
Alamitos Heights Improvement Association

Newsletter

Editor: Ronan Cohen

WWW.AHIA.INFO

August 2004

Remember the Date

**25th Annual Alamitos
Heights Neighborhood
Picnic!**

**Sunday, August 29th
2:30 – 5:30 p.m.
Orlena and Vermont**

We are planning a terrific picnic for all Alamitos Heights residents. This is our 25th picnic – so it's one of our neighborhood's greatest traditions.

Those of you who attended the picnic last year know what a great time everybody had.

Doug and Jackie Miranda will return for their fifth year to provide music and coordinate lots of fun games. We hope you have been practicing for the water balloon and egg toss!

Last year we gave away over 100 prizes and this year there will be even more!

The firemen will be back to cook those delicious hotdogs and hamburgers.

The Long Beach General Plan

The Long Beach General Plan will soon be updated to reflect the City's future needs. The City recently called for residents to get involved in developing the plan. The City was divided into five clusters. Alamitos Heights was part of Cluster 4, which encompassed the entire southeast area of Long Beach. I was one of 31 residents who got together to discuss our concerns and learn about new projects that will affect our neighborhoods.

In the first meeting, we answered questions prepared by the City. These were questions about significant factors that make Long Beach a desirable place to live and what we consider the most significant issues threatening those qualities of life. Our answers and discussions centered on 7th Street traffic, traffic congestion and parking problems on 2nd Street, bay pollution, the homeless problem around the pier, the poorly developed commercial property along 7th Street, and crime.

(Continued on page 2)

Message from the President

Dear Neighbors,
Labor Day is just around the corner and summer will soon be coming to an end. Our 25th Annual Picnic is set for August 29th and we will elect a new AHIA Board of Directors. I'd like to thank the 2004 AHIA Board for all their hard work and reflect on their accomplishments:

- Hosting our 15th Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony last November, which drew the largest crowd to date.
- Forming a Communication Committee, strengthening and increasing the frequency of the Newsletter, updating our website, and monitoring issues that concern our community.
- Attending and reporting on our Third District's Monthly Meetings.
- Co-hosting the Annual Pancake Breakfast/Colorado Lagoon Clean-Up with FOCL
- Increasing memberships significantly over last year.
- Hosting the Community Neighborhood Watch Meeting and working with the city and our neighbors to build teams within our community.
- Forming a Traffic Committee whose first meeting in July was well attended by neighbors, city engineers and employees discussing various issues and organizing steps to reach

(President continued on page 5)

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The City returned to the next meeting with maps and suggestions about land use, development potential, and neighborhood statistics. We learned that Cluster 4 has a low person per household (density) compared to other areas of Long Beach and Los Angeles. The average annual household income in Cluster 4 is higher (\$75,627) than other areas of Long Beach and Los Angeles. Cluster 4 also has a higher education (college/professional) attainment (56.3%). Overall, this data suggests Cluster 4, which includes Alamitos Heights, is an affluent Long Beach neighborhood and does not have serious problems with overcrowding, graffiti, unemployment, or inadequate transportation.

What problems do we have? One concern is the traffic on 7th Street and whether to time the traffic signals to alleviate the backup going west on 7th Street.

We suggested opening Lagoon to allow water to drain directly out to the Marina to prevent the contamination of the water from storm drains.

The participants also felt the City should remove the breakwater and the wall at the beach in order to encourage greater usage of the area by residents.

The participants agreed that getting rid of the Seaport Marina Hotel would improve the Marina area. Mixed usage development for this acreage, with residential units above commercial space, was one possibility. Another possibility was developing the Live Bait property into a senior apartment complex.

There will be a final meeting this fall to decide what

recommendations will be presented to City Council. If you are interested in learning more about the new General Plan, contact Pat Garrow, Project Manager at the City, or email me at cfawcett@charter.net.

(by Cheryl D. Fawcett)



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Artie & Ethel

Talk about a double vote of confidence! In 1938, Artie Stevenson and her husband, Albert, built a 3-bedroom California Bungalow-style home on Santiago, across from Recreation Park golf course. The home was designed by Kenneth Wing, a prominent Long Beach architect whose work includes dozens of homes in Alamitos and Belmont Heights as well as local public buildings, such as the Airport's administration building and Memorial Hospital. It was on Santiago that Artie and Albert raised their daughter, Ethel.

A quarter century later, the Stevensons were ready for a larger home. "Kenneth Wing showed us some beautiful homes and neighborhoods elsewhere in Long Beach," Artie says. "Finally, we decided we just couldn't leave Alamitos Heights and Recreation Park. We razed the old house and Kenneth designed and built a new one. And here we are!"

That was in 1966. Today, the Grecian-Italianate "Villa Nane" remains as one of the most distinctive homes in Alamitos Heights.

The Stevenson family's Alamitos Heights connections are strong. Albert's father, Carl Albert, was a landscape gardener and worked on Recreation Park (the original Virginia Country Club). Albert and his two brothers, Jimmy and

Harlan, learned to play golf and became noted champions. In the 1950s, Albert played on our local course with Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, who drove to Alamitos Heights from their homes in Palm Springs. (Artie and Albert had a home in Palm Springs, which Artie stills owns. Albert was a founding member of the El Dorado Country Club in Palm Desert.)

For many years, Artie and Albert were active in AHIA. In



the early 1940s, Albert helped negotiate contracts for some of the first oil wells in Alamitos Heights, and was later on the AHIA Board of Directors.

For many years, the Stevenson home was a focal point of Christmas celebrations in Alamitos Heights. As the Press-Telegram reported, crowds walked and drove by the home to see the Stevensons' huge tree in their bay window. Later, their annual Christmas party featured live music by the Long Beach Junior Concert Marching Band.

Ethel Severson raised her son, John Albert (Corky) Severson at the Stevenson home – and, Villa Nane derives from Giovanni, the Italian version of John. Today, Ethel's grandson,

Grant, often spends time there when he is not in high school in Orange County.

Artie and Albert, and eventually Ethel and Corky as well, traveled the world as they built one of the largest independent oil leasing companies, with offices in Los Angeles and Rome and oil interests from Algeria to Alaska. "My mother and father were a strong team. He always valued her judgment," Ethel says. "Business and travel were in their blood. She became one of the most knowledgeable people in the oil industry and built strong friendships with the leading families and governments of many countries where we did business. She also studied and collected the arts of those countries."

When Albert died in 1968, Artie and Ethel took over the business and continued their extensive travels. Even though activity has wound down in recent years, they still work on personal business a few hours every day from their home.

The longstanding connection between the Stevenson family and Recreation Park – and our entire neighborhood – was memorialized in 1968 when the family donated in memory of Albert the two walls and plaques that are now at the corners of Santiago and PCH and 7th Street. (By Mike Stugin)



AHIA – On Watch: Monitoring Controversial Issues

Old Gas Station – 7th & PCH

The owner's realtor reports the owner has received approval on the work plan for the property. However, the environmental engineer quit the job. A substitute has been identified, but the "okay permit" is nontransferable. When the new permit is in hand, crews will tackle the deep drilling, testing, and remediation. Interest from prospective buyers continues strong.

Los Cerritos Wetlands Commercial Development

Neighborhood concern grows about the prospect of two huge commercial real estate developments on undeveloped land that was formerly designated wetlands. One project would feature a Home Depot at Studebaker and Loynes; while the second project at PCH and Studebaker Road, would likely feature a major grocery store chain outlet.

The next major milestone for both projects is the development of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) required by state law. A series of scoping meetings are underway. Residents can contact Angela Reynolds, Acting Community and Environmental Planning

Officer, for a meeting schedule or to send their comments directly (angela_reynolds@longbeach.gov). A draft EIR should be available for public comment by October. Meanwhile, Councilperson Frank Colonna has announced plans to form a Los Cerritos Wetlands/ Studebaker Road Work Group. AHIA will be providing input to the group and attending meetings.

Proposed Long Beach Liquid Natural Gas Terminal

This fall draft environmental reports are due from the Fed-

eral Regulatory Energy Commission and the Port. These reports will trigger a series of public hearings. To be built, the facility needs approval from FERC, the Port, and the California Coastal Commission.

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(President continued from page 1)

desired goals.

- Hosting our upcoming 25th Annual Neighborhood Picnic.

All that in just one short year! Hats off to our board members for their dedication to preserving a safe, clean and friendly neighborhood! A special thanks and recognition to our outgoing Board Members for their generous and invaluable service to AHIA: Ronan Cohen, Jenny Ernest and Carol Rowe.

If you are interested in becoming a Board member or joining one of our committees, you can contact us at board@ahia.info or come to one of the scheduled board meetings. AHIA warmly welcomes your personal contributions to keeping our neighborhood safe, beautiful, and up-to-date on community issues.

Gina Leyva
AHIA
President

TRAFFIC

With traffic-related issues piling up, the AHIA Traffic Committee will sponsor meetings and outreach to City officials. Co-Committee Chairpersons, Debbie Danny and Jennifer Schutt, recently hosted a meeting that drew about 20 AH residents along with Avonne Gravel and Lisa Berglund from Frank Colonna's office, Ed Norris from the City of Long Beach Traffic Control Dept, and Pat Brown from the Long Beach Housing Development Com
p a n y .

Topics included the excessive speed and volume of traffic throughout the neighborhood, repairing stop signs, installing

additional stop signs, repainting street legends, possibilities of installing barricades and turnabouts, and implementing neighborhood parking controls for the annual Greek Church Festival.

Shortly after the meeting, the incorrect speed sign (35 mph) on 6th Street between Manila and Winslow was removed and corrected to 30 mph. The next Traffic Committee meeting will be held in October with the location and time posted at www.ahia.info. (By Jennifer Schutt)



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West Nile Virus

As of August 14, 2004, there has been one death reported from West Nile Virus (WNV) in Long Beach, and 116 cases throughout the rest of California. The City confirmed that 27 dead birds found in Long Beach were infected.

City Public Health officials are urging calm vigilance. Despite the sensational headlines, we are not in a crisis. Most people who are infected can expect just a mere headache or no symptoms at all. However, the elderly and those with lowered immune systems are more susceptible and need to take special care.

The City Health Department suggests the following precautions:

For daily updates, visit www.wipeoutwestnile.com.

- Remove pools of standing or stagnant water from such items as debris piles, buckets, kid's toys, and tire swings.
- Clear gutters and drains of standing water.
- Change water in birdbaths frequently.
- Properly maintain swimming pools and spas.
- Limit watering of lawns and outdoor plants to twice a week to avoid run off to gutters and around sprinklers.

TOTAL PAID BY STREET

	<u>Total Homes</u>	<u>Total Paid</u>	<u>% Paid</u>
E. 10th St	1	1	100.0%
Monrovia Ave.	12	9	75.0%
St. Joseph Ave	4	3	75.0%
E. 8th St.	8	6	75.0%
Orlena Ave.	37	25	67.6%
E. 6th St.	17	11	64.7%
E. 4th St.	34	22	64.7%
Havana Ave.	91	56	61.5%
Los Altos Ave.	81	49	60.5%
Haines Ave.	5	3	60.0%
Panama Ave.	37	22	59.5%
Terraine Ave.	106	58	54.7%
E. Colorado St.	13	7	53.8%
Santiago Ave.	66	35	53.0%
Flint Ave.	83	40	48.2%
Winslow Ave.	69	30	43.5%
Vermont St.	7	3	42.9%
Ultimo Ave.	96	38	39.6%
Manila Ave.	25	9	36.0%
Pac Coast Hwy	5	1	20.0%
Park Ave.	14	2	14.3%
E. 7th St.	1	0	0.0%
812	430	53.0%	

- Limit your time outdoors when you notice mosquito activity, or wear clothing that provides as much coverage as possible.
- Use mosquito repellents containing DEET. (Follow instruction on label for adult and child usage.)
- Make sure doors and screens

have tight-fitting screens.

For questions regarding mosquito control in the City of Long Beach call the DHHS Vector Control Program at 570-4132 or go to www.longbeach.gov/health



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Crime in the Heights: The Case for Neighborhood Watch

On a balmy evening in the middle of summer, over 60 AH residents turned out on June 24th for the Alamitos Heights Community Neighborhood Watch Meeting. AHIA President, Gina

tivity suffered by some other City neighborhoods, we still have significant crime. We are vulnerable to such threats as identity theft, auto theft/burglary, and home invasion/break-ins. There are other troublesome issues as well, including panhandlers and transients going through alley trash cans; motor-driven pocket bikes and motorized scooters; lewd activity/solicitation at Colorado Lagoon, Marine Stadium, Ma-

Given the local crime situation and the City's limited resources -- Long Beach has only one Nuisance Abatement Officer for the whole city and only one beat officer patrol for our area -- the need for a Neighborhood Watch program became clear at the meeting. Eric Sing's presentation reviewed the four classes and educational materials available from the City's Neighborhood Watch Coordinator Office.

Typically, it takes just five concerned neighbors on an individual block to set up Neighborhood Watch for that block. AHIA will be reaching out to meeting attendees to encourage them to organize committees on their blocks. To arrange Neighborhood Watch training, residents can call Lisa Mas-sacani, the City's Neighborhood Watch coordinator, at 570-7229.

Neighborhood safety is all

about being educated, watchful, and not being afraid to speak-up and get involved.

(By Victoria Murillo)



Leyva, organized the meeting and AHIA Board members distributed flyers to all 811 Alamitos Heights residences. Speakers included Eric Sing, deputy in the City's Neighborhood Watch Coordinator Office; and East Division Community Policing Officers, Greg Jensen and Paul Baum.

As the speakers and neighbors all agreed, even though Alamitos Heights does not have the intense gang and violent crime ac-

rina Vista; loitering at Recreation Park/Colorado Lagoon; and parking problems throughout the neighborhood.

Be Watchful...Be Careful ...

Identity Theft: Mail that has your name, address and other personal information should not be thrown in the trash. Shred mail or paperwork before discarding.

Alleys: Do not throw items in to the trash that are still of use and that invite transients to go through your trash. Trash cans should be brought out only on your scheduled trash day.

Auto Theft/Burglary: Always lock your car. Never keep valuable items or credit cards in your car, or have your garage door opener in plain view. Check your car frequently and report a lost license plate immediately.

Home Security: An average home has an average of 20 windows and doors -- so any one of them left open/unlocked is an invitation to a bad guy.

Panhandlers/Transients: Never give money to panhandlers, this only encourages their continued presence. Report transients who pilfer through the trash to the police.

Lude Activity/Solicitation: If you see anyone loitering or cruising around Marine Stadium, Colorado Lagoon, and Marina Vista bathrooms, report them to the police immediately. Have available the license plate number and description of the car and the physical description of the occupant.

Parking: Call the police about any cars, motor homes, and campers parked for a length of time in the surrounding neighborhood. If there are people living out of these vehicles, call the police immediately.

City of Long Beach Police
(Non-Emergency) Telephone Number: 435-6711

From the Editor

This will be my last Newsletter as your editor. It has been my pleasure over the past five years to help bring you the news, events, and history of Alamitos Heights. It is now time to turn over the reins to Mike Stugrin and Brian Buchanan.

Mike has been doing a fabulous job for the past year in coordinating the communications committee, selling ads for the newsletter, proofing copy and writing many of the articles. In fact for the last several issues, I have done little more than the layout. I am now turning this responsibility over to Brian Buchanan

Solar Energy:

California Senate Bill 1652 would require that housing developers install solar electric panel, sufficient to generate the electricity for an average home, on 55% of all new homes in California by 2010 . Once installed these solar panels generate reliable non polluting, free electricity during peak usage hours.

The additional mortgage payment on the home would be no more than the cost of purchasing the electricity from the utility. The panels last more than 30 years and excess electricity can be sold back to the utility. If the panels are part of the design process for the new home or development, then the houses and landscaping can be designed to

maximize solar collection and attractiveness.

Solar electricity reduces our dependence on ugly and potentially dangerous power plants, expensive and ugly distribution lines, and foreign oil.

If California doubles the demand for solar panels, experts predict that cost of these panels could fall by as much as 18%. This would make solar electric generation even more cost competitive, and ultimately help California achieve energy independence.

If you think this is a good idea, write to the governor or your state representative. If you would like to know more visit www.environmentcalifornia.org

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