unified metropolis with

many faces. There were mysterious caves, satin pillows, and dogs and cats that lived in harmony. I saw a coastline splashed in 5-hues of blue. There were hundreds of hot air balloons floating above stone walls etched in time; And in the distance, was the resounding cry of prayers echoing across valleys and canyons.

My reverie ended with a familiar voice.

"Wake up sleepy head," Benjamin said. "It's time to go home."



About the Author

As a journalist and author, Marlise Kast-Myers has contributed to over 50 online and print publications including Forbes, Surfer, SD METRO Magazine, San Diego Magazine, and Union Tribune. Her passion for traveling has taken her to 85 countries and led her to establish short-term residency in Switzerland, Dominican Republic, Spain, and Costa Rica. In her capacity as a travel journalist, Marlise has co-authored over 20 Fodor's Guides including books on Mexico, San Diego, Panama, Puerto Rico, Peru, Corsica, Sardinia, Vietnam, Los Cabos, and Costa Rica.



Bodrum, on Turkey's southwest coast, is the gateway to beach towns and 5-star resorts.



Catnaps and fashion pair perfectly in Alacati on Turkey's Cesme Peninsula.



Iconic Hagia Sophia served as a religious center for the Byzantine world.



Fairy chimneys and cliff-hewn pigeonholes of Cappadocia.

The Pickleball Fashionista:

By Manny Cruz

Aubri Steele competes and designs chic clothing for Pickleball players with the rallying cry, 'be civil, play nicely'

Aubri is wearing Civile's Dink in a Box Tee

It's remarkable how the pandemic, the loss of a mentor, and a paddleball sport with a funny name could drive a 43-year-old Solana Beach wife and mother of five teenagers to launch a stylish clothing design business with the simple mantra, "be civil, play nicely."

That would be Aubri Steele, a former high school and college teacher who came up with the idea of designing attractive clothing for men, women and children who like to play pickleball — a fast-growing sport who owes its popularity in part to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced individuals and families isolated by the disease to invent different ways to entertain themselves in safe, relaxing activities.

Some people invested more time in reading. Others took up new hobbies. Camping and other outdoor activities were also favorite things to do.

For Aubri, her husband Cody, a real estate executive, and their teenagers, pickleball was a welcome relief from isolation. Cody set up a net in their front yard, obtained balls and paddles, and play began.

"We quickly became well-versed in the game and began inviting neighbors and friends to play, all while maintaining social distance and excessively sanitizing the equipment," says Aubri. "This was the sport we could play with our parents and our children. Simply put, pickleball brought us together."

For the uninitiated, pickleball is a game resembling tennis where players use paddles to hit a perforated plastic ball over a net. Two or four players can play.

The game has surged in popularity over the past two years. The Economist declared it "the fastest growing sport in America." According to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association, the sport attracted 4.2 million players in 2020,



a 21 percent year-over-year increase.

Pickleball enthusiasts echo Aubri's sense of family togetherness. "Pickleball is the only sport where my whole family — from my kids to my parents — can play together," says Dave Fleming, 54, a senior pickleball pro.

Stu Upson, CEO of USA Pickleball, s 50,000-member organization, says the game got a "big bump" in 2020 because of the pandemic. "People were really looking forward to opportunities to get outside in a safe environment and pickleball was perfect for that," he says.

One of the reasons the game is so popular is its simplicity, says Upton. "The game is pretty easy to learn. You can go out there and not embarrass yourself. It's a social sport. Players look at themselves as a community, and they welcome people to join the community. That's a pretty positive thing in today's divisive society."

Aubri, a Pickleball tournament player, says her clothing company, Civile Apparel, "was born out of the darkness of 2020 and the silver linings that brought unity and civility to our communities." "I saw firsthand how Pickleball transformed my family and wanted to share that same sentiment with others."

Yet it was the death of her father, Paul Hacker— a loved mentor to her — that sparked her entry into the clothing business. He died on Aug. 28, 2020, after battling cancer.

Though he did not have a college degree or any formal training in business, Paul Hacker formed a small manufacturing company in 1978 which, over time, employed his entire family, all of his extended family and numerous other families as well.

"During the years in business, he lived by the 'rising tide' mentality, and always put people first," says Aubri. "He taught me that while it's important to own your strengths, it's just as critical to identify and own your weaknesses. Hire people to do what you can't, and honor their crafts."

"While I would have preferred to have started (the business) with him here by my side, it was some money given to me from him, at the end of his life, that enabled me to invest in making Civile Apparel come to fruition," says Aubri. "Plus, I have the hard work and support of my team of women partners who believe in this brand and me as my father would if he were here today. We have one additional partner who has invested capital, has a background in design, and brings a fresh set of eyes to our product development process."

Civile, pronounced "chi-vee-lay," translates to "civil" in Italian. "It represents the core pillars of unity and respect and a return to civility that we hope to inspire," says Aubri. "Civile was born to remind us all, no matter which side of the line you play on, be civil, play nicely."

Never mind that Aubri has no formal training in clothing design. It's somehow imbedded in her psyche. "I have always had a unique sense of style and have a knack for putting together outfits that are unexpected," she says. "Civile has allowed me the opportunity to flex my creative muscles through the design of our apparel. I wanted that to be reflected in the designs, so pieces like the Generous



Civile Apparel model wearing the Favore Represent Performance Tee.

Harem pant and the Random Acts Dress are some of my favorites to style."

The Generous Harem pant, which sells for \$138 and is available only in black, has a high-rise, ribbed waistline. Aubri's website (civileapparel.com) describes it as a pant "that allows you to rock an authentic drop-crotch style, true to the harem name, while maintaining a comfortable and flattering fit."

A class Little Black Dress, the Random Acts, is a "dress that enables the wearer to loop an elastic strap around her sports bra, securing the dress for on court play." It is priced at \$148.

Many of the other fashions in Civile Apparel's collection — sweatshirts, tank tops, skirts, hoodies, pants, sweatpants, hats — are priced competitively with other top brands.

Aubri says the names of Civile products reflect the fun and unique qualities of pickleball.

"Products like our classic 'Don't Be a Dink'shirt and the 'One Lob' tank are named after pickleball terms and puns so that Civile wearers feel connected to the pickleball community specifically."

"As I became more engrained in the sport, I noticed a lack of apparel that married my active lifestyle with who I was as a woman," says Aubri. "I wanted to be able to go from my office to the pickleball court, to the store, golfing with my husband, and maybe out for drinks, all with a great performance fabric fashion piece as



Civile Apparel team

the base.

“Although I have no formal training, I currently take the lead in designing our pieces based on diversity, inclusion to be as multifaceted as the people wearing them. I tend to get inspiration from everywhere, from the foods I eat to the landscapes around me, but the most important inspiration comes from the people who will be wearing the clothing. I work hard to honor the beautiful elements of the human

figure and best ways to highlight those while keeping things like movement and sun protection in mind.”

The clothes, she says, are designed to be as diverse as the people wearing them.

Women’s apparel is the most comprehensive line that the company produces, but the men’s line will be expanded and — sometime in the future — children’s pickleball clothes will be offered. Designs will not only come from



Civile Apparel's Let's get #Picked Tee



Civile's Random Acts Dress

HISTORY OF PICKLEBALL

Pickleball has nothing to do with pickles, and everything to do with family, togetherness and good sport.

It was created in 1965 by three Washington State men – Joel Pritchard, Bill Bell and Barney McCallum. Pritchard and Bell came home from a game of golf and found their families sitting around with nothing to do. After improvising a game on an old badminton court, they were joined by McCallum. They created pickleball rules, relying heavily on badminton.

According to USA Pickleball’s History of the Game, the first known pickleball tournament was held at South Center Athletic Club in Tukwila, Washington in 1976.

Stu Upson, CEO of USA Pickleball, offers these comments on the sport:



Stu Upson, CEO of USA Pickleball

Since 2013, USA Pickleball membership has grown 1,250 percent in its membership to more than 57,000. There are more than 1,800 USA Pickleball ambassadors nationwide.

Why pickleball is so popular

There is a unique energy in the room when people mention the sport “pickleball” that you don’t seem to find with any other sport. The game is fun, social, easy to learn, and a low barrier to entry with equipment to play the game being very inexpensive and easy to pick up at a sporting goods store near you or on PickleballCentral.com.

Thanks to places2play.org, you can search for courts near you, bring your paddle and join in on open play games to make new friends and play with people at your same level. It’s rare for a sport to know that if you go to the park by yourself, you’re sure to find a group of people to jump in and play some games with, and instantly form new friendships.

Pandemic - rise in popularity

During the pandemic, many Americans were seeking ways to stay healthy and active near their homes. Due to the pickleball court being 1/4 the size of a tennis court, it’s easy to create a court in your driveway, in a parking lot, or within a gym space. So, many people were being introduced to the sport for the first time and playing with their family of four in the driveway, creating a new way of bonding as a family and having fun. The game is multi-generational, so we were seeing grandparents playing with their grandkids, and young adults in their 20s and 30s enjoying playing with their parents.



Civile models showcasing the Luminary Skirt in white and the Favore Represent

CEO Aubri, but from members of her team — her five partners: Kerby Capri, Kate Nowlan, Casey Ladd, Sheri Tieman and Emily Berliant.

“I lean on my amazing team to lend their expertise, personal taste and insight,” says Aubri. “And we love to receive feedback from our customer base.”

And then, of course, there is Aubri’s mother, her biggest fan. “She can often be found helping with inventory or assisting with basic daily tasks in the office,” says Aubri. “She offers me the same ‘whatever you need’ support and mindset that she did to my father.”

Civile Apparel works with local sew houses to produce their line of clothes. It allows the company to give back to the local economy.

While Civile’s first year sales were strong, Aubri wants to and plans to do more. “Having just recently jumped into this entrepreneurial journey with Civile, I plan to foster the growth of this business and take care of the people who have helped bring it to life before I move on to anything else,” says Aubri. This is just the beginning. We plan to become a big player in the pickleball apparel market.”



Civile Apparel models, friends and team members featuring the Kinda a Big Dill Skirt, Andiamo!! Tee, Favore Represent Performance Tee, Tender Booty Short and the firm’s classic, best-selling Play Nicely Crew.



Aubri Steele and husband Cody Steele playing pickleball.



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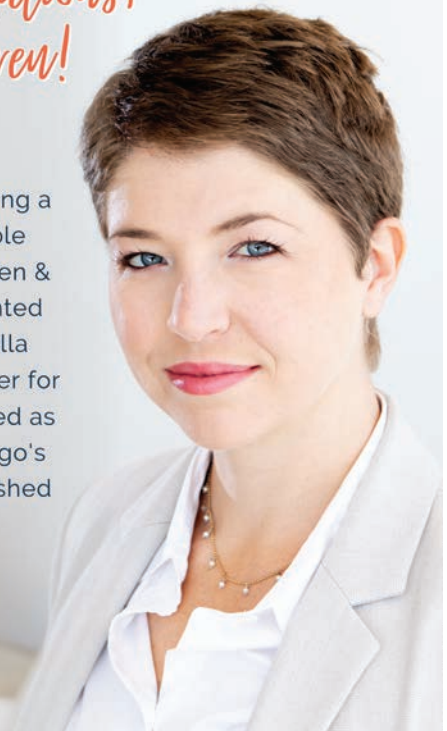
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Biden's Border Chaos, 100,000 Fentanyl Dead and Hands That Rocked the Cradle By John Kass

When I think about America's wide-open southern border with Mexico and the utter lawlessness such chaos represents—a record two million illegal immigrants streaming in last year and thousands more every day—I consider the politics.

Can a nation survive without borders? How long can political leaders rationalize their own refusal to enforce the law and protect the borders?

And how long will voters allow politicians and their media enablers to gaslight this orgy of national self-destruction?

My wife has a different perspective. Yes, Betty sees the politics. But she's also a mother and a teacher. She loves kids. Her hands rocked the cradles in our home.

And I can still see her as she was in the boys' bedroom years ago when I'd come home late after work, her hands rocking those twin wooden cradles as I opened the door, with Betty wordlessly warning me not to wake up the boys.

But the other evening, for the first time in the 40 years we've been together, she offered up a column topic and asked me to write on it.

"The border, the border, the border," she insisted.

The free Biden phones to illegals?

"Not just the free phones and the politics," she said. "All those young people dead from fentanyl overdoses. All of them dead. Their families. All that pain."

More than 100,000 Americans died from drug overdose last year, most of them young, most were victims of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids smuggled over the southern border.

Overdose deaths have doubled over the past two years. Some reports put fentanyl overdose as the leading cause of death of Americans between the ages 18–45. And the numbers of the dead are rising. The narcotics come illegally across that wide-open southern border with Mexico, the

border that President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris continue to ignore.

If you're young and think yourself invincible you may have heard of contemporaries dying by overdose. If you're older, you may know parents who've lost their children that way. You see that eyes of the parents are empty, exhausted and broken by regret and guilt.

Those holes in their families and lives will never be filled. If you're blessed as we've been with healthy children who by God's grace have stayed away from drugs, you can still think of those who are hurting. You can still say a prayer for them.

China makes fentanyl. Banks and the Mexican drug cartels make fortunes pushing the synthetic opioid across our wide-open Southern border.

They use illegal border crossers as their mules. All the cartels want is their money, to use as the Outfit used prohibition cash, to buy corrupt politicians and corrupt cops to keep their supply lines open.

Most human fentanyl mules get through undetected. For every one that is caught, how many get away? And American young people die, without much reaction from the American political class or the media that protects that class.

If 100,000 young Americans started dropping dead from Covid, media would spotlight the cause and assess the blame. But fentanyl is all about the border. And the open Southern border is about politics.

And so, the dead become just numbers, statistics to be swept up and tossed, and we look away, as we look away when black and brown children are cut down in America's big cities in the street gang wars and we forget their names, because others are always dropping into the river of violence that bears them away.

Some of the addicted have lost contact with

their families. But many of the dead were loved. Their families were still in their lives. And they had mothers who rocked them in cradles and dreamed of the things they would do together.

The other day at the Del Rio Port of Entry in Texas, a human mule was arrested, trying to smuggle more than a half million dollars' worth of fentanyl into the U.S. from Mexico. She had 30 packages weighing more than 40 pounds of the drug in her vehicle. One news story offered photos of the packages.

But the story struck a memory. Del Rio.

Remember Del Rio? It is the place where 15,000 illegals gathered every day to cross over. Del Rio was an embarrassment for the president, not because illegals were crossing. As a presidential candidate he called for all those who wanted to come to surge the border. Once he took office he rewarded Democrats and the illegal immigration lobby by stopping the building of the wall, reversing the immigration policies of former President Donald Trump.

It wasn't much of a surprise, was it? Biden had announced what he would do. He campaigned on it. And now we live with it.

What bothered the White House at Del Rio was Fox News sending a camera-equipped drone over the Rio Grande, so America could see the chaos, so bothersome that federal aviation regulations were ginned up to stop the TV drones. But they didn't stop. In September 2021, Hattians had arrived from Central America and thousands began rushing across the river.

Mounted Border Patrol agents tried to turn them back, swinging their reins to control their mounts and keep the illegals off the horses. Democrats and media allies seized on the mounted agents, shrieking that the border patrol had used whips like cruel overseers on a slave plantation. They all told the lie that the Border Patrol was whipping the innocents. Biden and his crew played the race card. They got what they

wanted. If you opposed the illegal rush across the border you were in league with the slave masters and their whips.

It wasn't true. There were no whips. There was no whipping. But that didn't matter. What mattered was the screaming to change the subject from those thousands upon thousands streaming across the Rio Grande.

"It's horrible what you saw," said President Biden. "To see people like they did, with horses, running them over, people being strapped. It's outrageous. I promise you! Those people will pay. There is an investigation under way now. And there will be consequences."

Again, there were no whips. The illegals weren't whipped. But careers were ruined. Horse patrols were suspended. Morale was destroyed. Border enforcement was relaxed. And the border was kept wide open, which satisfied the neo-Marxist left the Democrats have given themselves up to.

And six months later, Joe Biden has yet to offer an apology to the Border Patrol.

"After clearly making up career-ending, false accusations about the agents to change the narrative away from shocking daily videos of 15,000 illegal aliens amassing under the International Bridge in Del Rio, the administration now seems perfectly content to let the agents twist in the wind," writes Tom Homan, the former Acting ICE Director now a visiting fellow at the conservative Heritage Foundation.

"Where is the report?" Homan asked, demanding an apology that will not come.

And except for a few media outlets, the porous Southern border that Biden had created faded from the news.

But the border is wide open now. And soon it will widen some more, with the Biden White House decision to abruptly end what is called Title 42 Authority.

Title 42 is a regulation through the Centers for Disease Control that allowed illegal immigrants to be expelled from U.S. soil during the pandemic. Border officials are now dealing with a flood of illegal immigration. But in the coming days, as Title 42 ends on orders of the Biden administration, they'll be dealing with an illegal immigrant tidal wave. Some estimates suggest there could be an additional million illegal border crossings in within weeks of Title 42 ending. This is by design.

"The southern border is about to explode, and federal authorities are making preparations — not to arrest, detain, and deport record numbers of illegal border-crossers, but to process them quickly and release them into the United States," writes John Daniel Davidson, superb analyst and senior editor of the conservative opinion site "The Federalist."

That means more border chaos. And more fentanyl. More mules to carry the poison to us. More money for the drug cartels.

America will be awash in fentanyl. And more young Americans will die, and more grieving parents will stare at the world through empty eyes. Many states are already overwhelmed. And everywhere, bad as it is now, it will get much worse.

I wonder how the open border politics of the Washington establishment would react to the following:

What if all the parents of all the fentanyl dead gathered in silence around the Biden White House holding photos of loved ones lost?

Not one or two, not a dozen, but all of them. It won't happen of course. But think of it. See it.

Around the White House, see all the grieving parents holding photographs of overdose victims. The photos of victims as the infants they once had been, when they had dreams, when their parents had dreams for them, before they were claimed by the narcotics pushed by Mexican drug lords across that open southern border.

In wave after wave. And more when the tidal wave begins.

The parents and siblings not screaming, not shouting. Just standing. Americans quietly reminding the Washington political establishment of the obligation they have to the nation.

An obligation to act. To focus on protecting our own border before they worry about borders of other nations a world away.

Why? Because this is our country. Because we live here.

There are real lives at stake, lives of Democrats, lives of Republicans, lives carried by women for months, by wives, by moms who weren't thinking of talking points or partisan politics when they gritted their teeth and screamed, suffering the great pain of childbirth.

See it. Think of all border and the fentanyl dead, think of them as America's children, the images held in the hands of the women who rocked the cradles.

Kass is the former award winning columnist at the Chicago Tribune . You can subscribe to his new columns at johnkassnews.com

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