

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.



Helen's son cutting the grass - 3500 block of Lime Ave looking toward Atlantic Ave. Check out the oil wells in the background!

Longtime Cal Heights Resident Reflects on Changes

By Rachael Rifkin

Helen Wilson, 91, has lived in California Heights since 1954. She loves her neighborhood, cares about her community and knows most of her neighbors. Initially, however, she had mixed feelings about moving to Long Beach.

A Minnesota native, she originally came to Hollywood with dreams of becoming a singer and her husband Harvey had been living in the LA area. Harvey, a dentist, had been sharing a practice with another dentist and was ready for a change. He had narrowed it down to a practice in South Gate or Long Beach. Helen explained, "We didn't know which one to choose at first. I wasn't sure I would

like Long Beach. Up until then my only knowledge of the city involved the navy and retired farmers from Iowa."

In the end, it was California Heights schools that led to their decision. "We had a 5-year-old son and a toddler, and the schools in South Gate were overcrowded. We learned that Longfellow Elementary was a good school so we drove around the immediate area looking for a house. The closest house was on Lime Avenue so we bought it."

Helen was very close with her neighbors. They had block parties and everyone knew each other. She thinks back on all the people who used to live in the neighborhood when they first moved in. "A plumber lived on the 3600 block of Lime Ave. Jerry Heard was the best plumber in the area. He lived there until he died. A city manager and a councilman lived on the 3700 block of Lime," she recalled. "The person across the street owned a machine shop. He and his wife were from Texas. They had one son and eventually moved back to Texas. Many wonderful people have come and gone."

Helen has fond memories of the shops and restaurants around Atlantic Avenue as well. She remembers seeing the Sound of Music with her children at the Crest Theater. She and her family would go to Thrifty's Drug Store to get treats and ice cream. One of their favorite restaurants was El Patio, which was across the street from where Baja Sonora is now. There were two drive-in diners. She got all of her flowers from a huge nursery that was between Linden, Elm, Wardlow and E. 36th Street.

"There was a market on Orange Avenue and Wardlow Road where the ballet studio now is and a market where the restaurant supply place now is. (cont'd on page 3)

president's message

A MESSAGE FROM JOHN ROYCE

Well, summer is almost here! School kids have spring fever, looking forward to the long, lazy days ahead, and moms and dads are wondering what kind of trouble they're going to get themselves into with so much free time on their hands! Weekend barbeques and trips to the beach only take up so much time, and there are still all those pesky weekdays to fill up.

Luckily, there's plenty to do around here to keep the kids out of trouble this summer, and lots to do for everyone who's looking for some healthy activities! From volunteer opportunities to earn community service hours (or just to build good character and appreciation for those that give of themselves), to learning experiences, day camps and just plain fun, we've packed this issue of The Heights with enough options to at least get us all off to a good start for a summer full of fun and worthwhile activities.

I'd like to remind parents that teens in need of community service hours can meet up with the Cal Heights Clean Streets crew to pick up litter and pull weeds on the main thoroughfares surrounding our neighborhood every Thursday morning from 8:30-10:00, starting in the parking lot behind EZ Lube at Wardlow and Atlantic. We provide bags and gloves and sign their forms upon completion of the morning's route.

Also, please remember that the Long Beach Police Department enforces curfew for youth seventeen and younger between 10 pm and 5 am unless accompanied by an adult.

Enjoy the summer! *



John Royce, CHNA President



Planned by Cal Heights ReLeaf, organized by our 7th District Council Office and funded by Oil Operators, community volunteers planted 30 trees on April 23rd at 33rd & Pasadena. The trees will capture particulates from the 405 Freeway, provide oxygen and improve sightlines for adjacent homes.

(photos - left: volunteers working hard, right: Oil Operators President, Kevin Laney & 7th District Councilmember James Johnson toss in the first shovels full after John Royce's planting lesson.) More photos on our Facebook page.

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There was a car dealership across from Polly's Restaurant and a gas station where the Walgreens is. We were sad when they left. They were wonderful people," Helen recalled. "There has been a tremendous amount of changes over the years. That's why I think the preservation movement is great. It's helped keep our historical neighborhood intact."

Helen enjoys her current neighbors, too, and sometimes tutors their children. She keeps up with the latest neighborhood news and until recently could be seen on daily walks with her faithful dogs, Willy and Maya. She is glad that when her children come to visit, they are still happy to hear about and explore their childhood hometown.

*Rachael Rifkin is a journalist and a Signal Tribune staff writer. She also helps people write their life stories/memoirs. For more information email lifestories2day@aol.com or call (562) 424-2362. **

Bixby Knolls Dragster Expo and Car Show Returns!

The Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association and the 8th District Council Office invite residents to display their pre-1975 vintage and classic cars, hot rods, street rods and special interest vehicles in the 6th Annual Bixby Knolls Dragster Expo and Car Show, returning to Atlantic Avenue between Roosevelt and San Antonio on Saturday, July 9th - 3 to 9pm. Pre-registration entry fee (postmarked by June 9) is \$25; after June 9, \$40. If not registered by June 27th, fees will be collected on the day of the show upon entry. For entry forms and complete information, go to bixbyknollscarshow.com. If you don't have a car to enter, come on down for a summer afternoon of fun on the avenue! It's free! *



Photo from 2010 Dragster Expo & Car Show!

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A few things to

City of Long Beach Parks and Recreation Programs

Our award winning Parks and Recreation Department offers a diverse array of programs, including summer parks, aquatics and specialty day camps, youth programs, adult and youth sports leagues, a variety of summer classes for adults and children, senior programs, volunteer opportunities, golf, tennis and more! For schedules, fees and registration call 570-3100, or go to longbeach.gov/park/. The schedule for the popular summer Concerts in the Park will appear in June. ✱

LB Shakespeare Summer Drama Camp

LBSC offers two, two-week sessions for children and teens, grades K-12, June 20 to July 1, and July 18 to July 29. Cost for each session is \$265 and includes instruction in acting, dancing and singing, set design, costumes, Shakespeare history and more, with a final presentation for parents on the last day of camp. The camp operates Monday through Friday, 9am-2pm, with aftercare available at \$5 per hour. LBshakespeare.org, 997-1494 ✱

Rancho Los Cerritos Summer Programs and Sunday Concerts

Big changes are happening at historic Rancho Los Cerritos, where the first phase of the new visitor's center and entrance are taking shape! Mud Mania returns on August 21, Rancho Summer Adventures weeklong day camps arrive for July and August, and the usual lineup of free Living History and garden tours continue throughout the spring and summer. By the time you read this, the first free summer concert will have taken place. On Sunday, June 26, enjoy Wartime Radio Review; Sunday, July 24 welcomes Crazy Rhythm Hot Society Orchestra; The Band of California Battalion performs on August 28. All concerts run from 5:30-7:00pm, perfect for a summer afternoon cool down on the rancho lawn. Picnics encouraged! Reliable teens earn community service credits volunteering for help with day camps, museum duties and more. RanchoLosCerritos.org, 570-1755. ✱

Long Beach Ballet Summer Programs

Right here in the neighborhood, Long Beach Ballet has been molding and shaping young dancers for thirty years. Two, 2-week summer programs are offered July 18-29. The Junior Summer Intensive focuses on intermediate dancers ages 9-12, Mon-Fri, 9am - 4pm, \$490. The Children's Dance Camp is summer fun made just for kids ages 5-11 - Mon-Fri, 9am - 3pm, \$390 - \$250 first week only. Dancers in both 2-week programs participate in a performance on July 29. longbeachballet.com, 426-4112. ✱

Do this summer!

At Your Long Beach Public Library

by Jennifer Songster, Librarian-Dana Neighborhood Library

We've all been waiting for June! It marks both the end of the school year and the beginning of a long, glorious summer filled with time to catch up on reading! It is the perfect opportunity to join the Summer Reading Club at the Dana Neighborhood Library. Most people think the Summer Reading Club is for children. That's important, to be sure, but the Long Beach Public Library also has a Summer Reading Club for teens and one for adults.

The Summer Reading Club for children (pre-K through 5th grade) begins on Thursday, June 16th at 3:30 pm - the day of the Kick-Off Party and the first opportunity for children to sign up for the Club. In addition, we will have games and other fun activities for the children. The Summer Reading Club includes exciting programs every Thursday at 3:30 p.m.

The teen and adult Summer Reading clubs each begin a few days later on Saturday, June 18th. There will be a little less fanfare, but just as much fun. Both teens and adults have an opportunity to win books and other prizes for their reading.

Bring the whole family to the Dana Neighborhood Library and sign up to read this summer! LBpl.org, 570-1042. *

Aquarium of the Pacific Summer Fun and Learning

Our aquarium offers unique, fun and educational programs for kids this summer. They offer single, three day and week long day camps. Sea Squirt (5-6 year-olds), Ocean Adventures (graded 2-4), Junior Biologist (grades 5-7), and there's even a special parent-child Fish Fry Camp for little ones 3-4 years old, and a Marine Science Sleepover Camp for ages 13-15, including pizza party, movie and popcorn and a keepsake T-shirt. Birthday Party Sleepovers are also offered. Prices and times vary.

Enjoy the serenity of the aquarium at night with an Adult Sleepover! Relax with yoga and meditation sessions, interact with the animals, listen to an informal lecture and sleep under one of the aquarium's large exhibits in the tranquil after hours. Pizza, snacks, continental breakfast and T-shirt are included. Alcohol is available for guests 21 and older. 6:30pm-9:00am; 20 person minimum reservation; \$70 per guest, \$60 aquarium members; AquariumofPacific.org, 951-1630 *

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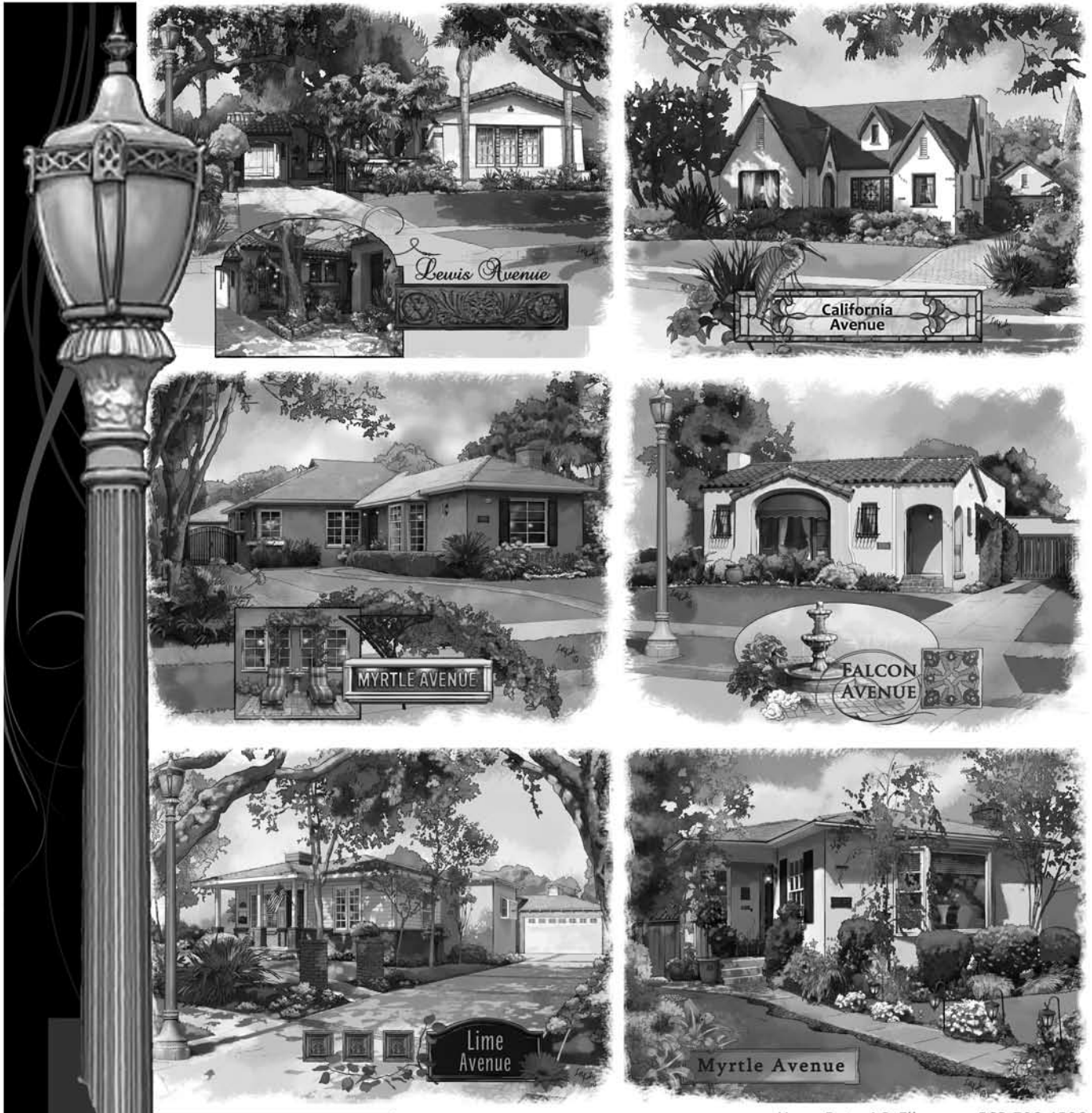


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Summer Fun at AveryBoo Arts Studio

On a hot day this summer, relax in the AC while the little ones play! There's lots to do at Averyboo! In addition to their regular offerings, take advantage of special summer activities. In Art Sketchbooks & Sculpture students ages 7-12 explore their inner-artists and imagination through the use of materials rich in tactile diversity, color theory, design and multi-media sculpture. Occurs Tuesdays for six weeks June 21-July 26, 12:15-1:30pm - \$120 includes materials.

Art Club for kids 6 -10, includes a project of the day, sketching or handwork with an emphasis on reuse and a juice box. 5-day sessions 7/11-7/15, 7/25-7/29, 8/8-8/12 - \$90. On July 27, 6-7pm, it's a Dance Party Luau for kids 4-7! Traditional dance and light refreshments - \$12.

There's even a special Robots with Dad, Saturday, 6/18 to celebrate Father's Day! \$20 per father/child pair, or add a child for \$12. Space is limited, so please pre-register for all classes at averybooarts.com, 918-4800. *

Special Thanks!

CHNA announces Lewis Ebersole as our primary Home & Garden Tour sponsor. Lewis has been a regular volunteer and supporter for many years, and is one of our biggest financial contributors. Thanks for being part of the team, Lewis!

The 2011 Home & Garden Tour takes place Oct 2. calheights.org/home_tour.htm

New Biz Buzz

For all of us who have been anxiously awaiting the **Fresh & Easy** opening, it looks like we'll be waiting longer than expected. Curiously, the company brass in England (Fresh & Easy is part of the British grocery giant, Tesco) can't make it to California for the dedication until September. So even though it looks like all they need to do is pave, stock and open, it won't happen without the brass.

Suba Sushi and Tapas announces an exciting move! Executive Chef, David Santiago, plans to move from the Long Beach Blvd. location for new digs at 3736 Atlantic Avenue, just south of Everyday Zen Relaxation Studio. The new location offers better visibility with lots of windows facing out to the street, plenty of parking and taps into Cal Heights residents who enjoy walking to dinner. We couldn't be more excited to have Suba on the avenue, which should help to activate that sleepy stretch and pull First Fridays activities south. This should happen by Fall. subasushi.com | 595-1959

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From the 7th District

James Johnson Councilmember

On May 3rd, City Council unanimously approved my agenda item that seeks to use our street repair dollars more efficiently, saving \$30 million over the next 20 years. My item calls for the City to use a portion of each year's street budget on preventative maintenance for our streets instead of waiting to fix them after they have failed. This is smart financially as it costs many times more to repave or reconstruct streets than it does to maintain them. In these tough economic times, it is one of my priorities to actively explore new ways of saving the city money and using your tax dollars more efficiently and effectively.

On May 21st, local residents joined me for the grand opening of Long Beach's newest and largest dog park, Wrigley Heights Dog Park. This new park is over two acres and has been developed using minimal funds. It is a great example of how we can turn an unused property into a positive use for the whole community. Bring your dogs and enjoy the park. Wrigley Heights Dog Park is located at 3400 Golden Avenue.

I want to thank everyone who joined the CHNA and I for the California Gardens (AKA Willow Spring Gulch) clean up. With the help of over 60 volunteers, we were able to remove an impressive 3.61 tons of trash and debris from the property. If you haven't had a chance to visit California Gardens, please join me on Wednesday, June 29th at 5:30pm for a tour of this 55-acre property. California Gardens was featured on the front page of the Press-Telegram on Sunday, May 1st. See for yourself what everyone is talking about. The entrance is located at 27th & California. Parking is available on 27th Street. Please contact my office to RSVP.

The next two First Books at First Fridays will be June 3rd and July 1st, 5:30pm-6:30pm, at Dana Branch Library. The library will remain open until 7pm, so bring your library card with you. The big red bus will pick up guests in front of Dana Library at 6:30pm to take guests to First Fridays.

I look forward to seeing you in the community.

district7@longbeach.gov | 570-7777

*(for more information on my street maintenance item, for upcoming events, or to join our e-blast for updates, visit www.jamesjohnsonlb.com) **



Dominguez Gap Wetlands in Spring - The Perfect Nature Hike

by Theresa Hew

It's been three years since the Dominguez Gap Wetlands were opened to the public. As

Cal Heights residents, we are close to the wetlands and Spring is a perfect time to see the flora and fauna at it's best. Winter rains and three years of maturity have allowed the wetlands to truly establish themselves and the native plants are in full Spring bloom.

The wetlands are an East Basin, 30-acre restoration site created alongside the Los Angeles River from Del Amo Avenue to the north and Wardlow Avenue to the south. It is the first completed project of its kinds in the LA River Master Plan and features aspects like flood control, water quality improvement, environmental enhancements with recreational and educational opportunities.

A recent tour sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council, Long Beach chapter, described how the wetlands were created from flows off the LA River and Long Beach area storm drains. This water is naturally treated by wetlands' plant life before it reaches the San Pedro Harbor. Wetland ponds have become a home for frogs, turtles, ducks, and various bird species including the red-winged blackbird and occasional visits from herons and brown hawks. Among the plant life you will see sage, sycamores, cottonwoods, California poppies and species native to the riparian environment.

The wetlands offer an easy two mile hike on maintained trails for walking, biking and horseback riding. Visitors can enjoy slopes with native scrub giving a glimpse into the past when the LA River had lush, seasonal, natural vegetation. The trails are free to the public and can be accessed via Del Amo Avenue near Oregon Avenue. Street parking is available. The trail can also be caught off Del Mar Avenue in Los Cerritos-Virginia Country Club. Just take San Antonio Drive west to the 4100 block of Del Mar Avenue near Terralynn Place. You will see the trail opening through the Eucalyptus grove on Del Mar Avenue. Please note, dogs must be leashed and the trails are closed during stormy weather.

So grab your hiking boots and binoculars and check out the wetlands in their full Spring splendor. ✨

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Taqueria Mexicana Numero Cinco

by Allen Brackett

The local taco stand Taqueria Mexicana Numero Cinco is the area's newest hidden treasure. Located at 1901 E. Carson Street near Cherry Avenue is open every day from 9 to 9. If you like to get your Mexican food from an authentic taco stand this is the place for you. The selection is straightforward, but has more than enough for most Mexican food connoisseurs. Traditional taquitos, tacos al pastor and wet burritos are served alongside more unique sopes, carne asada fries and their famous California Burrito (it has fries inside the tortilla). The food is spicy and the portions are generous. The tacos are priced right and always hit the spot, especially with cool fruit drinks like sandia (watermelon). This is a great spot for lunch, dinner, a snack or anytime you crave something spicy. You can call in an order at 989-9210. ✱

Volunteers Picked Up Tons of Garbage (3.61 tons to be exact!)

On April 4th over 60 volunteers toured and cleaned the 55 acre Willow Spring Gulch. It was an amazing day! Thanks to the volunteers who so eagerly cleaned up tons of debris, Litter Free Long Beach, LB Environmental Services (for hauling everything away!), James Johnson's office and CalHeights Clean Streets. ✱



Water Reminder - Watering days are Monday, Thursday and Saturday before 9 am and after 4 pm.

Hollywood Comes to Cal Heights

by Ava Brackett, 11 years old

March 25th was a special day in the Heights. There were a series of commercials being shot for 76 Gas Station/Phillips 66. The morning shoot started at Cerritos and Wardlow and then went to the 76 Station at Wardlow and Orange.

I went to the location to see what was happening. I had the chance to meet many people at the location involved with the commercial. Candy, the costume designer, showed me the clothing and took me to the snack bar for the cast and crew. I also met the director, Mike Maguire. He was funny and signed my autograph book, "Quit school. Hollywood beckons." I also met some of the actors and actresses.

Everyone was nice. They invited me for lunch and dessert. I had lunch at home, so I ate dessert with the cast and crew. There was ice cream, mini brownies, chocolate chip cookies, and then the bread pudding arrived. I was in a fantasy land! I had a wonderful time that day. ✱



Holiday Safety

All fireworks are illegal in the city of Long Beach, but there are many local sites to enjoy professional displays.

Check local newspapers and limelightlb.com closer to the Independence Day holiday for places and times. Report illegal fireworks anonymously to the arson hotline - 800/782-7463.

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Thursdays: 8:30 am litter pick up - see calheights.org click on Clean Streets.

Saturdays: Strollers Walking Group - 7:30 am at our local Atlantic Avenue It's a Grind.

See all calendar events at calheights.org or visit us on Facebook!

June 3 and July 1 - First Friday! firstfridayslongbeach.com

July 9 - Annual Dragster Expo and Car Show

July 12 - Articles due for the next edition of The Heights

October 2 - 2011 CalHeights Home & Garden Tour

In 1997 the CHNA board embarked on an adventure to raise funds to sustain community projects, facilitate greater public outreach and engage residents about the special qualities and value that our historic district designation offers. 100% volunteer driven, our tour has given us untold opportunities, like our wonderful mural by Art Mortimer, Cal Heights ReLeaf, Clean Streets, calheights.org, The Heights Newsletter, volunteer socials, historic lamppost restoration program and the tour itself.

Home selection is being finalized, and we thank all who have so generously offered their homes. 2011 ticket sales and details will go up at calheights.org in June, as will info about our guest speaker! Stay tuned!

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

7th District Council - James Johnson

570-7777 email: district7@longbeach.gov

8th District Council - Rae Gabelich

570-1326 email: district8@longbeach.gov

54th District Assembly member- Bonnie Lowenthal

495-2915 web: democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a54

Airport Noise

570-2665 / 570-2600

California Heights Neighborhood Association

424-6727

California Heights ReLeaf

997-9094

Dana Branch Library

570-1042

Fire Department

570-2500

Graffiti Paint-Out

570-2773

Garage Sale Hotline

570-YARD (9273)

Long Beach Building Department

570-6651

Long Beach Animal Control

570-PETS (7387)

Neighborhood Preservation Information

570-6194

Neighborhood Watch Program

570-7229

Parkway Tree Trimming

570-2700

Police Department Dispatch

435-6711 or Emergency 911

Police North Substation Information

570-9800

Rancho Los Cerritos

570-1755

Senior Check-In

570-7212

Street Potholes

570-3259

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