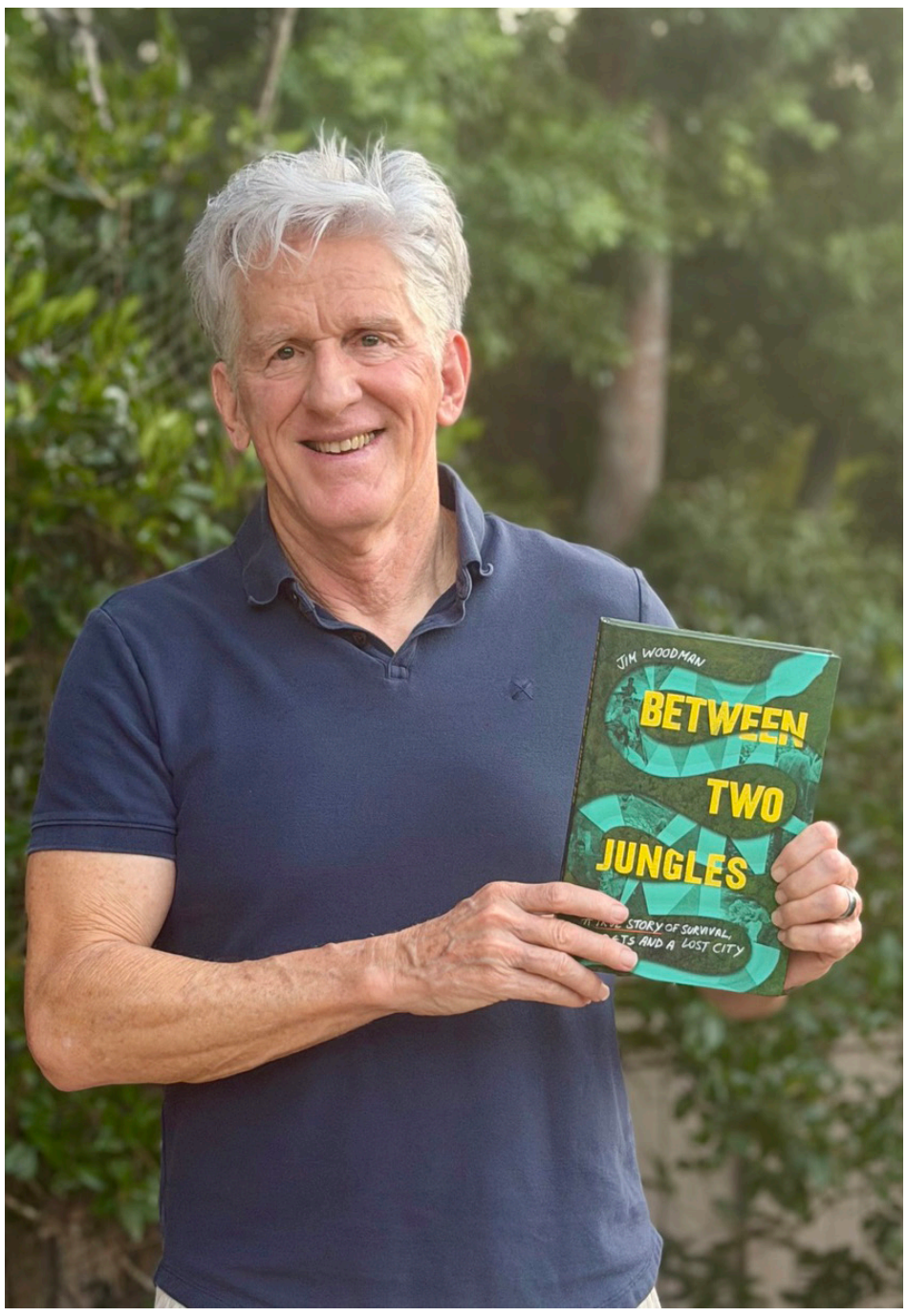
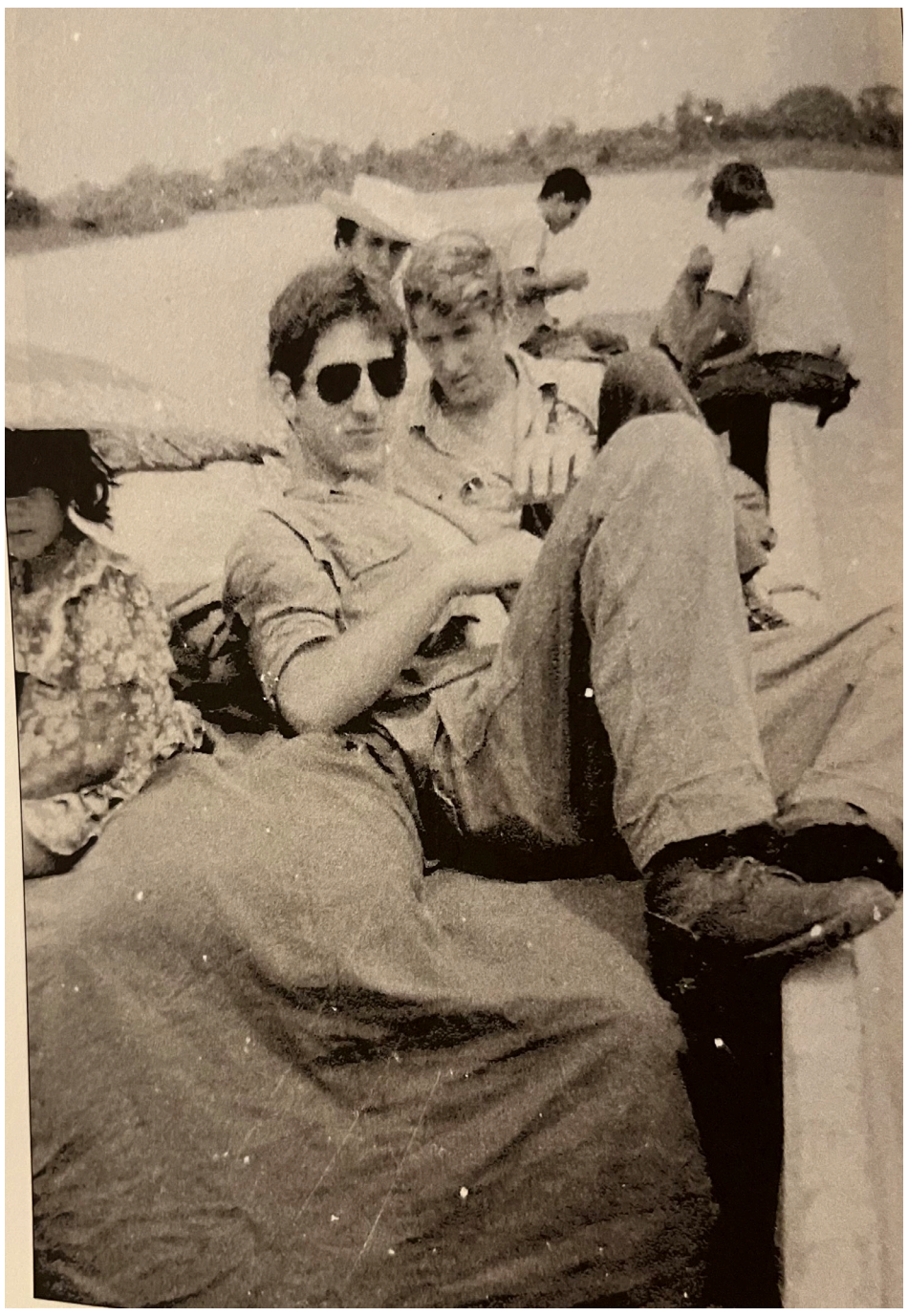


Jim Woodman, author of the new memoir "Between Two Jungles". **PHOTOS COURTESY JIM WOODMAN**



The author Jim Woodman, background, with Brian "Clarky" Clark on a dugout canoe in Honduras.

Author explores themes of resiliency, survival in memoir 'Between Two Jungles'

By Karen Billing
KARENB@RSFREVIEW.COM

When he was just 17 years old, Carmel Valley's Jim Woodman improbably found himself in the middle of the Honduran rainforest on an exploration to find the Ciudad Blanca, known as The Lost City of the Monkey God. The year was 1976, his mother had been sent to prison and his father had sent him off on the expedition with his younger brother and three teenage friends to find a legendary city made of white stone that no one else had managed to discover despite decades of trying.

The adventure became even more dangerous for the teenagers when "Gary," the erratic snake hunter and scarred Vietnam veteran his father hired to guide them but didn't entirely vet beforehand, threatened to kill them and leave their bodies in the jungle.

Woodman's new memoir "Between Two Jungles" tells a story of survival that he kept a secret for most of his life, a story so hard to tell because he didn't think anyone would believe it.

"This whole thing, the few people I told said, 'Wait, what?' They found the story so far-fetched and incredible that it was unbelievable. Why would a father send his boys to dangerous, unmapped jungle to look for a lost city? That's insane," Woodman said. "When I was 17, I didn't think I'd live to be 18. When we came back and told my dad what happened and how Gary threatened to kill us he said, 'Well, you're alive aren't you?'"

The book weaves between the tale of his adventure in Honduras and stories of his tough and unconventional childhood with his mother, such as being forced to shoplift.

"The reason we were down there in the first place is because my mother was sent to prison," Woodman said. He had been sent to live with his father in Miami when his mother was sentenced to six years for theft. He believes his father pitched the lost city exploration as a way to get him and his brother away for the summer from the house he shared with his new family.

Woodman's father was an adventurer and an author who wrote travel books for airlines with routes into Latin America—a self-made expert in Latin America and mysteries of the world, he had helped found the International Explorers Society in 1974. Before this jungle trip, Woodman had traveled to Honduras before and had been on a trip to explore the plains of Nazca in Peru.

"That trip was cool and it was planned so well, surely he would know about this

See **JUNGLES** on Page B10

ADVERTISING CONTENT



Russell Bowman of Bowman Plant & Tree Care Specialists is lovingly referred to as San Diego's "tree doctor extraordinaire." Courtesy photo

Tree Doctor wins 'Best of' Award two years in a row

by The Coast Group advertising December 11, 2024

For over 40 years, Russell Bowman has been delighting residents of San Diego County with his plant and tree expertise.

So, it's no wonder Bowman Plant & Tree Care Specialists have been named in the San Diego Union-Tribune Community Press' "Best of North County" voters' poll for tree and plant care for a 2nd year in a row!

He is lovingly referred to as the San Diego "tree doctor extraordinaire" by his clients, Bowman is known for transforming sickly trees and gardens into Disneyesque wonderlands.

Using his own proprietary blend of organic biological nutrition, Bowman uses techniques he picked up during his time as a horticulturist at Disneyland.

He's done more than just care for sick plants and trees, he's revolutionized both residential and commercial properties by the use of his organic fertilizer tanks that inject his proprietary formula through your irrigation systems.

He fills these magical fertigation tanks monthly to keep your property looking healthy and vibrant all year long.

In a very short time, this program pays back through reduced water bills.

"When you give your body proper nutrition, it affects your overall health and boosts your immunity, so you don't get sick. The same is true for plants and trees." Bowman feeds complete "nutrition delivery biology" derived from earthworm castings to replenish the missing healthy soil biology.

"This is the secret to keeping your property looking like a five-star resort."

Russell is quick to point out that healthy plants and trees are also environmentally friendly. A healthy plant will be more efficient at photosynthesizing sunlight into oxygen and the healthy soil/compost helps bring down uses far less water.

He donates his time and expertise for the trees for the Point Loma Association and gardens at the Rock Church in Point Loma, Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, the YMCA, Barnes Tennis Center, Chili's Restaurants, Stone Brewery in Escondido, and San Diego Botanic Garden.

He also served with the San Diego Rose Society in Balboa Park for 12 years. Russell enjoys giving clothes, food and toys for the Orphans in Tijuana.

"My calling is to beautify the earth, making trees and plants healthy," The Master Gardener taught me everything I know. I've learned that when you love something, it's not something you have to do; it's something you want to do."

To learn more about Bowman and his services, please contact Russell at 858-499-9417. He provides tree and plant nutritional care as well as ongoing routine garden maintenance.

Call today and receive a Free Consultation!

BEST OF NORTH COAST 2024 NORTH COAST READERS POLL

Russell Bowman abides by all applicable state laws and requirements and does not perform any services that require a licensed contractor. Business license B2017006153.
bowmanplantandtreecare.com



On Thursday, **November 5th, 2026,** Dr. Curtis Chan and his dental team will be opening their office patio for **"The Great Halloween Candy Buy Back & Card Give Back"** program. Kids have an opportunity to send cards to our troops, donate beanie babies and donate their excess candy for cash ($1 per pound, 5 lb max) to provide sweet treats to our troops overseas!

Each child will receive a Dr. Chan Chocolate Bar with a chance to be 1 of 5 kids to win a **Golden Ticket** worth $100



How to participate:

~ Bring your kids, cards, beanie babies and unopened candy you want to donate to our dental office location:

Curtis L. Chan, DDS
12835 Pointe Del Mar Way, Suite #3 in Del Mar

~ Join us for this fun, outdoor community outreach event.
~ Cash for candy and Golden Ticket Opportunity will ONLY be on **Thursday, November 5th from 3pm - 6pm.**
~ Our team will weigh the candy & pay your child $1 per pound (5 lb max).
~ Your child MUST be present & must have or make a card for the troops.
~ Your child will receive a free toothbrush kit & spin the wheel for a prize.
~ Come & thank a few military HEROES who will be present at our event!!
~ Everyone is encouraged to donate leftover candy the week following Halloween during regular business hours.

If you have any questions or need directions
call or text: 858-481-9090
or visit us on the web: www.curtischandds.com

JUNGLES

From Page 3

lost city in the jungle and not put kids in so much danger," said Woodman of the false confidence his brother and his friends had before embarking on their journey.

The memoir is based on true events, although some dialogue has been recreated and names of some individuals like "Gary" have been changed.

The book plunges the reader into the "brutally dense and impenetrable" La Mosquitia jungle and the boys' battles with humidity, hunger, machetes, deadly snakes, endless rain and mud, and shady characters like their unreliable guide, hitmen and criminals hiding in the jungle.

"We had no clue what we were doing," said Woodman of their expedition, which in the book he compares to "Lord of the Flies" meets REI clearance bin, a "true exercise in winging it."

The book follows Woodman through jungle adventures in dugout canoes and on forest treks, flashing back to his navigations of a chaotic childhood and forward to athletic exploits as a competitive swimmer and Ironman triathlete and becoming a father and breaking the pattern his parents set.

"I have a very unique background and I have three boys I do not want to follow in my footsteps," he said.

Woodman has lived in Carmel Valley for 27 years, where he and his wife raised their sons. He founded the Active Network (Active.com) in 1998, an online directory and registration platform for races and endurance events which grew to one of San Diego's largest companies.

Much like his time in the jungle, Woodman said he has lived most of his life without guidance or a roadmap, getting lucky with things like a "blind squirrel finding an acorn." He played water polo in college at Texas A&M and the University of Arizona but he never got a degree or paid much attention in class. While in college, he started cycling and got into triathlons, eventually putting on his own triathlon in Austin, Texas when he was just 23 years old.

As a race director, he learned by doing, staging triathlons in the early 1980s in Texas and creating what would become, at the time, the world's largest race with the President's Triathlon in Dallas.

For 12 years, he was the editor and publisher of Florida Sports Magazine. It was there he got the idea for an online events calendar database—with his background as a race director, he knew more than most how difficult race registration could be. He founded the Active Network in Miami and eventually merged with San Diego-based Racegate.com in 1999. He stayed with the company until 2007—the global technology platform went public in 2011.

Now 67, Woodman is still an athlete but he doesn't race anymore. He started swimming again at 50 and swims as part of the masters program at the Encinitas YMCA.

He waited a long time to tell or write this story, but he believes it is one worth telling.

"Some life experiences are miserable while they're occurring, but the mind looks back on the positives and builds a foundation for the future," he wrote. "Ultimately, I've come to see adversity as not something to be avoided, but as a teacher, a shaper of character. My difficulties haven't broke me; they've built me."

He never did find a lost city, he said, but somehow stumbled onto a discovery of resilience and strength that he would carry for the rest of his life.

To order the book or for more information visit jimwoodman.com/

EVENTS

From Page 8

beloved production brings wonder, joy, and festive spirit to the stage, a news release states.

For more information and ticket purchases (on sale now) visit EncinitasCA.gov/Nutcracker or call 760-633-2746.

ABBEY ROAD'S CHRISTMAS WITH THE BEATLES

Abbey Road's Christmas with the Beatles returns to the Belly Up on Wednesday, Dec. 23 at 8 p.m. Doors open at 7 p.m. This special night is filled with Abbey Road's mash-ups of Christmas classics and Beatles faves. Tickets are $20 — $35 and may be purchased online at www.bellyup.com, by phone at 858-481-8140 or at the venue box office. The Belly Up is located at 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. The show is 21+.

VETERINARY CARE PROGRAM FOR SENIORS

The "Veterinary Care Assistance Program for Seniors" at Rancho Coastal Humane Society offers financial assistance, resources and support to senior pet parents (60 years and older) with limited income for their pets' veterinary care. Financial documentation and a written estimate and treatment plan from an accredited San Diego County veterinarian is required. For more information call 760-579-2426, visit www.sdpets.org or email Vetcareprogram@sdpets.org

BATIQUITOS LAGOON PRESENTATION: "THE KUMEYAAY THROUGH TIME."

Batiquitos Lagoon will hold a presentation on Nov. 14 at 10 a.m. titled "The Kumeyaay Through Time." In honor of Native American Heritage Month, guest speaker Jennifer Stone, assistant curator at Barona Cultural Center & Museum, will share the history of the Barona People, both pre and post contact, focusing on the three waves of newcomers to this land, and on enduring Kumeyaay traditions, including the Creation Story. The free event is good for ages 5 and older. Meet at the Nature Center, 7380 Gabbiano Lane, Carlsbad. Events are held outside, and in case of rain, events will be canceled and rescheduled. For more information, visit Batiquitoslagoon.org.

SAN DIEGO ITALIAN FILM FESTIVAL TO FEATURE ELENA'S WAR AT LA PLAOMA THEATRE

San Diego Italian Film Festival presents Elena's War (Elena Del ghetto) on Thursday Nov. 19, at 7 p.m. La Paloma Theatre, Encinitas (471 S. Coast Hwy 101, Encinitas).

In the heart of Rome's Jewish ghetto during WWII, one woman's defiance became an act of heroism that history nearly forgot. This powerful historical drama tells the true story of Elena Di Porto, a fiercely independent Roman Jewish woman who defied fascism and risked everything to save lives. Branded "Elena the Crazy" for her scandalous rejection of social norms, Elena became a relentless thorn in the side of the fascist regime that threatened her community's very existence. In Italian with English subtitles.

After the movie a special Q&A session will be held with with Dr. Shira Klein, associate professor, chair, Department of History Fellow, Ferrucci Institute for Italian Experience and Research.

LA JOLLA EVENTS

• ArtPower presents 13-time Grammy Award-winning musician John Legend and his show, "An Evening of Songs & Stories" at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 6 at UC San Diego's Epstein Family Amphitheater, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla. $77-257. amphitheater.ucsd.edu/event/john-legend

• La Jolla Music Society presents Nemanja Radulović & Double Sens at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 7 at the Baker-Baum Concert Hall within the Conrad Prebys Performing Arts Center, 7600 Fay Ave. A pre-show lecture will take place one hour before at The JAI within the Conrad. $40-105. theconrad.org/events/radulovic-double-sens

• ArtPower presents Cat Kid Comic Club, a musical adaptation of the Dav Pilkey "Dog Man" spinoff series, at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8 at UC San Diego's Epstein Family Amphitheater, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla. $27-47. amphitheater.ucsd.edu/event/cat-kid-comic-club

• La Jolla Music Society presents "The Magic of Monteverdi," featuring chamber ensemble Les Arts Florissants, at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 13 at the Baker-Baum Concert Hall within the Conrad Prebys Performing Arts Center, 7600 Fay Ave. A pre-show lecture will take place one hour before at The JAI within the Conrad. $60-95. theconrad.org/events/les-arts-florissants

• ArtPower presents Latin Grammy-winning ensemble Las Migas at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 13 at UC San Diego's Epstein Family Amphitheater, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla. $27-47. amphitheater.ucsd.edu/event/las-migas-2026

• La Jolla Playhouse presents the world-premiere musical, "Grim," through Dec. 6 at the Playhouse's Mandell Weiss Theatre at 2910 La Jolla Village Dr. $30-129. Several shows early in its run are already sold out or have limited availability. lajollaplayhouse.org/show/grim

AXOLOTL

From Page 5

estimates from the last 25 years claim that there are 1,000 or fewer axolotls in the wild. This is due to the introduction of tilapia into the lake as a food source for people (which ended up being a predator to axolotl), population changes, and an increase of plastic and pollutants going into the water.

Access to the new exhibition is included with Birch Aquarium admission. Learn more at aquarium.ucsd.edu.

INFORMATION TO KNOW

True or False?

1. If an axolotl loses or damages a tail, leg or part of an organ, it can re-grow that body part
2. Axolotls can weigh more than a pound
3. Axolotls are critically endangered
4. Axolotls eat worms, insect larvae and small crustaceans
5. Axolotls hunt during the day

Answers

1. If an axolotl loses or damages a tail, leg or part of an organ, it can re-grow that body part: True.
2. Axolotls can weigh more than a pound: False, axolotls weigh between two and 10 ounces and can reach eight to 12 inches in length.
3. Axolotls are critically endangered: True.
4. Axolotls eat worms, insect larvae and small crustaceans: True.
5. Axolotls hunt during the day: False, axolotls hide in mud or aquatic plants during the day and come out at night to hunt.

Find more news at delmartimes.net.

