

THE HEIGHTS

CALIFORNIA HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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The Heights is a bimonthly publication of the California Heights Neighborhood Association. All residents are invited to contribute articles and opinions. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and brevity. Opinions expressed are not necessarily shared by all residents nor the editor. Our goal is to provide a voice to our community and keep residents informed of issues affecting California Heights.



Foreclosures Cause Concern

It's no secret: foreclosures are up dramatically. But even if you haven't had the misfortune of losing a home, there are still reasons to heed warnings presented by LBPDP Community Policing liaison, Marlene Arrona.

With so many homes in foreclosure, banks and other lenders have more properties than they can handle, so it's taking extra time to process and get them back on the market. Even after being listed, some homes don't sell for months. When a home sits vacant and unattended for extended periods, it offers criminals and squatters prime opportunity and attracts them to our neighborhood.

Besides becoming eyesores for lack of care and magnets for vandalism, vagrants may occupy the homes and squatters can attempt to assert residency. Many succeed simply by moving in, changing the locks and turning on the electricity, or they produce false leases which force police and other authorities to pursue time consuming formal eviction procedures. When they are finally evicted, the squatters move on, having enjoyed free rent for weeks or months!

Others may claim to be landlords and rent properties to unsuspecting tenants. The new residents sign leases, hand over rent and security deposits to the thieves, then are surprised when a real estate agent shows up to prepare the house to go on the market.

Abandoned properties can also negatively affect property values or become health hazards. Unattended pools are unsafe and stagnant water breeds mosquitoes. This is especially concerning as West Nile virus continues to spread, transmitted to humans primarily through mosquito bites.

While this problem has yet to show up significantly in our area, foreclosures are on the rise, and the problem may get worse before it gets better. If you have a foreclosed home near you, keep an eye out. If unexpected residents show up before a sale sign goes up, call Patty at the Seventh Council District Field Office at 570-4461. If a property has a for sale sign and is not being cared for, first call the listing agent.

president's message

A MESSAGE FROM JOHN ROYCE

We said goodbye to some wonderful seniors in the past few months. Allow me to mention two here.

At 94, *Gen Romine* lived a long life, loved by her wonderful family and, it seems, by everyone she encountered. We met her in 2000 when we purchased her gold 1968 Mustang. She thought it was time to give up driving. Apparently, she had four driving rules: no left turns, no parallel parking, no night driving and most importantly, no freeways!

We went through an adoption process of sorts. Each of her kids and grand kids had to decide if we were fit to inherit Grandma's "Buttercup." Two visits and countless phone calls later, we passed inspection. Gen and Co. were reassured by our old home in "a lovely historic area!" Gen invited us over for cake before we took care of the official stuff, and we promised her we would restore, not remodel Buttercup. That we did, and it made her happy. We drove the Mustang to her memorial service so the family could visit the car they had taken turns borrowing for high school and college dates, and summer trips to the beach.

We were honored to be part of her send off, and we'll miss her sparkle, her bright eyes and her endless positive outlook.

Florence Garibaldi lived on Olive Avenue since the 1940s. She survived two husbands and a son. I met her soon after we moved in 1999. She walked her dog, Mollie, an imposing but gentle pit bull, by our house each morning. In the year before Florence passed, she'd release Mollie if I was out in my yard, and she'd hit me like ton of bricks, eager for her few minutes of back scratching ecstasy.

Florence operated like clockwork, walking Mollie every morning at 9:30 and taking her daily trek to Arby's at 11:30. After a while she began to invite me for lunch. I was always "too busy," but I soon realized that she just wanted some company. So began our lunch dates, which occurred with fair regularity. She had stories to tell, of her moving to LA during the war from Oklahoma, her job at the May Company, and of the Italian feasts that she and her husband would host for the entire block!

As I've reported in the past, Senior Police Partners are available to check on a senior neighbor you may be worried about. To request a senior check, call 570-7212. For more info about the program, call LBPD Community Relations at 570-7215. As always, if it's an emergency, dial 911.

Please take a moment to remember our senior neighbors. A trip to the market, a simple repair, or just a friendly chat can make someone's day.



CHNA President

NEXT CAL HEIGHTS COMMUNITY MEETING

June 12th at 7pm.

Our guest will be Blair
Cohn, Executive Director
of the Bixby Knolls
Business Improvement
Association.



Volunteers at the 4/26 Tree Planting.

Get involved and become a CHNA
volunteer! Email calheights@earthlink.net!



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Another Tree Planting Success!

What better way to close Earth Week and celebrate Arbor Day than with a tree planting event? A joint effort of the Bixby Knolls

Business Improvement Association (BKBIA), The City of Long Beach Public Works, Leadership Long Beach Class of 2008 and Cal Heights ReLeaf, the Saturday, April 26 event was met with overwhelming community response. Over 200 people showed up bright and early as *It's A Grind Coffee House* hosted our kickoff, donating their Saturday morning to plant 44 Pink Trumpet trees and two Aristocratic Pears on Atlantic Avenue between Carson and San Antonio. The trees will combat global warming, clean the air, and provide for eventual shady walks and shopping along our retail corridor.

We had LB Firefighter Academy recruits, local Scouts, city workers and officials, residents and business owners, artists, young and old, black and white and everything in between! Alone, none of it would have been possible!

This planting marks the second installment of a joint venture between the BKBIA and Cal Height ReLeaf. Last November, volunteers planted 34 trees on the 3300 block of Atlantic.

To all of you who came out to help green our avenue, thank you on behalf of everyone who worked tirelessly to see it to fruition! The tree planting effort is proof of the power of community and clearly represents what can be done if we are willing to work together to reach common goals. We hope you all enjoy your greener, and soon shadier Atlantic Avenue!



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Get the scoop on First Fridays, Strollers,
Bixby Knolls Literary Society and more.
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address in the box under "newsletter," and
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Checked Your Sprinkler Timers Lately?

Now that we've finally enjoyed a relatively moist winter season and most of you took the opportunity to turn off or reduce the frequency set on your irrigation timers, warmer temps and longer days are on their way.

Now that it's time to reset your timers, remember, they can only be set to operate on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays, after 4:00 pm or before 9:00 am. Also, washing off walks, driveways and other paved areas is prohibited at all times unless using a high pressure washer. For more information on regulations, water saving tips and conservation rebate programs, visit LBWater.org.

Welcome Poggio Restaurant!

Poggio (in Italian it means small hill - aka knoll)
is located at 3819 Atlantic Avenue.

The tables are set with white tablecloths,
pictures are hung; the atmosphere is both cozy
and sophisticated. We hear they're opening
this week. Fantastico!

2008 Cal Heights
Home and Garden Tour!

The Annual California Heights Historic District Home and Garden Tour will take place on Sunday, October 19th. The Home Tour Committee is currently seeking homeowners interested in participating in the tour. The tour is the primary fundraising source for the association and the projects it sponsors. If you know of a wonderful house that showcases historic character and charm, please let us know. Remember, just because a house is not 100 percent complete, does not necessarily mean it won't fit on the tour.

We have an exciting new start location for the tour this year, as well as a few other changes. So please plan to join in! When tickets go on sale later this summer, they will be available online through the new Cal Heights website. So, if you hate to write checks, you can purchase tickets with a few clicks of your mouse!

Homeowners receive free tickets to the tour as well as a beautiful Home Portrait by Ellen as a token of our appreciation. If you have a home or know of a home we should consider, or if you'd like to volunteer as a docent, please call 981-3671, or email us at calheightshometour@earthlink.net.

Help Long Beach Police Help You!

Stay connected and informed. The Long Beach Police Department invites residents to sign up for e-Alert. Working together, we can make our community safer! To sign up, go to longbeach.gov/enotify/default.asp.

No More Junk Mail?

The Long Beach Department of Public Works, Environmental Services Bureau would like to help you reduce unwanted mail. Besides being a nuisance, it wastes precious resources and often contains information we want to protect.

Free kits are available, and can be ordered online at longbeach-recycles.org, click on "Recycling," then click "Waste Reduction Guide," or call (562) 570 - 2876.

Tree City USA!

Due to efforts of the City of Long Beach Public Works and neighborhood groups like Cal Heights ReLeaf that continue to champion tree plantings in the city, Long Beach received Tree City USA designation from the National Arbor Day Foundation in recognition for meeting the foundation's criteria:

- Establish a Citizen Tree Advisory Committee,
- Pass a city municipal code for a tree maintenance policy and Urban Forest Master Plan,
- Establish a tree care budget (\$3.7 million), and
- Observe Arbor Day tree planting events.

The announcement came about a year after 7th District Councilmember Tonia Reyes Uranga suggested seeking the designation by applying the city's new urban forestry goals and setting those goals into official motion.

A Tree City USA flag will now fly over the civic center in recognition of our city's efforts, so for those of you who have attended a recent tree planting, give yourselves a big pat on the back!

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Community Meetings News

Thanks to local realtors Connie Wildassin, Kevin Poi, and John Gazdik for hosting an informative April community meeting. Thirty five residents were treated to an enlightening discussion about the current real estate market, what it could mean to each of us, and what steps we might take as we consider our options.

To read more about the discussion, moderated by CHNA board member, Kathryn Costantino, check out Nick Diamantide's extensive article starting on the front page of the April 24th edition of the Signal Tribune, accessible at signaltribunenewspaper.com.

We'd also like to thank LBP North Division's Sergeant Cory Brown for taking time from his busy evening to speak to us about crime prevention and for addressing our questions and concerns.

Once again, we also extend our thanks to the Petroleum Club for accommodating our meetings. It was our first time in the lounge, and it proved popular with our guests, who enjoyed the opportunity to relax with drinks, wine and soft drinks from the bar.

Join us on June 12th at 7pm. Our guest will be Blair Cohn, Executive Director of the Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association. Blair has hit the ground running, aggressively promoting and involving residents and business owners alike in turning the tide for a more dynamic local retail and office environment.

LOST PET?

Email lostpets@calheights.org.
Please, don't post on the posts!

Atlantic Off Ramp

Yes, it has been a while, and we're all getting frustrated with the closure of the Atlantic off ramp from the north-bound 405. While Target and Cal Tans wrestle about accepting responsibility for the landslide, the Orange Avenue and Long Beach Boulevard exits complete the move without a tiresome turn around at Home Depot or Spring Street. Hopefully by the time you read this, we will be well on our way to a re-opened ramp.

Lime Avenue Residents

We are sorry that the last edition of The Heights failed to reach your doorstep. We don't quite know what happened to the letters that were dropped on a volunteer's porch for delivery. Perhaps they were delivered to the wrong porch. If so, and you came home one day to find a large stack of newsletters on your porch, won't you please give us a call or take a weekend walk to distribute the letters to your neighbors. We do not have enough copies to redistribute!

Lime Avenue residents can still read the March edition of the Heights, available on our website at calheights.org. Just click on the "The Heights Newsletter" selection on the right column of the home page, then select the issue you would like to read on the newsletter page.



LA River Dominguez Gap Wetlands

Once an ugly, unattended and litter ridden spreading grounds between the levees of the LA River,

the Dominguez Gap area has been transformed by LA County recently.

The project is a multipurpose project that includes wildlife habitat, runoff water quality improvements, groundwater recharge, passive recreation and education, while still retaining its flood control capacity. The project will require minimal maintenance and has been planted with a variety of native vegetation that will fill in over the years. If you visit before too much more hot weather hits, the native wildflowers should still be putting on a show before they set their seeds for next winter's crop. Lupines, California

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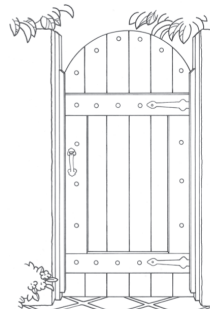
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poppies, tidy tips, purple owl's clover, goldfields, elegant clarkias, and even the occasional baby blue eyes color the landscape.

Birds have already begun to set up shop. Ducks and ducklings have been regulars, and herons, yellow finches and red winged blackbirds have been spotted, along with a healthy population of butterflies bobbing amongst the wildflowers.

The site can be accessed by taking San Antonio Road west to where it dead ends near Los Cerritos Park. Turn right on Del Mar and enter the area just across from the entrance to Crown Point at Avery. Or, you can approach from the north near Oregon and Del Amo.

Currently, dogs are welcome on leashes only. The county warns that unless owners pick up after their pets, the area will be permanently closed to dogs.

Enjoy the transformation!

**The weather's getting warmer and there's lots
happening at Rancho Los Cerritos!**

See what's up at rancholoscerritos.org.

Restoration Trade Fair Sept 21st at Luther Burbank Elementary

The Rose Park Historic District Neighborhood Association has organized a restoration trade fair. As its title suggests, the purpose of the fair is to showcase home improvement and repair resources for residents residing in Long Beach's historic districts, or for any residents with the desire to preserve or retrofit their homes' historic architectural qualities.

The California Heights Neighborhood Association has supported the fair since its inception, will participate in the event and we congratulate the Rose Park members who have dedicated their time and energy to bring it to fruition. Operation hours and a complete list of sponsors and participants will be announced.

BOOKMARKS

888 Clean LA
ladpw.org/epd

Bixby Knolls Business Improvement
bixbyknollsinfo.com

California Repertory Company (Cal Rep)
calrep.org

Carpenter Center
carpenterarts.org

City of Long Beach
longbeach.gov

Dana Branch Library
lbpl.org/location/dana/default.asp

First Fridays - Long Beach
firstfridayslongbeach.com

Historical Society of Long Beach
historicalsocietylb.org

International City Theatre
ictlongbeach.org

Litter Free Long Beach
litterfreelb.org

Long Beach Museum of Art
lbma.org

Long Beach Playhouse
LBPH.com

Long Beach Recycles
longbeach-recycles.org

Long Beach Unified School District
lbUSD.k12.ca.us/index.asp

Museum of Latin American Art
molaa.org

Music Theatre West
musical.org

Rancho Los Cerritos
rancholoscerritos.org

Richard Goad Theatre & The LB Shakespeare Co.
lbshakespeare.com

Tree People
treepeople.org

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Thursdays:

Farmer's Market - 3 to 6:30 pm (Atlantic at 45th Place)

First Friday of Every Month:

First Fridays - firstfridayslongbeach.com

Saturdays:

Strollers - 7:30 am at Starbucks (Atlantic & San Antonio)

- 5/13 Bixby Knolls Literary Society. This month's book, **Ask the Dust** by John Fante. 6:30 pm - Dana Branch Library. info@bixbyknolls.com
- 5/17 Last day! Historical Society of Long Beach, *The Way We Worked*, traveling exhibit. hslb.org
- 5/19 Long Beach Heritage, **Preserving Family Photos & Documents**, 6 to 8 pm, lbheritage.org
- 6/3 **Primary Election** - Find your polling place at lavote.net.
- 6/8 Long Beach Heritage - **Great Homes Spring Tour**, Noon - 5pm. lbheritage.org
- 10/19 Cal Heights Home and Garden Tour! (562) 981-3671 calheightshometour@earthlink.net

Newsletter Submissions:

If you would like to include information for future newsletters, please forward articles, photos or suggestions to newsletter@calheights.org. Thank you to all who have responded.

Deadline for next submission
June 8

Next flyer distribution
June 23

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Police Department (Emergency-on Cell Phone)
435-6711

Police North Substation (Non-Emergency)
570-9800

Fire Department
570-2500

California Heights Neighborhood Assc.
424-6727

California Heights ReLeaf
997-9094

Dana Branch Library
570-1042

Rancho Los Cerritos
570-1755

Long Beach Building Department
570-6651

Long Beach Animal Control
570-PETS (7387)

Airport Noise
570-2665 / 570-2600

Code Enforcement
570-CODE (2633)

Graffiti Paint-Out
570-2773

Garage Sale Hotline
570-YARD (9273)

Noise Control
570-4126 (press 4)

Parkway Tree Trimming/Removal
570-2755

Street Potholes
570-3259

Senior Check - In
570-7212

Tonia Reyes-Uranga- 7th District
570-6139 email: district7@longbeach.gov

Rae Gabelich- 8th District
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