Northwest Election June 12

Candidates are in place for eight seats on the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council to be voted on this year. The first round of neighborhood council elections conducted by the city clerk will be held on Thursday, June 12. Voting for the Northwest San Pedro council will be held at Peck Park, 560 North Western Avenue, in the main building. Voting hours are 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

City clerk staff will supervise the voting. All that is required of voters is that they state affirmatively that they are stakeholders in the Northwest Council area. Write-in candidates and citizens desiring to vote by mail may apply for a registration packet or a ballot by going to the city clerk’s website: cityclerk.lacity.org/election.

Follow the instructions and deadlines carefully. Write-in applications and vote-by-mail ballots will be accepted at the city clerk’s office until 5:00 p.m., Monday, June 9. Vote-by-mail ballots will be accepted at the polling place at Peck Park during voting hours on June 12.

Northwest Board Members Will Serve Four-Year Terms

Candidates elected to the NWSPNC board this year will serve four-year terms, a result of a modification of our bylaws stemming from the Neighborhood Council Review Commission’s recommendation for the city clerk to conduct all NC elections, which was enacted by the city council in February.

The city clerk will only hold elections every two years, as they claim they cannot conduct NC elections in odd-numbered years, which is when other city elections are held. Neighborhood councils had the option of electing all board members every two years, or half of the board every two years.

The Northwest Council approved the latter, based on a long-standing belief that no more than half the board should face election in any single year. Continuity of the board and a sense of institutional order have been held as highly important goals by the board since the NWSPNC’s inception.

Mechanisms exist in our current bylaws to appoint an interim board member until the next general election, should someone not be able to fill out a term for any reason. That person would then be able to run for the last two years of a four-year term, or a full four-year term if the seat is up at the next election. A youth seat is appointed by the board on a yearly basis.

Types of Seats on the Neighborhood Council

Each Neighborhood Council writes its own bylaws, and included in those are types of seats which will represent the community. Some neighborhood councils elect all members on an at-large basis. Others have created designations for seats in an effort to distribute seats both geographically and in terms of members from constituent constituencies within the council area.

In the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council geographic area, there are four census tracts; each has two representatives. Typically the census tract representatives own or rent homes in each area.

There are two seats designated for businesspeople, two representing the education community, and two for non-governmental organizations, which may include churches, unions, or charitable or fraternal organizations.

There are also two seats designated at-large, for any stakeholder.

Finally, there is a youth seat, designated for students or others between the ages of 16 and 21. The youth seat is appointed by the board for a one year term, and the incumbent may apply for additional terms, as long as they are under 21 the last time they are appointed.

This brings the total number of seats on our board to 17. The officers of the board are elected every year by a vote of the board.

The president of the board chairs the board meetings, and, while a voting member, typically only votes in the event of a tie. Neighborhood Council Committees

The council president appoints members to standing committees, which largely reflect the most important issues considered by the board as a whole.

On our council, these committees include planning and land use, youth and education, a port committee, an outreach committee, a bylaws committee, a finance committee, and issues committee.

Most of these are self-explanatory, but a word should be said about the issues committee. It can be very wide-ranging in its interests, and essentially takes in any issue not covered by the others.

Everything from requests for stop signs to beautification issues (litter, weed removal, and tree plantings for example), can fall under the umbrella of “issues.”

This year, issues ranging from shade awnings at Peck Park pool to consideration of subsidizing goats at Ramirez Ranch have been discussed by our issues committee.

It’s the goal of the Neighborhood Council to hear most issues at the committee level, and for the committees to pass their recommendations to the board for approval. This does not mean that an urgent or unscheduled issue may not be brought before the entire board right away.

VOTE!

The Northwest Neighborhood Council Election

Thursday June 12
1:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Peck Park
Main Building
560 N. Western Ave.
San Pedro

CANDIDATES:

David Arvonio
Census Tract 2963

John Greenwood
Census Tract 2964

Mary Hamlin
Census Tract 2970

Diana Nave
At-large

Gabriel Rivas
Nongovernmental Organization

Barbara Schach
Education

George Thompson
Census Tract 2951

Laureen Vivian
Business

Other “ad hoc” committees can be appointed to look at specific or complex problems. Typically, the president appoints members to such committees.

One committee left to be mentioned is our election committee, which has served well and ably for six election cycles, and has worked this year with the city clerk to bridge to the new clerk-controlled election process.

It is unclear whether the election committee will be needed in the future for elections, but it is our hope to have the city clerk to bridge to the new clerk-controlled election process.

Attn: POSTAL PATRON
NORTHWEST SAN PEDRO NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
638 S. Beacon Street, Box 688
San Pedro, CA 90731
(310) 732-4522
board@nwspanpedro.org

NWSPNC BOARD MEMBERS
DAN DIXON, President
JOHN NAVAR, Vice President
Chair, Issues, Parks and Transportation Committee
MARY HAMLIN, Secretary
Newsletter Editor
SANNI WEHBE, Treasurer
Chair, Budget and Finance Committee
MOLLIE ABBATIELLO
PETE BURMEISTER
BONNIE EASLEY
Chair, Scholarship Committee
CRAIG GOLDFARB
JOHN GREENWOOD
Chair, Planning and Land Use Committee
JODY JAMES
MERYL MOLOV
DIANA NAVE
Chair, Outreach and Communications Committee
PHILIP NICOLAY
Chair, Port Committee
RAY H. PATRiCiO
BARBARA SCHACH
Chair, Youth and Education Committee
JOHN STAMMREICH
CAPT. GEORGE THOMPSON

NWSPNC Committees
Issues / Traffic / Parks Committee: Deals with traffic and transportation, parks, community beautification, and other issues not covered by specific committees.
Planning and Land Use Committee: Deals with planning and land use issues.
Port Committee: Deals with port-related issues and advises our representatives on Port Community Advisory Committee.
Youth and Education Committee: This newly-formed committee focuses on meeting the needs of young people in our community, including education, recreation, and crime prevention.
Communication and Outreach Committee: Communicates with our stakeholders through a quarterly newsletter, speaking engagements, and personal contact with various target groups and gathers community concerns and feedback.
Finance Committee: Recommends budget, reviews funding requests.

If you are interested in being a member of any of these committees, please e-mail your contact information to board@nwspanpedro.org.

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.

President’s Corner
THank You for Serving and Thank You for Running

By Dan Dixon

Our election this year may seem simple, but it deserves your attention.

Our Candidates

Here’s a quick overview of the candidates—for more information please see their personal statements elsewhere in this issue. Of the eight candidates certified to run in the June 12 election, five are incumbents and three are running for first time.

Diana Nave and John Greenwood are long time board members, and were both important in the formation and development of our council. They have each served in several capacities on the board, including multiple terms as president. Frankly, no one outworks either of them.

George Thompson has served on the board for three years. He’s a hardworking member and chair of our bylaws committee. George has gotten a real workout this year as we questioned the changeover to city clerk-run elections and had to rewrite our bylaws a couple of times to conform to new rules promulgated by the clerk and the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment. Revising bylaws is sometimes tedious, but is very important to the smooth functioning of the board. George has kept us on point in reworking the bylaws, as he does regularly at our board meetings.

Mary Hamlin and Barbara Schach are each seeking second terms. They have stepped up and taken responsibility for important functions. Mary has been our board’s secretary and as newsletter editor (she stepped back for this edition while chairing a major charity event in San Pedro).

Barbara, a longtime educator, has skillfully chaired the Youth and Education Committee. During her tenure a new youth member was selected (we are pleased to have Meryl Moliov on our board), and Barbara and the committee have taken a proactive role in increasing our outreach to schools in the community. I am delighted that they have stepped up to run for the open seats available this year.

David Arvonio, a resident of the Ponderosa between Captain and Park Western, served as Captain in the U.S. Air Force and is now a civilian employee working at the Los Angeles Air Force Base. The L.A. Base is extremely important to the community, as it deals with many fireworks issues engendered by port operations. I have no doubt about, and look forward to, David’s continued participation with our council.

John Stammenreich has been forceful in his commitment to bettering the issues facing San Pedro, and parlayed his initial concern about then new fireworks issue into a seat on the board, and acting diligently as the chair of a fireworks committee that heard the neighbors and worked with local officials to bring illegal fireworks to the forefront of community concern. John is a Republican Party volunteer, and many have supported legitimate fireworks activities around the Fourth of July. John’s day job at Northrop Grumman is demanding, and his activities in the Republican Party will take most of his volunteer time. We are sure we will continue to hear from John on important issues.

Sanni Webbe has applied a steady hand to the financial affairs of our council for years. As a member of the finance committee and, especially as our treasurer, Sanni has diligently and efficiently followed up on commitments made by the council and never allowed us to run out of petty cash or reimbursements as necessary. He has volunteered to consult as needed after his term ends.

We deeply appreciate Jody, John and Sanni for their service and friendship. They continue to be neighbors, which is what this is all about.

Summer 2008
2 THE NORTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD ADVOCATE
Opinion Traffic and Ponte Vista

John Greenwood, Chair, Planning and Land Use Committee

Recently San Pedro residents received their latest newsletter from Bob Bisno pledging to spend $8 million on local traffic signal synchronization and other traffic projects.

He will provide this “generous” benefit only if the City of Los Angeles will allow him to build a 1,950-unit condominium project at the former Naval housing site on Western Avenue. In fact, new city and state rules would allow him to build 2,635 units if some are low and moderately priced.

Here is the secret that Mr. Bisno does not tell you. The City of Los Angeles has received funding from a state bond issue to implement the traffic synchronization program throughout Los Angeles, including San Pedro and Wilmington.

If Mr. Bisno builds his 1,900-plus units near the site the city of transport will gladly take his money, but it won’t provide anything extra for our area. The department can use the additional $8 million to fund projects elsewhere in Los Angeles.

Mr. Bisno is required to mitigate the additional traffic caused by his development. Most residents will be happy to have him spend less money on traffic improvements in exchange for building a more modest project of single family homes that will create less traffic.

Why suffer from a larger project in order to pay for traffic synchronization that should be coming here anyway?

This is one of the reasons that both the Northwest and Coastal neighborhood councils and former Councilwoman Hahn’s advisory committee on Ponte Vista have endorsed the current R-1 zoning.

The final decision will be made by the city council and mayor. The next step is a hearing by the city public safety committee. In the meantime, let us councilwoman know what you think by calling her office at (310) 732-4515.

What the Northwest Council Has Been Up To

The neighborhood council works on some tough, ongoing issues, but also has the opportunity to respond to needs that arise in the community.

These usually come from groups requiring multiple sponsorships from many different organizations.

Most often, their events or needs allow our council to broaden its outreach in the community, and help familiarize our neighbors with what we do in representing their interests.

Here’s a sampling of the groups and events we’ve agreed to support during this year (July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008):

• Taste in San Pedro, one of the biggest and most fun events of the San Pedro summer.
• Clean San Pedro for its ongoing projects both in our neighborhood and throughout San Pedro.
• A great group of volunteers who work for GLY.
• Sponsorship of Eastview Little League. Eastview played for years in the Northwest neighborhood, and is returning to it in three years.
• Holiday and spring events at Weymouth Corners, in conjunction with the San Pedro Chamber of Commerce.
• The annual Teen Police Conference at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.
• The Homeless Awareness Concert at Peak Park.
• Dana Middle School after school Clubs.
• The ongoing planning process for the Angela Gate Master Plan.
• Cabrillo Beach Booster Summer Activities, including the July 4 Fireworks Show.
• Assisting San Pedro Peninsula Homeowners United with labor costs and equipment for their ongoing efforts maintaining over 200 trees that they planted on Navy Fuel Depot property, a huge enhancement to North Gaffey Street.
• Gold Sponsorship for Relay for Life 2008, which raised almost $150,000 locally for the American Cancer Society.
• Specific grants to assist local elementary schools and Willowbrook Special Education Center.
• Sponsorship of Shakespeare-by-the-Sea—the other big, fun San Pedro summer event!
• Bleacher shade awnings for the Peck Park Pool.
• Specific items for the new Harbor Rock film production program.
• Major sponsorship of the San Pedro High School Boys Varsity soccer teams.

Sponsors provide funds for programs, but we hope our sponsorship will prevent the class from being cancelled for the first time in many years.

We appreciate the hard work of the many groups and individuals who seek our assistance. We are not intended to be a primary funding source, but we are glad to be able to supplement needed funds or make a program run more smoothly. We hope the community agrees.

October 12 ‘Target’ Date for Opening

The Target store under construction at North Gaffey Street and Capitol Drive is proceeding apace. Considering the price of gas, it will just be in time to save a trip to Del Amo.

Opinion A Special Hazard in the Harbor Community

By Jody James

Near San Pedro’s boundary with Wilmington, Harbor City and Rancho Palos Verdes there is an aging 26 million gallon LPG tank facility called AmeriGas Propane Inc. The tanks at this facility sit across from a densely populated neighborhood, within two blocks of three schools, soccer fields, the 110 freeway and the Port of LA. They sit on the PV fault and in a liquefaction zone according to the maps provided by the California Seismic Hazard Mapping Act.

Very few of us understand the magnitude of the danger our neighborhoods face. Our anxiety has been tweaked by the recently released US Geological Surveys report that an earthquake of a 6.7 or greater will occur here within the next 30 years. If these huge tanks rupture in a catastrophic incident what would be the result of 26 million gallons of butane (and 600,000 gallons of propane) cutting loose on our neighborbonds?

A chemical engineer and seismic experts familiar with the facility had a scenario that involved “inexinguishable rivers of fire” and sympathetic explosions for miles. In addition to accidents and earthquakes there is the threat of terrorism.

For years the city council and mayor have seen the tank as a remote site! After the attacks of 9-11 our elected officials promised to act swiftly to remove serious hazards from our communities.

The Port Master Plan from the 1970s identified these tanks as urgently needing to be relocated to a remote site! After the attacks of 9-11 our elected officials promised to act swiftly to remove serious hazards from our communities.

The only action concerning AmeriGas is that it no longer ships its product out of the Port to the Far East. The situation has become even more hazardous as the product is shipped by rail and truck through our communities on the way to Texas.

I am hoping that an act of unity and community support will help get AmeriGas relocated before a disaster happens. I am asking all of you to pick up a phone, write or stroke the keyboard in our defense. Councilwoman Hahn needs to have momentum with her to get City Hall to make our safety Priority #1 by relocating the AmeriGas tanks and forcing them to conform to current safety standards. Thank you!

Neighborhood Council Planning Working Group Established

Neighborhood council planning and land use committees will be meeting regularly with Harbor City and Rancho Palos Verdes councilwoman Janice Hahn’s planning staff.

Frank Hong, planning director for Councilwoman Hahn, has formed a working group of committee chairs from all neighborhood council in the district, including the three San Pedro NC’s, Wilmington, Harbor City, and Harbor Gateway South and North to meet on a regular basis.

The structure of the committee and possible operating tenets were discussed at an initial meeting May 17. The startup meeting brought a wealth of issues to be discussed, ranging from parking in the neighborhoods to all areas of development.

It was agreed that the group will permit the local councils with their particular sets of priorities, problems and opportunities, to work together on issues that affect all neighborhoods.
The Candidates Speak

Here are personal statements from the eight candidates who have qualified for the June 12, 2008 election.

David Arvonio—Census Tract 2963

Qualifications:
1. Founding President of Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council (2002-2005).
2. Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council Board Member (2002-present), serving at various times as Vice President, Chair of Bylaws Committee, and Chair of the Land Use and Planning Committee.
3. Board Member and Former Chair, Gang Alternatives Program.
4. Member and former President, Rotary Club of San Pedro.
5. Vice Chair, Angels Gate Cultural Center.
6. Former Member and President, Los Angeles Board of Education.
7. Former Member, Board of Directors, Boys and Girls Club of L.A. Harbor.
8. Chair, Citizens Oversight Committee for Proposition Q. Provide citizen review of the current bond issue to build $650,000,000 of police fire and 911 facilities in the City of Los Angeles, including the new Harbor Police Station.
10. Trained as a facilitator and mediator.

The Board and others involved with the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council have accomplished much. While some other Neighborhood Councils have been frustrated by inighting, we have listened to one another and worked together. I am proud of our role in removing the Kinder Morgan tanks on North Gaffey Street, helping the council office to secure millions of dollars for improvement in Peak Park Canyon, fencing and planting the storm drain on Capitol Dr., funding sidewalk, street and curb cleanup, identifying area young people for service awards, arranging forums on important community and election issues and so much more.

We have made the Neighborhood Council a place for the community to come and voice ideas, speak off on governmental and business initiatives and build a better community together. We make sure that government at all levels pays attention to our neighborhoods and that government efforts are well directed. I would like to continue working on your behalf.

Mary Hamilton—Census Tract 2970

I’ve had the opportunity to serve on the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council for the past two years and have also served as Secretary and as editor of the newsletter. It’s a great feeling to know that you’ve been able to “give back” to the community, and your vote will allow me to continue that work.

Diana Nave—At-Large

Hello Neighbors,
I have been involved in the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council since its founding and have held several positions on the Board, including serving as president for two years. I am proud of the accomplishments of our Board including securing nearly $5 million for improvements to Peck Park Canyon beginning in 2010 (it’s such a slow process!) and over $5 million from the Port for the greening of North Gaffey, which should occur this summer.

I am running for reelection for several reasons, including the fact that one of the most important decisions regarding the future of our neighborhood will be made by the City this year. That decision is the disposition of the application by Biano Development to build 1,350 units (Ponte Vista) on Western Avenue, a plan to which I am emphatically opposed, and which, as a result of recent changes in state law, could actually allow 2,633 units under certain circumstances. Additionally, we need to continue to work to lessen the impact of Port Development on our community.

Our Council provides an important forum for members of our community to raise issues and to contribute ideas. We have worked hard to resolve problems and raise our community’s concerns with all levels of government.

This is a critical time for our neighborhood. I am seeking your support to continue the efforts of our Council has begun to make whatever happens in our community the best possible for all of us. Thank you for your support.

Barbara Schach—Education

As an educator of 35 years and Assistant Principal of Tenth Street School for 6 years, my interest in continuing on the board is to continue to ensure that the children and the families of our council’s geographic area are well served with their best interest in mind in all decisions and actions that the board makes in the coming years.

I have been and education administrator for 11 years in various districts and areas of Los Angeles. I have served on councils and boards similar to the Northwest Neighborhood Council in various areas around the Southland. I am a member of PTO (PTA at other sites), and I am on the community relations board for the prison on Terminal Island. On behalf of our school, I have initiated a valet service for children by having volunteer parents trained by LAPD. Through my efforts, our Wonder of Reading Library has community members who help our children regularly.

As a board member for the last two years, and as chair of our Youth and Education committee, I have initiated regular citizen awards via the Bina’s office. We have also secured art murals for Taper School (worked on by students), provided Seventh Street School with items to enhance their academics as well as help with beautification, and, through the committee, have given 3 service awards (privately funded), both last year and this year.

I will continue to work for the students of the Northwest San Pedro Council area to ensure that their lives are better not only through education, but in the community as well.

Gabriel Rivas—Nongovernmental Organization

I have been involved with the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council (NWSNPC) since 2000 by attending numerous Board and Committee meetings. As a result of my participation, the Board members nominated me to represent NWSNPC at the DWP/NCs Memorandum of Understanding Oversight Committee. I’ve watched countless City council meetings and learned how our local government operates.

The primary reason for my participation is to be well-informed with issues affecting our community. One in particular is the “overdevelopment” as Peninsula Park, Ponte Vista and others, 1,950 units, which, if approved, will have a significant long term impact in our wonderful San Pedro community. There is simply not enough infrastructure that can accommodate this project. I have spent many weekends at various locations gathering petition signatures to keep the Ponte Vista property at its current R-1 zoning. I gladly did this for the betterment of our community. Both street traffic and cargo traffic at the Ports are huge issues for our community.

I ask for your vote as my goal is to work diligently with the diverse residents and business community to bring forth the best solutions or recommendations. I would also like to increase such participation of elected officials as to make elected officials fiscally responsible to stakeholders, and not always raise fees or taxes as a quick fix.

George Thompson—Census Tract 2951

I have been a member of the Governing Board of the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council for the past three years. My areas of specific interest are traffic, construction (both business and housing) and the overall environment here in San Pedro.

During my 30 years of residence in San Pedro, I have witnessed the overall development of housing, primarily with respect to apartments and condominiums, and have been pleased to watch previously semi rural areas transformed into generally well-kept apartment housing.

My concern now, however, is the apparent lack of an overall plan for development in San Pedro which takes into account the total effect on traffic in this area. Each applicant for a building permit must plan for the effect the project will have on this already congested area. It is difficult to ascertain if the city takes all planned development into account (as a total effect) as opposed to considering each as a separate project. This situation does not bode well for the future. We have only to observe the enormous amounts of traffic moving down Westmont, Capitol, Channel, and Seventh Street (mention only four) to readily witness the impact. I believe we need to be mindful of the cause and effect of development on traffic and the environment as well.

My goal in serving you is to continue to reflect on my concerns and those of you in this area, and strive to reach an accommodation which will allow us to have our concerns defined and set forth to our elected officials. I ask for your vote and support in this matter.

Lauren Vivian—Business

Endorsed: South Shores Streetcar, Dana Jr. High and San Pedro High School (79).
USC—B.A. in communications, 1982; M.A. in German Literature, 1989.
Practiced architecture and co-owned art gallery in New York City, 1989-2006.
Returning home to San Pedro, own home near Avellin Park. Continue to practice from home and am opening The Dekor Gallery, 45 W. Sixth.
Appointed to CRA Community Advisory Committee.

I am so happy to be back in San Pedro!! I have been town and I pledge to be active as long as I am breathing.

I look forward to doing what I can to improve our town and way of life.