



THE HEIGHTS

NEWS FROM THE CALIFORNIA HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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I ♥ Cal Heights Fundraising Campaign Was A Success! Thank you!

By Stacey Morrison

September 23 was a city-wide day of giving through Long Beach Gives. This was the third annual charitable event which facilitated 9,552 donations to 203 non-profits totalling over \$2 million!

California Heights Neighborhood Association was one of those nonprofits. This was our first year and it was a success thanks to over 60 donors who donated just over \$7,000. This was a critical fundraiser due to our home tour being postponed to next year and we are grateful for the support.

A big thank you goes out to local relator Andrea Testa for setting a \$1,000 matching donation which was met.

Thank you to everyone who donated to CHNA. We are emboldened to continue doing what we do - weekly Cleanstreets litter cleanups, planting and caring for our local trees, alley cleanups, home and garden tours, protecting our historic lamp-posts, and educating neighbors on best practices in renovating historic homes.

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Jordan Busa - Photo credit Tom Underhill

Cal Heights - Looking Back

By Frances Stoner

Have you ever lost something so precious to you that afterwards you felt like your world changed and you along with it? That happened to Jordan Busa on July 4, 2017 when he lost Aurora.

Like many parents, Jordan's wanted him to play a musical instrument, the violin. Not the easiest instrument for a five-year-old, but he really liked it, in fact excelled at it so much it became the focus of his young life. From his beginnings at Longfellow all the way through Long Beach Poly he spent his time with private lessons, school orchestras, special concerts at Disney Concert Hall and even shook the hand of First Lady Michelle Obama. It takes a tremendous amount of dedication and practice to achieve these goals, but something else was driving Jordan - Tourette's Syndrome.

Tourette's is a neurodevelopmental disorder that often begins in childhood. The child may have many unwanted 'tics', either muscular, vocal or both. Jordan developed Tourette's in the fifth grade and it made his life miserable. Fellow students teased him and he suffered from 'premonitory urge' knowing his tics were about to happen but helpless when they did. "Ninety percent of your brain power goes to trying to control the tics", Jordan explained, "I didn't have much left over to concentrate on school." But something wonderful happened when he played the violin - the tics subsided and he felt joyful. "I knew I was good at the violin and it helped my ego from all the other negative aspects of my life."

Jordan's first grade teacher, recognizing his potential, introduced him to another music teacher, Helen Hagen, who had a profound effect on his musical and personal life. "She was the teacher that everyone needed but no one deserved" recalled Jordan, and he bloomed under her guidance. (cont'd page 4)

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Cal Heights - Looking Back

Incredibly Ms. Hagen gifted Jordan with a beautiful 1892 violin he named Aurora. He continued playing, attending college and looking for gigs when the unthinkable happened - he accidentally left Aurora on the top of his car as he drove away and the violin was lost. "That day changed me", the devastated Jordan recalled. Even more incredible, Ms. Hagen again gave Jordan another violin with the caveat he now had to pay for it.

So now Jordan and Aurora II had to be successful. Over the next few years, he played many small gigs and tried street performing, but it wasn't enough to maintain a steady income - and then came Covid and everything stopped. On a whim he posted on social media he would perform on your front porch for \$10 and suddenly everything changed. The beautiful classical music that Jordan and Aurora II preformed was heard all over Cal Heights, bringing joy during the lockdown and a much-needed income.

Jordan was thrilled on the day he went to Ms. Hagen's home to surprise her with his earnings. "I final felt like I owned Aurora II, I finally had her again." . 🎻

President's Message

This may actually represent my most overdue submission for the President's Letter to date. And the wait may have been worth it. Our delay this month gives me the opportunity to gush with gratitude. The CHNA participated in Long Beach Gives this year, and I am utterly overwhelmed with the response we got. Especially in light of where we are in a biannual financial cycle, the response we received more than met our operational cost needs in the near and medium term. I literally can not thank you all enough.

I have nothing else in particular that I want to cover this time around. I'm coming out of an intensely busy (for me) period of work, and I've got until mid-spring before that cycle peaks again. I hope you are all doing well as the latest COVID peak appears to be beginning to break around us. And I hope you will continue to do well in the weeks and months to come. Let's all just try to keep an eye out for each other, shall we?

If there is anything you all need, reach out at info@calheights.org. We may or may not be able to address it ourselves, but we'll try to get it to the attention of someone who can. 🎻

Thanks,



Hugh Little
President, CHNA



From the 7th

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a truly important cultural celebration that began September 15, 2021, Hispanic Heritage Month. This year marks the 7th consecutive year that the City of Long Beach recognized Hispanic Heritage Month.

On a national level, the week of September 16th was first recognized as Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968 by President Lyndon B. Johnson. 20 years later, in 1988, the week was expanded to a 30-day period between September 15th and October 15th and was renamed Hispanic Heritage Month, under President George H. W. Bush.

When I became the 7th District Councilmember in 2014, I noticed that our City was not officially celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month. During my collegiate years at California State University, Long Beach, I recall that Hispanic Heritage Week celebrations took place in several City parks and other facilities throughout Long Beach. I felt the need to bring that tradition back, so I partnered with former Councilwoman now Senator Lena Gonzalez and Mayor Robert Garcia to make the celebration official.

In the years before the COVID-19 pandemic, my office organized an annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration at Silverado Park known as the 7th District Fiesta in the Park. The Fiesta in the Park celebration was attended annually by thousands of residents, of all ages and backgrounds, gathering to embrace and celebrate Hispanic Heritage.

I hope you can join the celebration, as the Long Beach Public Library is hosting its third annual Vida Latina event series this year. The event series will include in-person and virtual family programs through Saturday, October 30. To see the full schedule of Vida Latina programs, visit lbpl.org or call the Long Beach Public Library at 562.570.7500.

As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic remains a threat to the health and safety of our Long Beach community. I encourage you to continue to look out for one another - wash your hands, wear a mask, practice social distancing, and please get vaccinated if you have not done so already. If you need assistance with the vaccination process, please contact my office. As a reminder, my staff is always available to assist you.

Please continue to reach out by calling 562-570-7777 or emailing district7@longbeach.gov.





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Photo credit Tom Underhill

Smart Meters Help Save Water Now

By Marion Saffery

As promised, in this issue of The Heights we'll learn about the city-wide smart meter upgrade - which is part of the City's LiveSmartLB program.

You're probably aware the City has upgraded our old water meters to "smart meters." (This upgrade couldn't have come at a better time, as some areas of Los Angeles County have already entered "exceptional drought" conditions.) Our new high-tech meters give residents new tools and information that can help us all be more water efficient in our homes and businesses here in Cal Heights.

The smart meters do much more than simply deliver billing information to the Long Beach Water Department. They also send important alerts to the LBWD, which allows for a faster response to service disruptions and other customer concerns. The information is relayed via an encrypted and secure radio frequency directly to the LBWD, so our personal data will continue to be safe and confidential.

Moreover, our new smart meters provide us with detailed information about our personal water usage through LBWD's new smart meter online portal. There, by checking the "My Daily Use" column, customers can quickly and easily view their daily water use in gallons, as well as how this data compares to the previous two months. Click on "View Use," to see graphs detailing your water use over varying degrees of time, including seasonal water use. Scroll to the bottom for a pie chart of water usage from your washing machine, faucets, showers and baths, toilets, and irrigation.

Using the "I Want To" column, customers can, for example, check for possible water leaks, understand an unusually high bill, or apply for rebates for high-efficiency clothes washers, premium high-efficiency toilets, rotating sprinkler nozzles, or rain barrels, to name a few. (cont'd page 7)

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In addition, LBWD customers can sign up for “My Use Notifications,” which alert them when their water use surpasses the threshold they, themselves, set—anywhere from double to five times their daily usage. Customers can choose to receive these notifications by email, text message, or voice.

To register your household for the WaterSmart program portal, simply visit lbwater.watersmart.com and follow the prompt - you'll need to have your account number at-the-ready. It's free, and it only takes a minute. The more you know about your personal water usage, the more you can do to reduce it. 🌱

Coming Soon: Orange Avenue Bikeway

By John Moreland


Changes are coming to Orange Avenue. The City of Long Beach is in the process of implementing and constructing a bikeway connecting North Long Beach to Alamitos Avenue. Currently, there is a buffered bike lane (or Class IV bike lane) on Orange Avenue north of Del Amo Avenue. In late 2016, the City of Long Beach adopted the 2040 Bicycle Master Plan to enhance bicycle travel through the City. One of the key components of this master plan was to include buffered bike lanes along the entire extent of Orange Avenue. The City began implementing this in North Long Beach, but due to funding constraints and the pandemic, implementation of this bike lane has stalled.

However, there is a good chance that this bike lane will be coming to California Heights later this year or early 2022. The bike lane will not be a true “buffered” bike lane like those on 3rd Street, Alamitos Avenue, or Bellflower Boulevard due to a lack of space. The City plans on eliminating the center turn lane and adding two striped bike lanes next to the parallel parked cars. The main travel lanes will shift towards the center of the street. Parking on Orange Avenue will not be directly altered by the bike lane. Cars wanting to make a left turn onto Bixby, 37th, or 36th will no longer have a separate turn lane. These intersections would look like the intersection of 33rd and Orange in Signal Hill.

Typically, with these bikeway improvements, City engineers also take the opportunity to evaluate street parking to ensure that cars coming out of driveways and intersections can see cars driving on Orange Avenue. There is a good chance that more no-parking red curb areas will be painted along Orange Avenue to be consistent with State engineering requirements. Some street parking may be lost as a result. However, these spaces would be lost due to providing a safer street, not from the bikeway. If you have any questions, email info@calheights.org. 🌱



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Cal Heights In Pictures

By Tom Underhill





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IN THE KNOW'LLS

What's New? What's Happening?

by Blair Cohn, Executive Director BKBIA

The engines are still humming at the BKBIA office and I promise to not be as nostalgic or sappy this month. We tightened our belts while we wait for the new funding to arrive but remain hard-charging every day.

Let's get back to basics for a minute. I wanted to share with you, if you didn't know already, a few of the programs we have to activate the neighborhood. We encourage you all to join in.

Bixby Knolls Strollers – Neighborhood walking group. The group meets every Saturday morning at Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, 4105 Atlantic Avenue at 7:15 am. The strolls begin promptly at 7:30 am. Coffee Bean provides free coffee each week for the group. (Friendly) dogs are welcome, too. Over the last 13 years we have logged over 2,568 miles.

Bixby Knolls Literary Society book club - Another program designed to bring people together and support a local business. The Literary Society focuses on the greatest American classics of the 20th century as well as current releases. The Literary Society meets the second Wednesday of each month at Dream Come True Tea & Party Room at 7:00 pm.

Knights of the Round (Turn)Table - Modeled after our Literary Society, this music group has become our most popular. Each month we choose a different historically significant album (covering all genres), then listen and discuss it song by song. The rules are simple: Turn off your cell phones and concentrate. Listen to every song on the album and experience them as the artist and producer intended. Food and drinks always available.

Brewery Knolls Beer Bus – An easy way to tour and appreciate “Brewery Knolls” is to hop on the bus, that typically runs once a month August through November, for a visit to our breweries and beer stops in the district. Each October we host “Walktoberfest” where attendees receive special treats and specials visiting each participating location plus fun entertainment. Costumes encouraged.

Kidical Mass – A play off of the sometimes controversial “Critical Mass,” Kidical Mass was created so kids could “rule the streets.” This is our monthly family-friendly bike ride. It is typically a 4.5-mile route, easy paced, and good for all levels. We finish with treats.

First Fridays – Our monthly marquee event. As the name goes, on the first Friday of every month, businesses stay open late and host artists and musicians to activate the pedestrian zone. Hop on the Big Red Bus and check out the Expo Arts Center, Artists’ Lot, and all the music, food, shopping, along the way.

How can you help or get involved beyond the programs? Donate! We have formed a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization so you can now donate to us and get a tax deduction. Your financial support goes directly to our “Clean and Safe” programs like private security patrols, cleanup efforts, and landscaping. What you get in return is a healthy, vibrant, business district that contributes to the property values of the neighborhood...plus, you’ll feel good by doing so.

October Business Recommendation: Thunderbolt Pizza, 4085 Atlantic Avenue. First of all, you just HAVE to stop in and meet the owner, Jay Stebbins. Nicest and sincerest guy around who is committed to creating an “upscale, hip, date night pizzeria” for you all. The hand tossed pizzas are delicious as are his organic salads, garlic knots, and more Italian specialties popping up on the menu all the time. Tip: His gluten-free pizzas are exceptionally good. Take it from a guy who is always looking for tasty gluten free options. Outstanding craft beer available and a growing wine list. Jay has created a great patio vibe, too. We are very happy to have Thunderbolt in our district.

That’s it for now and you didn’t even need a Kleenex after reading this one.

Always Stay Bixby Strong, Blair 🐶

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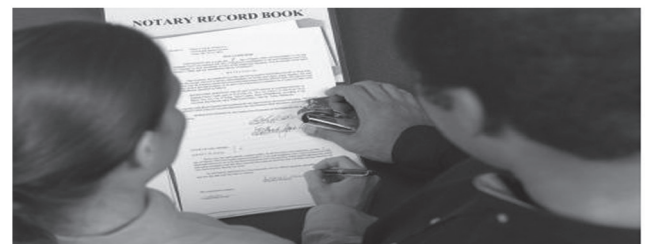

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