



Nancy Gardner

Councilwoman



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Newport Beach, California

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General Services	3055
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May already? We're focused on budgets, but lots of other stuff is going on.

CORONA DEL MAR BRANCH LIBRARY

I have been told by Linda Katsouleas, our Library Service Director, that the plan is to close this branch in the next few years because it is underutilized. Since I'm in there a couple of times a week and it's never empty, I was surprised to hear that, but they have statistics to back up their position. The tentative plan is to incorporate a library function in the new Oasis as a replacement.

PARKING AND SAFETY

For those of us living in old ("olde" is too precious) Corona del Mar, getting out of alleys can be a real thrill. Parked cars can block your view of not just oncoming autos but also cyclists. One solution is to extend the red curb area on the street to provide better sight lines. Staff will be coming back with an analysis of how much street parking we would lose if we do this.

TWO TOURS

I took a tour of Banning Ranch with fellow Council members Mike Henn and Leslie Daigle. It's an interesting area. From the mesa there's a great view of the ocean—and also the sanitation district which takes up all that side of the river. There are a couple of nice coastal canyons, but most of the area is pretty distressed after all these years as an oil field. Restoration is going to be a challenge. Later, representatives from The Irvine Company gave us a preview of what Newport Coast residents would find when the Pelican Hills Road South gate was taken down May 1 and residents could once again use the road. TIC did a great job of getting the road in shape, but those using Pelican Hills Road South can expect delays during the day due to the ongoing construction.

FRIENDS OF THE HARBOR?

In talking with John Corrough, he made the point that while the upper bay has lots of friends and supporters working to improve and protect it as a functioning estuary, there is no group focused on the lower bay and the navigability issues there. Council member Leslie Daigle had recently written an op-ed piece in the Pilot on dredging, among other things, so I contacted her, and we met with staff to explore the idea of establishing a foundation that would seek funding and provide other support for city efforts to improve conditions. We'll see what they come back with.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CDM RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION AND BID

The Residents Association and the Business Improvement District held a joint annual meeting at Sherman Gardens which was well attended. Fire Marshall Bunting's proposal study to use goats to reduce the fire hazard in Buck Gully was well accepted as was the police presentation on stepped-up enforcement along Ocean Boulevard.

LEAF BLOWERS

Not having yet come up with a good alternative to leaf blowers for commercial users the City is taking advantage of a program offered by the AQMD to turn in its old models for new, state-of-the-art models which are supposed to be much quieter and cleaner (although they don't solve the problem for those with allergies). If the new models are an actual improvement, we can then work to get our contractors to upgrade, and eventually, other users. Meanwhile, we will continue to look for new ideas.

AND FINALLY . . . WE'RE NUMBER 1! AGAIN!

I attended the Newport Coast Watershed Management Program which showcased some of the cutting-edge studies that Newport is doing and tried not to look too proudly overweening when a woman from the State Water Resources Board said, "Wow, I can't believe a city is doing stuff like this."