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# Alamitos Heights Improvement Association Newsletter

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Website: [www.ahia.info](http://www.ahia.info)

WINTER 2012

## 2012 COLORADO LAGOON TREE LIGHTING

Alamitos Heights got into the holiday spirit early with our annual Colorado Lagoon Tree lighting event on the day after Thanksgiving. We had help from Santa and our local fire department as well as the city lighting crew from City of Long Beach, Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine.



Your AHIA membership dollars provided funding which allowed us to enjoy 11 beautifully lighted trees on the Colorado Lagoon this year. Many thanks for your membership as it allowed us to continue this wonderful tradition! AHIA would also like to thank the Belmont Heights Community Association for their donation of \$200 to our annual tree lighting.

We were pleased to once again have the Starlight Carolers bringing back the memories of the Dickens Novel with their Victorian period attire as they performed their vocal renditions of many favorite Christmas Carols. AHIA was pleased to be able to provide

an extra 30 minutes of music for the neighborhood to enjoy! This year the carolers played for a full two hours!

Children, their parents, Grandparents and lots of neighbors rang in the holiday season with delicious cookies, and hot chocolate that was donated by Polly's Gourmet Coffee on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Our AHIA President, Roberta Smith, welcomed us and announced the upcoming Alamitos Heights holiday decorating contest (see related article).



The excitement came when Santa arrived on board our local fire truck with ringing bells and flashing lights. All the kids had an opportunity to say hi to Santa and tell him what they'd like him to bring this year (Please no coal, Santa; I've been a good girl!). Photos were taken with Santa and can be found on our web

site [www.ahia.info](http://www.ahia.info) so make sure you check the site and download your children's photo!



AHIA would like to extend a big thanks to Tom Fallon who has been the Man of the Hour at our event for 20 years. The Board was pleased to provide Tom with a special commendation for his service to our community at the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Thank you to all who helped make this wonderful family tradition possible! From our homes to yours, the AHIA Board wishes everyone in our neighborhood happy holidays!

*Annemarie Sauer Hale*



## 2013 Alamitos Heights Improvement Association Annual Membership Drive

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 while making positive changes to our neighborhood and community. Here are a list of events we provide the community:

- Annual summer picnic and neighborhood 5K run and 1K fun-run in June
- Encore concert in the park following the conclusion of the Long Beach Municipal Band concerts in August
- Holiday Tree Lighting with Santa and carolers in the Colorado Lagoon in November (Friday following Thanksgiving day)
- Holiday Decorating Contest awards in December
- Community Meeting with local officials (date TBA)

The 2013 AHIA annual membership fee is only **\$30** per household. Please look for a renewal form in your mailbox in early January 2013. If you misplace the renewal form, you can send your check (made payable to AHIA) to: **AHIA. PO BOX 14571, Long Beach, CA 90853.**

**Please submit your annual membership dues check by January 31, 2013 as the funds help us determine our budget for the year.**

AHIA would like to thank each of you who plan to renew your membership and all of the households that will join for the first time. An extended gratitude goes to those who wish to provide an additional donation beyond the membership fee. Your generous support goes a long way to allowing us to provide exceptional community events for each AHIA member!

As an additional reminder, the membership form also has a section for comments that we read and review for action that can be taken by AHIA. There is also a place to check if you would like to become more involved in the Association as either a volunteer in one of our community events or to become a board

member (voting for board members occurs at the AHIA annual picnic in June 2013 and elected members serve from September to August).

Neighbors are always welcome and encouraged to attend any AHIA Board of Directors meetings held the 2nd Monday of each month in the conference room of Fire Station 8, located on 2nd Street in Belmont Shores across the street from Bay Shore Library, from 7 –9 pm. Our website is [www.ahia.info](http://www.ahia.info) and if you have any questions or need an additional membership form please email:

[ahiatreasurer2012@gmail.com](mailto:ahiatreasurer2012@gmail.com).

*Thank you - Damian Medina*

AHIA 2012-2013 Board of Directors  
 President — Roberta Smith  
 Vice President — Annemarie Sauer Hale  
 Treasurer — Damian Medina  
 Recording Secretary — Chris York  
 Historical Secretary — Phil Steuber

Full Board of Directors:  
 Annette Dhein - 300 block of Santiago  
 Kelli Elliott - 5600 block of 6<sup>th</sup>  
 John Garvey - 300 block of Haines  
 Barbara Geortner - 500 block Ultimo  
 Bill Hallowell - 600 block St. Joseph  
 Aarti Harper - 300 block of Winslow  
 Damian Median - 300 block of Manila  
 Annemarie Sauer Hale-700 block of Havana  
 Roberta Smith - 400 block of Terraine  
 Philip Steuber - 700 block of Havana  
 Bob Waeger - 700 block of Havana  
 Tanya Wannemacher-300 block of Santiago  
 Chris York - 400 block of Terraine



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**Farmers' Market**

Every Wednesday from 3 p.m. - 7 p.m.

**Marine Stadium**

Appian Way and Nieto Ave



**-Farm fresh fruits and vegetables-**

pure raw honey – free range eggs – dried fruits – nuts

baked goods – specialty foods – flavored kettle corn

fresh field cut flowers – handmade & unique items

Enjoy a variety of hot, fresh food made to order

In our Food Court

Lee Ostendorf 562-449-9299

**Coyotes in Alamitos Heights**



Please be aware that we continue to have several coyote sightings in the neighborhood at all hours of the day and evening. Coyotes are very purposeful animals and are coming into the neighborhood in search of food. Although are a natural part of our environment and cannot be removed nor relocated, coyotes pose a threat to smaller animals and pets, especially cats. As such, please keep smaller pets indoors whenever possible. Also, keep pet food bowls either indoors or in the garage.

**AHIA SAFETY CORNER**



**Christmas Tree Fire Safety**

The leading cause of Christmas tree fires and property damage remains short circuit or ground fault (21%). According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), cords and plugs were the leading type of equipment involved in the ignition of Christmas trees.

**Safety points to remember:**

- Any string of lights with worn, frayed or broken cords or loose bulb connections should not be used.
- Always unplug Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to sleep.
- Never use lit candles to decorate a tree, and place them well away from tree branches.
- Try to keep live trees as moist as possible by giving them plenty of water daily. Do not purchase a tree that is dry or dropping needles.
- Choose a sturdy tree stand designed not to tip over.
- When purchasing an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled as fire-retardant.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source and try to position it near an outlet so that cords are not running long distances.
- Do not place the tree where it may block exits.
- Safely dispose of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are highly flammable and should not be left in a house or garage, or placed against the house.

**'Twas the Night before Christmas (In the Heights)**

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all thro' the Heights,  
 Not a dog was stirring, not even a mite;  
 The lights were hung on the homes with care,  
 In hopes that St. Nick soon would be there;  
 The families were nestled all snug in their beds,  
 While visions of Concert N' Parks, bounced in their heads,  
 And Mousey in her 'sweats, and I in my briefs,  
 Had just settled our brains for a long winter's relief-  
 When out on Marina Vista park there arose such a howling,  
 I sprang from the bed to see what was the happening.  
 Jumping on my bike I sped down Santiago  
 flying past 6<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> till I reached Colorado.  
 There the moon on the breast of the night-dewed grass,  
 Gave the luster of mid-day to objects so vast;  
 When, what to my half-sleeping eyes should see,  
 But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny coyotes,  
 With a little old driver, so lively and quick,  
 I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.  
 More rabid than dogs his kye-yotes they came,  
 And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:  
 "Now! Manila, now! Ultimo, now! Los Altos, and Winslow,  
 "On! Terraine, on! Orlena, on! Panama and Havana;  
 "To the top of the Heights !and over the Lagoon!  
 "Now dash away! dash away! dash away soon!"  
 As dry leaves before the street sweepers fly,  
 When they meet with a jogger, mount to the sky;  
 So up to the house-tops the coyotes they climbed  
 St Nick with his toys to leave all behind.  
 Once done, I heard him say as he drove out of sight-  
 Happy Christmas to the Heights, and to all a good night.

*Phil Steuber*



**HOLIDAY DECORATING WINNERS**

The 7th annual AHIA Holiday Home Decorating Contest took place the second week of December. Alamitos Heights' neighbors continue to do a fantastic job of decorating their homes for the Holiday season. One winner was selected for each of the five categories below. Winners will be presented with beautiful keepsake wooden plaques with their winning category and a photo of their beautifully decorated home in January 2013. This year's winners were:

- 378 Havana - Best Overall Yard Display
- 410 Flint - Best Use of Lights Display
- 350 Los Altos - Most Original Yard Display
- 505 Flint - Best Humor Display
- 520 Winslow - Most Traditional

Congratulations to all who participated and thanks for your efforts! A few of the winning photos are shown and all can be viewed on our [www.ahia.info](http://www.ahia.info) site. For additional information about this contest or any AHIA events, please email [president@ahia.info](mailto:president@ahia.info). All emails are kept confidential and used only to send information of importance. Remember you will automatically be registered for next year's contest. We hope you will join in to make our 800-homes community a festive place for all to enjoy.

*Aarti Harper*



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**3RD DISTRICT UPDATE FROM  
GARY DELONG**

**SEADIP Update**

In June 2012, a grant in the amount of \$929,000.00 was awarded to the City of Long Beach by the State for the updating of the South East Area Development Improvement Plan (SEADIP). The SEADIP plan covers the area generally bounded by Seventh Street, Marine Stadium and the Orange County border. The updated plan would guide the growth and development of this area for the next 10-20 years.

In order to receive the SEADIP grant money, the City must select a consulting team who will then provide a scope of work and projected schedule to the State. At this time, the City is still in the process of preparing a Request For Proposal (RFP) in order to select a consultant. It is anticipated that the RFP will be released in early December.

**The City Budget**

The Long Beach City Council passed a difficult, but balanced, city budget for Fiscal Year 2013. Difficult decisions were made, balancing funding (and cuts) between our Police Department, Fire Department, Parks and Recreation programs, Library Services and other city functions.

The structural deficit was caused primarily by three events: 1) A decline in General Fund tax revenues, 2) Increased pension costs and 3) Compensation increases provided to city employees as part of a multi-year contract. I voted against this contract several years ago because I believed the city would not have sufficient revenues in future years to absorb these additional expenses. I also believed the city should be spending more General Fund revenue taking care of our infrastructure (streets and sidewalks come to mind), and this

would not be possible if we increased our labor costs.

As Chair of the Budget Oversight Committee (BOC) for the last six years, it is my responsibility to take the City Manager's proposed budget, along with Mayor Foster's recommendations, and hold numerous public hearings along with the other members of the budget committee — Councilwoman Suja Lowenthal and Councilman Patrick O'Donnell. The three of us on the BOC listen to the community input, perform our own outreach in our districts and reach out to other council members for their ideas and suggestions. Additionally, I attended as many community budget meetings around the city as I could.

After listening to all the various stakeholders, the Budget Oversight Committee made the following recommendations to the full City Council:

- Hold a new Police Academy and hire additional police officers.
- Identify funding for police overtime, gang unit officers, and non-sworn Police Service Specialists.
- Identify funding for Parks and Recreation after-school programs.
- Utilize a large percentage of the "one-time" funds for infrastructure, such as streets and sidewalks.
- Restore community programs in our libraries, using a more cost-efficient service delivery model.
- Provide funding to maintain a 5-year tree trimming cycle.

Despite these achievements, next year will be even more difficult if we don't achieve meaningful pension reform with the city's largest employee group — the IAM (International

Association of Machinists). This employee group has received more than a 15% increase in salary since the recession began in 2008, while many individuals in the private sector have seen stagnating wages, a decline in income, underemployment or even unemployment. Additionally, IAM employees pay less than 10% of the cost of their pensions while Long Beach taxpayers contribute more than 90% of the skyrocketing pension costs.

When the IAM contract (which I voted against) expires at the end of this fiscal year (Sept. 30, 2013), the City will need to take a firm stand on both pension reform and overall employee compensation. Due to the generous raises that were provided by the City Council, it is likely it will be necessary to reduce employee salaries for this group in order to avoid significant service reductions to Long Beach residents.

I am prepared to support placing a measure on the ballot next year regarding pension reform, and letting Long Beach residents decide if pension and compensation benefits should be trimmed in order to provide an appropriate level of services in the future.

And back to this year's budget, I didn't get everything I wanted, and I suspect neither did any of my colleagues. We all had to work together, compromise, and come up with a proposal that was acceptable to all. What a refreshing concept — the legislators in Sacramento and Washington should give it a try.

**3<sup>rd</sup> District Neighborhood Association Monthly Meeting**

Every month the 3<sup>rd</sup> District Council Office hosts a lunchtime meeting to discuss pertinent issues within the 3<sup>rd</sup> District and the City of Long Beach.

If you would like to be included on our email notice list, please contact 3<sup>rd</sup> District Field Office at (562) 570-8756 or email [district3@longbeach.gov](mailto:district3@longbeach.gov)

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Website - www.ahia.info

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**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR  
CONTRIBUTORS TO THE COLORADO  
LAGOON TREE LIGHTING EVENT**

Belmont Heights Community Association



Wishing each of you a joyous  
New Year!

**John P. Gooding**

Broker Associate



Alamitos Heights  
Resident & Broker  
for over 30 years



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