By Mary Hamlin, NWSPNC Secretary

Have you ever ridden in a parade? Especially a Christmas parade? Well, I did...on December 2, in San Pedro, riding in a classic ‘65 Mustang convertible!

President Dan Dixon called and asked me to ride with him (his wife Kathleen couldn’t go—she was spending the day at the Long Beach Aquarium with their daughter, Caitlin, who was working on a super, special project with African penguins!).

Well, Dan is such a kind soul, I couldn’t say no. So I said “yes.” Five minutes after I hung up the phone, I was totally freaking out! “What were you thinking?” I said to myself.

I should have lost that 100 pounds, had my hair colored, walked on my treadmill (it’s two years old and has a mile on the pedometer).

Of course the next thing was “what am I going to wear?” Two hours later, I said “Self, you can do this!” And I did. And it was a highlight in my 773 months here on earth!

With Captain George Thompson and John Stammreich carrying the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council banner, Dan and I took our places sitting on the back of the car. I asked Dan what we were supposed to do. “Wave, I think” he said. O.K., I can do that!

Then Dan noticed that the banner on the side of the car said “Dan Nixon, not Dixon which opened a whole other round of nervous hysteria.

After a couple of salutes and cheers from the paradegoers (i.e., hey, President Nixon, it’s good to see you back?) President Dixon threatened to do the President Nixon “V” for victory sign.

I promptly threatened to get out and walk if he did... and after those moments of levity, some of the nervousness went away.

Then an incredible thing happened—I looked, really looked, at the kids along the parade route. They were soooooooo happy and when I waved directly at one little girl, she got so excited! “That lady waved just to me!” I could almost hear her saying to her Mom and Dad.

From there on, I kind of forgot about myself...and concentrated on the kids. And I had a great time!

Thanks, Dan, for asking. Thanks, Kathleen, for having another really, really important place to be, and thank you to all those other really, really important places sitting on the back of the car.

When our committee first met with you, you predicted that the kids along the parade route would spend the day at the Long Beach Aquarium with their daughter. Coming from you, those moments of levity, some of the nervousness went away.

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Secretary Rides Mustang in SP Christmas Parade

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NWSPNC BOARD MEMBERS

DAN DIXON, President
JOHN MAVAR, Vice President
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MARY HAMLIN, Secretary
Newsletter Editor
SANNI WEHBE, Treasurer
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From the President’s Desk

New Year, New Member, New Issues

By Dan Dixon

The New Year brings some genuinely new business, and a reminder that many of the issues our council works on are ongoing.

New Member

First, a very happy note. The NWSPNC was pleased to approve the recommendation of our youth and education committee to the council. Meryl Moilov was sworn in as our new youth seat member at our January 14 board meeting.

Our membership is elected in different categories, such as board resident, business representatives, community organization seats, at-large representatives and our youth seat. Meryl is a new member of our board and will serve until our next election, later this year. Meryl grew up in San Pedro, has been very active in Girl Scouts and in many community endeavors, and is a student at Cal State Long Beach.

We look forward to working with Meryl, and her appointment as a youth representative is in keeping with our council’s goal of casting a wide net to bring in as many segments of our community as possible.

Development Issues

PONTE VISTA: The NWSPNC passed a motion at our January meeting requesting the city planning department to order a new draft environmental impact report for the revised development plan on the Ponte Vista property.

In June, 2007, Biao Development proposed a revised plan for the property, reducing the total number dwelling units from 2,300 to 1,950. The neighborhood council believes this project will still have an extreme impact on the community, specifically on Western Avenue, and the council believes the same traffic and density issues that were not adequately addressed by the original EIR continue to present a real challenge for the community.

For instance, the council believes that the use of outdated traffic count numbers from other cities do not adequately address the issues facing Los Angeles in the 21st century. It is the council’s belief that any request to change existing zoning to accommodate such a massive project must be reviewed with great care, and that a new EIR is appropriate and necessary.

The motion was supported by a large majority of the board, with two dissenting votes.

TARGET AND NORTH GAFFNEY: We hope that you’ve noticed that many of the billboards on Gaffney below the freeway overpasses have been removed! The council and neighbors are very pleased.

The foundation for the Target store is being poured, and the store is projected to open in October, 2008. Target is working to secure all necessary permits for occupancy, including landscaping work on North Gaffney Street.

At the same time, the Harbor Department is moving forward with a plan to beautify the east side of Gaffney from Gatun Street to Westmont Avenue. The port’s plan includes new curbs, gutters and sidewalks with street trees, a grassy area with trees, shrubbery and benches along a meandering walk path, and other greenscape enhancements along the route.

It is the hope of the council that street trees on both the east and west side of the street can be coordinated to form an eventual “boulevard of trees” extending up Gaffney. This is part of the council’s long term goal of uniting and beautifying the Gaffney Street corridor from Channel Street to Westmont, and beyond.

JCC HOMES: Clean-up of the KinderMorgan site of 134 proposed homes on Gaffney continues, but concerns about subterranean soil contamination adjacent to the site have added to the issues involved in the cleanup.

Combined with the softening of the housing market, the project does not appear to be on a very fast track. We will continue to monitor the situation and will continue to work with JCC Homes on its commitment to enhance Harbor Highlands.

NEW SCHOOL: Whatever the disposition of the former Naval property on Western turns out to be, apparently a proposed public school campus on the site is off the table.

In the district’s budgeting to focus on its property at Angel’s Gate as the potential site for a 800-plus student campus to relieve overcrowding at San Pedro High School, the NWSanPedro.org, for the announcement of the district’s scoping meeting, which is the first step in the environmental review process, as well as community input meetings on the details of the project.

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL: At the recommendation of the neighborhood council, Councilwoman Hahn’s office has appointed a new returning member out of community to the CRA CAC.

Lauren Vivyan, a San Pedran who moved away to the Big Apple for some years but has returned to her roots, attended her first CAC meeting on January 16. Lauren is an archivist who brings that important sensibility and knowledge to the board. We are proud to have Lauren represent us in working on improving all of downtown San Pedro.

Newspaper:
The NWSPNC Governing Board meets on the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Peck Park Auditorium, 560 North Western Avenue

Community Preparedness Corps Volunteers Needed

The city is looking for energetic volunteers to organize and prepare local plans and ensure that every Angelena has the tools and resources to prepare for emergencies. Volunteers will receive a stipend, funded by the city and Americorps. For more information, call (213) 473-9922 or go to http://www.lacity.org/epd/deplan corp1.htm.

NORTHWEST SAN PEDRO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
638 S. Beacon Street, Box 688
San Pedro, CA 90731
(310) 732-4522
board@nwsanpedro.org
**Squeaky Wheels Get the Grease**

By Phil Nicolay, Chair, Port Committee

The tight rail track curves within the West Basin Terminal along Pacific Avenue and Front Street have resulted in wheel squeaks from trains as they leave the area.

This wheel squeak noise resulted in complaints to your neighborhood council. Working with the Pacific Harbor Line and the Port of Los Angeles, the port committee has identified an on-track lubrication system that can reduce wheel-noise and extend track life.

The Port of Los Angeles is working with Pacific Harbor Line and the West Basin Terminal to evaluate the use of wayside lubricators along this portion of the Port’s rail system. The wayside lubricator is mounted to the track and supplies lubricant to the track before and during passage of a wheel. Both sides of the track are usually lubricated with a lubricant that could be biodegradable; this reduces wheel friction and noise.

An example of an installed wayside lubricator is provided below. At this time, a contractor is evaluating the feasibility of installing the lubricators along the West Basin rail line for the Port. We will keep the community informed as the Port moves forward with this project.

**Wayside lubricator system**

In addition to rail noise from trains in the West Basin, the NWSNPC has received complaints regarding the locomotive warning horns at night along the North Gaffey Street rail line leading to AmericaGas.

The Port is currently evaluating where the warning horns are sounded, either at the protected Westmont Drive grade crossing, or the unprotected Gatun Street grade crossing, or both. Based on this data the Port will determine what is required to make the North Gaffey rail grade crossings quiet zones.

Following completion of the noise study and research on the requirements, the feasibility of quiet zone grade crossings at Westmont Drive and Gatun Street will be evaluated. The Port should complete its studies in the next few months. The Port’s findings and recommendations will be reported on at a future neighborhood council meeting.

**Fireworks, Shopping Carts and Tagging... Oh, MAN!**

By John Stammreich, NWSNPC Board Member

As 2007 was coming to an end, I was chatting with some neighbors about some of the improvements we experienced living in San Pedro in the past year. It appeared to most of us that San Pedro was starting to grow up, become more economically viable and an even better place to show friends and relatives from out of town what a great community looks like.

Then New Year’s Eve came. Around 9:00 p.m. or so, the fireworks began. The nuisance grew and thoughts regarding the city’s revenues and development, and other vital services. By 11:00 p.m. the noise ceased. I was later told that Henry’s has hired a private contractor to drive around and retrieve its shopping carts. Sad, when you think about it.

**One Call to City Hall**

**INK CARTRIDGE RECYCLING**

Ever wonder what to do with the used ink cartridge from your printer? Well, Dodson Middle School has a program for you. You can place the empty ink cartridges in the plastic container on the counter in the main office. They will recycle them and the funds they receive from this effort will be used to purchase supplies not covered by the budget. It’s a great way to help out a local school.

**TAPER AVENUE AVENUE WINNERS—front row: David Oliveri, Kim Silver, Brenna Rivero; center row: Tyler Castaneda, Alexandra Susnar, Alexa Fonse; back row: Vice Principal Barbara Schach**

**College Financial Aid Workshops Scheduled**

Cash for College Workshops provide free, one-on-one guidance to families completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Cal Grant GPA Verification Forms. This FAFSA is a required form in financial aid application packets whether you want to attend a four-year college/university, community college, vocational or technical school.

Additionally, each workshop offers an AB540 advisor working personally with each student and/or their family to explore the maximum amount of opportunity for every person.

The following workshops are scheduled in our area:
- February 9, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Hacker College
  1111 Figueroa Place, Wilmington
- February 21, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Banning High School
  1527 Lakme, Wilmington

Students should bring their parent or guardian, social security card, driver’s license, or alien registration card. For more information, go to www.lacashforcollege.org or call Maria Nieto at (213) 580-7599.

**City of L.A. Wants Your Input on Annual Budget Take the Mayor’s Survey Online**

Do you have concerns about the budget for the City of Los Angeles? The Mayor invites you to participate in the formulation of the 2008-09 budget.

To participate, complete the Mayor’s Budget Survey found at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=yt9qlmeG92h8VPnya5N6U17w_3d_3d or to www.lacity.org and click on the “Mayor’s Budget Survey.”

This survey requires you to make very tough decisions regarding real issues that we face. This year, the City of Los Angeles will be challenged by many issues, none more pressing than the potential loss of $270 million or roughly six percent of the city’s General Fund. The magnitude of the potential revenue loss is enormous and could jeopardize support for public safety, transportation, recreational services, housing, economic development, and other vital services.

All NWSNPC stakeholders are urged to complete the survey, including the use of the comment form at the end to express budget priorities and thoughts regarding the city’s revenues and expenditures.

**NWSNPC Awards for Students Program**

By Barbara Schach, NWSNPC Board Member

This award arose out of the Youth and Education Committee. The committee was looking for ways to honor students who are doing extra service to the school.

The committee felt that there were many students who do over and above the expected for the good of the community, the school and/or the students who attend the schools.

Councilwoman Janice Hahn has graciously agreed to provide certificates to the schools. They are to honor grade 5 students based on criteria determined by the respective schools. These awards have the city logo, are signed by Janice Hahn and have a brief description of the service performed.

Some schools have chosen to honor the students twice a year and some have chosen to honor students on a monthly basis. Some examples of the criteria may be community service, service to the school and or the students, perfect attendance, and/or academics.

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I understand many local residents need to walk to the store to buy groceries and then need something to lug them home. Maybe another good idea for a project is to offer local residents who need them a private shopping cart of their own. One of those tall lightweight ones people use.

A one-time purchase of these for neighbors that need them might solve their dilemma and save our local stores from having to chase down their shopping carts while improving the looks of our neighborhood.

I encourage you to step up, volunteer and bring new ideas for improving our neighborhood.

Come to the monthly board and community meeting (6:30 p.m. every second Monday at Peck Park Auditorium) and tell us what is on your mind.

Visit our website, nwsanpedro.org and ask to be added to our e-mail list so you can learn more about issues in our community.
Emergency Preparedness
By Bonnie Easley, NWSPC Board Member

The realization for those of us living in the San Pedro or Palos Verdes Peninsula is that well intentioned folks “preach to the choir.” How many of you have set up your survival kits? How many of you have an “escape route” planned in case you are trapped? How many of you have a “meeting place” for family members to gather to?