Put Yourself in This Chair
Run for the Neighborhood Council

Neighborhood councils provide an opportunity to get your voice heard and have amazing potential to improve the quality of life in our community.

What? The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council is seeking candidates to serve on our board for the 2016-2020 term.

Who are we? The NWSPNC Board is composed of 17 individuals from all walks of life, many with no prior “activist” experience, who are committed to making a difference in our community.

What is our purpose? NWSPNC is one of 96 neighborhood councils certified and funded by the City of Los Angeles to better connect Angelinos to City Hall and improve government responsiveness to local concerns by making them accountable.

What do we do? We study, take positions, and advocate on issues related to improving the quality of life in our community.

What is required of a board member? Candidates should have a strong commitment to making a difference in our community. Who better to create a powerful community than the people who live, work, and play there? Board members are expected to attend board meetings held on the second Monday and participate on a committee and in other activities, typically 10-12 hours per month.

Who can be a board member? Board members must be at least 16 years of age and live, work, own property or a business, go to school, or belong to a non-governmental organization located within our boundaries.

Pathways to Employment V • Saturday, May 14
OPEN LETTER TO HARBOR AREA YOUTH AGES 16-24

Dear Young Adult,
You may have no concept of what you want to do with your life, may be lost as to a career path, unsure on college. Or perhaps you have some awareness but worry that you may not have the experience, skills and/or confidence to compete or be successful. While we will tell you this is absolutely normal, that does not necessarily relieve your concerns.

The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council, along with the San Pedro Rotary and many community members care about you and your apprehensions. We understand the world can be a bit scary and having to make adult decisions now when you are unsure is surely daunting.

That is why we are offering you the opportunity to attend an all-day event designed specifically to assist you in planning for your future. This is a FREE event that includes a light breakfast and delicious lunch. This annual event offers:
- Workshops on topics such as creating effective resumes, impressive interview skills, social media networking, job preparation, entrepreneurship, non-verbal and verbal communication skills just to name a few.
- Opportunities to meet one on one with employers and educational organizations to discuss job prospects, internship programs, career paths, trade skill opportunities, etc.
- Individual practice interviews to hone your skills and give you the competitive edge

We are offering you seminars focusing on life skills, networking lessons, job opportunities and a whole lot more designed to open your mind to passions and prospects you may have never imagined. Show initiative, take advantage and don’t miss this day.

Watch our website, nwsanpedro.org, for online registration which will begin in March. Then register and bring your friends for a day we promise you will never regret attending.

Sincerely,
Youth and Outreach Committee
Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council

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Where can I get more information? To get more information go to www.EmpowerLA.org/Elections or attend one of our candidate information sessions:
March 15, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Peck Park
April 4, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Peck Park

If you have questions please contact us by e-mail at board@nwsanpedro.org (preferable) or by phone at (310) 732-4522.

Why Should You Get Involved with Your Neighborhood Council?

Many people in our community are unfamiliar with neighborhood councils. However, in recent months awareness has increased due to extremely hot and volatile issues such as homelessness, bike lanes, and increases in crime. Social media has displayed an outpouring of concerns about how these topics should be addressed. Some messages have been aggressive, mean spirited, erroneous and unproductive.

Neighborhood councils offer a platform for stakeholders to express concerns seeking viable solutions in an environment dedicated to gathering accurate information with collaborative discussions. So if you wish to change this atmosphere, consider joining your neighborhood council.

- RUN FOR OFFICE: You can choose to run for a board seat. We are including an article that outlines the opportunity.
- JOIN A COMMITTEE: You can choose to join a specific committee that may focus on an issue that is of personal concern. (See article on Passion.)
- ATTEND MEETINGS: You can visit any board and/or committee meeting to talk about your concerns and learn more about what we can and do accomplish for our local community. All meetings agendas are posted at nwsanpedro.org.
President’s Corner
Homelessness Task Force Overview
By Ray Regalado, President

Over the last few months, myself and a handful of well qualified residents and stakeholders have been addressing the issue of homelessness in the harbor area. I have been impressed by the credentials and the commitment of the task force members who have addressed the subject of homelessness in our neighborhoods and streets. Every one of the members brings a level of expertise to the subject matter and together, the team, works with passion and diligence to fulfill our commitment to our community to suggest reasonable and attainable remedies.

Task force members represent many aspects of our community including residents, business owners, non-profit assistance organizations, law enforcement, medical and mental health professionals, and legislative research experts. Each member volunteers their time to provide the group with data and research; information as to how we might address the challenges of homelessness in our community. Meeting monthly we review group and individual research that occurs during the course of time in between our meetings. Many hours of work has been put in by the members of the task force in between their respective professional and familial obligations to the debit of our community. Also, many of the task force members volunteer their time in other interest areas.

When we agreed to participate, Councilman Buscaino asked that we address three areas of concern regarding homelessness, location-based services; (1) housing volunteers and; (2) public spaces. Understanding each one of the three areas of concern can be a task force in itself, we understood the urgency of addressing each item since the community was discussing them among themselves, with their city leadership and on social media. The plan of the task force was to break up into independent subgroups and address the focus areas in specific subject areas; quality of life; homeless services group; housing and redevelopment (property owners group); business owners and services distribution group; and legislative and community check group. Each member of the task force participates in a group or multiple groups, researches data and best practices and are to provide their recommendations to best address the three main homeless issues mapped out by our task force mandate.

With two more scheduled monthly meetings scheduled, we will vet and review sub-group research and recommendations and suggest action items to the Councilman. Action items will then be reported to the community at a future date. The work has been challenging, however, the caliber of participation and dedication by the members of the task force has been a testament of the desire of the community to address the homeless issue with resolve and compassion. The passion in which the task force members have addressed the work exhibits the primary characteristic of the harbor community; civic engagement at its best.

NWSPNC Committees: What is Your Passion?

NWSPNC is looking for individuals who are passionate about our community to join our council or one of our committees. Much of the work of the council is done through our committees that study the issues and bring recommended positions to the board for a vote. Committees also plan community events related to their purposes. This past year, we screened a movie at Peck Park, participated in the annual Spirit of San Pedro Holiday Parade, and had booths at the councilman’s spaghetti dinner, Le- land Park Spring Fling, and Weymouth Corners Candy Cane Lane. We have provided grants for youth based projects and have funded various informational and awareness events.

Currently, we are planning Pathways to Employment, a NWSPNC-created event that helps students successfully navigate their way into the workforce, preparing them to host CERT training, emergency preparedness, a rain barrel distribution, and several community cleanup events. If you are interested in participating in one of our committees or have a passion that is not listed below, contact us at board@nwsanpedro.org.

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Park Western Place Elementary School
Turning ‘Bullies’ Into ‘Buddies’

Thanks to last year’s grant from Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council, Park Western Place Elementary School recently unveiled their new “Buddy Bench”.

The bench, a creative concept of the Student Council, is a designated spot for third, fourth and fifth-grade students to go when feeling lonely, excluded or just in need of a friend. Sitting on the bench is a signal to a nearby Student Council member to reach out and lend a hand.

Prior to the bench unveiling, the committee filmed a video that was shown in every classroom, depicting a student being teased and different ways a bystander could intervene to change the outcome. In this video, students were taught the steps in making a “Four Star Apology”.

These steps are painted on the ground in front of the bench, as is the slogan “It takes all of us to make our campus bully free!”

What’s Coming Up at Peck Park

• Spring Egg Hunt Saturday, March 19, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on baseball field, arts and crafts, egg dying, egg hunt, prizes and a visit from Mr. Bunny!
• Spring Camp March 21-25, ages 5-12. The perfect way to spend your spring break. A fun week of games, arts and crafts, sports, movies and a field trip to Pump It Up is planned. Cost for the full week with field trip is $150.
• Coed Summer Basketball, ages 4-13, a great way to sharpen your basketball skills. Online registration begins April 4, walk-ins begin April 16. Registration fee $100. Practices begin in June, games in July.
• Summer Camps, ages 5-12. Nine weeks of fun, themed activities, and field trips, June 15-August 12. Cost: $150 per week plus $20 one-time registration fee. Part-time options available.
• Tennis Lessons, ages 6-99, spring session begins the week of March 7. Beginning and intermediate levels available. Cost: $75 for 10 week session.

Take the NWSPNC Water Challenge
The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council challenges all neighborhood councils and city-sponsored event functions to promote the use of reusable water containers and no longer provide individual bottled water.

What Made Me Do It?
By Darlene Zavalney, Chair, Youth and Community Outreach

When asked to write about why I decided to become involved with the neighborhood council, I had to stop and think. What was it that motivated me? I’ve always had a passion for volunteering, starting in high school when I went door-to-door collecting money to help Danny Thomas build the St. Jude Foundation and for the last 20 years as a volunteer helping Dr. Jane Goodall build her youth environmental program, Roots & Shoots. But, the neighborhood council was different. It was government. It was structured. It really wasn’t in my wheelhouse.

That was before I met Diana Nave, who at the time was president of NWSPNC. Those who know Diana know she is always recruiting and promoting the council. Her passion for the council and the work that can be accomplished there was contagious. She convinced me to give it a go.

I had no idea what I was getting into. First of all, everyone spoke an entirely never-heard-before language of acronyms discussing issues I had no idea about. It didn’t take long, however, to get caught up in the wave of council business. There is so much going on in our community that unless you are involved you most likely have no idea of the scope of issues taking place. Whether it is to promote the waterfront development, remove hazardous chemicals, create and improve parks, deal with traffic issues, save our science center, etc., the council is on top of it trying to secure what is best for San Pedro.

If you have a passion for this community, the neighborhood councils need you. Whether it’s running for a seat on the board, attending board meetings or getting involved and joining a committee. For more information, check out our website at www.nwpsanpedro.org. I hope to see you at a meeting soon!

Candidate Information Sessions
Have you ever thought about being a member of the NWSPNC but don’t know what it involves or how to join? If so, attend one of our candidate information nights. These sessions will provide more information about what the Board does, what is required of Board Members, the requirements for the various board seats, and the election process. Candidate information sessions will be held at Peck Park at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday March 15 and Monday April 4. Candidate filing opens February 27 and closes April 12. See page 1 article for more information.
350.org Launches ‘Re-vision Rancho’ Campaign

350.org, an international nonprofit organization that advocates against climate change, met at Peck Park Recreation Center in January. With thousands of members, and chapters that span 188 different countries, 350.org touts itself as a “global grassroots climate movement.”

The organization’s South Bay-Los Angeles chapter recently caught wind of the Rancho LPG butane and propane storage tanks located on Gaffey Street in San Pedro. Given the inherent hazardous risk that the storage facility poses to its surroundings, the 350.org chapter has joined San Pedro residents in advocating for its removal. The group has titled this campaign, “Re-vision Rancho.” The premise of the campaign: envision a reality in which the land that is currently occupied by the storage facility is instead occupied by safe, non-threatening, pollution-free renewable energy sources.

Involvement of the South Bay-Los Angeles 350 Climate Action group with the Rancho LPG relocation issue comes at a critical time. Southern California saw a barrage of reckless behavior from the oil and gas industry in the year 2015. In February of last year, an ExxonMobil refinery explosion blasted in Torrance and was ruled a “near miss” catastrophe by the Chemical Safety Board. In May of 2015, miles of Santa Barbara coastline fell victim to a catastrophic oil spill. (The pipeline that ruptured is owned by Plains All America—the same company that owns the Rancho LPG storage facility in San Pedro.) And in October of 2015, negligence by the Southern California Gas Company led to a massive methane gas leak that continues to poison Porter Ranch residents today.

In each of these cases, oil and gas corporations—and the government agencies that regulate them—called Southern California communities.

If you would like to “Re-vision Rancho,” the South Bay-Los Angeles 350 Climate Action Group asks you to join them. The group meets bi-monthly, and is working on a number of local climate-related issues. Adults and youth alike are encouraged to join the movement. Please visit the chapter’s website, southbay350.wordpress.org, for more information.

Celebrate Earth Day with the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council in the month of April! On the third weekend of April, the Neighborhood Council’s Sustainability Committee will host a family-friendly Earth Day event. The Council will give out free rain barrels, and host fun Earth Day activities. Further details will be available on our website, www.nwsanpedro.org.

USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

Bulky item pickup
City services
Graffiti removal
Homeless issues: city council office
Homeless issues: Harbor Interfaith Services
LAPD Harbor Division
Parking Enforcement
Sanitation
School Police
Shopping cart pickup
Storm drain issues
Street Services
Los Angeles County supervisor’s office

Waterfront Development
Design is underway for the Town Square at the foot of Sixth street, part of the promenade. Design is expected to be complete by the end of 2016 with construction starting in May 2017.

Ponte Vista Renamed ‘Highpark’

The developer recently announced that Ponte Vista has been renamed “Highpark.”

The developer completed additional geological test and anticipates the city will soon issue the needed grading permit. They have entered into a Streambed Alternation Agreement to mitigate for 1.18 acres of vegetation at an off-site mitigation bank. The bank is in agreement with the regulatory agencies’ requirements. A Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan has been prepared for the project and will be implemented during earth-disturbing activities. NWSPNC sent a letter to the developer reminding them of their commitment to prioritize the road that will connect Mary Star to Westen.

Western Avenue Corridor

The Western Avenue Corridor Enhancement Strategy was significantly modified based on community comments, including those submitted by NWSPNC. The new strategy deleted the proposed 3-4 story buildings facing the street and will make the existing traffic lanes more pedestrian-friendly. Street parking may be removed and replaced with five-foot-wide bike lanes with an additional three-foot-wide space separation from traffic.

The plan also calls for minimizing curb cuts along the corridor, and undergrounding of utility lines. The final strategy can be viewed at http://www.rvpca.gov/403/Western-Avenue-Strategy-Plan. The recommendation for bike lanes is predicated upon the results of traffic and bike studies demonstrating that traffic volumes and speeds will not be reduced. RVP has received funding to undertake the traffic and bike study and to update a previously approved traffic improvement plan. The plan will recommend that the study will be completed and available for public review in 6-12 months.

Urban Greening Plan

The Los Angeles Conservation Corps is tentatively scheduled to present the draft Urban Greening plan for San Pedro to the NWSPNC Planning and Land Use Committee on February 17. This plan, being developed under a contract with the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, looks at improved landscaping and pedestrian connections, particularly in the downtown area and connections to our parks and open space. Watch our website for more information.

Gaffey Beautification

The Port will present the designs for the North Gaffey Beautification Phase II at the NWSPNC Planning and Land Use Committee on March 16. Phase II will be a multi-phase pathway from Gatu to the corner of Pacific and John South Gibson Boulevard. The Port anticipates going out to bid in 2016 with construction completed in 2017.

The Conceptual Plan for the Port of Los Angeles’ Gaffey from Summerland to 17th Street has been completed and we are still waiting for the council office to release it to the public, along with the Phase I Implementation Plan. Watch our website for details.

Ponta Vista

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