

Spring 2104

Alamitos Heights Improvement Association

Annual AHIA Picnic is Coming June 8th



on Orlena Street starting at 12:00 noon, June 8th.

All food and activities are free to AHIA members who have paid their 2014 dues. This includes a delicious BBQ, soft drinks, shaved ice, fun music, face painting, balloon figure souvenirs, train rides, games for kids and adults. This includes a free raffle ticket and a chance to win awesome gift cards and other great prizes. If you haven't paid your dues, it's not too late to join. You can pay your \$30 dues at the picnic Check-In Booth. For non-members and guests, the cost is \$10/person.

Mark your calendar for our annual AHIA picnic, planned for all of our 800+ Alamitos Heights residents. Whether you're nostalgic for the good 'ol days when life was simpler, or you would like to see what the hoopla of Mayberry USA was all about, you won't want to miss this wonderful family and community event. "There's just something about Alamitos Heights that makes it special", is what I often hear. It draws in people like YOU, who have pride in the safety of our families and homes, and a sparkle for a good time. It's a safe haven where people help people to raise their families, get well, live vibrantly, support their needs and grow successfully. It's got the small town feel within the conveniences of a big city, yet the charm of a village. Come meet your neighbors and friends who keep Alamitos Heights alive and thriving!

The Picnic will be at Alamitos Heights Park by the Colorado Lagoon between Colorado & Vermont

Additional donations are always appreciated so we can continue this great event year after year.

The Picnic is also our annual AHIA Association Meeting where we elect our new Board members for the year. Don't forget to save **Sunday, June 8th** for the annual AHIA Picnic and Association Meeting. Come join us for a fun afternoon with family, friends and neighbors! *Tanya Wannemacher*



Visit the website for more information - www.AHIA.info

Suzie Price, AH Resident, Elected 3rd District Councilwoman



In a field of five, capturing nearly 55% of the votes in the primary was no small feat, but Suzie Price did just that, and is now Councilwoman elect for the 3rd District. A long time 3rd district resident, she moved to Alamitos Heights in 2005 where she and Mark, her husband of 11 years, are raising their two young sons. Her early years were far from ordinary.

She was born in the US, moved to Iran, and returned with her mother to escape the revolution when she was seven years old. She describes her most vivid memories were having to leave her father and sister behind and struggling to learn English. She states, "Although I don't recall exactly what I felt, it certainly was a difficult adjustment." Raised by her single mother, she flourished graduating from CSULB with a BA in political science and a MA in public policy and administration. After completing law school, Suzie served as a county prosecutor and deputy city attorney. She is currently a Deputy District Attorney for Orange County prosecuting homicide cases. She states, "I come from a long line of public servants who work to serve their communities. I've never been motivated financially, although I understand making an income is important to taking care of my family. I find great rewards in helping people with their lives and circumstances."

Suzie is both pleased and surprised by her strong victory. "I didn't expect to win at the primary and by such a large spread. It was very exciting to reach voters in an authentic and meaningful way. The campaign had a lot of heart." Why does Suzie think she won? "I believe people think I am doing this for the right reasons. I have a heart for the community and a vested interest. I have young kids growing up here." A quote from Maya Angelou strikes a chord with her:

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." She remembers how people treated her and the lasting impact it had on her life. This influences her leadership perspective. She believes if we could all act and speak in ways that left everything and everyone just a bit better, than great things could happen. It's her plan for her time in office.

Between now and taking office, Suzie will focus on connecting with local officials, learning the nuts and bolts of the position and building a foundation for her office. Her initial focus will include community programs like a comprehensive, structured neighborhood watch program. Safety is very important to her and she looks forward to working with the current community watch programs and neighborhood associations to build stronger programs. She adds "I'm looking forward to working with the members of my own community, Alamitos Heights, in making our community stronger, better, and more prepared for the future". Suzie will also be reaching out to constituents through social media to gather outside-the-box ideas. While campaigning, she heard many great ideas to make the 3rd District better. "Flood me with ideas, programs, events to bring community together, to grow pride in city and district." Ideas can be posted on her Facebook site: Councilwoman Elect Suzie Price.

With the campaign behind her, Suzie continues balancing her roles of wife, mother, daughter, friend, public servant, and volunteer. And, she's looking forward to getting back to one her passions – cooking.



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Build a Community—Join AHIA Board

Would you like to see our streets paved and our sidewalks repaired? Interested in keeping Alamitos Heights safe? Do you enjoy the Lagoon Christmas Lights and a fabulous Summer Picnic or concerts in the Marina? If you answered 'Yes' to any of these, then you may be interested in becoming more involved as an Alamitos Heights Improvement Association volunteer or board member!

It's that time of year when we recruit interested volunteers and/or members to serve on the Association's board. It is a worthwhile investment along with perks of getting to know your neighbors, while improving your community you live. Some specific roles may include: events, newsletter, website, safety, traffic, infrastructure, and community involvement. The time commitment is about 2 hours per month. Board meetings are held locally every other month on the 2nd Monday from 7:00 - 8:30 PM. Volunteer committees are held on an ad hoc basis based on the upcoming event or project.

If you are interested, please forward the following information to the Association via either e-mail at president@ahia.info or by regular mail (Alamitos Heights Improvement Association, PO Box 14571, Long Beach, CA 90853):

Name, Board Member or Volunteer, AHIA event or projects that interest you (please visit our website for more information on these - www.ahia.info), Current community involvement (if any)

Deadline for submission is May 31, 2014. You may submit your name or a neighbor (with permission) living in Alamitos Heights. All board members are elected or re-elected each year and may not serve more than 6 continuous years and an AHIA members. Names will be placed on the ballot for voting at the Annual Meeting at the Picnic, Sunday, June 8th.
Roberta Smith, President

Proposed Dunkin' Donuts Serves Up Controversy

The corner of Flint and 7th St. is the site of a growing controversy. A proposed plan calls for the two current structures to be torn down and a new Dunkin' Donuts built that will include a drive through. Concerns developed when local residents discovered the site plan would diverted customers down Flint and the Flint – Ultimo alley, rather than onto 7th Street, creating traffic issues for the surrounding area, including Flint, 6th, 4th, Manila, and, Ultimo. It is anticipated morning hours can serve as many as 100 cars per hour. Many neighbors also feel the increased traffic on residential streets could also pose a safety issue for the children going to school. Others support the new business, seeing it as a welcome a change to the corner and an opportunity to improve the neighborhood.

The developer received approval to move forward at a Planning Commission meeting in March. A group of Alamitos Heights residents filed four appeals with the Mayor and City Council asking for changes to proposed plan. The appeals and arguments, both pro and con, will be heard at 5 p.m. on May 6, at the City Council Meeting. The meeting is open to the public

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AHIA Membership Drive Is On — Join Today

AHIA would like to thank each of you who renewed your membership or joined for the first time. Thanks to the funds raised through annual membership dues and your generous donations, AHIA is able to provide great neighborhood family events throughout the year, like the summer picnic, concert in the park, and holiday tree lighting while making positive changes to our neighborhood and community. For those who have not yet joined, there is still time. The annual membership fee is only \$30 per household. Please send your check (made payable to AHIA) to: **AHIA, PO BOX 14571, Long Beach, CA 90853**. You can get a copy of the membership form at our website or by contacting: ahiatreasurer2012@gmail.com Please submit your annual membership dues now. We need and appreciate your support.

An extended gratitude goes to those who gave a donation beyond the membership dues. Your generous support goes a long way to allowing us to provide exceptional community events.

Community Yard Sale is Coming June 7th

Need to make more space in your home? Enjoy finding hidden treasures? Let's have a yard sale! On **June 7th**, you're invited to join in a Alamitos Heights-wide Community Yard Sale. It's a great opportunity to clear some space in your home and make some



extra money. AHIA will be advertising and posting signs. What do you have to do? Aside from gathering your sale items, get a yard sale permit from the City. A single household permit is \$17. If you get your neighbors to join in, a block group permit is the same fee. A great deal for all. You can apply online: www.longbeach.gov/finance/business_relations/garage_sales.asp.

Needs some tips yard sale tips and pricing info, check out: www.garagesalestracker.com/garage-sales-guide-pricing.asp and www.garagesalesource.com/articles/garage_sale_pricing/

Join 5th Annual 5K Run & 1K Fun Run June 8th

Calling all runners, joggers, and walkers! This year's 5K run is purely organized to get you up to join your neighbors for a run through our neighborhood. Jogging strollers and dogs on leashes are welcome. The 5K route will be available on the day of the run at 8:45 am or by email (see end of article). This year we will not have an official pre-registration.

The 5K run will begin the morning of the AHIA annual picnic on **Sunday, June 8th at 9 am**. The 1K fun run will start at 11:30 am and be completed before the picnic begins.

Meet us at the corner of Orlena and Vermont, at the northeast corner of Alamitos Heights Neighborhood Park.

The 1K fun run participants will receive a prize at the finish line. Please make sure an adult joins any



younger runners along the entire route.

We could use volunteers to assist the runners throughout the route with water and letting them know which way to go. If you are available to volunteer for the 5K run (8:45 am - 10:30 am) and/or the 1K fun run (11:15 am - 12 pm), please contact Kelli Elliott at kelliottster@gmail.com. Kelli Elliott

Message from Councilmember DeLong - Thank You

As the sun sets on my final term in office, I would like to thank the residents of the 3rd District who elected me to office eight years ago, and again four years ago. It has been a pleasure serving you and I am proud of the work that we have accomplished together. Many of you gave your time to participate in the process and worked with my office to accomplish projects that improved our community and our City, and for that I am thankful. A few notable projects that we accomplished together are:

- Improved the water quality in Alamitos Bay and along our ocean front by installing debris screens on outlets draining directly to the ocean
- Restored our urban forest by planting hundreds of trees
- Rebuilt numerous beach parking lots
- Began planning for the new Belmont Plaza Pool
- Built the “temporary” outdoor Belmont Pool
- Updated the Long Beach Airport Terminal
- Updated the Tot Lots at Mother’s Beach and Livingston Park
- Created the Vista Street Bike Boulevard
- Calmed traffic on Broadway between Park and Nieto Avenue by installing planted medians
- Rebuilt Basins 1, 4 and 5 in the Alamitos Bay
- Renovated beach restrooms
- Completed the Termino Storm Drain project
- Acquired 33 acres of Los Cerritos Wetlands behind the Marketplace (Marketplace Marsh) for future restoration
- Acquired 100 acres of Hellman Ranch property for future restoration
- Expanded the intersection at PCH and 2nd Street to increase capacity and reduce congestion
- Cleaned the Colorado Lagoon culvert and dramatically improved water quality
- Approved plans for an Open Channel to reconnect the Colorado Lagoon and Marine Stadium

- Repaired more streets and sidewalks than ever before
- Began the planning process for the Pacific Electric Right of Way
- Initiated the repair of the Naples Seawalls

Hopefully I’ve left a legacy for my successor and the community that includes reigning in City employee pensions so that we have available funds to repair our declining infrastructure. I hope in the years ahead our elected officials will serve efficiently and effectively, embracing the theme of doing more with less, and that residents will stay engaged in the process to ensure that our elected officials are responsible with our scarce resources.

Thank you for the honor of being your City Council representative. I’ve enjoyed these last eight years, but look forward to passing the baton and moving on to my next endeavor.

Gary DeLong

John P. Gooding
Broker Associate

Alamitos Heights Resident & Broker for over 30 years

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Long Beach is for the Birds!

Everyone who has frequented Long Beach knows the loud iridescent green birds that routinely fly overhead announcing their arrival. The feral parrots have been a staple of the Long Beach environment since the early 1980's and if the bright colors of the birds don't grab you, their noisy squawking certainly will. Experts believe that there are approximately 3,500 birds representing 13 different species in Southern California. In Long Beach, the South American Mitred Conures reigns supreme and numbers are estimated to be around 200. Researchers say their numbers are growing, not only in Long Beach, but throughout Southern California, due to the hospitable environment that primarily includes an abundance of food and lack of natural predators. There has been much speculation about the origin of these non-native parrots, but to this day it remains anecdotal and undocumented. The general consensus is that some of the parrots came to California as pets and were released, while others escaped during a pet shop fire in Pasadena in the 1980s. Highly social animals, they typically gather in large flocks early in the morning and then again at dusk before returning to their roosting sites. Like them or not, one thing's for sure, they're here to stay. *Chris York*



Walk with Some Four Legged Friends



On May 31st, Friends of Long Beach Animals 13th annual walk for animals will be held in Marina Vista Park. In their 23rd year, they committed

to saving animals lives through spay/neuter programs and education . The event will be from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. There will be a fair with arts and crafts, pet related supplies, food vendors, live entertainment, animal demonstrations, pet adoption groups, a raffle area, and kid zone. Registrants for the WALK use the Eliot St. entrance. There is a walk registration fee of \$30 and, of course, no charge for companion animals. Please note, the animals will need to be licensed, leashed, and socialized. Water

will be provided and there will be poop bags available. And most of all, be prepared to have fun. For additional details, and to register, visit the website: <http://www.friendsoflongbeachanimals.org/>

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Who is the Father of Alamitos Heights?



The “father” of Alamitos Heights was real estate promoter Frank Shaw. In 1904, he bought 160 acres of Alamitos Heights from the owners of the Rancho Alamitos for \$150 (\$2700 in today’s money) an acre. He subdivided the tract into twenty-five and fifty-foot lots; fifty-foot lots started out at \$750 (\$14,000) and went as high as \$1750 (\$32,000) by 1906. The smaller lots started at \$125 (\$2200) and went to \$300 (\$5400). Shaw was quite a promoter, he sent up toy balloons with deeds attached. When people came to claim the land from the deeds, Shaw would charge them an administrative fee worth the price of the lot. At that time the best way to approach Alamitos Heights was by water. Though it was only five miles from Long Beach, it was quite a drive to get there by horse and buggy. The Sprite, manned by Shaw’s partner Lee Judson, brought up to 75 passengers at a time up the channel from the ocean.

Then came 1906, and the devastating San Francisco earthquake. All real estate development in Southern California came to a halt, as money was redirected northward to rebuild San Francisco. It wasn’t until after World War I that real estate sales picked up again in Southern California.

Much of present day Alamitos Heights was annexed to Long Beach in 1909 as part of Belmont

Heights. Promoters in the Belmont Heights region convinced others that their area would be better off as a separate city, as it would then qualify for County funds to build roads. They assured residents that liquor would continue to be banned. Alcohol was quite an issue back then; cities were either dry (Long Beach) or wet (Naples). On October 1, 1908 the residents of Belmont & Alamitos Heights voted to create their own city of Belmont Heights (a city nicknamed “Spite City” by those in Long Beach who were against the move).

The real reasons for the new city became apparent three weeks after the election, when Belmont Heights officials voted to become a recreation center – one that would compete with Long Beach’s Pike. This was a surprise to the citizens of the new community – they began to

Con’t on page 7

suspect that the true purpose of creating a separate city was to allow alcohol. It turned out they were right. Word leaked out that a Los Angeles company was going to build a dance hall offering alcoholic refreshments right in the center of the town. There were also plans for a hotel which would serve alcohol. Belmont Heights residents were outraged.

On January 8, 1909, the citizens appealed to the California State Supreme Court which ruled that Belmont Heights officials had to hold an election and let the citizens decide the fate of their town. On November 9, 1909, they decided to disincorporate and join Long Beach. In return, Long Beach agreed to give the community fire and police protection, streetlights, roads, and their own pier - Belmont Pier. Thereafter the district became known as East Long Beach.

Things changed dramatically on June 23, 1921 with the discovery of oil on Signal Hill which triggered a rush for oil and wealth. In 1926 it appeared that Alamitos Heights was a good prospect for black gold. Lots that had sold for \$5000 (\$48,000) two years earlier were snapped up for \$80,000 (\$742,000) or more. By 1927 all of Alamitos Heights was open for oil drilling. People avoided settling in the area because it was continually sprayed by oil from successful wells. However, by 1931, as the oil boom slowed, homes began to be built in the area once again. During the depression and World War II, little housing was built anywhere, but in the 1950's a housing boom hit all of America. It was during this time that many of the homes in the section of the Heights near 7th St. and Bellflower Blvd. were constructed. Oil and homes have lived side by side, but gradually oil has lost out to housing. *Barbara Ford Geortner*

Volunteering is Fun —Sign up today

Newsletter

Do you have ideas for a good article? We would like to hear them. Would you like to participate in building stronger community communication? We are looking for members to participate in Newsletter and communication committee.

AHIA publishes a quarterly newsletter covering topics affecting our neighborhood, personal interest, and historical stories, safety, and local events. If you have topics you would like to recommend, please submit them to AHIANews@outlook.com.

Events

Spring and Summer brings many events to Alamitos Heights. We can use your support for the: picnic, fun run, community yard sale, and summer concerts. It's fun, rewarding, and a great way to join in the community and meet your neighbors.

Please email us at Events@ahia.info and let us know what you would like to be involved in supporting.



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Check Out Nextdoor.com

This website is dedicated to helping neighbors connect. It's free and allows you to stay connected to what happening in your neighborhood, share information, list classified, and ask question. Join today.

Get the AHIA Newsletter Sooner and in Color

Sign up to receive the AHIA Newsletter by email. Send your email address to treasurer@ahia.info. It arrives sooner, is in color, and it's green. Put "email newsletter" in the subject line. All emails are kept confidential; used only to send AHIA information.

Your Colorado Lagoon Update

Fourteen years ago, an Alamitos Heights resident became concerned about a LA County drain project and its impact on Colorado Lagoon. She approached neighbors and people using the lagoon, and also took her concerns to the AHIA board. She rallied a small group of residents who shared her concerns and they started attending meetings on the project, writing letters, and submitting comments to the county. AHIA provided the initial funding to help cover the costs of printing and distributing flyers to get the word out to the rest of the community.

That resident was Cindy Desatoff, and the small group of residents grew into Friends of Colorado Lagoon. Cindy, affectionately known as the mother of FOCL, still lives in Alamitos Heights and continues to serve on the group's board. As a direct result of the group's efforts, the drain project was redesigned to be much better for our local community, and became the genesis for many lagoon improvements over the last decade. Those improvements include diverting runoff and trash from entering the lagoon through storm drains, removing 80+ years worth of contaminated sediment, and re-sloping and replanting the western arm. The lagoon now gets some of the best grades for water quality in all of long beach, receiving over 90% A and A+ grades in 2013.

What's next? Anchor QEA, an environmental design firm, has begun the detailed design work for the lagoon's north shore (where the bathroom and parking lot once stood) and northern arm across from Monrovia Ave. This area will be re-sloped and replanted, and include creation of soft bottom and eel grass habitat within the lagoon, generating mitigation credits that will offset impacts from the Naples seawall project.

In addition, the city is preparing an RFP for a second contract for detailed design of the open waterway reconnecting the lagoon to Alamitos Bay. This design will follow the Alternative 4a alignment, per the EIR approved by the city and the coastal commission. All design and permitting should be complete this year or early next year, and work will start sometime in 2015.

FOCL's volunteers have nearly completed the re-vegetation of the lagoon's western arm. In 2013, over 1200 volunteers planted more than 5000 native plants, created trails, signs, and maintained existing plantings. If you have not taken a walk around the lagoon, now is a great time to do so. The plants in the western arm are blooming and the new signs are getting lots of positive feedback.

We are excited to be entering the final phase of the lagoon restoration, and would like to thank the residents of Alamitos Heights, and AHIA, for the tremendous support you have shown over the years. Colorado Lagoon is once again something our community can be proud of. If you would like to get involved, please visit coloradolagoon.org for dates/times of restoration and education events in 2014.

Dave Pirazzi/FOCL

VISION OF WATERWAY RECONNECTING COLORADO LAGOON WITH ALAMITOS BAY



Colorado Lagoon reconnected to the ocean through Alamitos Bay as envisioned by FOCL.

Alamitos Heights Improvement Association

P.O. BOX 14571

Long Beach, CA 90853

www.AHIA.info

Creating a Community
Together

Save the Date ***AHIA Annual Picnic & Fun Run*** ***June 8th***



***Free to AHIA
members***
***\$10 for Non-
members & Guests***

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