TREND REPORT
The Ethics of Community Leadership
By Jeffrey Wilcox
EXCLUSIVE TO THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Nonprofit boards are the training grounds for people to learn the fundamentals of what it takes to become a successful leader of communities. The goal is that, if every board member is developed into a responsible community leader while on a board, the members will move on to other worthy causes that will benefit from their knowledge and experience while building for themselves a progressive career of community service.

One of the least mentioned, yet fundamental, topics in developing community leaders is the topic of ethics. In its simplest form, ethics refers to those moral principles that people use to guide their decision-making. In the nonprofit world, the understanding and practice of ethical behavior cannot be overemphasized.

Approaches that nonprofit leaders choose to pursue about stewarding donated dollars, treating people in need with dignity, communicating with their stakeholders are constantly under the microscope. In the face of new competition that Bank of America executives now go so far as to call digital loan signing and mobile application services and the capabilities of ATMS are at the forefront of current banking technology investments, and in coming years some banking professionals expect to see technology advanced enough for real-time digital loan signing and payment transfers. Developing such technologies has become so crucial to the banking industry that Bank of America executives now go so far as to call them the ‘bright future’ ahead at Long Beach Airport despite new competition from Southwest

JetBlue Sees ‘Bright Future’ Ahead At Long Beach Airport Despite New Competition From Southwest

In the face of new competition from Southwest Airlines planning to introduce service this year at Long Beach Airport, JetBlue Airways officials said the airline sees a “bright future” at the airport, particularly with prospects for international flights on the horizon.

“JetBlue is proud of our 15-year history of delivering low fares and award-winning customer service to Long Beach,” said Morgan Johnston, JetBlue spokesperson, in statement sent to the Business Journal. “On behalf of our more than 700 locally based crewmembers, we look forward to a continued bright future at Long Beach Airport, including the potential of new, exciting international destinations.”

Early last month, the airport located four daily flight slots to international destinations.”

Facility A Must
U.S. Customs
Perspective:
Published's
Publisher's Perspective: U.S. Customs Facility A Must See Page 28

What’s Next For Boeing’s Massive C-17 Site?

Collaborating With Cities Across Nation To Develop Strategy For Repurposing Site

Two Tax Measures On June 7 City Ballot

More Perspectives:
29 – Inside City Hall
The Sex Trade In Long Beach
29 – Technology And Innovation
Empower The Wright Sisters
30 – HealthWise
Millions Experience Vision Loss
30 – Small Business Dollars & Sense
Avoiding The IRS Imposter Scam
30 – Effective Leadership
Organizational Brain Drain
31 – Reality Views
Multi-family Markets On The Rise
31 – Trade And Transportation
Freight Planning Taking Center Stage

Banking Technology: What’s Next?

By Samantha Mehlinger
Senior Writer

Long Beach voters have decisions to make on two local tax measures appearing on the June 7 ballot. Should the local sales tax rate be increased from the current 9 percent to a rate of 10 percent, as proposed by the Long Beach City Council? And, should an $850 million education bond measure suggested by the Long Beach Community College Board of Trustees be approved?

Both measures received unanimous approval from their respective elected bodies on February 23.

Sales Tax Increase

The Long Beach City Council has identified nearly $3 billion of infrastructure needs that require funding, including streets, sidewalks, alleys, storm drains, community buildings, etc. Additionally, the city needs to beef up its police department to battle a spike in crime that is impacting cities throughout the state. The number of police officers is currently at its lowest level since 2008. Lastly, in order to ensure adequate protection and fast response times, the fire department needs to put equipment into service.

The Long Beach City Council has identified nearly $3 billion of infrastructure needs that require funding, including streets, sidewalks, alleys, storm drains, community buildings, etc. Additionally, the city needs to beef up its police department to battle a spike in crime that is impacting cities throughout the state. The number of police officers is currently at its lowest level since 2008. Lastly, in order to ensure adequate protection and fast response times, the fire department needs to put equipment into service.
This Edition's Advertisers

Aquarium of the Pacific.................................................................14
Boulevard Cadillac........................................................................13
Bustamante, George/Warshauer, Steve/Jacques, Cameron – CBC BLAIR WESTMAC ..............9
Caldwell Banker Commercial BLAIR WESTMAC .....................9
City of Long Beach, Department of Financial Management, Purchasing Division .........15
Eye Physicians of Long Beach.........................................................13
Gaut, Roy – CBC BLAIR WESTMAC ...........................................9
Gems & Jewels Fine Jewelry .......................................................21
Grounds Bakery & Café .................................................................11
INCO Commercial ...........................................................................9
International City Bank ................................................................17
International City Escrow ..............................................................21
International City Theatre ................................................................20
Kafe Neo .........................................................................................11
Knightling ......................................................................................21
LB Walker Automotive ......................................................................11
Long Beach Symphony ..................................................................3
Milana's New York Pizzeria .............................................................11
Naples Rib Company .......................................................................15
Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network ........................................7
Port of Long Beach ...........................................................................Back Cover
The Queen Mary .............................................................................23
Volterra Dental ..................................................................................5
Wells Fargo .......................................................................................19

Who's Who Women In Business Advertisers

Alternative Divorce Solutions/Renee Shaffar ....................................23
Coldwell Banker Coastal Alliance/ Cindy Hinderberger .......................23
Coldwell Banker Star Realty/Mary Whirledge ......................................23
Gail Desilets, LMFT ...........................................................................23
Brigitte G. Dubil, ATR, LPCC, LMFT ...................................................23
Dynamic Designworks/Suzanne Mills-Winkler ......................................23
EcoCleaning Solutions/Monika Zuzanska ..............................................23
Emery & Emery/Alyson Emery ...........................................................23
Encore Awards/Jensen Rubber Stamps/Mu Zhang ..................................23
Executives Unlimited/Tomilee Tilley Gill................................................23
Eye Land Optometry/Christina Turner ..................................................25
FCI Management/Patricia Watts .........................................................25
FSC Securities/Karen Codman ............................................................25
Garnica Interiors/Joen Garnica ............................................................25
Gems & Jewels/Lourdes Valles .............................................................25
International Realty & Investments/ Ivy Arlinda Goolsby..............................25
J & L Jewelry/Ianis Krantz ..................................................................25
Keller Williams Pacific Estates/Barbara Irvine-Parker ...............................25
Keller Williams Pacific Estates/Andrea Testa .........................................25
Knightling/Kellie Sherrill ..................................................................25
Long Beach Spine & Rehabilitation/Marta Caliotto ....................................27
Minuteman Press/Hilda Sanchez .........................................................27
New American Funding/Patty Gadd .....................................................27
Outer Limits Tattoo/Kari Barba ...........................................................27
Pamela Kelly Communications/Pamela Kelly ..........................................27
Salon Indah/Charlene Ferry .................................................................27
Salon Medusa/Silvia Quinones ............................................................27
State Farm Insurance/Vali DeVries .......................................................27
Stephanie's Linens and More/Imelda Lorena R.H. ..................................27
Wellness-in-Motion/Janni Bualz ...........................................................27

Inside This Issue

4 In The News
• People News
• LBPD East Division Substation Opens On Willow Street
• Fire Department Promotes Nine, Recognizes Two
• City College Debuts New Students Services Center
• Beauty T@2 & Pink Ink Has Grand Opening March 5th

8 Newswatch
• Study Of Former Boeing C-17 Area, from Page 1
• Airport Director Francis Resigns; Heading For Oakland Airport
• Queen Mary Property Development Hinges On Several Issues
• BSNF Proposed Rail Yard Project Stalled In Court
• Two Local Tax Measures, from Page 1
• Mega Ship Benjamin Franklin Visits Port Of Long Beach
• The Loop Coming To Downtown Long Beach
• JetBlue Sees Bright Future, from Page 1
• Grand Prix Course Under Construction; Race April 15-17

17 Banking Industry
• Dodd-Frank Needs Fine Tuning, Say Bankers
• Banking Technology: What's Next, from Page 1

20 The Arts
• Evolve Theatre To Debut At Long Beach Playhouse
• Arts Council's Mobile ArtSpace Receives Architecture Award

24 Women In Business
• International Women's Day, from Page 1
• Long Beach Bar Association Led By Attorney Nyeleen Beljajev
• Noelia Rodriguez Is Highest Ranking Woman At Port Of Long Beach
• Brown Paper Press Aims For Great Writing, Design In All Forms

28 Perspectives
• Publisher's Perspective On Airport Customs Facility
• CalChamber Backs Renewed Effort On Federal Water Bill
• Inside City Hall: Why Sex Trade Is Bad For Long Beach
• Technology And Innovation: Empower The Wright Sisters
• HealthWise: Millions Of Americans Experience Vision Loss
• Small Business Dollars & Sense: Avoid Being A Victim Of IRS Scam
• Effective Leadership: Good Relationships Prevent Brain Drain
• Realty Views: Multi-family Market On The Rise
• Trade And Transportation: Freight Planning Taking Center Stage

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City Manager Appoints Marie Knight To Oversee Parks, Recreation & Marine

Long Beach City Manager Pat West recently announced that Marie Knight is set to take the reins as the city’s director of parks, recreation and marine effective in mid-March. Knight hails from the City of Orange, where she has served as the director of community services for the past nine years. In that capacity, she oversaw the city’s recreation services, parks planning and development, parks and facilities maintenance, and public information operations. Prior to that, she held the position of Newport Beach’s director of recreation and senior services. She has also served as the leisure services manager for the City of Garden Grove. Knight replaces George Chapjian, who resigned in June last year to take a similar position with Santa Barbara County. (Photograph provided by the City of Long Beach)

The Upton Property and Community Association recently named Tasha W. Hunter as its new Business District Manager. The association runs North Long Beach’s business district on Atlantic Avenue between Artesia Street and Market Street. In her new role, Hunter is responsible for operations related to rehabilitation projects, clean and safe programs, business support and community outreach. Hunter has worked with Long Beach City College, the Long Beach Unified School District, the Long Beach Community Action Partnership and other institutions. She has experience in large-scale event planning, including for the 2015 Uptown Beach Streets event. She is also a member of the Arts Council for Long Beach Board of Directors. Hunter holds a bachelors degree in film and television production from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a masters degree in film and television production from Chapman University. (Photograph provided by the Uptown Property and Community Association)

Glenn Mau Joins Long Beach Office of Miller Nash Graham & Dunn

The Long Beach office of law firm Miller Nash Graham & Dunn recently brought on Glenn Mau as an addition to its real estate and construction practice team. The firm services the West Coast, with an array of clients, including businesses, nonprofits and public entities. Its business clients represent many industries, including banking, biotech, construction, energy and others. Mau, who has more than 25 years of experience in this field, was previously an attorney for Archer Norris. He holds a bachelors degree from Creighton University and a law degree from Santa Clara University School of Law. (Photograph provided by Miller Nash Graham & Dunn)

Police Department’s New East Division Substation Holds Grand Opening

The City of Long Beach celebrated the opening of the new East Division Substation for its police department with a grand opening and community open house on February 20. The new substation is located at the former U.S. Army Reserve Center known as Schroeder Hall at 3800 E. Willow St. The facility, originally built in 1960, was renovated by Environ Architecture, a Long Beach firm specializing in restoring and repurposing historical buildings. Renovations included the addition of a mailroom, an evidence room, a gym with lockers and showers, reception areas, an ADA-accessible elevator and other improvements. Environ’s design included sustainable elements such as LED lighting, drought-tolerant plants, water-saving fixtures and more. The East Division of the Long Beach Police Department is relocating from its previous substation on Los Coyotes Diagonal near the traffic circle. The division’s service area encompasses the area from Del Amo Boulevard to the Pacific Ocean from north to south, and between the Orange County border to the east and the City of Signal Hill to the west. At the open house, community members were treated to facility tours and grilled hot dogs from the Long Beach Police Officers Association. Mayor Robert Garcia called the new substation a “testament to the city’s commitment to public safety.” Police Chief Robert Luna said his staff was pleased to make the move to the new facility. “We’re extremely grateful to have a professional environment that enhances our operations and is centrally located for the community we serve,” Luna said in a city statement. Pictured at the new substation is Commander Liz Griffin, who oversees the East Division. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Larry Duncan)

City College Names Nevin Head Of Superintendent-President’s Office

Long Beach City College (LBCC) recently named Miles J. Nevin as director of the Office of the Superintendent-President, Eloy Ortiz Oakley. In this capacity, he essentially functions as the office’s chief of staff, spearheading its administrative operations. Nevin was previously executive director of the California State Student Association, a part of the California State University (CSU) system’s Office of the Chancellor. In this position, he represented the 460,000 students attending CSU campuses as a liaison to the governor, CSU Chancellor Timothy White, and federal and state policymakers. He previously served as the director of public affairs for the association. Nevin also sits on the board of directors for the Long Beach nonprofit Children Today, and is an advisory board member for the Campaign for College Opportunity. He holds a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice and a master’s in public administration from CSU Long Beach. (Photograph provided by LBCC)

Congressmember Alan Lowenthal Discusses Legislation With SCAN Executives

Congressmember Alan Lowenthal (above right) recently paid a visit to SCAN Health Plan’s Long Beach headquarters to discuss legislative happenings in Washington, D.C. SCAN, a nonprofit, offers Medicare health plans in several California counties. “What you do is what I believe in,” Lowenthal said while visiting with SCAN CEO Chris Wing (pictured at left). “I believe in providing services and protecting the most vulnerable in our community.” Elected officials are regularly brought on tours with SCAN employees about making their communities better places to work and live. (Photograph provided by SCAN Health Plan)

Golf Tournament For Boys & Girls Clubs Of Long Beach Breaks Fundraising Record

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Long Beach charity golf tournament, held February 22 at the Virginia Country Club, raised more than $110,000 for the club – a record amount for the annual event. A statement from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Long Beach attributed the record fundraising to a change in the event’s format and the involvement of Ladies Professional Golf Association star Natalie Gulbis as the host. At the event, a $10,000 donation was also made by the Friends of Jerry Lessel, supporters of the club. “We thank all who participated for their generosity and support of more than 4,200 under-represented children and youth in Long Beach,” Trent Bryson, president of the club’s board of directors, stated. Bryson is also CEO of Long Beach insurance company Bryson Financial. In 2015, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Long Beach’s annual gala raised more than $1 million for the organization. To learn more about the club, visit www.bgclb.org or call 562/595-5945.

Catalina Express Announces New Departure Schedule

To celebrate its anniversary, Catalina Express is expanding its schedule of departures from Long Beach, San Pedro and Dana Point, beginning March 11. “We have comprised a new schedule to run more efficiently, giving our passengers more convenient departure times and to allow on-time departures and arrivals,” Catalina Express President Greg Bombard said in a company statement. Ferry service from Long Beach and Dana Point takes travelers to Avalon, while service from San Pedro also provides access to Two Harbors. The expanded Long Beach schedule includes earlier and later hours of operation, as well as more frequent and consistent service throughout the week. Visit www.catalina-express.com/schedule-fares.html to view departure schedules.

More In The News On Page 6
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In mid-February, the Long Beach Fire Department celebrated the promotion of nine of its own, two employees of the year, and a traditional badge ceremony held at the department’s headquarters. “These promotion ceremonies are a time-honored tradition that brings family, friends, and co-workers together to celebrate the achievement of those that are being promoted from within the fire department,” according to a statement from LBFD. Fire Chief Mike DuRoe presided over the event, where Police Chief Robert Luna and members of his department, as well as other city officials, were also in attendance. The following fire department employees were promoted: Aaron Fletcher to the position of rescue boat operator; Jon Breeden, Brian Mauga and Jeffrey Thralls to the position of fire engineer; and Charley Baker, Keith Dixon, Nicholas Kalt, Jim Farley and Edmond Smith all were promoted to the rank of fire captain. Leticia Garcia was named 2015 Civilian Employee of the Year, and Firefighter Will Nash was selected as the 2015 Firefighter of the Year. Pictured at right are, from left: Police Chief Robert Luna, Police Officers Nicholas Dyer, Robert Paul and Cory Lapworth, and Fire Chief Mike DuRoe. Pictured above, front row from left: Thralls, Nash, Fletcher, Kalt, Baker and Dixon. Second row, from left: Public Safety Dispatcher Michael Robideaux, Breeden, Farley, Mauga and Smith. Third row, from left: David Honey, administrative bureau manager; Christopher Rowe, assistant chief; and Richard Brandt, deputy chief. Back row from left are: David Kean, assistant chief; Gonzalo Medina, marine safety chief; Michael Sarjeant, deputy chief; Chief DuRoe; and David Segura, deputy chief. (Photographs provided by the Long Beach Fire Department)
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Study Of Former Boeing C-17 Site

(Continued From Page 1)

The City of Long Beach is one of four cities chosen to participate in the Daniel Rose Fellowship program, in which city leaders convene during a one-year period for professional development, leadership training and assistance with land-use challenges.

Mayor Robert Garcia, along with Deputy City Manager Arturo Sanchez, Deputy Director of Public Works and City Engineer Sean Crumbly and Planning Bureau Manager Linda Tatsum, who serve as team members of the effort, met with a panel of city leaders and experts who visited Long Beach on February 12. Senior Planner Carrie Tai is also providing assistance in the effort.

The fellowship panel includes city officials from three other cities chosen to participate in the program along with a wide range of experts. The three other cities in the cohort are: Denver, Colorado, which is looking to redevelop the Colfax corridor; Rochester, New York, which is considering a downtown revitalization; and Birmingham, Alabama, which is seeking investment to redevelop its civil rights historic district.

The fellowship program, which concludes in November, is made available through The Rose Center for Public Leadership, which is jointly operated by the National League of Cities and the Urban Land Institute.

During the panel’s visit to Long Beach, city leaders and experts toured the city’s study area, which includes a total of 130 acres of property.

Boeing officially shut down its C-17 assembly plant last year after the aerospace giant was unable to secure enough domestic and foreign orders to keep the manufacturing operation going.

The study area includes Boeing’s main assembly hangars, adjacent buildings and surrounding residential and commercial property.

Airport Director Bryant Francis Leaving For Similar Post At Oakland International Airport

By SEAN BELK
Staff Writer

Long Beach Airport Director Bryant Francis, who was hired a little more than a year ago, has announced he is resigning to take a similar post at the Oakland International Airport. His last day will be March 30.

Francis, who became Long Beach Airport director last January, replacing the airport’s former director, Mario Rodriguez, who held the job for five years and left to lead the Indianapolis International Airport, will serve as director of aviation for Oakland International Airport, which is under the authority of the Port of Oakland.

“I’ve had an invaluable experience as director of Long Beach Airport,” Francis said in a statement released on February 25 by the City of Long Beach. “I appreciate the community and our business partners for recognizing the airport as an important city asset. I thank the mayor, city council, airport advisory commission and city manager for their collective guidance. The Long Beach Airport team is among the best I have had the pleasure of working with, and I am confident they will continue to deliver exceptional service to our customers.”

According to the press release, the city will conduct a process to fill the airport’s leadership position. In the meantime, City Manager Pat West is expected to appoint an interim director to lead the airport until the selection process is complete.

In the press release, West commended Francis’ service to the airport and the city.

“I want to thank Bryant for his engaging and strategic leadership at Long Beach Airport,” West said. “He worked collaboratively with all stakeholders, including airport tenants, our commercial and general aviation partners, and the community.”

Francis’ departure comes as the airport and the city are grappling with the possibility of allowing U.S. Customs and Border Protection service at Long Beach Airport that would permit international flights.

In addition, the airport’s recent decision to increase the number of commercial daily flights has opened the door for Southwest Airlines, which was granted four flight slots, to begin servicing Long Beach as the airport’s newest air carrier.

During calendar year 2015, the airport experienced a decline in revenue due to a 10.6 percent drop in passenger traffic compared to 2014. Much of the decline was due to JetBlue not utilizing many of its allocated flights. Francis has stated, however, that passenger traffic is rebounding this year.

Additionally, just days prior to the announcement that Francis is leaving, the city council at its meeting on February 16 was scheduled to consider a “long-range master plan” for the airport. However, the item was withdrawn.

The master plan, according to a city staff report, would be arrived at through a “collaborative process with the community, airport stakeholders, the airport advisory commission and city officials.”

“Without an articulated long-range vision, the airport is subject to external pressures to pursue certain development objectives and opens itself up to suspicion and mistrust among certain airport stakeholders, including impacted communities,” the staff report states.

Curt Castagna, president and CEO of AeroPlex/Aerolease Group and president of the Long Beach Airport Association (LBAA), which represents businesses at the airport, told the Business Journal via e-mail that the interim and future new airport director should “be encouraged by city leadership to continue to engage businesses, airlines and community groups, so that the airport can maximize its economic development and revenue potential within established policy.”

“On behalf of the Long Beach Airport Association, we are grateful for the efforts Bryant Francis made as the director at Long Beach Airport and we wish him well in his new position in Oakland, where we know he will use his talents to excel,” Castagna said. “The news of his departure, while unexpected and unfortunate, can provide the City of Long Beach the opportunity to refocus on the airport as an asset of the city and again seek an experienced commercial and general aviation airport director. Given the programs that Bryant initiated and managed during his tenure, it is critical that the city not delay in continuing those programs.”
left by Boeing, which at peak production employed thousands of people.

She noted that industrial warehousing and retail might be potential uses but likely won’t provide the same high-paying jobs that Boeing once provided.

Zimbabwe said other cities have dealt with such an employment loss. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for instance, has transformed from a city once known for steel production to now having a more diversified economy, including tech firms such as Google, she said, adding that Long Beach is in an even better position to make such a transformation.

“In many ways, Long Beach is well poised because the market is very good in Southern California and Long Beach is proximate to a lot of exciting things that are happening in the region,” Zimbabwe said.

“That’s great, but it also means the city needs to get out in front of this and be proactive in terms of planning what they want this site to become.”

Development possibilities discussed during the study visit include: creating a “research park” in collaboration with local universities; bringing in a large tech firm; expanding what has already occurred at nearby Douglas Park with light manufacturing, industrial and office uses; or attracting big-box retail.

Zimbabwe said development at the site would most likely be strictly commercial since residential use would be prohibited because of noise impacts from the airport and possible land contamination.

The land comes with some restrictions, including Federal Aviation Administration requirements associated with buildings near a flight path and city zoning restrictions as it relates to the local neighborhood. However, there might be future opportunity for expanding land uses, she said.

Zimbabwe added that the program provides Long Beach city officials with a chance to receive a “disinterested opinion” from private sector experts, who don’t have a vested interest in any development in the city.

In a statement to the Business Journal, Boeing officials said the company is evaluating options for a “long-term property strategy,” including evaluating assets and the site’s historical value, and will be “making decisions in the best interest of Boeing and the surrounding community.” Boeing officials said no decisions have been made yet regarding the property disposition.

The fellowship panel recommended that the next steps for the mayor and city officials should be to establish relationships with CEOs of major landowners and anchor institutions in Long Beach and the region; assign a “development czar” with executive authority to coordinate the development effort; and form an internal steering committee comprised of key department heads.

The panel also recommended that city officials over the next six months focus on defining the market and create a clear list of potential users for the airport area under different scenarios.

The mayor and his team will be meeting with experts and city leaders for a Rose Fellowship retreat in Philadelphia on April 19.
Development surrounding the Queen Mary could include new outdoor entertainment venues with supporting retail, a boutique hotel, a mega-yacht marina and, perhaps, a residential component, according to recent demand analyses.

Whether such development is economically feasible, however, is still largely dependent on resolving various land-use, access and parking restrictions that have kept much of the property vacant for decades, city officials said.

Potential land uses were discussed on last month at a meeting of the 12-member Queen Mary Land Development Task Force, appointed by Mayor Robert Garcia to be the voice of local stakeholders in identifying preferred development alternatives for more than 43 acres of property.

“I’m hopeful that we will be successful,” said Michael Conway, the city’s director of economic and property development, in a presentation to the task force. “I’m excited to see the possibility of development on this land after so many years, but it’s been challenging.”

Last year, Los Angeles-based Urban Commons took over as the new master leaseholder of the Queen Mary, replacing Garrison Investment Group, which had invested $13.3 million in improvements to the ship since acquiring the leasehold in 2009 after former lessees went bankrupt and defaulted on loans.

Conway said the site’s “less than desirable” location, which has limited access points, tidelands lease restrictions and parking limitations, has created barriers for attracting development and has caused an inability to subdivide leases.

Potential land uses were first brought forward in a demand analysis conducted in 2013 by Los Angeles-based Economic & Planning Systems, Inc. (EPS) at the request of Garrison. The analysis identified two possible development scenarios.

Scenario One would include a 14-berth mega-yacht marina, a 150-room boutique hotel, an improved events area and 15,000 square feet of ancillary retail. The development, however, would also eliminate 429 parking spaces from the Queen Mary’s parking lot that currently has 1,600 available spaces, according to the study.

Scenario Two would include the three land uses (entertainment, marina and hotel) along with 370 multifamily residential units. The total development would take away 1,230 parking spaces from the Queen Mary.

Although the state prohibits residential uses in tidelands areas, Conway said the city might be able to work out a land swap, exchanging public land elsewhere in the city for tidelands property, similar to what was done to allow retail uses at the Pike. He also said entertainment venues in tidelands are required to have a regional draw.

Urban Commons hired Redondo Beach-based consulting firm Hurst Harrigan Associates, Inc., in June 2015 to conduct its own demand analysis. The lessee also hired Los Angeles-based Gensler Architects to guide the future development and continues to employ Evolution Hospitality to operate the ship’s hotel and John Thomas to serve as historical consultant.

Conway told the Business Journal in an e-mail that Hurst Harrigan worked off of the initial EPS study and presented city staff with a number of undisclosed proposals from tenants interested in a “unique entertainment and boutique hotel development” at the Queen Mary property.

“Hurst Harrigan assumed that the entertainment use identified in the EPS analysis was highly likely and conducted regional market analysis to determine likely tenants for such a development,” he said.

Conway added that Hurst Harrigan didn’t examine the possibilities of a mega-yacht marina or residential development. Whether or not development impediments can be resolved will ultimately become a factor in calculating residual land value (projected net operating income minus project cost and required rate of return) that will essentially underwrite the project and determine economic feasibility, he said.

The EPS study estimates that the total development cost for Scenario One would be $60 million, putting the residual land value at $7.9 million. Scenario Two would have a development cost of $183 million, with the residential units increasing the property’s residual value to $12.6 million.

Conway noted, however, that elimination of parking spaces caused by the new development stands to reduce the Queen Mary’s residual property value, further complicating development.

In addition, he said needed public infrastructure, such as streets and grading, has yet to be fully considered, adding that the city may have to assist somehow.

“We think at some point the city is going to have to participate in this,” Conway said. “We don’t know how, but it’s going to be challenging.”

Conway noted that Carnival Cruise Lines, which operates under an existing sublease with Garrison and a direct lease with the Port of Long Beach, plans to replace its “Miracle” cruise ship with its new “Splendor” vessel in early 2017, which increases the number of total cabins from 7,800 to 8,800.

As a result, the city plans to turn over full access of the Spruce Goose dome to Carnival to provide a more positive guest experience for embarking and disembarking passengers. City staff said the cruise line plans to invest up to $5 million in structural and safety upgrades to the historic dome, built in 1982 to house the Howard Hughes flying boat.

Currently, part of the dome is used by the Queen Mary for the ship’s annual special events, such as CHILL in winter. City staff

As part of the development plan for the Queen Mary area, Carnival Cruise Lines will be able to use the entire dome which formerly housed the Spruce Goose. (2014 Business Journal photograph)
said the ship’s lessee plans to invest in a new special events venue near the site to accommodate Carnival’s request.

In return, Carnival has agreed to provide about $2.5 million a year in passenger fees as a new revenue stream to pay for historic preservation of the Queen Mary, Conway said, noting that a previous method of charging “percentage rent” to the lessee for funding historic preservation is “unreliable.”

The city council last November granted authority for the city to enter a restated master lease with Urban Commons for operating the Queen Mary for a new 66-year term. Base rent of $25,000 a month or $300,000 a year will increase every 10 years with the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Under the new Queen Mary lease, the percentage of gross revenue Urban Commons is required to dedicate toward ship maintenance will gradually increase from 1 percent to 3 percent over five years, as the lessee plans to invest $20 million into the ship during that time, Conway said.

At its next meeting on March 2 at 5 p.m. at the Museum of Latin American Art, the Queen Mary Land Development Task Force will discuss circulation, transportation, parking impacts, connectivity to downtown and a “people mover” concept. The task force plans to take a tour of the Queen Mary property at its meeting on April 6.

Case Over BNSF’s Proposed Rail Yard Stalled In Court

By SEAN BELK
Staff Writer

A lawsuit over potential environmental impacts of a rail yard proposed by Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway near West Long Beach on Port of Los Angeles property continues to be held up in court, according to city officials.

BNSF’s nearly $500 million project to build a state-of-the-art rail yard called the Southern California International Gateway (SCIG) on a 153-acre site was halted almost three years ago after the City of Long Beach, the Long Beach Unified School District, multiple trucking companies, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and other environmental groups filed a lawsuit against the Port of Los Angeles, claiming port authorities had conducted a faulty environmental impact report (EIR).

On January 28, Contra Costa County Superior Court Judge Barry P. Goode was scheduled to hear oral arguments from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) on a matter regarding “due process” after the judge heard initial oral arguments from involved parties last November.

That court hearing, however, never took place. (Please Continue To Page 12)
BNSF Rail Project
(Continued From Page 1)
place because other matters came before the
court, Long Beach Assistant City Attorney
Michael Mais told the Business Journal in an
e-mail. He said the city is waiting for the
court to assign another court hearing date.

“Hopefully at that time the matter can be
concluded,” Mais said.

The judge is expected to make a ruling
on the project’s EIR after concluding oral
arguments at the next hearing, according to
the city attorney’s office. The judge would
have 90 days to render a final decision on
the case if oral arguments are concluded.

The lawsuit against the Port of Los An-
geles was filed in 2013, stating that the
port’s EIR failed to address possible health
risks to schools, a homeless shelter and res-
idential neighborhoods from increased air
pollution caused by the rail yard.

Port and BNSF officials, however, assert
that the project aims to reduce air pollution
by taking trucks off local freeways and im-
plementing zero-emission equipment. BNSF
officials have also expressed plans to create
a buffer to protect neighborhoods from air
and noise pollution while continuing efforts
to relocate port-related businesses currently
operating at the proposed rail yard site.

BNSF has been planning to build the rail
yard on property bounded by Sepulveda
Boulevard, Pacific Coast Highway, the
Dominguez Channel and Terminal Island
Freeway for decades. The plan is to transfer
cargo containers (from trucks to rail lines)
closer to port docks in order to increase ef-

ticiency and capacity. ■

Two Local Tax
Measures On
June & Ballot
(Continued From Page 1)

service that has been offline for a number of
years.

To meet these needs, the city council – at
the request of Mayor Robert Garcia – ap-
proved a measure that would increase the
sales tax for a 10-year period. The current
9 percent tax would be set at 10 percent
for the first six years, going into effect January
1, 2017, then reduced to 9.5 percent for the
final four years. At 10 percent, the sales tax
is expected to raise additional revenue of
$48 million annually.

The ballot measure is referred to as a
general tax, which requires a 50 percent
plus one vote for passage. But that also
means the additional money goes directly
into the city’s general fund instead of being
specifically earmarked for the needs listed
above. This raises the question: can voters
trust councilmembers to spend the money
as promised?

For example, seven of the nine city
unions are currently negotiating new con-
tracts, which may not be decided until after
the June 7 election. Also, the police and fire
unions’ contracts end September 30. Thus,
many voters are suspect as to the “real” use
of the additional funds.

To answer the trust question, the city coun-
cil agreed to establish a five-member citizens
oversight committee to review city expendi-
tures and to keep taxpayers advised of how
the additional sales tax money is being spent.

Toward that end, Councilmember Daryl
Superanw received the city council’s full
support to include the following text into the
sales tax motion: “In addition to this
citizen’s advisory committee, the intent of
this council action shall be considered in
any future expenditure of these monies. To
ensure that expenditures are consistent
with the intent of this body, any budget
recommendations regarding expenditures
associated with this sales tax shall be pre-
sented to [the Long Beach] Financial
Management [Department] for analysis
and review. Financial management shall
then prepare a report to the [city council’s]
budget oversight committee discussing
the recommendations and their alignment
with the legislative action that is being
taken by way of this motion. Further, fi-
nancial management will provide city
council with a quarterly report outlining
the work of the citizen advisory commit-
tee as well as any approved budget expen-
ditures. Although the actions of this
council and this mayor cannot bind the ac-
tual future council or mayors in regards
to the expenditures of the proposed
sales tax increase, this council can state
very clearly the intent of this action and
expect that the public should hold ac-
countable all future legislators in regards
to the expenditures associated with these
proposed sales tax increase revenues.”

Prior to the final vote, North Long
Beach Councilmember Rex Richardson
stated: “I have said it before and I am
going to reiterate it now. I think this pro-
posal is modest. It’s reasonable. . . . I don’t
know what the voters [are] going to do.

But I think they should have an opportu-
nity to help determine their fate. There’s
no question that our infrastructure is fail-
ing. There’s no question that we need to
double down on core public safety serv-
ces and our emergency response times.
But I don’t know that any solution is the
perfect solution. So I think that this is
modest, I think it’s reasonable. . . . So far
it’s demonstrated there is sort of broad
support for this. That said, I think we need
to send this to the voters.”

Following the vote, Mayor Robert Gar-
cia reiterated that he wanted to be clear
the city council is giving voters “the op-
portunity to make their voices heard at
the ballot box. It’s not an endorsement of
going in this direction. They will all have
an opportunity on their own to make
those decisions. But it’s giving the voters
the option.”

“This is now in the hands of the Long
Beach voters,” Garcia continued. “And
over the course of the next few weeks
and months ahead, there will be a robust
citywide conversation. . . . I want to
thank those that advocated to adding the
citizens oversight commission and
strengthening its ability to monitor these
funds as well.”

College Bond Measure
According to Eloy Ortiz Oakley, super-
intendent-president of the Long Beach
Community College District, the two-
campus college needs to add and renovate
classrooms and address other needs that,
once completed, will accommodate the
college and its students for half a century.

In a statement, the college outlined that
"the measure would upgrade science, engineering, and technology classrooms and labs; repair gas, electrical and sewer lines; fix leaky roofs; and improve earthquake safety, campus security, and handicapped accessibility, among other items."

The measure, which requires a 55 percent threshold for approval, will cost property owners $25 per $100,000 of assessed valuation on their property. For example, the owner of a home valued at $500,000 will pay $125 annually. The bond runs through the year 2062-63.

A key reason cited by school officials for the college’s third bond measure this century is that matching funds previously promised by the State of California to the college did not occur.

During the February 23 board of trustees meeting, several people spoke in support of the measure. Following the testimony, Board of Trustees President Doug Otto stated: “Tonight we’ve heard from students, faculty and community members who have spoken on how this bond measure will improve education and career training for our students. The college has a significant need to repair and improve our deteriorating classrooms so that we can continue to support 21st century student needs.”

A citizens oversight committee, which has been in place for previous city college bond measures, will continue to monitor how the money is spent, and provide reports to the public. ■

Long Beach Women Councilmembers Ask For Support Of Gender Equality

The four female members of the Long Beach City Council have teamed up to propose that the city officially support an international agreement affirming human rights and equality for women. The four councilmembers, including Vice Mayor Suja Lowenthal, 1st District Councilmember Lena Gonzalez, 3rd District Councilmember Suzie Price and 5th District Councilmember Stacy Mungo, have placed an item on tonight’s, March 1, city council agenda requesting that the city officially support the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), an agreement adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979.

While many U.S. cities have adopted the policy, the federal government has yet to officially recognize it. The women of the council are also proposing that the city manager identify a current city commission to work in tandem with California State University, Long Beach to conduct a gender analysis of the city. Based on results of the study, policy reforms consistent with CEDAW may be examined.

The city council meets at 5 p.m. at city hall, 333 W. Ocean Blvd. ■

– Senior Writer Samantha Mehlinger

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CMA CGM
Mega Ship, The
Benjamin Franklin,
Inaugurated In
Long Beach

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Senior Writer

The inauguration of CMA CGM’s Benjamin Franklin, the largest container vessel ever to call at a U.S. port, at the Port of Long Beach on February 19 symbolized the international shipping line’s faith in the U.S. economy and its desire to strengthen its presence here, Chairman and CEO Jacques R. Saadé said at the event.

The Benjamin Franklin is 1,300 feet long and holds 18,000 twenty-foot-equivalent units of cargo. The Port of Long Beach and Port of Los Angeles are both spending billions of dollars to upgrade their infrastructure to prepare for a future when such ships are commonplace.

During a speech at the vessel’s inauguration, Saadé said his firm chose to name it after Franklin, one of America’s founding fathers, because he was the link between the U.S. and France, where CMA CGM is based.

“By bringing the largest container vessel ever to U.S. shores, we are confirming our willingness to strengthen our presence in the United States,” Saadé said before a crowd of 600 people from industry, political and other backgrounds.

A post-release from CMA CGM indicated the company is confident in U.S. ports’ ability to handle vessels of this size in the future because of their ongoing infrastructure investments. The Benjamin Franklin’s visit to Long Beach was one of four trial runs to help American ports prepare for larger vessels. The ship’s first visit to a U.S. port was to the Port of Los Angeles late last year.

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Colorful Design To Activate Vacant Corner Of Ocean Boulevard And Pine Avenue

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Senior Writer

The long-vacant southeast corner of Ocean Boulevard and Pine Avenue is soon to be full of color and light, thanks to a contemporary outdoor event space designed by Los Angeles-based firm Stereo.Bot. The firm, which is partnering with architecture firm Gensler and landscape design company Valley Crest on the project, is perhaps best known for its colorful displays at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival.

With support from the City of Long Beach and the Downtown Long Beach Associates (DLBA), Vice Mayor Suja Lowenthal spearheaded the effort to activate the corner, which has gone unused since the Jergins Trust Building was demolished in 1985. Similar to structures the firm has created for Coachella, Stereo.Bot has designed a 600-foot-long, lightweight structure supported by aluminum and wrapped in colorful material. The Loop, as it has been dubbed, coils up from the ground and high into the sky. The design allows people to walk through and around it, thereby allowing movement from all street-facing sides of the lot, according to Alexis Rocha, leader of Stereo.Bot.

Gensler is assisting with the civic planning for the project, and Valley Crest is working on landscaping, Rocha said. He explained that the project will enhance connectivity from the corner to Victory Park, the convention center and South Pine Avenue.

Calling The Loop “a 24-hour cycle project,” Rocha said it is designed “to look great during the day and amazing during the night,” lighting up when the sun goes down.

The DLBA estimates The Loop will be installed this April, and that it will remain there for at least two years before a permanent development is selected for the property. In a news release, DLBA Place-making Manager Sean Warner stated that the project is designed to allow for many activities on site, such as the DLBA’s Live After 5 music events.

DLBA is going to oversee the project’s implementation, and plans to spearhead programming and events after it is installed. For more information about the project, visit www.theloopdlba.com.

First Phase Of Middle Harbor Recognized By American Society Of Civil Engineers

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Senior Writer

The first phase of the Port of Long Beach’s Middle Harbor Redevelopment Project, designed by local engineering firm Moffatt & Nichol, is receiving the American Society of Civil Engineers’ California Regional Award for Outstanding Construction Project of the Year.

Construction on the first project included creating a larger, stronger wharf terminal capable of handling automated equipment and the “world’s most advanced quay master planning and design services for larger ships and cranes with automation technology.”

In the firm’s statement, Project Manager Dan Allen explained that the design for the wharf was revisited several times to “address the ever-changing design criteria of larger ships and cranes with automation technology.”

The first phase of Middle Harbor is expected to be operational this spring, according to the port. When the second phase of the project is completed near the end of the decade, two aging terminals will have been combined into a modern terminal able to accommodate the world’s largest container vessels. The facility is operated by Long Beach Container Terminal, a division of Orient Overseas Container Line.

Team members assigned to the project will accept the award on March 18 at a banquet in Sacramento.

L.A. Superior Court Launches Conference For Young Women

The Los Angeles Superior Court is holding its first-ever Young Women’s Leadership Conference this Thursday, March 3, to provide a venue for more than 100 young women to learn about the legal profession and about a career on the bench. Student attendees are being selected from the county’s Teen Court program, a diversion program intended to prevent repeat incidents among young offenders. The event program includes several judges and justices as guest speakers, question and answer program including several judges and justices as guest speakers, question and answer sessions, and breakout sessions with legal professionals.

Twenty-eight L.A. County high schools are participating. The conference takes place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse, 111 N. Hill St., Los Angeles. For more information, contact the L.A. Superior Court’s Community Outreach Office at 213/633-1016.

**Some of the listed projects have scheduled mandatory pre-bid meetings, which may have already occurred due to publication lead times**
Toyota Grand Prix Of Long Beach Track Construction Underway; Race Weekend April 15-17

Construction of the racetrack for the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach kicked off on February 16, with Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia operating a Gehl forklift to place one of the first of more than 2,400 concrete blocks for the track’s safety system. Construction began on Shoreline Drive, at the race’s 10th turn. In all, the 1.97-mile, 11-turn circuit requires 14 million pounds of concrete to line the track, according to the Grand Prix Association of Long Beach, which oversees the race. Association staff will work more than 33,000 hours before race weekend on April 15-17 to place this concrete, put together 15 grandstands, and set up four miles of fencing. Work also includes bolting together 17,000 ties, and installing seven pedestrian bridges and seven giant screens for live TV coverage. Setup also involves installing “49 high-end hospitality suites,” two clubs, tents, electrical lines, portable restrooms, trash containers, and more. The Grand Prix includes the Verizon IndyCar Series, the IMSA Sports Car Grand Prix, the 40th annual pro/celebrity race, the Pirelli World Challenge, and other events. Portions of the track will also be used for the Long Beach ePrix, the only U.S. race of the FIA Formula E Series, which takes place on April 2. That race features all-electric vehicles. Ticket prices range from $32 to $142. For more information, visit www.gplb.com. Pictured at the construction kickoff are, from left: Jim Michaelian, president and CEO of the Grand Prix Association of Long Beach, Mayor Robert Garcia, and Peter Santillan, business manager, secretary and treasurer for the Laborers’ Union Local 1309. (Grand Prix Association photograph by Andy Witherspoon)

JetBlue Sees Bright Future At Airport

(Continued From Page 1)

Coast hub, since 2001 and was allocated three additional flight slots while Delta Air Lines, which also currently serves the airport, was allocated two additional flight slots. The airlines have up to 90 days from the point of notification to make flights available for sale and nearly six months to begin operating the new slots.

The nine additional flight slots were offered after a recent noise analysis declared that cumulative noise levels from aircraft have decreased at the airport. The airport is required under the city’s noise ordinance to offer additional flight slots to airlines if noise levels fall below the allowable noise budget.

According to the analysis, noise levels have reduced primarily because aircraft have become quieter. The additional slot allocation increases the airport’s total air carrier flight slots from 41 to 50.

As of February 26, Southwest officials had yet to announce destinations from Long Beach or when flights may become available, however, the Las Vegas Review-Journal has reported that the airline is considering Las Vegas as a potential destination.

Brad Hawkins, spokesperson for Southwest, which currently serves Los Angeles International (LAX), Burbank, Santa Ana and Ontario airports, told the Business Journal via e-mail that the airline looks forward to becoming the most convenient option for Southern California travelers.

“We carry more California travelers by air any day than any other carrier,” he said. “With our significant presence in both the Bay Area and the L.A. basin, we aim to offer relevant and attractive service at airports close to where people live and work. In the L.A. basin, Long Beach would represent our fifth service point. We aim to not just be the hometown carrier but also the most convenient carrier for Southern California travelers.”

Meanwhile, JetBlue has requested that Long Beach Airport consider offering international flights. As a result, the City Council agreed in January to move forward with a study on the feasibility of adding a federal inspection services (FIS) facility for U.S. Customs and Border Protection clearance. The city is expected to release the results of the independent study in July.

Johnston has stated that adding international flights for destinations south of the U.S. border would enable the airline to fully utilize all of its flight slots that now total 35. He said JetBlue is “excited to grow,” adding that plans for utilization of the airline’s additional three flight slots will be announced later this spring.

JetBlue Sees Bright Future At Airport

(Continued From Page 1)
Banking Groups Say Dodd-Frank Act Regulations Need ‘Fine-Tuning’ Or Consumers, Small Banks Will Suffer

It’s been six years since Congress passed legislation, known as the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, to overhaul the financial lending industry in the wake of the mortgage crisis and subsequent recession.

The legislation, which is still being rolled out, created a wide range of new regulations for banks within its more than 10,000 pages, and established the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) charged with preventing predatory lending and making it easier for consumers to understand mortgage terms.

The act also directed federal agencies to ensure the stability of large financial institutions deemed “too big to fail” whose collapse would devastate the economy.

According to state and national banking groups, however, a large portion of the provisions have had “trickle-down effects” on small community banks that had little to do with the mortgage crisis yet are now dealing with added costs for reporting and other requirements that if not amended will end up hurting consumers.

“This regulatory burden with all the attendant costs for staffing and so on is taking away resources that the banks would much rather be directing toward the communities that they do business in,” Rodney Brown, president and CEO of the California Bankers Association (CBA), told the Business Journal.

Earlier this year, a legislative package supported by Republican Alabama Sen. Richard Shelby, chairman of the United States Committee on Banking, to amend provisions of the act failed to pass in Congress. The legislation brought forward last year was backed by the CBA and the American Bankers Association (ABA).

Nevertheless, banking groups are still holding out for possible reforms. They acknowledge, however, that it may take some time for lawmakers to take a bipartisan look at the legislation, particularly during the U.S. presidential election season.

“We’re hoping that, as time goes by, the partisan view of Dodd-Frank dies down and we can start asking the practical questions and dealing with the practical issues,” said Wayne Abernathy, executive vice president of policy and regulatory affairs for ABA.

One area in need of reform, he said, is the “qualified mortgage” rule, which went into effect in 2014 and requires that creditors make a “reasonable, good faith determination of a consumer’s ability to repay any consumer credit transaction secured by a dwelling and establishes certain protections from liability,” according to the CFPB.

Abernathy said the rule “makes a lot of sense” on the surface but is “complicated to administer” and prevents banks from tailoring loans to a consumer’s financial situation.

The ABA last year proposed changing the definition of a qualified mortgage to include any mortgage a bank holds on its books, loosening standards for banks to allow certain loan types, such as for people who are rich in assets but have seasonal or sporadic income, he said. Abernathy added that such changes should be considered to ease the burden on small banks and help stabilize mortgage markets.

“They’re keeping it on their books so there’s a very strong incentive for the bank to get it right and make sure it can be paid off,” he said. “Having that kind of a definition allows the bank to say ‘let’s find the approach that will work for your circumstances.’

Some positive aspects of the Dodd-Frank Act, Brown said, include provisions that put in place simulations to ensure large Wall Street banks can deal with stressful situations.

However, increased capitalization, compliance-related reporting, credit reserve reviews and risk management requirements mostly intended for large financial institutions have spilled over the entire industry, particularly impacting small community banks, he said.

Brown said many banks have had to double the number of staff positions just to read, digest and understand the legislation’s expectations and then to conduct business that is in compliance with the added regulations.

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you’ll deal directly with local decision-makers
who have a genuine interest in your long-term success.
That’s our idea of truly personal business banking.
Dodd Frank Needs ‘Fine Tuning’
(Continued From Page 17)

“It’s very, very challenging for a half-a-billion-dollar asset community bank to shoulder the kind of added reporting and compliance that is required and trickle down from what was really intended from institutions much, much larger,” he said.
While some U.S. presidential candidates have tried to politicize the issue by supporting even more regulations and proposed breaking up big banks, Brown said such a move would be irresponsible in a time when the U.S. economy is rebounding.
“I think a lot of progress has been made,” he said. “Layering on more regulation rather than fine-tuning the regulations that are on the books would be imprudent.”
Brown added that, despite economic turmoil in other countries, the United States economy has improved greatly since the legislation passed in 2010. He pointed out that the nation would be at a “competitive disadvantage” with other countries if large banks were broken up into smaller financial institutions.
“As we try to do business in a world economey, we would be very disadvantaged because we would have smaller financial institutions trying to meet the needs of our businesses that require credit, payment and investment management services,” he said. “The community would tell you that they would rather have larger, well-managed and effectively run competitors as well as regional and community banks to compete against.”

Banking Technology: What’s Next?
(Continued From Page 1)

their bank “a technology company that provides financial services,” according to Brian Jones, regional operations executive for the bank. Jones is one of 11 executives in the U.S. who oversee geographical territories for the bank – Jones’ stretches from Paso Robles to south Orange County, as well as Bakersfield and Fresno.
“Our strategy is to simplify banking. We have been on that mission for awhile – to really make banking easy and transparent and accountable to our clients.”
Jones told the Business Journal. Bank of America has a $3 billion annual technology innovation budget to help achieve that end, he noted. “Even beyond that, within the financial services industry we have the most patents, with 2,500,” he said. While the bank develops its technology in-house, it also works with tech giants like Google, Amazon, PayPal, Facebook and Microsoft to develop and patent financial applications.
Wells Fargo, too, places a major emphasis on technological development, with its own in-house group devoted to tech innovation.
“At the end of the day, it’s really about being where the customer wants us [and] in the form the customer wants us,” Ben Alvarado, president of the bank’s Southern California Region, said. As Wells Fargo continues to make technological investments in platforms like mobile and online banking, the focus will continue to be on making processes quicker and more convenient for customers, he added.
“We know people love their phones and they use apps for just about everything,” Alvarado said. For that reason, Wells Fargo continues to update and add new features to its mobile application, which F&M continues to update and add new features to its mobile application, which F&M continues to update and add new features to its mobile application, which F&M continues to update and add new features to its mobile application.

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Brown added that, despite economic turmoil in other countries, the United States economy has improved greatly since the legislation passed in 2010. He pointed out that the nation would be at a “competitive disadvantage” with other countries if large banks were broken up into smaller financial institutions.
“As we try to do business in a world economy, we would be very disadvantaged because we would have smaller financial institutions trying to meet the needs of our businesses that require credit, payment and investment management services,” he said. “The community would tell you that they would rather have larger, well-managed and effectively run competitors as well as regional and community banks to compete against.”

Banking Technology: What’s Next?
(Continued From Page 1)

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Evolve Theatre To Debut At Long Beach Playhouse

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Senior Writer

Evolve Theatre, a new theater company with Long Beach roots, is making its debut at the Long Beach Playhouse’s Studio Theatre on March 18 with a new play entitled “Choosing Us.” Managing Director Kenny Allen and Artistic Director Ryan Weible are the founders and leaders of the theater company, which is dedicated to enacting positive social change through its performances.

Allen holds a bachelors degree in theatre arts from California State University, Fullerton and has worked in marketing and administrative capacities for the Segerstrom Center for the Arts. The Laguna Playhouse, Shakespeare Orange County and South Coast Repertory. Weible holds a bachelors degree in performance studies from San Diego State University and a masters in educational theater from New York University. In addition to roles directing and script-supervising productions in New York, Weible has directed more than 50 plays and musicals in California.

The two were inspired to have Evolve Theatre’s first project focus on transgender writers, who are also playing the lead roles. Allen told the Business Journal, “Throughout the play they get closer to finding out more about who they are and what love and family means to them, and finding out what their gender expression means to them.”

The play is being funded by an Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign, according to Allen, who stated that the new theater company is sourcing its funding from private donations.

In the future, Allen said Evolve intends to address whatever issues need the most attention, as suggested by the community. “Already we’ve had different community leaders and organizations that have been asking if we would consider doing a project in the future,” he said.

While “Choosing Us” is a traditional theatrical performance, Allen said future productions are likely to be done in the style of interactive theater, in which audience feedback and participation are sought during and after performances. Eventually, he would like to mount full seasons of performances.

“Choosing Us” performances take place March 18, 19, 25 and 26 at 8 p.m. at the Long Beach Playhouse, 5021 E. Anaheim St. General admission is $15, and the cost for students and seniors is $10. For tickets and more information about the theater company, visit www.evolvetheatre.org.

Arts Council’s Mobile ArtSpace Receives Architecture Award

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Senior Writer

The Arts Council for Long Beach’s Mobile ArtSpace – a transportable black cube that transforms into a space for arts events – was one of five winners of Architect Magazine’s Progressive Architecture Awards in February. The award ceremony, which also recognized projects such as a skyscraper in New York and an entire cultural district, took place at New York’s Museum of Modern Art.

The Mobile ArtSpace was designed by a team comprised of Los Angeles-based architectural firm 64North, along with BuroHappold Engineering, architecture firm Formation Associates, and artist Steve Roden.

Architect Magazine described the Arts Council’s cube as “mysterious and seemingly inert,” but noted that its creative design allows it to come to life at night; its sides light up and, before a show, a lighted balloon floats above it, acting “as a beacon to lure people to the site and the strange black cube.” For performances and events, its sides drop down, creating a flexible stage space. The cube is able to be transported via flatbed truck.

One of the jurors for the awards, Matthew Kreilich, said in an Arts Council news release that the Mobile ArtSpace has a powerful impact on culture. “It’s doing some things most architecture isn’t trying to understand,” he stated.

“The Progressive Architecture Awards embody the most innovative, ambitious architecture in the United States and worldwide,” 64North Director Wil Carson said in an Arts Council news release. “The Mobile ArtSpace is in many ways a perfect match for this award, given its radical redefinition of the role the arts can play in our city and community.”

The cube will continue be used throughout Long Beach, and perhaps later in other cities, according to the Arts Council. “The Arts Council is excited to host wildly diverse arts programming throughout the city – and in an award-winning architectural space,” Arts Council Board President Marco Schindelmann stated. “The architecture, along with the arts programming, will inspire.”

The Arts Council for Long Beach's Mobile ArtSpace is a transportable venue for arts events. The structure is designed as a black cube (above) with a shiny exterior that lights up at night; its sides drop down to create a reconfigurable stage (right) for hosting a variety of arts and cultural events. (Arts Council photos)
Women Business Owners

When it comes to women business owners and entrepreneurs, progress seems to be pacing somewhat faster. The National Women's Business Council (NWBC) recently released a report analyzing the preliminary results of the 2012 Survey of Business Owners by the U.S. Census Bureau, and cited encouraging figures.

From 2007 to 2012, the number of women-owned firms in the U.S. grew to make up 36.2 percent of all non-farm businesses—an increase of 29.6 percent. In that time, their total receipts increased by 35.1 percent to $1.6 trillion. These businesses employ nearly nine million people.

Amanda Brown, the executive director of the NWBC, pointed out that over the 10-year period from 2002 to 2012, the growth rate of women-owned businesses is even more impressive. “The numbers are crazy in terms of the surge that’s happening,” she said. “The number of women-owned firms has increased by 52 percent. Employment by these firms has grown by 18 percent, and then the revenues that are being generated by women-owned firms . . . increased by 51 percent in this 10-year period.”

Looking back even further, the growth comparison is more stark. “When you think about the council history, we were formed back in 1988,” Brown said. “The reason congress created us was because at the time there were a bunch of state laws that required a woman to have a male relative co-sign a bank loan if she was trying to get a bank loan. In 1988,” she emphasized. “Not even 30 years later, we have now hit this amazing milestone of 10 million women-owned businesses.”

Now is what Brown is calling “the tipping point” for women in business. “The momentum is there. . . . The appetite for entrepreneurship is there.” But women in business still face major barriers, particularly when it comes to access to capital. “We talk about parity a lot. In no way have we achieved that,” Brown said. “We have a long way to go until women are actually receiving the same sort of investment.” She continued, “I hate to say it, but it really does all come down to the money.”
International Women’s Day

(Continued From Page 21)

The federal government has a goal to allocate 5 percent of its contracts to women-owned small businesses, but it has yet to achieve that goal, Brown noted. Although women’s access to capital isn’t on par with men’s, it is improving. More women are receiving SBA loans, according to the NWBC’s recent report. And innovations like crowdfunding platforms are enabling more women to gain startup dollars and investments. For example, the NWBC’s report points out that at least 7 percent of venture capitalists are women, according to the NWBC’s recent report. And innovations like crowdfunding platforms are enabling more women to gain startup dollars and investments. For example, the NWBC’s report points out that 42 percent of Indiegogo’s crowdfunding campaigns are run by women.

When asked about the lower odds women have of advancing to higher levels within companies, Brown responded that “Progress is always slow.” She speculated that, in part, slow progress is due to generational issues.

Brown, a millennial, noted that it seems women in the generation prior to her were more competitive because fewer positions were available for women when they were coming into the corporate world. “There was like that one slot for a woman. And now, I think what you’re starting to see amongst even the younger generation, or millennials, you don’t really see that same sort of competition,” she said.

Brown’s own story, while not framed in the corporate world, is one that illustrates how women can progress through the ranks and succeed.

She started her career in college in 2005 as an intern for then-Senator Barack Obama. “When I graduated in 2007, I was actually planning to go to law school. And I moved to Chicago to go to law school and actually ended up going for a fundraiser for him,” she recalled. “This was like four months after he announced that he was running for president. And he convinced me that I should go work for him on the campaign and defier law school.”

After the election, Brown became assistant to the director to the White House Office of Political Affairs, and then moved on to the U.S. Department of Energy as an advisor for strategic planning. Finding the field of energy not suited to her, she moved on to become the national political director for the nonprofit organization Rock the Vote. In 2014, she became executive director of the NWBC.

“There were honestly very few things that could ever lure me back into the government, because it is such a bureaucracy and I am the ultimate millennial who wants to see things happen tomorrow,” Brown reflected. “This is a space where there is just so much work that needs to be done. And I am such a champion for women entrepreneurs.” Brown said she has a personal connection to her work, having watched her mother try time and time again to break the glass ceiling in corporate America as she grew up.

“We have made so much progress, but it’s one of those things where I think people get really excited about progress and then it’s like okay, we should stop doing all the work that we’ve been doing,” Brown said. “Now more than ever we have to double down. We have gotten the train moving. We can’t stop it or let it slow down. At this point it’s just got to keep going and we’ve got to keep it on track.”

“It’s a really exciting time for women in our country,” Brown concluded. “There is so much possibility for them.”

In Its 99th Year, The Long Beach Bar Association Is Led By President Neyleen Beljajev

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER

Senior Writer

Throughout her career, Long Beach resident Neyleen Beljajev has been guided and encouraged by accomplished female mentors. Knowing firsthand how such guidance can help put young professionals on a solid career path, as the newly installed 99th president of the Long Beach Bar Association, Beljajev is placing an emphasis on mentorship, as well as community outreach.

“Every year, there is such a need for mentorship, and it was shocking to me that there wasn’t an established mentorship program yet within the bar organization,” Beljajev told the Business Journal. She explained that, when the dean of her international studies department at Hawaii Pacific University hadn’t mentored her and suggested she go to law school, she might not be where she is today.

“That’s why I’ve started a mentorship program this year: not only to bring in new members, but as a way to bridge the gap between the new members and the members with so much more experience in the law and in the work-life balance?”

After graduating from Loyola Law School, Beljajev worked for Los Angeles law firm Girardi Keese for eight years until launching her own firm, Beljajev Law Group, this past November. Her clients are predominantly women business owners. She has been a member of the Long Beach Bar Association since 2010, when she came on as a board member.

“So many women have helped guide me to where I am today, and, if they weren’t for them, I don’t think I would be able to manage having a successful law practice, leading the bar, having two children and a nearly decade-long marriage,” Beljajev reflected. Her mother, her former college dean, and 2nd District Court of Appeals Justice Judith Ashmann-Gerst, whom she worked for in law school, have all provided valuable mentoring and guidance, she noted.

“It’s particularly important for women in law to support and guide one another, according to Beljajev. “We face unique challenges in that we have to decide how to make a work-life balance work – and that’s not an easy task,” she said. Of all the women she attended law school with, about half of them have already retired or gotten out of the business, she said.

“When I was pregnant with both my children, the most common question I was asked was whether I was coming back to work,” Beljajev recalled. With student loan debt and a mortgage, she never second-guessed that she would go back to work. “Not only that, but I have worked so hard for my career. . . . My entire identity is wrapped in my career. It never occurred to me that I wouldn’t go back to work,” she said. Changing the perception that women who are mothers cannot or should not continue on with their careers is “a massive challenge,” Beljajev said.

When asked if she feels there is gender parity in terms of women in law being able to advance to senior levels or earn as many billable hours, Beljajev replied, “I think that looking at the numbers of female equity partners [and] of women who are name partners – looking at those numbers will tell you the answer to that question.”

The National Association of Women Lawyers recently released its ninth annual survey on the status of women in law, which found that 18 percent of women comprise equity partnerships in the U.S. – only 2 percent more than in 2006. The survey also found that “the typical female equity partner earns 80 percent of what a typical male equity partner earns, down from 84 percent in the first survey.” Female equity partners typically bill for only 78 percent of what their male counterparts bill; however, these women reportedly worked a median of 2,224 hours, while men worked 2,198.

“To resolve these issues, “We need strength, and that strength comes from mentorship,” Beljajev said. “If you don’t find mentors within your own law firm, then look outside your firm.” She continued. “That’s why the Long Beach Bar Association’s mentorship program is really important.”

As the association’s new president, Beljajev is also placing an emphasis on giving back to the community. Each month this year, the association is going to contribute – either through services or other means – to local organizations.

“This month we’re focusing on For The Child, which is a phenomenal organization,” she said. Based in Long Beach, For The Child is dedicated to helping families and children build lives free of abuse, neglect and violence.

One of For The Child’s programs provides calm, friendly places within nine Los Angeles County Superior Court houses for children who have to come with the parents or guardians. Each child is given a book to take home, according to Beljajev. To support this effort, the Long Beach Bar Association is holding a book drive this month.

“I love the work that I do at the Long Beach Bar,” Beljajev said. “It’s a great place to give back and grow our network.”

Like the City of Long Beach, the association is made up of diverse members, she noted. As the youngest female president and the second Mexican-American to lead the association, she hopes to build upon that diversity, and infuse new energy and ideas into the organization.
March 1-14, 2016

Who’s Who

Women In Business

Renee Shaffar, E.J.D., Certified Divorce Mediator
Alternative Divorce Solutions

Renee Shaffar completed her undergraduate degree in Business Management at Pepperdine University. Renee’s own divorce experience propelled her to go to law school. She studied and earned her Executive Juris Doctorate at Concord Law School. After completing law school, Renee trained directly under the founder-owner of Alternative Divorce Solutions (ADS). Lani Baron, Esq., at the ADS Institute of Best Practices. Renee is now proud to be part of the team that once guided her through her own divorce and honored to make a positive impact on the lives of families in the Long Beach area.

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Cindy Hinderberger, REALTOR® – CalBRE #01902607
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Cindy is dedicated to serving the community and has a true love for helping others. She sees the big picture and the small details. She educates clients on the buying and selling process as it is just as important as finding the right property. You’ll see the difference with Cindy. She is a Master Certified Negotiation Expert, has Certification in Relocation, can assist in 1031 Exchanges, Member of Estate Planning Trust Council of Long Beach. Keeping Clients Happy . . . One Home at a Time! Everyone Knows it’s Cindy!

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Mary Whirledge, Realtor
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A Real Estate professional for well over 20 years, Mary Whirledge is a member of Pacific West Beach of Realtors, California Association of Realtors and National Association of Realtors. She holds a RCS and an e-Pro designation defining her dedication to continuing education. Mary shows versatility with a foreclosure/short sale designation as well as being a Corp. Relocation and Coldwell Banker Specialist for high end properties. Besides being a listing agent Mary holds a designation as an Accredited Buyers Representative. UC Davis prepared Mary with strong public relations and economic skills to negotiate in today’s challenging market. Call Mary today for all of your Real Estate needs.

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Brigitte G. Dutil, ATR, LPCC, LMFT

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender community continues to face challenges and prejudice. It is important for service providers to know and understand how these difficulties can negatively impact us, our families, and our children. I provide a safe, compassionate, and nurturing environment to help clients feel better able to share their thoughts, fears, and goals. As a Family Mediator, Parenting Plan Coordinator, and Collaborative Divorce Coach & Child Specialist I assist people in reaching an agreement or settlement when terminating a relationship, addressing post-relation issues, or establishing parental and or custodial agreements.

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Suzanne Mills-Winkler, President
Dynamic Designworks, Inc.

Suzanne is the owner of Dynamic Designworks, a cutting edge digital marketing agency, specializing in social media. She started her company in 2001 as a partnership with her development firm for the toy and entertainment industry. In 2010 she expanded her services by launching Blop Toys’ award-winning Squinkies social media campaign. Suzanne leads a talented staff of designers and marketing strategists providing cutting edge paid media, social management, design services and in-depth reporting for all their clients’ social media channels. Suzanne has called Long Beach home for more than 25 years. She is very active in the community honoring her time as PR Chair of Steel Magnolias.

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Monika Zuzanska, Founder
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Monika Zuzanska is the owner and founder of EcoCleaning Solutions, Inc. She has been actively involved in the cleaning service industry since 2003. Monika’s house cleaning service grew over the years. Her commitment to each and every homeowner is to provide the highest quality service in every home and business on every single visit. Monika has dedicated this business to helping homeowners and businesses protect their investments while maintaining clean and healthy living and working environments. She also participated in Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program. Monika welcomes your inquiries and looks forward to talking with you.

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Dr. Alyson Emery, Owner
Emery & Emery

Dr. Alyson received her B.S. from UCLA and her D.D.S. from the University of Pacific School of Dentistry. She has practiced dentistry with Dr. Doug Emery in Long Beach for over 25 years. She prides herself in providing high quality dentistry while making patients feel very comfortable. Dr. Alyson believes in being part of the community and has volunteered for numerous organizations. She is a past President of The Harbor Dental Society, LB Chamber Women’s Council, and National Charity League. “The most meaningful volunteer work I do is providing dentistry to the young ladies in the Pathways to Independence program.”

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Mu Zhang, President
Encore Awards/Jensen Rubber Stamps

Mu Zhang is the industrious owner of Encore Awards/Jensen Rubber Stamps. She combines her engineering degree with having worked for a Fortune 500 corporation and years of manufacturing expertise to operate her business. Mu has expanded Encore Awards from not only retail but also to wholesale and promotional product lines. She is prominent in the local business community and is a member of several Boards of local non-profits. Some of Encore’s accounts include the Academies of Motion Pictures and Country Music, and many local businesses. Mu’s business recently received the Signal Hill Chamber of Commerce’s Year of the Award 2015 Award.

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Tomilee Tilley Gill, Founder & President
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In 2001, Tomilee founded Executives Unlimited, a national retained executive search firm, after a successful career in commercial banking and finance. Her demonstrated business acumen and ability to thoroughly evaluate her client’s business and their corporate culture sets her apart from other recruiters. Tomilee has successfully worked in many industries including: consumer products, apparel, manufacturing, distribution, education, banking, and health care, in addition to not-for-profit. Her tenacity towards finding the most qualified executive talent to best fit the needs of the client’s company, along with her integrity and commitment to quality, is what allows Executives Unlimited to succeed today.

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Women In Business
Beyond Limits: The Port’s Head Of Communications Reflects On A Storied Career And Leaving The Door Open For Others

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER
Senior Writer

Noelia Rodríguez’s recent arrival at the Port of Long Beach comes at a time when there are some big “firsts” for women in the harbor department: the port is being led by its first female-majority board of harbor commissioners, and, for the first time in its history, the board has all female officers. Then there is Rodríguez herself, who as the first managing director of communications is also the only woman who has an office behind the glass doors of the harbor department’s 8th floor executive suite.

Rodríguez has been a “first” on more than one occasion. But to her, breaking the glass ceiling — or in this case, the glass doors — is not nearly as important as ensuring those doors stay open behind her.

“I have been in my career, a number of times, the first fill-in-the-blank. And of course, I have been very proud of that,” Rodríguez told the Business Journal in an interview. “But to me, my personal measure of success for myself is not that I was the first, but what I did to make sure that there was a second and a third and a fourth.”

After six months at the port, Rodríguez hasn’t quite finished unpacking her photos and other memorabilia, but the pictures that do adorn her office give a glimpse into her varied career in communications. As the first and longest-serving press secretary for First Lady Laura Bush, it’s no wonder there are a number of framed photos labeled with the words “compliments of the President” in Rodríguez’s office. Casually propped on a chair against a wall is quite possibly the most striking of these photos, in which, in the center of the oval office, President George W. Bush embraces her.

Prior to her service at the White House, Rodríguez began her career at Southern California Edison as a corporate spokesperson. From there, then-Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan took her on as his press secretary, and later bumped her up to the position of deputy mayor overseeing communications and scheduling. In 2000, Riordan appointed her to the position of president and CEO of the L.A. Convention 2000, which hosted the Democratic National Convention.

Riordan impressed upon Rodríguez the understanding that she is no less important than anyone else, no matter what that person’s position, she recalled, adding that the former mayor’s guidance helped build her confidence. “He always said to me, ‘Don’t call him Mr. So-and-so. He’s John,’” she said. “As a woman, I think we need to remember that. Don’t give away your power,” she continued. “Even by a simple gesture like saying to somebody, ‘Yes sir.’ You know, in our society there is a connotation when you say something like that, that you’re basically telling someone they’re more important than you are.”

In 2001, Rodríguez moved on to the White House to work for the First Lady. “The White House is an experience in and of itself. It’s something that is a very small club, of course,” she said. Some of the most memorable moments of her career and life took place there, such as being introduced to Pope John Paul II at his summer residence in Italy by President Bush (another framed photo she has in a box somewhere, she added), or being part of a White House luncheon for famed baseball players like Sandy Koufax and Hank Aaron.

“Of course the No. 1 experience was 9/11. That changed the course of history,” Rodríguez said. “It changed all of our lives individually, and it really was a time when we lost our innocence as a nation. And I was there front row and center for that experience. It just really changes you,” she reflected.

“Every day since, I have always felt so fortunate to be an American,” Rodríguez continued. “The unity that we saw in the days and months after that was amazing. I wish that we could get back to that feeling as a nation.” The unity and bipartisanship that prevailed in America following 9/11 reflects her own values and worth ethic. “I really miss the days of bipartisanship. I lived it, I have been a lifelong Democrat working for Republicans, even at the White House,” she said. “I am very proud of that, because I am able to see both sides. And not everybody has either that ability or desire.”

Following her time at the White House, Rodríguez’s positions have included chief of staff for the Broad Foundation, vice president of corporate communications for Uni-vision, director of communications for the City of Irvine and director of Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum for political speech and debate. Immediately prior to joining the port, she was the chief communications officer for Metro Los Angeles.

A dedication to public service, a love for international matters and the persistence of Port of Long Beach Chief Executive Jon Slangerup are what brought Rodríguez to her current position. “I have to give kudos to Jon Slangerup, because he was very gracious and persistent in asking me to join the team. It wasn’t ‘something I sought,’” she said.

As managing director of communications, Rodríguez oversees the port’s government relations and communications bureau. “The priority is to really integrate the two so that they are working hand in glove,” she said. “It’s one thing to have the government relations team and our legislative agenda on behalf of the port and working with the mayor’s office on behalf of the city, but if we’re not coordinating with the communications team, including community relations, so we can maximize our impact not only here in Long Beach but [also] across the country, then I don’t think we’re doing the job the best way possible.” Rodríguez’s first day on the job at the Port of Long Beach was the same day Harbor Commissioners Lori Ann Farrell, Lou Anne Bynum and Tracy Egoscue became the president, vice president and secretary of the board. “I thought, wow, this is going to be a ‘chicks rule’ kind of a place,” she recalled.

Chief Executive Slangerup has appointed and promoted women to high-level positions since he joined the port in 2014, Rodríguez noted. “I am not saying it’s enough. More needs to be done and more will be done. But the important message is that there is forward motion, and that’s a good thing.” The harbor department’s efforts to encourage and promote women aren’t limited to its own ranks, she noted. The port sponsors a yearly event called the Women In Trade luncheon, in which high school girls are able to talk to women working in the field of international trade and learn about career opportunities.

While Rodríguez acknowledged that women, including herself, have faced and continue to face challenges in the business world, she said she has chosen to look beyond that as she has moved through her career. “It’s a great time for women in business, and the limits are your own imagination. I know that’s my limitation,” she reflected. “My advice is, don’t limit yourself,” Rodríguez said. “Look at where the opportunities are, because they might come in shapes and sizes and colors that you never would have expected for yourself.”

Noelia Rodríguez assumed the newly created position of managing director of communications for the Port of Long Beach about six months ago. In her career, she has served in such capacities as press secretary to First Lady Laura Bush and, most recently, chief communications officer for Metro Los Angeles. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Larry Duncan)
Dr. Christina Turner, OD, MS
Eye Land Optometry

As a California board-certified optometrist, Dr. Christina Turner has dedicated her career to providing the best vision care in a wide range of health care settings. She earned her Doctor of Optometry from Southern California College of Optometry in 2011. Prior to her training in Optometry, she received a Master’s of Science in Health Care Administration at CSULB and a Bachelor’s in Chemistry at UCSB. Her volunteer work has been variably impaired during her undergrad studies motivated her to pursue a career in Optometry. Her dream was always to own her own practice and that came true one year ago when she purchased Eye Land Optometry in North Long Beach and is enjoying the opportunity to serve her local community.

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Patricia Watts, Founder, President & CEO
FCI Management

Ms. Watts is the founder, President & CEO of FCI Management. FCI provides expertise, knowledge and leadership to its customers by delivering innovative strategies and solutions in the energy and water industries, creating a sustainable global environment. With over 30 years of experience in the utility industry, Ms. Watts has held management positions in customer service, energy services, marketing, public affairs, and community relations. Ms. Watts is also an executive member of several boards (VP of the Low Income Oversight Committee and Hall of Fame Inductee for the National Association of Women Business Owners), in addition to other prestigious organizations.

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Karen Codman
Karen Codman/FSC Securities Corp.

Karen is an Investment Advisor Representative with FSC Securities Corp. and an Accredited Investment Fiduciary. She has been a financial planner for 14 years. Karen specializes in providing her clients with innovative strategies that are inspired by your unique situations. Karen guides you in defining your vision for the future, and nurtures your portfolio to help you fulfill that vision. If you are an entrepreneur, Karen will help you integrate your personal financial goals and your business benefits and retirement solutions to achieve the best results. Karen’s motto is “Distinctive Financial Strategies designed for your life.”

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Joen Garnica, President/Principal Designer
Garnica Interiors Inc

Joen Garnica is a visionary whose determined spirit and work ethic helped her create an award-winning interior design firm that has been in business for over 12 years in Long Beach's revitalized downtown; an area she also calls home with her twin boys and husband Diego. Her desire to help her clients create beautiful, functional interiors is what drives Joen to help her community as a member of several community boards and as President of the East Village Association. Joen is currently working to become Long Beach’s 2nd District Councilwoman in order to continue to make Long Beach a better place.

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Barbara Irvine-Parker, Realtor Associate
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Barbara obtained her California Real Estate License in 1977. As a seasoned agent, she continues to receive ongoing training and has developed tried and true marketing strategies. Her accomplishments have hinged on two points: providing the highest degree of professionalism and expertise; and providing quality service and communication. Barbara has called Long Beach/Signal Hill her home for more than 25 years. "My professional networking through National Association of REALTORS®, California Association of REALTORS®, and the Women's Council of REALTORS® has proven to be invaluable in maintaining a powerful connection between my business and community."

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Andrea Testa, Realtor
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Formerly the founder of FreeSpirit Yoga, Andrea obtained her California Real Estate License in 2013 and was honored with Rookie of the Year, Volume, for 2014. Her clients and vendors boast her professionalism, availability, communication, resourcefulness and service. She’s a member of National Assoc. of Realtors, California Assoc. of Realtors, Women’s Council of Realtors, and International Women’s Leadership Assoc. Andrea’s also a community liaison for Brick Knolls Business Improvement Assoc., member of the Senior Advisory Council for the Senior Activities Center at Expo, is on the non-profit KW Cares committee, and on her Church Council at Cal Heights United Methodist Church.

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Lourdes Valles, Founder
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Lourdes Valles is a local resident and founder of Gems and Jewels Fine Jewelry and Repair. Lourdes is a diamond expert and is a graduate of the Gemological Institute of America. Lourdes is a proactive member of the community. When she is not in the office, she is out organizing neighborhood clean up events. She is also a member of the BKBA. Gems & Jewels carries national brands like Citizen and Honora Pearls. The services we offer include watch repair, jewelry design, engagement rings, Certified Diamonds, Jewelry appraisals, and jewelry tailoring. We have a full production workshop located inside our Bixby Knolls showroom.

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Kellie Sherrill, President
Knightling Inc.

Kellie Sherrill founded Knightling, Inc. in 2007. Initially beginning as a graphic design firm, it swiftly grew into the website design firm it is today. While Knightling still provides branding, graphic design and website services, it is dedicated to helping clients to bring Knightling's specialty is small business websites. Whether you have one employee or 50, Knightling can help you achieve that perfect first impression online. People coming back for more as you truly capitalize on the resource a great website can be. Every website Kellie creates is mobile friendly and optimized for SEO. Kellie is a member of and the Executive Director for the Executives Association of Long Beach.

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Who's Who in Business

March 1-14, 2016
Long Beach Business Journal 25
Owners Of New Book Publishing Company In Long Beach Aim For Great Writing And Design In All Forms

Award-winning journalist Wendy Thomas Russell and local architecture writer Jennifer Volland have set out on a mission to prove that there is still demand for great storytelling, even in today’s fast-paced technological age.

The two moms and self-made entrepreneurs, who met through their daughters and a mutual love of books, teamed up two years ago to launch a new independent book publishing company called Brown Paper Press.

The goal was to develop a model that would fill “gaps” they said exist among publishing houses, such as large New York presses ignoring the relevance of niche books or small publishers disregarding the importance of design. They also want to lend a professional hand to authors uninterested in self-publishing, often considered a “vanity” project.

Through the use of e-books and print-on-demand technology, in which a certain amount of copies are ordered as demand grows, more publishing opportunities have become available to authors, said Russell, a former Long Beach Press-Telegram reporter.

“It is completely shifting how people get books and how they produce books,” she said. “It has opened up this breeding ground for people like us who want to come in and take advantage of what’s available for people who really deserve to be published.”

Brown Paper Press employs a team of outside professionals and has partnered with IngramSpark, a subsidiary of major distributor Ingram Content Group, for print-on-demand services, making books readily available at bookstores and in libraries.

Having an outside firm handling distribution frees up time to focus on editing and design while reducing waste, since books aren’t stored in warehouses, Russell said.

The main goal of the company, currently available in a new environmentally friendly way. The two moms are holding copies of their latest titles at Barnes & Noble Bookstore in Long Beach, where the books are sold. Two of those are pictured at right: “I’m Dying Here: A Life in the Stacks,” by Press-Telegram columnist Tim Grobaty, and “Burdens By Water: An Unintended Memoir,” by university professor Alan Rifkin. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Larry Duncan)


Russell said the idea for the book, which came to her very, very fast . . . “I keep thinking, ‘this is really good and there’s nothing out there like it.’ We are at a time and a place in our history in America that it’s a perfect time to talk about tolerance.”

At first, adding that they plan to take their time to build a reputation as a quality press.

Wendy Thomas Russell, left, an award-winning journalist, and Jennifer Volland, a local architecture writer, launched a new book publishing company in Long Beach two years ago that utilizes print-on-demand technology to make books readily available in a new environmentally friendly way. The two moms are holding copies of their latest titles at Barnes & Noble Bookstore in Long Beach, where the books are sold. Two of those are pictured at right: “I’m Dying Here: A Life in the Stacks,” by Press-Telegram columnist Tim Grobaty, and “Burdens By Water: An Unintended Memoir,” by university professor Alan Rifkin. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Larry Duncan)

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Russell said the company also doesn’t plan on becoming a regional press or working solely with local writers, although there are many talented authors in Long Beach and they hope to energize the local cultural scene. She said the company is already mining talent from across the nation.

Russell and Volland, who tend to duties as mothers and have other writing projects, said they don’t consider the company a “hobby” but aren’t expecting major growth at first either, adding that they plan to take their time to build a reputation as a quality press.

The future of book publishing, Russell said, is one that not only puts stock in great writing and design but also embraces books in all formats, whether print or online. She said the company prides itself in being environmentally friendly through the use of print-on-demand technology and e-books.

“I’m an avid e-book reader, but print is absolutely not going anywhere anytime soon,” Russell said. “And to be successful right now in publishing you have to go to both.”

Grobaty and Rifkin will be signing copies of their books on April 2 at Barnes & Noble at 6326 E. Pacific Coast Hwy. in Long Beach, and April 18 and 19 at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books at the University of Southern California.
Bring out your professional BEST! Through personalized speech presentations of civil service employees who speak to community groups. Services, City of L.A., said, “Your seminars improved the presentations, clarity in pronunciation, vocal power and credibility in presentations, helping you to be the best you can be, naturally.”

Pamela Kelly, Owner
Pamela Kelly Communications

Dr. Pamela Kelly has been serving Long Beach communities for 18 years. When treating a patient she considers the whole person. She is a Certified Chiropractic Sports Practitioner and is currently working on her Diplomat in Sports Medicine. Honored with the CA Chiropractic Association’s 2007-08 “Doctor of the Year” award, she is a team doctor for USA Volleyball and was the Chiropractic Consultant for the Orange County Roller Girls from 2009-2011. Emphasizing biomechanical health and fitness, customized nutritional requirements and exercise programs, focusing on individual needs and goals, helping you to be the best you can be, naturally.

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Charlene Ferry, Owner
Salon Indah

Salon Indah is a full-service salon with a unique style that accompanies its friendly and down-to-earth atmosphere. Operating out of the same location for the past 25 years, they’ve built a committed clientele of all ages that include both men and women. Recently certified in organic natural hair color, owner Charlene Ferry is committed to providing natural treatments and organic products, which are available for purchase. They also offer makeup services, waxing, spray tanning, massage and organic facials. Stop by Salon Indah for a free consultation, refreshments, and check out their promotions on Facebook, Yelp and on their Website.

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Hilda Sanchez, President
Minuteman Press

Hilda Sanchez is the President of Minuteman Press of Long Beach, which she and her husband Dave Rigby established in 2002. Minuteman Press is a printing, design, marketing and promotional products firm. It’s a one-stop shop for all your printing needs and is nimble enough to meet your pressing deadlines. The company has received numerous awards in recognition of its quality, customer service, graphic design and community involvement. Hilda serves on several local boards and the company is active in the Long Beach Chamber of Commerce and the Printing Industries Association of Southern California.

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Imelda Lorena R.H., Owner
Stephanie’s Linens and More

Stephanie’s Linens and More is the only name you need to know for the best party supplies in the area. Amazing selection and even more amazing prices available. Backed by 15 years of experience as a Marriott party supply business in 2004 and added a wider selection of services to her repertoire. Named in honor of our owner’s own daughter, Stephanie’s Linens and More provides beautiful events for each and every client. Impress your guests with gorgeous party and linen rentals from their special event experts in Signal Hill, California. Stephanie’s Linens and More is the only name you need to know for the best party supplies in the area. Amazing selection and even more amazing prices available.

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Vali DeVries, Agent
State Farm Insurance

Vali is observing her 31st year as a State Farm Agent this week, serving the needs of friends and neighbors with their homeowners, auto, life and commercial insurance coverages. A Long Beach native, Vali attended local schools, is a 1981 CSULB graduate and resides in the Los Altos area with her husband, Dave, and their two daughters. “I enjoy helping people, providing protection at a good price and solving their problems so they can sleep better at night,” Vali states. Like a good neighbor, State Farm (and Vali DeVries) is there. CA License #0667954

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Janni Busia, MS, CWS, CHC, Founder & Director
Wellness-in-Motion, a wellness coach partnership

As a Certified Wellness Specialist & Holistic Health Coach with a Masters of Science in Exercise Physiology, Janni offers innovative approaches to wellness and lifestyle medicine. Being Well Programs offer clients a private or group sessions that helps them identify key health risk factors and improve physical fitness, energy, nutrition, mindful practices and quality of life. Working together, clients develop “sustainable” wellness strategies, learn to integrate healthier habits and behavioral changes that encourage a shift to healthy living. Clients gain a deeper understanding of what food and lifestyle choices work best to achieve personal health/lifestyle goals. *specialty cancer/chronic lifestyle conditions

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Long Beach Business Journal 27
U.S. Customs Facility A Must To Move The Airport And Long Beach Forward

By GEORGE ECONOMIDES
Publisher's Perspective

(Note: This perspective was uploaded to the Business Journal’s website and facebook page, and as a newsletter on the 22nd of February. To sign up for the free newsletter, please visit: www.lbjbusiness.com).

The potential of having a U.S. Customs facility at the Long Beach Airport should be a no-brainer. It doesn’t alter the city’s airport noise ordinance but it does expand the airport’s and the city’s economic potential and international reach and influence.

We are and will continue to be the International City, with one of the best port complexes in the world, a diversified population and one-of-a-kind cultural arts programs – including the Museum of Latin American Art and an emerging Cambodian Town. Additionally, we’re home to the internationally recognized Queen Mary, the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, the new all-electric e-Prix – of which Long Beach is one of 10 host cities worldwide – and we have Sister City relationships that stretch from Ecuador to Kenya to China and Russia.

We are a global city. We've heard it time and time again, when business people visit Long Beach for the first time, they fall in love with our city, its people and our unbeatable weather.

While JetBlue Airways is the entity that made the request for customs service, it would be far from the only user. Corporate aviation businesses at the airport will be in a better position to participate in a citywide economic development vision. These include entities such as Gulfstream, which has customers worldwide and is increasing its presence and jobs at the airport. Currently, those aircraft customers must clear customs in other areas of the country or at LAX before flying into Long Beach. Other airlines already here – American and Delta – will examine opportunities for international flights, as well as the city’s newest carrier, Southwest Airlines, which is expected to begin service over the next few months.

The beauty of all this economic activity – which translates into additional high-paying jobs – is that this can be accomplished without interfering with the city’s noise ordinance. It also does not cost taxpayers a dime because user fees cover all the costs.

While we recognize there is an ongoing feasibility study that was approved by the city council to examine these facts – a process that is important – we see no downside to a customs facility. Those who politicize this project, or wish to use it to create fear by communicating misrepresentations that are less than truthful about its impacts, are doing a disservice to the city and to its residents. The airport manager, city staff and councilmembers should move quickly to put the facility into operation – and we do know it can be accomplished in a very short timeframe. Any effort to drag this out is, again, purely politically driven.

We call on our federal officials to immediately move forward with establishing a federal inspection customs facility at the Long Beach Airport.

CalChamber Backs Renewed Effort On Federal Water Bill

Plan Improves Ability to Capture/Store Water

(Note: The following is from the California Chamber of Commerce and was prepared by the chamber on February 26.)

By VALERIE NERA
Policy Advocate
CalChamber

U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein has introduced an updated proposal to provide long- and short-term solutions to the state’s historic drought. The California Chamber of Commerce supports the effort to move drought relief legislation this year and improve the ability to capture and store water in wet times for use in dry ones.

Feinstein’s proposal includes provisions to allow more water to be captured and stored during drought and to promote both the building of new reservoirs and increasing the capacity of existing ones.

In introducing the bill, Feinstein estimated that if all the projects identified in the bill were completed, nearly 1.4 million acre-feet of “new” water could be made available.

The CalChamber and other business, grower and water groups from the Western states have previously called for action on bipartisan Western water and drought relief legislation.

There is a growing consensus that Western water users need every tool available to survive and recover from the current drought and to prepare for the hard, dry years that the future may hold.

Water Storage Projects

To help store water during wet years for use in dry ones, the bill:
• Authorizes $600 million for water storage projects in California and other Western states. These may include both federal projects (Shasta) and nonfederal projects (Sites, Temperance Flat, Los Vaqueros).
• Sets deadlines for the federal Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau) to complete feasibility studies to allow CalFed storage projects to compete for the $2.7 billion of bond funding that California’s Proposition 1 earmarked for water storage. The CalFed Bay-Delta Program is a collaboration of 25 state and federal agencies to improve the state’s water supply and the ecological health of the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.
• Updates U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dam operations to increase water supply while reducing flood risk.

Emergency Operations

Emergency provisions to make water delivery more efficient during the drought include the following. The provisions would last as long as the Governor’s drought declaration is in effect or for two years, whichever is longer:
• Improved data to operate pumps at higher levels when no fish are present and reduce pumping levels when fish are nearby.
• Allow agencies to keep the additional water they are able to pump during winter storms.
• Require agencies to explain pumping reductions due to the Delta smelt biological opinion. The agencies must explain decisions to reduce pumping to protect the Delta smelt based on improved data rather than relying on intuition.
• Require agencies to maximize water supplies consistent with applicable laws and biological opinions. Agencies cannot harm fish in violation of biological opinions, but should try to increase water supplies.
• Open Delta cross-channel gates more often so that water from the Sacramento River is used to control salinity instead of water released from the Central Valley Project.
• Allowing 1:1 water transfer ratio, versus the past practice of requiring water users to send more water downstream than can be pumped out. Environmental law and biological opinions still must be followed.

Other Provisions

Other sections of the bill provide:
• Desalination. Reauthorizes the Desalination Act and authorizes $50 million over five years for desalination research projects, such as improving existing technology, reducing environmental effects of seawater desalination and developing next-generation technologies to reduce the cost of desalination. Also authorizes $50 million over five years for feasibility and design of sea and brackish water desalination projects.
• Assistance for drought-stricken communities. Rural and disadvantaged communities with fewer than 60,000 residents may apply for grants through the Bureau to help stabilize water supplies.
• Water recycling, conservation, efficiency. Authorizes $200 million in increased funds for the Bureau’s water recycling and reuse program. Authorizes a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency program to label water-efficient products for consumers, similar to the Energy Star program. Authorizes a Department of the Interior program to establish an open system with data on water quality, climate and weather effects, and erosion. The system would be accessible to the public online.
• Additional funding. Authorizes $200 million for a loan guarantee program to allow water districts and municipalities to leverage loans and loan guarantees for water projects. Also increases funding by $150 million for the Bureau’s WaterSMART program.
• Endangered/threatened fish and wildlife. Authorizes $55 million for short-term, low-cost proposals to protect and assist in recovering endangered or threatened fish populations, including Delta salmon and smelt.

What’s Next

Senator Feinstein’s bill will be taken up soon by the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska). (Valerie Nera specializes in advocacy on agriculture, water, water storage, resources, telecommunications, crime, and banking and finance issues for the California Chamber of Commerce.)
Inside City Hall
Why Sex Trade Is
Bad For Long Beach

By GERRIE SCHIPSKE

Back in the day,” as the expression goes, when local police departments referred to the offering of sex for money, it was called “prostitution.” Women were controlled by male “pimp” and in many areas of the country, prostitution was looked upon as a “vice-

However, prostitution has become human trafficking. As more and more gangs have found it difficult and dangerous to sell illegal drugs, they have found a much easier source of money: the buying and selling of girls as young as 11 and 12 for sex. Unlike a shipment of illegal drugs that can be sold once, the same young girl can be sold over and over and over.

Today, human trafficking - sex trade - has become one of the fastest growing crimes in the U.S., and particularly here in Long Beach.

The issue first came to light in 2012, when Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe announced that as many as 84 percent of children arrested in Los Angeles County for prostitution lived in Long Beach and the South Bay. These girls had been forced into prostitution and in fact were victims, not criminals.

When Knabe first raised this issue, some “movers and shakers” wanted the issue downplayed about Long Beach. I knew, because I placed an item on the city council agenda to get a report from our police and to see what could be done about it. I immediately received phone calls about how a council discus-

sion would hurt our travel and tourism industry. And for the first and only time, I removed an agenda item in order to let the rest of the city catch up on the outrage I was feeling, knowing this horrendous crime is happening here.

Fast forward to 2014 and the issue had gained widespread attention – again thanks largely in part to the relentless efforts of Supervisor Knabe. Community groups got involved and finally the city council did as well – establishing the Human Sex Trafficking Task Force in the police department.

Just this February, more than 400 people attended a day long “Youth Exploitation Safety Symposium - YES! 2016” symposium sponsored by the Long Beach Human Trafficking Task Force which is dedicated to “working to end modern day slavery in our community.”

Long Beach is on the move to eradi-
cate this horrible violation of human rights. But we also need to raise aware-
ness that sex trafficking would not occur without customers. That’s why my favorite religious order of nuns, the Sisters of St. Joseph, did an awesome thing the week of the Super Bowl. They contacted all hotel caretakers of 220 hotels in the vicinity of the game and asked four questions: 1) Have employees received training to recognize potential occurrences of human trafficking in their hotels? 2) Is there a protocol in place for hotel employees to document and report possible incidences of trafficking? 3) Are hotel employees/managers aware of the local groups to end trafficking? 4) Is the hotel willing to make anti-traf-

ficking information available to guests? We need to do the same with all of our hotels.

Next column: Just Four Little Words. (Gerrrie Schipske was elected to both the Long Beach Community College Board of Trustees and the Long Beach City Council. She is the author of several books on Long Beach history. Her blog is www.longbeachinside.blogspot.com.)
Millions Of Americans Experience Vision Loss—Could You Be One Of Them?

By RAVI MENGHANI, M.D.

Millions of Americans 40 years and older are either legally blind or are visually impaired, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Like most parts of the body, overall health affects the eyes. Chronic conditions can worsen or even increase the risk of developing eye conditions. Eating healthy, exercising and avoiding smoking can result in healthier eyes. Protecting the eyes from the sun also can help prevent long-term damage.

It’s important to consider preventative measures and learn about common eye conditions, so they can be treated correctly and immediately.

Common Eye Conditions

Cataracts: In most cases, mild cloudiness of vision is caused by cataracts, which is cloudiness of the lens inside the eye. Initially it can be treated with glasses, but vision may worsen and require surgery. Causes of cataracts include aging, excess exposure to UV rays, excessive use of steroid medications and uncontrolled diabetes.

Corneal Ulcers: Corneal ulcers are open sores on the cornea often caused by an infection. People who repeatedly sleep in their contact lenses are at higher risk. But doctors may see blood and hemorrhages in the retina. There are four stages of diabetic retinopathy, and during the first three no treatment is needed. Well controlled blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol is vital to preventing its progression.

Glaucoma: Glaucoma is the slow deterioration of the optic nerve that affects peripheral vision. Left untreated, glaucoma can result in vision loss or blindness. While there is no definitive cure for glaucoma, medical, laser and surgical treatment can slow or in many cases halt the progression of glaucoma—worsening of peripheral vision. Open-angle glaucoma has no symptoms, so to prevent vision loss, it’s important to get screened early and regularly, especially if there is a family history.

Macular Degeneration: Macular degeneration damages sharp and central vision, which is needed for seeing objects clearly and affects reading and driving. There are two forms — wet and dry. Wet is when abnormal blood vessel behind the retina start to grow under the macula. Dry is when the macula thins overtime as part of aging process, gradually blurring central vision. There are no early treatments, but for later stages, studies have shown that certain combinations of vitamins over the phone.

by Ben Alvardo

Small Business Dollars & Sense

by Ben Alvardo

Avoid Being A Victim Of IRS Imposter Scam

Learn To Spot Scams, Avoid Tax Fraud

With tax season upon us, it is also time for Internal Revenue Service (IRS) imposter scams that could lead to tax fraud for some unsuspecting victims. Here are some of the most common tax scams, and information to help you take steps to avoid these scams that can wreak havoc on your financial well-being.

Scam #1: Identity Theft

What is it? Scammers steal your personal information for illegal or fraudulent activities, like filing a tax return in your name. Prevention tips:

• Use a unique username and password for tax filing software (as well as for every financial institution you have accounts with), and update them regularly.

• Do not routinely carry your Social Security card or share your Social Security number with others unless absolutely necessary.

• Shred sensitive documents before discarding.

• Avoid storing personal information on your mobile devices.

• Review your credit report every year. You can receive a free copy of your report every 12 months from each of the credit reporting agencies as well as AnnualCreditReport.com.

Scam #2: Frivolous Phone Calls

What are they? Scammers, posing as the IRS, call you claiming you owe taxes or are due a refund. Prevention tips — Be wary of discussing financial information if the caller:

• Demands immediate payment without giving you the opportunity to appeal.

• Uses aggressive tactics, such as threatening arrest, deportation or license revocation.

• Requests credit, debit or bank account numbers over the phone.

Scam #3: Phishing E-mails, Text Messages Or Social Media Posts

What are they? Phishing e-mails, text messages or fraudulent e-mails may contain links to phony websites and request your personal or financial information by using a variety of techniques. Fraudulent text messages and social media posts use similar tactics to convince you to divulge confidential information. Prevention tips:

• Never provide passwords, account numbers or personal information in response to e-mails or other messages. The IRS does not solicit information via e-mail, text or social media.

• Do not reply to suspicious messages – delete them.

• If you have clicked on a link and opened an attachment, or have provided personal information call your bank immediately.

If you fall for a tax scam

Take action immediately:

• File a complaint at the Federal Trade Commission’s website and if the complaint involves someone impersonating the IRS, include the words “IRS Telephone Scam” in the notes.

• Also report identity theft on the Federal Trade Commission’s website, all three credit reporting agencies, banks and credit card companies.

• Close any suspicious or affected accounts.

• If your Social Security number is stolen, contact the IRS and read about Social Security number theft on their website.

For more information about scams, you may Google the IRS’s “Dirty Dozen Tax Scams” and you may find tips to help protect yourself at well Fargo.com.

(Mick Alvarado, a 25-year veteran of Wells Fargo, is the president of the bank’s So. Calif. Region, which stretches from Long Beach to Orange, Imperial and San Diego counties.)

Effective Leadership

By Mick Ukleja

Good Relationships Help Prevent Organizational Brain Drain

There are new challenges that threaten to undermine the well being of our organizations. The giant sucking sound that could be heard is the sound of knowledge being drained out of organizations by retirements and other turnovers. Over the next few years we will see the greatest transfer of knowledge in the history of the world. The transfer of tacit information does not effectively happen without the building of relationships between the experienced worker and the younger millennial generation.

Stop and think about it. Every organization on the face of the earth at one time or another is dependent on entry-level people learning from seasoned employees. Arguably, the greatest competitive advantage an organization has is not in the knowledge that resides in its company manuals, but the knowledge that is captured within the experience of people who have spent a career acquiring it. Transfer of knowledge is one of the key reasons for building a relationship with the millennial generation. If boomers professionals do not attract and connect with this generation, the loss will be more than a tranquil work environment.

Tacit knowledge passed down from one generation to the next cannot be over-emphasized. Explicit knowledge is formal and is written down. Tacit knowledge is the kind of knowledge that is difficult to transfer from one person to another by simply writing it down. When we have tacit knowledge we are often not even aware that we possess it, let alone how valuable it can be to transfer to others.

This inability to transfer tacit information is a serious threat. When there is retirement and voluntary turnover, it’s not just people that leave. Information leaves with them. The term brain drain was first coined by the Royal Society to describe the immigration of scientists and technologists from Britain to America from postwar Europe. The term has been broadened to define the loss of skilled people from one organization to another.

As baby boomers retire there is the looming reality of a boomer brain drain. Companies will face it over the next few years with increasing intensity. One NASA spokesperson said (Washington Post), “If we want to go to the moon again, we’ll be staring from scratch because all that knowledge has disappeared.”

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average large company will lose 30 to 40 percent of its workforce over the next 5 to 10 years. The replacement for the baby boomer mass exodus is, and will continue to be, millennial professionals.

If baby boomer (1946-1964), and gen x professionals (1965-1980), do not attract and connect with millennials, the loss could be devastating. If there is a disconnect between the experienced and the young, odds are that some tacit knowledge will be lost in the organization.

The more millennial employees perceived their managers to be interested in them and in their personal development, the harder they will work for their managers. Managers who have poor relationships with their employees are far less likely to share tacit knowledge with them. That’s because it’s done through mutually respectful relationships. Along with this, millennials are less likely to ask for information they are not given. Growing up they were used to being given thorough details for every assignment in school. As a result, they often fail to ask for the details in the workplace.

Having the leadership skills to connect with millennials and leverage their strengths not only results in deeper engagement, lower turnover and transition costs, it is also a key to retaining and building organizational knowledge.

(Mick Ukleja is the author of “Leadership and personal productivity. He’s president of LeadershipTraq, and author of several books. His clients have included Fortune 500 corporations and nonprofit organizations. Check his weekly blog at www.leadingspark.com.)
Multi-family housing always has been a strong component of investment real estate. As someone once said, people always need a place to live, and the fundamentals of supply and demand – especially when so many people lost their homes in the recession – continue to be strong.

During the worst of the housing bubble, many homeowners became renters because they could no longer afford to own their home. The rental side of residential real estate – including homes and apartments – continued to thrive with multi-family units doing particularly well since they are normally a less expensive alternative to renting a single-family home.

Because the recession put a crimp in just about all kinds of building – including homes and apartments – the upward demand continued while the supply did not keep up. But things changed in 2015.

According to research by Freddie Mac, more than 300,000 multi-family units were built and entered the market last year – the most since 1989. Although the increase is predicted to drive up vacancy rates somewhat, most observers contend that this area of real estate will continue to stay strong for the foreseeable future.

“Favorable demographic trends, strength in the job market and reduced affordability of owning a home will continue to fuel strong demand for multi-family rental units,” noted Freddie’s multi-family economic outlook for 2016.

Steve Guggenmos, vice president for multi-family research and modeling at Freddie, expects the construction of new units will remain elevated over the next few years: “We see baseline demand being around 310,000 units per year, and you add in pent-up demand that jumps up all the way to 450,000 units per year.”

From these numbers it is pretty evident that the demand should be there for strong fundamentals in this sector of real estate – despite the increase in supply.

Even though vacancy rates rose slightly in the fourth quarter, Guggenmos said he is not concerned because there is so much momentum in the multi-family market.

He predicts vacancy rates will reach 4.8 percent by the end of 2017, which will still be below the long-run average of 5.3 percent.

In 2015 the multi-family sector had strong annual revenue growth of 4.6 percent due to low vacancy rates and rising rents. Guggenmos projects property revenue growth of 3.9 percent in 2016 and 4.3 percent in 2017. The long-run average is 3.3 percent.

These calculations are based on employment growth and the supply of new units coming on the market as well as other factors.

“That gives us a robust view that on the ground the economics are stable,” he said. “We do continue to see growth.”

Even though the housing recovery has continued, the increases in prices to renter have made many households unaffordable and driven consumers back into apartments.

For lenders of multi-family projects, the increases in apartment construction have been lucrative and a huge part of the recovery, even though some fear that this segment could overheat and lead to the problems that set off the housing crisis.

Lenders originated a record $256 billion in multi-family loans in 2015, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association. Freddie Mac purchased $47.3 billion in multi-family loans in 2015 and Fannie Mae purchased $42.3 billion in multi-family loans.

Federal regulators warned late last year that they are worried about interest rate risk on apartment and other multi-family loans. They urged lenders to contain concentrations of commercial real estate on their books and to rein in their loosening underwriting standards.

But to keep steady growth in both the single-family and multi-family sectors of real estate, loosening underwriting standards will almost become a necessity to free the logjam in lending that has constructed the market over the past few years.

Given the gains in economic growth and diminishing of risk in this sector of the real estate market, look for the lending climate to brighten and investor money to increase into this area of real estate.

(Terry Ross, the broker-owner of TR Properties, will answer any questions about today’s real estate market. E-mail questions to Realty Views at terryross@cs.com or call 949/457-4922.)
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