A few updates...

Thanks to the generosity of everyone who attended and supported the event, we set a new Annual Dinner record: $32,000+!

And – we are ready to roll on the Nimitz Greenway project, as our plans have been approved by the City of San Diego. Next step: bids.

Sincere and heartfelt thanks to Celeste Trepte for her $5000 donation toward the project. Celeste: your unending generosity has left an indelible mark on our beautiful community!

Garden Award

This is Point Loma High School’s new entry to the Athletic Field on Voltaire Street. It’s landscaped with colorful succulents sporting varied colors and heights that will add color to the area all year long.

The new plantings are part of a recent construction project, a 1,100-square-foot, single-story building featuring a two-window ticket booth, a new fully equipped concession stand with three service windows and much needed men’s and women’s restrooms.

Meet our new board members!

As a 35+ year veteran of the Southern California Real Estate industry, Dianne Reichardt has taken on many roles over the course of her career, serving as Director of Relocation, Branch Manager, Sales Manager, and Agent/Mentor to many of the best agents in Point Loma.

Prior to joining Pacific Sotheby’s, Dianne served as Manager and agent for the first Prudential office in Point Loma.

“Whether you live here or visit here, Point Loma is the best place to be,” Dianne said. “Surrounded by water, lovely views and walking trails, it’s a short bike ride to Shelter Island, Fisherman’s Landing, the Gaslamp District, and downtown.”

Dianne is looking forward to further serving the Point Loma community through the Point Loma Association Board of Directors.

Marty Smith calls herself a “nomad.” She was an “Army brat” who went to four different high schools and moved over 20 times until she was married. She had her children in Vermont, then moved to San Jose, where her husband worked in the computer industry. She said, “As empty nesters, we looked at each other one day and said, ‘none of our children live here; let’s look for work in San Diego.’”

Marty’s husband got a job at Qualcomm, and Marty began using her vast experience in teaching to start her own business in tutoring. She recently earned a Masters degree in Special Education from Santa Clara.
Chairman’s Message

Happy New Year! It’s hard to believe we are off to 2014. I hope we can all stick with our New Year’s resolutions!

One of my resolutions is to grow PLA, and inform our community about who we are/what we do. The PLA is extremely VITAL to the Point. We do so much, and have made a tremendous difference since 1961. But I find it very strange that a large percentage of people don’t know who we are and what we stand for. I am determined to change this and raise awareness throughout our community.

We have accomplished a lot in 2013. We just got the “green light” from the City to proceed with our Nimitz Greenway project, which will landscape the median from W. Point Loma to the Famosa bridge. This is our biggest undertaking yet. We are extremely excited!

I have been working with the Port District and OBCDC regarding needed maintenance of the medians on Harbor Drive and Sunset Cliffs Blvd. These medians have been neglected, and in some cases, are dying off. I feel strongly about the PLA being part of the solution. The Port District has stepped up nicely and has dispatched a landscape crew; OBCDC is seeking grants for its median work.

Another example of our collaboration with other organizations is the Village Garden Club of La Jolla’s donation of two Jacaranda trees to Dana Middle School. Many thanks!

PLA has a very strong board of directors in place. We are really thinking “outside the box” on how to best serve our community. We formed a committee in December to refine our vision and goals. In addition, we are working hard with the Point Loma Foundation to support individuals, families and businesses who want to give to PLA at a higher level. Remember, this money is invested back into your community.

Visit us at www.pointlomaassociation.com to see what’s going on. Join our efforts, tell your friends and “like” us on Facebook.

Robert Jackson

University. “I taught middle school and had a great time teaching in San Jose,” said Marty. “Now I am working on setting up my own tutoring company–Point Loma Tutor. I tutor both reading and mathematics.” (www.pointlomatutor.com)

Why the PLA? “Looking back, I guess I was always involved in community service, but didn’t realize it. I was involved with my children as I became a soccer referee, swim judge, and a leader for a Girl Scout troop, Webelo Scouts, and Tiger Cub Scouts—all at the same time.

“Now, as a resident in Point Loma, I am loving the community,” said Marty. “I have met so many wonderful people … I heard about the PLA and joined that, and before I knew it, I was the treasurer for the PLA dinner. When a board position opened up, I felt I had a chance to participate in continuing to make Point Loma a hidden treasure in San Diego.”

Beautification UPDATE

There are many beautification efforts under way, thanks to the PLA!

Saving Jacarandas Noting that the Jacaranda trees outside of Old Venice Restaurant were dying, Beautification members contacted the owner, who plans to replace them. Many thanks to Jodie Bruhn, who secured a tree donation! In addition, the Jacaranda tree at Cañon/Rosecrans will be replaced with the help of the Point Loma Garden Club, who donated the tree, and Stan Miller, who will pay for the installation.

Point Loma Park Beautification members reported major bare spots, dying trees, significant amounts of litter, graffiti, and evidence of homeless encampments to the Parks and Recreation Department. They then took matters into their own, gloved hands in October and cleaned up the mess! Thanks to Ginny Buerger for following up with Parks & Rec about replacing the trees.

Nimitz/Cañon cleanups The Mean Green Team cleaned up trash on Nimitz and Cañon in October and November. They also strayed a bit and cleaned up trash along Midway Drive. Thanks to the business owners there who let the MGT use their dumpsters. Picking up trash seems to be the easy part; finding someplace to put it is more difficult! Thanks to Chet Barfield from the Mayor’s office for helping get piles of collected trash picked up along Nimitz!

Cañon at Catalina Triangle Thanks to Robert Jackson and Hazel and Hal Russell for keeping an eye on this area.

Village Flower Project The Mean Green Team spruced up the flower planters for the holidays.

Point Loma Entry Welcome Signs Thanks to Bob Sherman for decorating the signs with lights for the Holiday season!

Bus Benches The PLA has four bus benches that can be placed in the community. Thanks to Dwayne Little for mapping all the existing bus stops and benches along the Rosecrans corridor: it appears that there are bus stops without benches, and benches without bus stops. Beautification Committee member Dave Brown will coordinate existing bus stops and plan priority locations for relocating benches.

Thank You! To Knox Bell, a friend of Al Baber, for donating a chainsaw to the Mean Green Team!

And to Ginny Buerger for donating and installing plants along a barren area near Catalina and Cañon.
THE MEAN GREEN TEAM

The PLA’s Mean Green Team is an amazing group of people who do good works at 17 sites across Point Loma every Friday morning! Say “Thank You” the next time you see the folks in the green vests! And, if you want to help, contact Ron Brooks at brooks1@cox.net.

Ron prepared a description of each site for new Mean Greeers that’s very worthwhile to share here:

1. Ed’s Triangle: Large 1.3 acre triangular median on Nimitz near the entrance to I-8 and Sunset Cliffs Blvd. The median has large mature palm trees around the circumference.

2. Pork Chops: Corner of West Point Loma Blvd. and Nimitz. There are two medium sized areas, one on the west side of Nimitz and one on the east that look like a pork chops; hence the name.

3. Nimitz West: This is the area on Nimitz where the “Welcome to Point Loma” sign is.

4. Dana Middle School: Narragansett and Chatsworth. We take care of the planters in the parking lot.


6. Soto Street Shed: There is a storage shed that we share with the City of San Diego Parks and Recreation people on Soto St. The storage shed is adjacent to the OB community garden at 2351 Soto. It is where we store all of our tools and extra supplies.

7. NTC Rose Garden: the Hugh Story Memorial Rose garden was created and is maintained by the Point Loma Association. It is located in the large park adjacent to the water channel behind the cannons at Liberty Station.

8. Tennyson Triangle: A small triangle of public property on the west corner of Tennyson and Nimitz. Presently, Moy Sanchez, our PLA landscape specialist and arborist, takes care of the triangle. It is the only parcel of land on which the Point Loma Association pays the water bill.

9. The Village: This is the middle of Point Loma at the corner of Cañon and Rosecrans. When we are in the Village, we take care of all the planters and the tree basins. The planters are watered and tended regularly by PLA staff.

10. Cañon Hiking Trail: This is the entire length of Cañon (Ullman to Valmont), where there is a hiking trail on the south side of the street.

Marilee Bankert, Joel Young, Cecilia Carrick and Steve Allman hard at work at the Rose Garden

Sweetaly is Oh So Sweet!

It’s a combination of “Sweet” and “Italy.” Sweet, because one of the owners of the former “Charlies Best Bread” on the corner of Rosecrans and Cañon is a Food Network “Sweet Genius” who also beat Bobbie Flay in a cannoli “throwdown;” and “Italy” because owners Gino Ruotolo and Francesco Manfredi hail from Teggiano, Italy, outside of Salerno.

Gino and Francesco took over ownership of the space on October 25, after what Gino described as a “very fast” business transaction. It wasn’t his original plan. After finishing culinary school at the San Diego Culinary Institute, Gino did his apprenticeship at Bruno Bakery in New York City, where Francesco worked as the Executive Pastry Chef. While there, the longtime friends attempted to purchase a bakery. When that fell through, Gino returned to San Diego and found that Charlie’s (Point Loma Bakery and Bistro) was for sale – and that former owner, Victor Zayas, was in a hurry to sell. It worked out. “San Diego has better weather, and nicer people,” said Gino.

Gino and Francesco want you to know that Sweetaly is more than a deli. Yes, Sweetaly features deli sandwiches, tasty bread, and great coffee; but gaze into the display case, and you will find bountiful eye candy – gorgeous cakes, hand-painted marzipan candies, pastry – and cannolis. Francesco creates custom wedding and special occasion cakes. He even did some turkey cakes for Thanksgiving!

Francesco has earned his stripes in the world of sweets. In addition to beating Bobby Flay in the “cannoli throwdown,” Francesco finished second in “Sweet Genius,” the TV show hosted by Master Pastry Chef Ron Ben-Israel. In the show, the chefs are given surprise ingredients.
with which they must create a chocolate, candy and cake dessert. Francesco’s ingredients? For chocolate: sweet fruit filling and chorizo; candy: pizza dough and chicory coffee; cake: sticky spread and a colorful veggie.

A Grand Opening is planned for January. Before then, there’s a lot to do. They hope to warm up the place with wood flooring, and add to the showcase in the front of the restaurant.

In the meantime, Francesco implores you to “stop by for a pastry and coffee” – especially after 3:00, when it gets a little quiet in the Village. Unlike in Italy, we don’t have quick shots of espresso at all hours! “They don’t want an espresso after 3:00 – they want beer or wine!” Gino explained to Francesco. They hope to obtain their liquor license by the end of March.

www.sweetalybakery.com

Impromptu

You may have noticed that there’s a new shop on the corner of Cañon and Scott, where Peninsula Graphics used to be.

Impromptu (name is temporary) is a boutique with women in mind. The shop features what owner Karen Stevens calls “coastal style” handbags, jewelry, yoga and exercise wear, home decor, and clothing.

“I’ve had an amazing response since we opened,” said Karen. “People love this place. They don’t want to go to the malls.”

With help from her daughter, Corie Slawson, who owns a boutique in Encinitas, Karen is “trying to keep price points low and provide a nice boutique setting.” She wants clients who are looking for unique gifts and something special. “We have many one-of-a-kind pieces,” said Karen.

Karen previously owned “Cut and Dried” on Voltaire for five years. She is excited about her location, and thankful that building owner Tom Grondona, who in her words “gave me an offer I couldn’t refuse.”

The store is open from 10:00 - 5:00 Tuesday thru Sunday. Stop by at 2841 Cañon Street.

An empty lot no more...

After over 20 years of sitting vacant, attracting a billboard, graffiti, trash, and an unusual number of pigeons, the former site of a Chevron station at the corner of Voltaire and Cataline will be transformed into a three-story mixed-use commercial/residential development called The Famosa Townhomes.

Due to the gas station’s underground storage tanks, it took years for the site to be approved for building. Then, when the site was ready, the recession hit. Brothers Russ and Scott Murfey, co-owners of Veritas Urban Properties, purchased the lot last year, excited about its potential as an urban infill site.

The project, due for completion in fall, 2014, will have 2128 square feet of retail space on the bottom floor, and eight townhomes and one flat (one-story condo) on the second and third levels. According to Russ Murfey, “The commercial component is thoughtfully incorporated to enhance the pedestrian experience and to feel like an existing brick building that has been in the neighborhood for years.” In addition, the units will have photovoltaic solar systems, private two-car side-by-side garages, European cabinetry, stainless appliances and contemporary styling. Each of the units will have outdoor decks and balconies, and some of the larger 3-bedroom units have rooftop decks with views.

Parking for the retail space will be located off the alley behind the building. Parking for the residents will be in at-grade garages.

For more information, go to: famosatownhomes.com.
So what’s the deal with the orange bikes?
Art? or a guerilla marketing campaign? Residents in Encinitas and La Jolla were wondering the same thing, too.

It turns out to be the latter. Orangetheory, a national chain of fitness studios, is opening three new storefronts in Encinitas, La Jolla, and Point Loma. They’ve split the long-vacant Blockbuster store on West Point Loma with Starbucks in the shopping center where the main anchor tenant is Grocery Outlet.

According to Hollis Lotharius, Regional Manager for Orangetheory Fitness San Diego, Orangetheory specializes in “dynamic, group personal training classes.” The hour-long workout includes treadmill interval training, rowing machines, and weight training. The West Point Loma store will open January 3, 2014. www.orangetheoryfitness.com

MCAS Miramar Pipeline Project Update
Norm Magneson paid a visit to the December PLA Board meeting to keep us up to date on the MCAS Miramar Pipeline project. Norm is a PLA representative to the Miramar Pipeline Navy Restoration Advisory Board.

The 17-mile long line running from Naval Base Point Loma to MCAS Miramar is 59 years old, and needs replacement and repairs at an estimated cost of $22 million.

Norm reported that the pipes will be completely replaced from San Antonio to La Playa, to Shafter, to Rosecrans, and Lytton. The question remains whether the pipes will be removed or filled with concrete.

The new pipes will be placed under Rosecrans. Which side of Rosecrans is still under discussion. Of course, there are major concerns about traffic and parking during the project. The project is still in the design phase; 35% of the design was completed in October 2013. The other 65% is projected to be completed in March 2014, with a possible start date of December 2015. The project is expected to take a year and a half.

Before then, you have a chance to attend a Public Scoping meeting on January 29, 2014. Look for details in an upcoming PLA e-blast.

Go PL!
Two Point Loma High School students were recent winners in the Playwrights Project’s California Young Playwrights Contest.

Erica Myrmel and Siobhan Snider’s scripts were chosen for production out of 165 submissions! The scripts will be presented as part of the Plays by Young Writers festival at the Old Globe Theatre on the Sheryl and Harvey White Stage, March 6-16, 2014.

Erica Myrmel wrote her play Thirty-Nine to Forty during a Playwrights Project program in her drama class. Siobhan Snider wrote Opposite Togetherness last school year. There were nine winners from across San Diego County. Four scripts will receive full professional productions, and five scripts will receive staged readings. For more information, go to www.playwrightsproject.org.
by the time you read this, the dazzling lights on Gar- rison Street will be dimmed; the blow-up snowmen, Santas, and other characters deflated; the animated dolls and animals stilled. Santa’s workshop will be closed for business; the villages uninhabited; Baby Jesus removed from his cradle. The parade of cars, trolleys, and tour buses – yes – TOUR buses—will have subsided; the oohs, ahhs, and squeals of delight silenced for another year.

On Thanksgiving weekend, the collective flip of a switch on Garrison Street marks the official start of the Holiday Season in Point Loma, and the beginning of a yearly tradition for families across San Diego County.

It began with two families – the McLaughlin and the Caboz/Freitas families – who have different recollections of when it actually began. Let’s just say it went into full swing about 20 years ago, and hasn’t let up since.

John and Carolynn Freitas bought their home at 3616 Garrison Street over 30 years ago. Soon after, Carolynn’s mother, Nazare’ Caboz, moved into the house next door across the easement that remains today. The space between the two homes is a City of San Diego “view ease- ment,” according to Nazare’ Freitas Judd, the daughter of Carolynn and John Freitas.

According to Dorene McLaughlin, who has lived with her husband Richard at 3652 Garrison Street for over 40 years, Mrs. Nazare’ Caboz hired a decorator to fill her front win- dow with a Santa’s Workshop display. Soon after, Dorene’s daughter, Casey McLaughlin, walked by, transfixed by what she saw. “She said, ‘I want to do something like that,’ so we had a shelf built in her bedroom,” said Dorene. The shelf was decorated with Mickey Mouse characters, and the McLaughlins placed lights around the window. “That was the start,” said Dorene.

The yearly display has become a life-long passion for Casey, who is cognitively disabled. She can’t read or write, but she has vivid ideas that come to life every year. “She gets a picture in her head, then finds the pieces to make it work,” said Dorene. Casey also looks through lots of magazines and chooses one new item every year. This year, she got two: she recently won a 9-foot candy cane in a ring toss game at Sea World. “Everything is Casey,” said Dorene. “She has chosen everything you see.”

While the “Village” designed by family friend Jim Bibbik has its spot, Casey directs the placement of everything else. She helps wrap new packages every year, and is especially involved in the window decorations. You can also see her handing out candy canes every Christmas Eve, an evening Dorene describes as “nuts.” Casey is also in charge of decorations for other holidays including Easter, 4th of July and Halloween. “We get about a thousand kids for Halloween,” said Casey.

While the number of decorations and lights continued to grow, so did the demand for power. “When we added the lights, we kept blowing up power lines,” said Dorene. “One year, when Mrs. Caboz turned on her lights, a transformer caught on fire and started a small brush fire.” And her next door neighbor began to notice that her appliances weren’t working all that well…

After many years of blown circuit breakers and incremental fixes by an army of electricians, San Diego Gas and Electric installed a new transformer – and the homeowners installed more electrical panels. “With all of the panels in our garage, we could run San Onofre,” joked Dorene. The average December bill? $2000. “We got a solar bid a few weeks ago. They said it would take 60 panels to run the display. We said, ‘nevermind.’”

Electricity isn’t the only complication: vandals have cut light cords, or deviously removed one bulb from a string of lights. At the McLaughlin house, it’s Casey’s job to find the empty socket. They also have to deal with folks getting a little too close. “We’ve had people walk into our house thinking it was an open house,” said Dorene. “Two guys helped themselves to our buffet – it was like The Wedding Crashers.” The McLaughlins have cones blocking their driveway because folks in the past have viewed the spectacle from the comfort of their cars—in the McLaughlin’s driveway.

Two doors down and over 20 years ago, a friendly competition began to brew between Mrs. Caboz and her daugh- ter, Carolynn. “It started with that window and grew from there,” said Nazare’ Judd Freitas. “Grandma Caboz actually enlarged her front window in order to accommodate Santa’s Workshop.”

“Growing up, you had to get used to things (dolls) moving in the house, and to people looking at you through the windows,” said Nazare’. She and her brother John Freitas recruited many friends to help out over the years – it was just what you did every Christmas. Now, John and Nazare’s children are part of the tradition. The names
The Nativity scene in the easement between the Freitas and Caboz houses is now encased in glass. “We’ve lost more than our fair share of Nativity scenes,” said Nazare, who noted that both houses now have video cameras. She also pointed out that prospective homeowners in the neighborhood sign a disclosure acknowledging that they may not be able to get into their driveway during the holiday season.

While the McLaughlins store some of their decorations off-site, the Freitas family just keeps building storage space. Their house sits on a one-acre lot with a spectacular view, which allows them to pursue other avocations such as raising chickens, growing wine grapes, and making wine in their on-site winery.

So – why do it? “Because of joy: we can see it – and hear it,” said Dorene. “It’s fun to hear kids come by and squeal. And it’s like feeling enveloped by lights … It’s a magical time of the season.”

Nazare’ shared Doreen’s sentiments. “There are so many generations who have enjoyed this: it’s for everyone.” In addition to the Nativity scene, the Freitas family sets aside a special window for Hanukkah.

“We never expected it to get so big, said Nazare. “But it’s about faith and family and community. If we have any regrets – it’s that we didn’t buy a certain item,” joked Nazare.

At the McLaughlins, the decorations come down the first weekend after New Years – and unlike the three to four weeks it takes to put up the decorations, it takes about three days to take them down. The Freitas/Caboz families take down their displays on January 6, the “Feast of the Kings,” which marks the visit to Baby Jesus by the three Kings or Wise Men.

What’s on tap for next year? More LED lights, re-doing windows, rearranging. When asked to look into the future thirty years, both Dorene and Nazare paused: they simply couldn’t image it any other way.
BUSINESS OWNERS:

It’s not too late to sign the petition to form a Business Improvement District in Point Loma!

What does it mean to you?

- Support for our local industry on the bay and in the Village
- A walkable community
- A voice for business
- Making Point Loma a destination - with attractive shops and services

Working together, businesses can build economic power that creates change and new opportunities in Point Loma.

More info? Call 619.295.5171
www.PeninsulaChamber.com