Peck Park Skate Park

Peck Park is growing! San Pedro, the home of Southern California skateboarding, is getting a new skate park at Peck Park Community Recreation Center. We have been hosting several community meetings to get local skaters, parents, police and other public members input on what would make this skate park great. Thanks to the input from the public it looks like Peck Parks skate park will be around 8,000 square feet of jumps, ramps, rails and a pool. Keep your eyes and ears open for the ground breaking day, which we hope will be April 2012.

Come Out Swinging in 2012!

Greetings from Peck Park! With the end of the holidays and winter wind- down going we have an exciting year ahead of us! Peck Park also has youth baseball registration starting in February 4 for youth ages 5-1. In April we will be starting our annual summer camp registrations and Spring Break Camp; stop by the Peck Park Community Recreation Center office this sea- son or check us out on line at laparks.org/peckpark for a complete listing of all the great activities or call us at (310) 548-7580.

Youth Employment

Education Fair May 19

The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council is hosting a youth em- ployment educational job fair. It is open to people from the ages to 16-25 who live in the San Pedro area. The event will be held Saturday, May 19, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Peck Park. Pre-registration is required.

On hand will be representatives from businesses, and the private sector who will be holding workshops to assist the youth of San Pedro in pursuing valuable knowledge needed for searching for a job.

The committee is looking for any groups or individuals who would be able to contribute to this event. Financial and/or in-kind donations will be very much appreciated. Proper recognition will be given accordingly.

Community Service Award 2012

This award is for $500 and open to anyone between the ages of 17-23. The recipient must meet the following requirements:

* Have a minimum GPA 2.5 and be attending a high school, college or vocational school;
* Demonstrated voluntary community service that is not required by schools or other programs between January 2010 and the present;
* Performed the service within the boundaries of the San Pedro neighborhood;
* Live, work or attend school in the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood boundaries.

Interested applicants can get the application on line at the Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council website OR contact Barbara Schach, (310) 832-9086 Monday or Tuesday only. Application is due to Barbara Schach by June 1, 2012.
By Diana Nave, President

Congratulations, Joe Buscaino. This will be an interesting and challenging time for you! We look forward to working with you!

Citywide, the biggest issues are the city budget, economic development, and employment. The Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates have been diligently studying the city budget and will once again be making recommendations to the mayor and city council. Craig Goldfarb represents our council in this effort. He would love to hear your ideas.

Our biggest issue coming up is likely to be the long-awaited local community plan update. It looks like it may soon emerge from the Planning Department for comment. The plan sets important parameters for development in San Pedro for the next five to 10 years, so it is important that we participate in what it includes. These issues will all be discussed at our Planning and Land Use Committee. Our Port Committee is addressing railroad engine train noise and rail tank car safety.

This is an exciting time to be in San Pedro. Many years of efforts by many different people are about to pay off. Our air is getting cleaner and our community is getting greener. The Governor has signed the legislation to create an Enterprise Zone to encourage business development. Work is about to begin on the downtown water cut. The USBWA and “Crafted at the Port” are both expected to open in July. Improvements are coming soon to Plaza Park, and we just heard that the South Bay Light Opera is coming to the Warner Grand!

A little over six months ago we began working with the council office and Department of Recreation and Parks to develop another skate park facility in San Pedro. Space was identified at Peck Park and Recreation and Parks worked very closely with local skateboarders and the San Pedro Skate Park Association under the leadership of Andy Harris, to develop a conceptual design for this facility (see diagram on page 1). They are hoping to have it open before the Channel Street facility has to temporarily close for the improvements to the 47/110 transition.

Changes are continuing on North Gaffey. Development has begun on the Harbor Highlands Homes (Group at Gaffey) and on a new storage facility at the corner of Basin. The bird store and San Pedro Sheet Metal have both been recently sold. The Sanitation Department is getting ready to landscape the hillside between the field of dreams and the North Gaffey Multiuse Pathway.

Check out the new restaurant in Northwestern, Pumarin Thai, 28368 South Western (in the shopping center with Smart & Final). I can tell you from personal experience that it is excellent, affordably too.

As we always would love to hear from you. All of our meetings are open and we encourage you to attend. Check out our website at www.sanpedro.org or e-mail us board@nwsanpedro.org.

By Scott Allman

For me, being on the board means that I get the chance to serve my community with other people who want to get involved in what is happening in our neighborhood.

I did serve on my homeowners association board for two years, but I still didn’t know really what to expect. I would encourage other members of the NWSPNC, a Los Angeles neighborhood council. I learned right away that the people serving on the board are really there because they care about what they live.

We fell in love with our neighborhood and our house and family. I found a position as medical director of Spay Neuter Project Los Angeles (SNP LA) right next to the Harbor shelter on Gaffey. Animal overpopulation is a huge concern and I am happy to be able to make a difference right here where I live. San Pedro has also become the home of our yellow lab, Landie, and our cat, Nala. We fell in love with our neighborhood and our neighbors. They have been incredible — making us feel welcome from the day we moved in. We love the “small town” feel of San Pedro and it is close enough to the harbor for Dave to get to Catalina Island where he is the director of Catalina Island Marine Institute (CIM). I look forward to representing my community and helping make San Pedro a better and safer place to live.

What It Means to Be on the Board

By Craig Goldfarb, Treasurer

I am happy to be joining the board of the North-west San Pedro Neighborhood Council. I think neighborhood councils give stakeholders an important voice in projects that affect the community. I am currently also serving on the NWSPNC Safety and Security Committee. I, and Ashley Grayson, my husband, represent authors’ manuscripts to publishers and negotiate the terms of publishing agreements. We also operate a marketing consulting firm to assist manufacturers in launching computer industry products.

When we traveled for business I would think how much I would love to see Los Angeles adopt more European-style public transportation systems. (Hop on the streetcar to run up and down Western? I could hope.)

I have lived in San Pedro for about 23 years. I also volunteer with The Associates, a fundraising support group for the Palos Verdes Art Center, and with the South Coast Rose Society. I enjoy gardening and occasionally reading books that are already between covers. I hold a B.A. from Wellesley College, and M.B.A. from U.C.L.A.
Congresswoman Janice Hahn's Report to the San Pedro Community

Friends and neighbors, it was a whirlwind 2011. In July of last year I had the immense honor of being elected to represent the 36th Congressional District. I served San Pedro in Los Angeles City Hall and now I have the pleasure of serving you in the United States House of Representatives.

I may work in Washington, D.C. these days, but San Pedro continues to be my home. Travelling back and forth to the east coast nearly every week isn’t easy, but I love serving you in Congress.

All of us understand the challenges facing our community and the nation. Here in San Pedro and around California, we continue to face high unemployment, currently hovering around 12 percent. That is unacceptable.

That’s why rebuilding our economy and creating jobs is my number one priority. Last year, soon after my election, I was named to serve on two important committees that deal directly with these issues; Small Business and Homeland Security.

I want to work on the committee that could give them the tools they need to thrive. In my first months in office, I met with over 50 businesses in the district—large and small—listening to their needs and concerns.

Working with them, I have authored legislation to address the key issues they brought to me, providing these businesses easier access to capital and less red tape to deal with along the way.

We will see how the importance of our ports and the challenges they face. The Port of Los Angeles is a tremendous economic engine, linked to 1.1 million jobs in our state, and another 2.2 million across the country.

Every one of the millions of containers that come through our port complex each year represents opportunity and commerce, but it also represents risk. We know that our ports face serious threats. We know how much pollution they cause. We know our ports need to live within the community. That means operating cleanly, efficiently, and safely.

That’s why in October, I teamed up with Ted Poe of Texas to form the bipartisan PORTS Caucus. The PORTS Caucus mission is simple yet powerful; for our economy to grow we must have strong and secure ports.

To protect our ports and LAX, I authored legislation to maintain funding for critical security programs that train police and firefighters. In addition, I have asked the Department of Homeland Security and the Customs and Border Protection to take the necessary steps to ensure that LAX has the proper number of customs agents at work to reduce delays for international travelers. We want LAX to be a welcoming gateway to our city.

I was also happy to please that this January we celebrated the opening of my new congressional office right in the heart of downtown San Pedro. Located at 140 West Sixth Street, my new office will serve the entire district and will always have its door open to you.

I hope your 2012 is off to a fantastic start and I look forward to seeing each of you.

San Pedro Convention & Visitors Bureau Seeks to Boost Area Tourism

Tourism—visitors, meetings, conventions—is the biggest industry in Los Angeles. But historically San Pedro has not had anyone promoting it as a destination for this business.

Until recently.

The San Pedro Convention & Visitors Bureau (SPCVB) is a relatively new organization, launched two and a half years ago, to serve as the key entity attracting and serving visitors, meeting and reunion planners, and others responsible for making decisions about where to go.

Many are surprised San Pedro has never had a convention and visitors bureau. But not many are surprised to learn that all of the transit occupancy (hotel) tax revenues generated in San Pedro go elsewhere, in particular to LAInc, as he Los Angeles Convention & Visitors Bureau calls itself.

Thus, SPCVB does not receive tax funds. It operates privately.

The value that the SPCVB is bringing to the San Pedro community is following the footsteps of the SPCVB has been confirmed.

The SPCVB was able to do all of that, staffing a welcome center at the USS Abraham Lincoln, a canteen at the Croatian Cultural Center of Greater Los Angeles, guides at the cruise terminal, directories, special offers, and more.

The SPCVB has also hosted reunions, the visit of the Russian tall ship Pallada, and promoted San Pedro throughout the world.

SPCVB has a number of other publications all specifically targeted for visitors and meeting planners coming to the San Pedro and the Harbor community, including a visitor guide, welcome newsletter, special events guide, and a travel agent guide.

It maintains an extensive presence on Facebook and other social media sites. San Pedro Convention & Visitors Bureau has created a great place to visit.

The key to San Pedro finding success as a tourist destination is to have a specialist organization that knows how to reach the marketplace. That’s the San Pedro Convention & Visitors Bureau.

San Pedro Convention & Visitors Bureau
(310) 728-9828 / www.SanPedroTourist.org / email: info@spcvb.com

Peck Park Pool Mural

Members of the San Pedro community are replacing the painted mural that has delighted the Peck Park Pool patrons for almost a decade. Apparently on July 6, 2012, Diane D'Alfonso, who designed the scene that is now showing its age. A mosaic mural will be its replacement.

The Peck Park Pool community and our neighborhood council voted on eight designs that local artist Julie Bender designed. The bright colored mosaic of individual sea creatures was the favorite.

This mosaic will have all kinds of tile, many of which will be handemade. The creatures will have a black outline and a black frame. The handmaade frame tiles will have fun facts written in them about the animal it surrounds. So, the mural will be sharply defined and beautiful from afar, like seen from the tennis courts, but up close is where the real fascination will entertain the onlooker.

Thirteen Girl Scout Troops signed up to help Julie Bender in the mosaic process. Girl Scouts and a special group of people from Peck Park Community Center have created about 3,500 handmade tiles, glazed them and, when the time comes, will put them on the wall. People have donated beautiful tiles from their remodeling and some are going to tile stores and finding discarded tiles that couldn’t be sold.

The work on the wall will be done on the weekends from the end of January to the end of April. Julie Bender is heading up the organization of the project if you want to help in some way, you can contact her at 83enderscox.net.

Other ways to help are donations. We need Thin-set, grout, tiling tools, sponges, buckets, hammers, eye protection, tile and, of course, money. If you want to donate money, please do it through www.laparksfoundation.org, click on “support a park” then “ways to give” then type in “Peck Park Pool” and use your credit card.

The cost of this mosaic is projected to be under $2,000, but in reality it will be “priceless” from the amount of love for the pool and all its healthy attributes, to the fun of creating a permanent art piece as a community. We can’t wait to get to the wall and create!

Skateboarding Accidents a Concern for the Community

By John Mavar, NWSNPC Vice President

As you drive through San Pedro you have undoubtedly encountered skateboarders racing down the street and suddenly appearing from nowhere. A number of residents have expressed concern about this issue.

Unfortunately this behavior recently resulted in the untimely death of a young skater. Could this have been prevented? Now more than ever, we need to rally, as a community, to prevent future accidents and deaths.

Michael Borojevich was only 14. The San Pedro High School freshman was passionate about skating, like every other skateboard enthusiast. He and his friends were skateboarding around Western Avenue and 25th street when the accident occurred. His passing reemphasizes the need to find a way to increase skate board safety.

The sport is about learning as many tricks as you can and to test your limits. As former skateboarder, I took my risks. But the level of intensity with our youth has increased.

The Northwest San Pedro Neighborhood Council and San Pedro Skateboard Association have worked closely with the Department of Recreation and Parks to make sure we provide another place for skaters at Peck Park. The skate park, still in the planning stage, is only a step toward by providing a safe and usable space. Our Neighborhood Council will continue to work with skaters, LAPD and city officials to find ways to increase skate board safety.

If you have ideas on how to improve skater safety or others issues please contact board@nwsanpedro.org.

New Year Looks Bright for USS Iowa

Happy New Year to All!

The New Year has arrived and so much has happened with the IOWA and with Pacific Battleship Center. As you know, on September 6, 2011 we got the call from the Navy and I recall the first thing they said was “Congratulations Pacific Battleship Center, you have been awarded the IOWA.”

That was the day I knew I would change many of our lives. I want to thank you all. It is because of many of you that we joined together to save the IOWA and bring her back to San Pedro.

All of us at Pacific Battleship Center look forward to having you aboard the USS IOWA in the very near future and are still planning to have a grand opening in July 2012. I will send you a notification once the details has been confirmed.

Thank you.

Trish Place, Membership Coordinator
Pacific Battleship Center / USS IOWA BB-61

San Pedro, CA 90731
(310) 728-9829 / www.SanPedroTourist.org / email: info@spcvb.com

Thank you,
MOMS Club of San Pedro

By Brynn Utovc

After the birth of my first child, I decided to forfeit the lifestyle afforded by day-care workers. I wanted to be able to change the diaper, bathe the baby, and change (and change again) my young son. Although I was in my late twenties, I was the first of my friends to have a child, and thereby the only one from my grad-school flock to be spending afternoons playing on a rug with Thomas the Train as opposed to taking the Blue Line to the morning in order to spend the day seated at a desk. Yes, I was jealous (a ton, admittedly) of those who still resided in “Adultlandia” and I, too, longed for a schedule filled with checking off-to-do lists and emailing back people who expected things of me (read: the time before Facebook was the single source of adult interaction).

Isolation, I learned the hard way, truly is the proverbial enemy of stay-at-home-moms. It is a natural tendency to depend so much on one of those long days on the couch, between diaper-changes and that third switch out of soiled clothes. But, we really became acquainted right before nap-time was ‘supposed to occur’ but didn’t, because it happened to be that anomaly-afternoon. In fact, these exact moments, I remember I had added a new tool to my Mommy-in-a-crunch-resource-kit, the MOMS Club monthly calendar. With its daily activity list and other local members, who were just as about as starved out for adult company as I was, numbered to call or text – I just simply had to refer to the calendar on my fridge, grab the diaper bag, and go.

In all honesty, I can’t remember how I first came to learn of the San Pedro chapter of this international non-profit organization. However, the acronym “MOMS” quite appropriately reduced from “Moms Offering Moms Support,” lives up to its intention. So, at this time, let me extend a very belated “Thank you” to the mother that first mentioned this group to me, albeit I no longer can recall this Angel of Mercy. Meeting other moms who were in similar boat, and learning all of the above, was like finding my Mommy-friends, and yet still finding Mommy-friends and arranging play-dates along the way was the sort of initial support I needed.

The local Soroptimist International Group is an excellent example of how a snapshot of your life or if you are a working parent wanting to spend some activity-centered time with one of your young ones, here is the information I wish I had a month before delivery! And yes, the MOMS Club of San Pedro welcomes pregnant first-timers as well! General meeting info: last Wednesday of every month at 10:30 a.m. at Peck Park ABC Room in the community building 560 Western Avenue, San Pedro Website: http://sites.google.com/site/sanpedromomsclub/home Membership VP Marcia Parker: sanpedromomsclub@yahoo.com

Local Soroptimist International Group Needs 70th Anniversary

Established in the mid-1940s, the Harbor group of the Soroptimist International has been extremely active in the local community for many years. They support services for women based in the Harbor area as well as on a national basis—and internationally—with some of the beneficiaries being local Girl Scouts, a women’s halfway house, local schools, a Mexican orphanage, and a training program in rural South India. The group focuses on sending “What A Pair women” to become nursing assistants. An endowment was established 10 years ago by the SILAH which benefits low-income women by providing free mammograms and other health support; $10,000 has been given to the FMCM Hospital yearly.

The major fundraiser for this generosity is the What A Pair “art bra” gala and auction, which has involved hundreds of local artists, community groups, businesses, and healthcare providers. What A Pair will again be a San Pedro event, with doors open from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Croatian Cultural Center, Seventh and Pacific. Tickets ($65 or two for $120) are available, as are ad purchase for the souvenir brochure and information on how to create/sponsor an artist or art bra, or to even make a donation.

There will be live music, working artists creating original work on-site from a figure model, complimentary finger foods, and other surprises. The goal is again $10,000 to go to our local imaging center/hospital. The Soroptimist International is a worldwide organization which focuses energies on improving the health, emotional, and economic well-being for disadvantaged girls and women.

The local SILAH welcomes potential members, as well as invites community members to join them in participation of a What A Pair. Call Marta Valladolid at (310) 832-5482 for more information on Soroptimists, their mission, to purchase tickets or an ad, or to provide support.

Have Your Say! Take the City’s Annual Budget Survey Online

Go online and take a few minutes giving the mayor and city council your opinion about the city’s budget priorities. Your response will help determine how Los Angeles spends taxpayer dollars. The link is: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2012LABudgetSurvey

Assistant League

The San Pedro South Bay Chapter of the Assistant League is located in Weymouth Corners. Most of us know them for their wonderful store or a quick postal stop. The store and post office are just ways to raise money to provide needed services in our community. Their Operation School Bell provided clothing to almost 2,000 children from 35 schools and their Dental Center handled 2,353 patient visits.

Operation School Bell helps programs which children need them with two sets of clothing, a pair of shoes, and a backpack filled with personal grooming items and school supplies. They have had children arrive in wet clothes, no under- wear, wearing their mother’s shoes, brother’s shirt or not having clothes laundered in many cases.

In addition, each student can choose a new book to take home. So many children have never had a new book of their own and they are very happy to re-ceive this special item. Some of the children that come are embarrassed, others are extremely sad, but all have huge smiles when they leave. Their volunteers contribute an average of 1,594 hours each school year. Most children write thank you notes or draw pictures, before leaving. Those volunteer’s time. School supplies, soft cover books or monetary contributions are always appreciated.

Frances J. Johnson Dental Center

Since 1941, the Frances J. Johnson Dental Center has been open five days a week and staffed by an all-volunteer dental team, providing quality, low-cost care to children of preschool through high school age from low income families. Last year, the center handled 2,353 patient visits.

The licensed dental staff consists of one dental hygienist, one full-time and one part-time Registered Dental Assistant, and a part time Registered Dental Hygienist. They have 20 volunteers who are scheduled to help at the front desk, assisting in providing oral health education, assist at health fairs and help with dental hygiene promotion.

In addition to 2,353 patient visits, the center also provided 650 dental screenings and fluoride varnish treatments and oral health education during three local community health fairs.

The Dental Center is currently participating in a research grant with UCLA School of Dentistry and funded by Delta Dental. The research grant is “Reducing Microbial Levels in High Caries Risk Adults.” The specific aim of the study is to determine how long the bacterial levels in the mouth will remain lowered for up to three months by using a two-step over-the-counter mouth rinse. The patients participating in the study receive a small stipend, electric tooth brush, oral hygiene instructions and updated list of Resources for Low-Cost and Free Dental Services in Los Angeles County.

The Dental Center has completed a successful “Soda Free Summer” campaign to promote good oral health and nutritional habits. They are working on a hygiene and cough etiquette program to reduce cases of flu and the number of absences from school and canceled appointments due to ill- ness. Most patients come from Spanish-speaking homes and the center’s materials and education are bilingual.

The dental care provided by the center includes carries risk assessment, oral hygiene education, and for the Los Angeles Department of Comprehensive exams and x-rays, fluoride treatments, sealants and other preventive treat- ments, fillings, pulpotomies, stainless steel crowns, root canals, extractions and space maintainers.

The fee is $10 per visit and services are for uninsured children of low income families only. Also, through a generous designated/restricted gift, the center is helping to subsidize complete orthodontic care for 41 patients. The local orthodontist they refer to are treating the center’s patients at a discounted fee.

The center is more than a dental clinic. It is a dental home for its patients and their families. It provides them with information of other services available to them in the community. Through the generosity of doctors and dental staff, they even do their best to make sure patients’ holidays are a even a little merrier and bright. They are always so thankful!

Dental Center staff are also happy to report that, each year, several pa- tients express their desire to pursue a career in the health professions as they graduate from high school and complete the program. The Dental Center is very fortunate to have such a wonderful organiza- tion as part of the community.

Civic Light Opera Docked at the Warner Grand

The Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities has reached an agreement with the Warner Grand Theater and the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs to take residency at the historic Warner Grand Theater in San Pedro. Executive Producer and founder of the Civic Light Opera, James Blackman, a third generation, native Angelino, is excited to be working in San Pedro on Los Angeles’ Little San Francisco.

He can’t wait to contribute his energy and company resources along with local entrepreneurs, businesses and citizens as San Pedro concludes its full revitalization. The Civic Light Opera is the winner of four Ovation Awards (Old Hollywood, Hollywood Songbird, Foreign Language and Miss Saigon.”

The Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities is the most awarded Theater Company in Southern California. This not-for-profit, cultural arts institution is dedicated to the presentation and promotion of this unique, American art form known as musical theater.

“The More the Merrier”–we are looking for office, warehouse and stor- age space. If you can lend a hand, email us at updateslo@gmail.com. For timed show and subscription reservations, please call (310) 372-4477 or visit www.civiclightopera.com.