Local Female Entrepreneurs Mirror Growing Trend Of Diversity

At the beginning of 2018, women made up approximately 26% of business owners in the U.S., according to the results of a survey by Guidant Financial, a firm that funds small businesses, and LendingClub. LendingClub is an online platform that connects borrowers to investors for personal and business loans. Out of the 2,600 current and aspiring entrepreneurs who responded, the survey found female business owners increased 18% from the previous year. This continues the upward trend of women owning businesses in the past 20 years, according to the 2017 State of Women-Owned Business Report by American Express OPEN.

The American Express report found that the number of women-owned businesses has increased 114% in the last two decades compared to the overall growth rate of 44% for all businesses nationwide. As of January 2017, 11.6 million woman-owned businesses existed in the United States. They employed approximately nine million people and generated more than $1.7 trillion in revenue. But while entrepreneurship among women has surged in the last two decades, businesses owned by minority women have grown at a rate of 114% in the last two decades, compared to the overall growth rate of 44% for all businesses nationwide. As of January 2017, 11.6 million woman-owned businesses existed in the United States. They employed approximately nine million people and generated more than $1.7 trillion in revenue.
Thanks Carnival for continuing to invest and grow in Long Beach!

Our 400 Tourism Businesses
With a newly expanded and repositioned “Spruce Goose” Dome, Carnival Cruise sets a new trend for transiting a cruise ship – and they did it in Long Beach.

Over 670,000 passengers will enjoy this travel experience each year and 730,000 by 2020.

In 2020 Carnival will bring the Panorama with 3,960 state rooms to Long Beach, which will continue our lead as the busiest cruise ship boarding area on the West Coast.

Thank you Carnival!
In The News

PortSide
Keeping Up With The Port Of Long Beach

After nearly 10 years working in the Port of Long Beach’s Information Management Division, Office Automation Analyst Claudia Garcia has become known as the “go-to person” for the 500-plus employees at the port when they need help with an IT issue. Garcia handles work order requests sent to the service desk, assists in software and cybersecurity training exercises, and even manages local high school interns during summer months. Garcia said she had always wanted to work for the government at some level and was excited when she saw an opening she qualified for at the port. “I was a Long Beach resident. I actually did not know anything about the port, I just knew the port was somewhere by the ocean,” she said with a laugh. When a port employee has a technical question or experiences a problem such as a hard drive crash, they submit a work request to Garcia’s department. She then ensures that the work orders are filled. But Garcia has been around long enough that she knows most employees, so they often just call her directly. “We’re really busy. In a typical day, I manage I would say 40 or 50 calls with different work orders,” Garcia said. Her department is also responsible for taking computers off the network that have been compromised by viruses. She estimated that there are more than one million attempted cyber intrusions made on the port each day. “It’s promised by viruses. She estimated that there are more than one million attempted cyber intrusions made on the port each day. “It’s

FREE: Sign up at lbbizjournal.com for Monday Morning Coffee & BizBrief (e-mail sent out at 6 a.m. every Monday about issues, events, meetings for the week; BizBrief is news of the day, sent out around 4 p.m., Monday-Friday)
In May 1966, Ruben Karapetian opened All Star Tire to serve the Long Beach community. In 1983, he relocated the business to 2721 E. Artesia Blvd. where it continues to operate today. "It's your typical entrepreneurial, small business success story," Andrei Karapetian, Ruben's son and current owner of the shop, said. "[My dad] started with recaps and small tires, and then growth demanded a larger facility. The current facility that we are operating is 70,000 square feet." Since opening, the shop has expanded to offer suspension, mechanical, fabrication, upholstery, paint and stereo services, in addition to wheels and tires. When Andrei took over the business around five years ago, he said he made a more aggressive push to gain business from local auto dealerships and increase online sales to keep up with the ever-changing retail landscape. Today, the shop employs 18 people to serve clients regionally and online. "The most interesting aspect is . . . trust and relationships still are key factors in making sure that customers know that when they get on the road they will be safe," Karapetian said. "Ninety percent of our customers are from Long Beach, so we're taking a little more proactive approach within the community." For more information, call 562/931-3894 or visit www.allsportsmotorsports.com.

Robert Earl’s BBQ

About four years ago, after successfully building his brand at local farmers markets, Robert Earl and his wife, Latoria decided to open Robert Earl’s BBQ at 703 E. Artesia Blvd. “There was really nothing in Long Beach as far as authentic Texas-style barbecue,” Earl said. “Long Beach is a beautiful city. I’ve built a lot of a relationship with the residents, who we call family.”

Growing up, Earl said he learned different techniques by watching his grandfather, Chef Woody, barbecue. In the 30 years since he has been barbecuing himself, Earl has put his own spin on family recipes and techniques. He explained that his joint is meant as a getaway for families to eat good food away from video games and TV, and to just enjoy each other’s company. Earl said all his food is good but that he prides himself on the brisket, where he smokes for 18 to 20 hours. The ribs, mac and cheese and banana pudding are also customer favorites, he added. “I love challenges. If I can get people to come [to North Long Beach] to get my food, that speaks volumes,” Earl said. “You’re not talking about Downtown Long Beach, you’re talking about In The Hood Long Beach. And in the hood is where it’s good.” For more information, call 562/726-1116 or visit www.robertearlbq.com.

All Star Tire

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B & B Carpets And Flooring

Bob Bernard first got into the flooring business in the late 1970s when he was looking for a summer job. He had friends in the industry and began assisting installers. In 1990, Bernard opened B & B Carpets and Flooring in Wilmington. The business moved to Los Alamitos before Bernard bought Boulveard Carpets in 2004 and relocated top his current location at 1117 E. Artesia Blvd. in North Boulevard. Bernard purchased an online brokerage provider. While anyone can pursue this avenue, it takes discipline and patience to research and stay current on companies and investing trends.

Getting help from a pro – Perhaps you don’t have the time or confidence in your ability to choose the right investments, and if that’s the case, you may want to turn to a professional financial advisor. The first thing you should expect is for a financial advisor to ask questions to gain a better understanding of your long-term goals, such as ensuring a financially secure retirement or helping your children or grandchildren afford higher education. Beginning with that information, your advisor should work with you to create an investment plan designed to help you achieve those goals. At the heart of that plan will be a recommended asset allocation, which is how your portfolio is divided up among different types of investments, typically stocks and bonds or cash alternatives.

Combining digital advice and a human touch – There are also hybrid investing solutions that blend convenient technology with customized advice. These low-cost services help small business investors create diversified portfolios, tailored to their long-term goals and risk tolerances, based on responses to a personal questionnaire. It can be intimidating for some small business owners to think about the kind of investor you are – and may seem like quite a bit of work, but when your ability to reach your financial goals is at stake, it’s likely to be worth it.

As the stock market has been on a historical high, many small business owners look for ways to invest and diversify their portfolios in order to capitalize on the current market. Because of the recent market dips many experts anticipate an end to this long running bull market. A 2017 Wells Fargo/Gallup Investor and Retirement Optimism Index revealed that most investors are not proactively shielding their portfolio from a market correction. When portfolio rebalancing is one way to prepare, just 40% of investors say they are currently rebalancing their portfolio in anticipation of a correction. Even fewer say they are selling stocks to help protect from future losses (18%) or buying bonds to help reduce their exposure to market risk (20%).

One of the consequences of a protracted bull market is, unfortunately, investor complacency. With a market correction inevitable at some point, it’s important small business owners check their confidence with a comprehensive risk assessment to determine how a market correction could affect their overall investment strategies. As a small business owner, if you’re unsure about how to manage your portfolio in light of a market correction – or invest in the market for the first time, a good place to begin is by determining what type of investor you are.

By Natasha Mata

As the stock market has been on a historical high, many small business owners look for ways to invest and diversify their portfolios in order to capitalize on the current market. Because of the recent market dips many experts anticipate an end to this long running bull market. A 2017 Wells Fargo/Gallup Investor and Retirement Optimism Index revealed that most investors are not proactively shielding their portfolio from a market correction. When portfolio rebalancing is one way to prepare, just 40% of investors say they are currently rebalancing their portfolio in anticipation of a correction. Even fewer say they are selling stocks to help protect from future losses (18%) or buying bonds to help reduce their exposure to market risk (20%).

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The Long Beach Planning Commission unanimously approved Pacific Industrial’s proposal to build three light industrial buildings totaling 424,050 square feet at the former United States Post Office processing and distribution center at 2300 Redondo Ave. A date has not been set for the proposal to go before the city council. (Rendering courtesy of the City of Long Beach)

**Pacific Edge One Step Closer To Development Of USPS Site On Redondo**

The Long Beach Planning Commission unanimously approved a light industrial development at the site of a former United States Post Office Long Beach Processing & Distribution Center at 2300 Redondo Ave.

Long Beach-based developer Pacific Industrial proposed the construction of three light industrial buildings dubbed Pacific Edge totaling 424,050 square feet with 638 parking spaces on the more than 19-acre site. Building 1, located at 2300 Redondo Ave., totals 205,530 square feet with 286 parking spaces. Building 2, located at 3200 E. Burnett St., totals 113,800 square feet with 175 parking spaces. Building 3, located at 3600 E. Burnett St., totals 104,720 square feet with 177 parking spaces. Each building will feature a 135-foot-deep truck court and an optional 10,000-square-foot mezzanine for office use.

To move forward, the site would have to be rezoned from its current ‘institutional’ designation. During the commission meeting, mitigation measures were discussed related to traffic. It was noted that, if approved, the project would include traffic system upgrades and adjustments to the surrounding area, including additional signals and timing modifications.

**Councilmember Vows To Fight Land Use Element**

The Land Use Element update has been a controversial issue since the first maps were released in February 2017. One year later, not much has changed, as 5th District Councilmember Stacy Mungo prepares to suggest killing the proposal when it comes before the Long Beach City Council on March 6.

“After a long and sometimes frustrating process for our residents, I’m happy that this matter is finally coming before the City Council,” Mungo said in the press release. “And while I appreciate the work of city staff and the state’s desire to increase housing in Long Beach, any increases in density should go where they make the most sense – around our employment centers and transportation hubs, and not in our single-family, low-profile neighborhoods like the 5th District.”

Echoing concerns of her constituents, shared also by many in the adjacent District 4, Mungo explained that increasing building heights to three, four and even five stories in East Long Beach would diminish quality of life in the overwhelmingly single-family home area. Another major concern is increased density that would potentially come with converting commercially zoned centers to mixed-use PlaceTypes.

“It makes no sense to turn our suburbs into city centers or flip our well thought-out and designed single-family neighborhoods into apartments and high-rises, when such development is better suited and better served elsewhere,” Mungo said. “I am committed to standing shoulder to shoulder with the residents of my district to fight for what’s right.”

**Harbor Associates Expands**

Harbor Associates LLC, a Long Beach-based property investment firm, announced the purchase of two suburban office developments for a combined $56 million on February 19.

“We continue to find compelling opportunities in suburban office locations that are out of favor with many institutional investors who are seeking more certainty in their investments,” said Harbor Associates Managing Principal Dan Weiss. 

Spring & Cherry – The rebuild of the small retail center on the northeast corner of Spring Street and Cherry Avenue should be completed by the end of March, according to the property owner’s leasing agent. Though initial plans for the site included 7-Eleven as an anchor tenant, the agent said the property owner decided against the idea. The site currently has no confirmed tenants. The site previously was home to West Coast Firestone. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Brandon Richardson)
vestors, through our deep network of brokerage relationships and our ability to move quickly and close all-cash,” Harbor Principal Paul Miszkowicz said.

The company acquired a 156,628-square-foot campus in Valencia for $33.1 million in joint venture with Goldman Sachs Asset Management Private Real Estate. In a separate joint venture with Blue Vista Capital Management, Harbor Associates acquired a 198,478-square-foot corporate campus in Thousand Oaks for $22.9 million. The sales brought the investment firm’s office portfolio to more than one million square feet.

At Valencia Gateway, Harbor plans to renovate the common areas, such as outdoor patios, and build out new spec suites. The firm also plans to upgrade the facilities with energy-saving features like LED lighting and electric vehicle charging stations. The property consists of two buildings at 25124-25125 Springfield Court, which are 81% leased to 15 tenants.

Tom Bohlinger, Ryan Smith and Justin Hager of JLL represented the seller, Barings, in the transaction. Attorneys Albert Valencia and Elizabeth Dryden at Ervin Cohen & Jessup represented the joint venture in the legal aspects of the sale.

The Conejo Corporate Campus will have the floor plans re-engineered to accommodate 5,000 to 25,000-square-foot tenants, which are prominent in the Conejo Valley, rather than the current single-tenant layout. The campus features two low-rise office buildings originally built for Amgen in 2011 at 2380 and 2400 Conejo Spectrum Dr. Renovations also include a fresh coat of paint, drought-tolerant landscaping and new signage. The property is currently 55% leased.

Kevin Shannon and Scott Schumacher of Newmark Knight Frank represented the seller in the transaction, while Pine River Capital Management was the external manager for the lender.

Clark & Spring – The small retail center on the southeast corner of Clark Avenue and Spring Street, known as Time Square, has completed exterior renovations. Long-time tenant Baja Sonora already has new signage up and expects to reopen in March. Other tenants include a Chinese food restaurant, coffee shop, bakery and Steady Beer Brew Co., though leases have not been finalized. According to CBM leasing agent Aaron Guido, the center should be occupied and open by summer.

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Zoning – Not Rent Control – Is The Solution For The Housing Shortage

The fight for and against rent control that is taking place across the state and in Long Beach is intensifying – and it is not going away soon. Activists, political factions and anyone looking for an easy vote have been quick to roll out the rent control card that supposedly makes everything ok and creates an affordable rent for all – and well, who cares about the owner anyway – they just pay the mortgage, maintain the property, pay taxes on that property, hoping to get something for their troubles.

As it was expertly detailed by another writer in this publication recently, rent control is definitely not all it is cracked up to be – for both tenants and owners – and the root of the problem is not enough housing. Real estate pricing – both for sale and for rent – is a product of supply and demand. All housing in the state is suffering from too much demand and not enough supply – so prices keep going up until it is unaffordable for much of the population.

But what is causing the shortage of both for-sale and rental housing? Everything from the lack of lumber, tight financing and over-regulation have been blamed, with very little action and of course even less tangible results. The easy answer now is to throw up rent control, which makes little sense in a free market economy. We don’t curtail the prices of the latest wonder drug or the amount that health care providers charge – or what we get charged at the pump for gasoline.

The real way to expand rental housing so that the supply is more appropriate to the demand is through zoning laws – and it is up to elected officials and planning department to tackle this issue at the root of the problem instead of applying a Band-Aid that will not work over the long haul.

Zoning has not always been part of the American real estate fabric – and at one time it was considered a real overreach to tell a landowner what they could do with their property in terms of building. Zoning regulations got their start in New York City in 1916 and in 1926 were allowed by the U.S. Supreme Court on a broader scale in urban centers.

According to the Brookings Institute, zoning laws did not have an appreciable impact on building trends until the 1970s as the pace of construction kept up pretty well with demand. It was during that time that the Baby Boom generation created the demand with their large numbers yearning for homeownership and creating an imbalance that has never gone away.

Most experts blame this more on land use restrictions – zoning – than any other factor. In California, this has been especially trying as the lack of appropriate zoning has held down the density and limited the number of units that can be built in desirable areas. Space then becomes a valuable commodity in urban centers with the resulting skyrocketing of prices for all types of real estate. With construction failing to keep up with the population, we now have historically low numbers of all kinds of housing. We have 12% of the U.S. population in this state, but only 10% of the housing stock. According to the real estate website Trulia, we now have the second-highest housing prices in the country after the District of Columbia. In 1960 California had the seventh highest prices.

Our home ownership rate is 54.4%, compared to the national average of 64%, pointing to the unaffordability on the ownership and rental levels.

Rent control is an artificial means that has been shown to not produce the desired result throughout its history – it is time to look at the real causes of the problem and attack it there.

(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 terryross1@cs.com or call 949/457-4922.)

Dear Advertiser,

Over the past 20 years the Aquarium of the Pacific has redefined the role of an aquarium. At its heart are live animal exhibits that evoke emotional connections between our visitors and marine life. But it has gone far beyond this. It has become a leader in connecting science, policy, and the public to explore and address some of the world’s most pressing issues, from climate change and sea level rise, to droughts and other extreme weather-related events, to the future of our Southern California urban ocean. We hope you will join us in celebrating these accomplishments and our 20th anniversary.

We thank you for your support and look forward to a bright future as we continue to build upon our efforts to serve our community and beyond.

Sincerely,

Jerry R. Schubel
President & CEO
Aquarium of the Pacific

The Long Beach Business Journal’s previous Aquarium of the Pacific special publications

Preopening 1998  5-Year Anniversary  10-Year Anniversary  15-Year Anniversary

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Carnival Cruise Line’s Expansion Means More Business For Long Beach

The recent expansion of Carnival Cruise Line into the entirety of Long Beach’s iconic dome beside the Queen Mary was the fruition of a vision 15 years in the making. Since the company began operating cruises from the dome in 2003, it has endeavored to grow its operations, according to Carlos Torres de Navarra, vice president of strategic and commercial port development for Carnival.

“I would say that since the day that we opened, or even before we opened, there was always an intent to secure more square footage in order to have a two-way operation,” Torres de Navarra said.

“Long Beach is squarely in our top four as a brand in terms of the busiest ports that we have for cruising in the nation,” he noted.

Prior to the expansion, which debuted in a grand opening ceremony on February 10, Carnival occupied only 70% of the dome and was able to accommodate only one-way traffic. Before a cruise ship had finished debarking, embarking passengers would have to wait outside the terminal. Carnival has long desired to expand into the entirety of the dome to allow for two-way traffic, to improve the guest experience, and to accommodate larger cruise ships, according to Torres de Navarra.

For years, the operators of the Queen Mary had used the dome for events like the popular CHILL and Dark Harbor. But in fall 2016, Carnival was able to hash out a deal with the dome’s lesseholder, Urban Commons, with the assistance of the landowner, the City of Long Beach.

Demolition began in April last year, and construction began in August. It took just five months to build out the interior of the dome into a two-way cruise terminal designed to give guests the feeling of starting their vacation as soon as they walk through the doors. The facility includes a boardwalk-type pathway lined with faux palm trees, a mini arcade, two replicas of the Spruce Goose, a VIP area, park-like seating and an ADA-compliant ramp up to the gangway. “We essentially gutted this place. The only thing that is old is our office on the second floor,” Torres de Navarra said.

As he described it, not only is the terminal now a more pleasant experience for everyone passing through it – from guests to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents who work there – it is now also a greater economic driver both for Carnival and for the city.

With the opening of the larger terminal, Carnival has brought a larger ship, the Carnival Splendor, to operate cruises to Mexico, Hawaii and Alaska. And, as the company announced at the terminal’s grand opening, in late 2019 they plan to bring a greater economic driver both for Carnival and for the city.

“We are seeing a very high interest in cruising, we are seeing a high interest in Carnival, and we just thought that the best thing for that ship would be to bring it to Long Beach first,” he said of the Panorama. “People should understand that ship is being deployed here as the first revenue cruise. So it’s coming straight from the yard.”

Long Beach is Carnival’s busiest single terminal operation in North America, besting even Miami, Torres de Navarra pointed out.

At the terminal grand opening, Carnival also announced that it would be investing in a major port development project in Ensenada, Mexico, a destination for some of its Long Beach cruises. The company plans to develop retail and dining for cruise guests to enjoy an improved shore-side experience, Torres de Navarra explained.

These combined multi-million-dollar investments, coupled with the eventual development of the land surrounding the Queen Mary by Urban Commons, should bolster the demand to cruise out of Long Beach, Torres de Navarra explained.

With the opening of the larger terminal, Carnival has brought a larger ship, the Carnival Splendor, to operate cruises to Mexico, Hawaii and Alaska. And, as the company announced at the terminal’s grand opening, in late 2019 they plan to bring a new, larger ship, the Carnival Splendor, which operates cruises to Mexico, Hawaii and Alaska. (Photograph provided by Carnival Cruise Line)

Wilken Mes, director of Carnival’s Long Beach cruise terminal, pointed out that city staff members were greatly helpful in getting the expansion project off the ground. “They fast-tracked it for us – they worked on the weekends even,” Mes said. “They did everything possible to support our timeline. I mean we’re beyond happy with that.”

Steve Goodling, president and CEO of the Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, also praised the city for its support of the project. “The city worked really hard and provided the leadership needed to bring together the deal for Carnival to get the full dome and for Urban Commons to also benefit from this transaction,” Goodling said. He pointed out that Carnival’s investments would bring more travelers to Long Beach, benefiting local hotels and businesses.

Torres de Navarra said that Carnival’s Long Beach terminal is now the company’s finest. He reflected, “It’s going to bring a lot more benefit to the city for sure. I mean, how can it not?”

By SAMANTHA MEHLINGER

EDITOR
New Innovation Institute Hopes To Build Up Economic Entrepreneurial Foundation

By Brandon Richardson

On the heels of the city’s adoption of the 10-year Economic Development Blueprint last year, faculty at California State University, Long Beach, founded the Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship to foster startup businesses.

“Whether it be a nonprofit, a social enterprise, private sector for profit,” Wade Martin, director of the institute and CSULB teacher, said. “What we try to do is make sure that they have the support necessary to open a business, preferably in Long Beach or the Greater Long Beach Area.”

The official beginning of the institute was July 1, 2017. The initial proposal was presented by Ingrid Martin, a professor of marketing and director of graduate programs for the College of Business Administration; Michael Solt, dean of the College of Business Administration; and Martin. An anonymous donor supplied an annual fund of $75,000 per year for up to five years to sustain the institute’s administrative costs during its infancy. During that time, Martin said the goal is to become an endowed institute, which would provide a more stable financial situation.

Martin said there have been pockets of programs and support for entrepreneurs and innovators on campus for years but there has never been an umbrella organization to bring them together and support their activity. One such program is the university’s Innovation Challenge, which has existed for eight years and awards up to $50,000 to the winning senior to support the opening of his or her business.

“Aboard three years ago, some MBA students thought they would create an incubator. It still exists and meets every Tuesday night to support businesses in the community and support students in the Innovation Challenge,” Martin said. “They are now alumni and work in the community but come back every Tuesday night to support and provide programming.”

Seeing the commitment made by students and alumni, Martin and these counterparts believe there was an interest and need, an institutional void, which is now being filled by the institute. Like the city’s blueprint, the institute’s core belief is that the local economy is and will continue to be driven by entrepreneurs and small business, which may need support.

Martin explained that, in the case of Long Beach, relying on large companies such as Boeing Company as the economic foundation is dangerous because if they leave the city the economy takes a huge hit. However, if the foundation is built on small business and entrepreneurs that are tied to the city, with an ecosystem of support and resources, they can grow and flourish, providing a more stable foundation for the city’s economy.

“What we have found is that our model to be able to provide the support is to partner with existing organizations, making sure we’re not duplicating programs, but complementing existing programs,” Martin said. “The university has expertise that we can bring to the table, and that’s what we’re trying to do.”

The institute has already partnered with various organizations throughout the city, including the Downtown Long Beach Alliance, Centro CHA, the Aquarium of the Pacific, Long Beach City College and Molina Healthcare, among others. Through these partnerships, the institute is assisting in providing various workshops and events to support entrepreneurs at all levels. Thus far, all programming has been free.

The next institute-sponsored event is CSULB VR Day on March 9. The event will use virtual reality to “highlight intellectual, gender and racial diversity” in the workplace. The event includes a keynote address, faculty and practitioner panels, workshops, and demonstrations from faculty and student research collaborations, NativeVR and Arvada Labs. NativeVR’s demonstration of UTURN, developed by Dr. Nathalie Mathe, “is an immersive live-action virtual reality film where viewers experience both sides of the gender divide in tech.”

To spread their presence to downtown, the institute is working with Shoshani De Mathe, “an immersive live-action virtual reality film where viewers experience both sides of the gender divide in tech.”

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Land Use Element Going To Council

By Brandon Richardson

He said it will consist of 15 members who are internal to the university and 15 members from off campus, such as partners, entrepreneurs, alumni and those committed to the institute’s mission.

“We believe we will help strengthen the ecosystem and support the city’s efforts to have this solid foundation for economic development,” Martin said. “We strongly believe in the 10-year blueprint and the idea of diversity and inclusion as central to our mission.”

City Petitions State

Supreme Court To Hear BNSF Rail Project Case

By Samantha Mehlinger

The City of Long Beach and six other entities filed a petition on February 22 with the California Supreme Court, requesting that the court reconsider a ruling by a state court of appeals on BNSF Railway Co.’s Southern California International Gateway (SCIG) Project, according to Mike Mais, a city attorney for Long Beach.

On January 12, a court of appeals overturned a prior ruling by a trial court that had found the environmental impact report (EIR) for the SCIG project to be insufficient in several areas. The January ruling found that the EIR was deficient in just one area—that it failed to adequately consider associated air quality impacts.

The project was originally protested in court by appellants including the City of Long Beach, the Long Beach Unified School District, community groups and businesses that would be displaced by the project. They argued that much of the EIR was insufficient and would negatively impact surrounding communities. The project was defended both by BNSF and the City of Los Angeles, which argued that the project would create jobs and improve supply chain efficiency.

Mais said that BNSF and the City of Los Angeles, which partnered with the railway company on the EIR, may now respond to the petition. All parties must then wait for the supreme court to decide if it will hear the case, a decision Mais said was not likely to occur for another 90 days at least.

The maps outline PlaceTypes and building heights city wide, and received pushback from residents, particularly those in Districts 4 and 5, who said building height and density should be left as is. The LUE update is meant to aid the city in meeting its housing needs through 2040, based on new state requirements and development principles. The LUE has not been updated since 1989. The council meeting begins at 5 p.m. at city hall.
Thank you
Carnival Cruise for growing in Long Beach. Now, that’s what we call “economic development”.

We’d like to thank Carnival Cruise Line for creating the most unique travel experience yet for its passengers. The company completely renovated the Spruce Goose Dome location to speed up the boarding, create space for a brand new ship in 2019, and reduce pollution – all while retaining the appearance of our historical landmark. This new one-of-kind terminal will be the busiest cruise ship terminal on the West Coast, bringing 670,000 passengers to Long Beach just this year. We have one more thing to say, “Cheers!”.

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Long Beach City Council Takes On Port Truck Driver Misclassification

The Long Beach City Council took unanimous action on February 20 to address the misclassification of port truck drivers as independent contractors, rather than as employees, by trucking companies operating within the Port of Long Beach.

The issue of port truck driver misclassification has been gaining increasing visibility in the past few years, culminating in a series of national articles by USA Today last year that documented cases in which truck drivers working at the San Pedro Bay Ports were misclassified as independent contractors and forced to make payments toward their trucks with their wages, working long hours for little take-home pay. The publication compared the practice of indenturing these drivers to indentured servitude.

At the meeting, Mayor Robert Garcia, who brought the agenda item to the council, pointed out that the California Labor Commissioner has received more than 900 complaints about port truck driver misclassification and has upheld more than 500.

Garcia’s request, which was co-authored by Vice Mayor Rex Richardson and Councilmembers Lena Gonzalez, Jeannine Pearce and Al Austin, included multiple directives to address the issue. The council unanimously approved the following:

- Adding language to the council’s state and federal legislative agendas to support legislation that would improve working conditions for port truck drivers;
- Requesting the city attorney to work with the offices of the California Labor Commissioner and Attorney General “to explore options to support regulatory efforts;”
- And requesting the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners and the council’s Harbor and Tidelands Committee to hold hearings on the issue “with the goal of finding solutions that protect the Port of Long Beach’s proprietary interests.”

“We have some great both large and independent trucking firms... But we also have a situation at the port where there are many trucking companies that quite frankly are taking advantage of the workers,” Garcia said. “It is clear to me and to many others that truck drivers at the Port of Long Beach are often misclassified as independent contractors, which results in them working poverty level wages and denies them the protections guaranteed by state and federal laws.”

Garcia said that legislation has been introduced to Congress to address the issue, and that he expected state legislation to be introduced within days. By approving his proposal, the council decided to support and align with such legislation.

Truck drivers, union representatives, community members and clergy representing various religions testified in support of the mayor’s proposal at the council meeting. Justice for Port Truck Drivers, an arm of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, sent out a statement praising the city council the following day.

The California Trucking Association (CTA) contends that the California Department of Labor has been unfair and prejudicial in deciding misclassification claims against trucking companies. The organization filed suit in December 2016 challenging the fairness of the “Berman hearing process,” which it says the California Department of Labor’s Division of Labor Standards Enforcement has been using to adjudicate these misclassification complaints. Berman hearings are a type of administrative hearing used by the California Labor Commissioner to resolve wage claims. Because the suit is ongoing, representation from the CTA said the organization could not comment. But a CTA press release announcing the lawsuit indicated that it found the Berman hearings process to be unfair. CTA CEO Shawn Yadon stated: “We believe the Labor Commission and Division of Labor Standards Enforcement, for more than four years, have been intentionally ignoring their statutory obligations to be neutral and fair and are, instead, abusing their
authority in order to drive a particular agenda – to undermine the many small business trucking companies that operate under the legal independent contractor relationship with other, larger companies – by forcing predetermined results from labor hearings.”

The statement from the CTA also claimed that the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and affiliated groups had sought the assistance from state and federal agencies in “cracking down” on trucking companies using independent contractors, and that those agencies then “assisted in efforts to stimulate misclassification claims by owner-drivers.”

The City of Los Angeles has also taken up the issue. In January, the Los Angeles City Attorney filed lawsuits against three trucking companies operating in the ports, arguing that they misclassified truck drivers as independent contractors and thereby avoided providing benefits and paying associated taxes.

At the council meeting, Garcia indicated that hearings on the matter by the council’s Harbor and Tidelands Committee and the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners would result in collection of information and data to be brought back to the council at a later date.

City Representatives Explore Solutions To Reduce Crime In Area Motels

BY ANNE ARTLEY
STAFF WRITER

The Long Beach City Council voted February 20 to continue pursuing efforts to reduce illegal activity at six Long Beach motels. Future initiatives may include an ordinance holding property owners accountable for criminal activities and creating an amortization program to phase out motels located in areas without a high volume of tourists.

Long Beach Innovation Team Director Tracy Colunga presented an update on the Nuisance Motels Pilot Program, a multi-department effort created in 2017 to identify the motels with high levels of human trafficking, drug activity and violent crime. It is set to conclude in September 2018.

Based on criteria such as a high volume of calls for police service and the severity of crimes reported, the program identified six “nuisance” locations: Luxury Inn, Searle Motel, Colonial Pool & Spa Motel, a Travelodge, Greenleaf Hotel and Stallion Inn Motel. Two of these are located on Long Beach Boulevard, two on Atlantic Avenue, one on Pacific Coast Highway near Atlantic Avenue and one on Lime Avenue. Luxury Inn, Searle Motel [both located on Long Beach Boulevard] and Stallion Inn are located in North Long Beach. The Travelodge and Greenleaf Inn are located downtown and Colonial is on Pacific Coast Highway near Atlantic Avenue and Long Beach Polytechnic High School.

Vice-Mayor Rex Richardson, one of the councilmembers who introduced the item, emphasized the importance of creating both a short- and long-term strategy to tackle the problem at its roots.

“When the city cracks down [on human trafficking], it’s like a water balloon,” he said at the meeting. “We crack down for a little while and then the issues just move to Compton and Lynwood. When the Compton sheriffs crack down, it squeezes the other side of the balloon and it [the problem] pops back up in Long Beach. We can’t look at just suppression.” Richardson represents the 9th District, where some of the problem motels are located.

Richardson proposed instating performance standards at motels as well as adding more lighting and security cameras. “The city is installing security cameras on Long Beach Boulevard,” he said. “The motel owners should be required to do that so it’s not funded by the taxpayers.” Richardson also pointed to a city mandate in Chula Vista that requires motel guests to show identification and register their license plate number when they check in.

The vice mayor outlined the long-term solution of updating zoning and land use regulations to phase out motels in neighborhoods where motel tourism is not economically viable. The establishments could then transition into affordable housing or mixed-use developments.

“I think this is a very proactive, strong approach,” 8th District Councilmember Al Austin said. “What I like about it is that it identified the most problem motels. It didn’t necessarily paint all motel operators with a wide brush. I have motels in my district as well. Not all of them are the best, but we have some examples of very well-run [motels] and responsible motel operators who should also be involved in a conversation about best practices.”
be needed to keep up with job growth in the city. The study was a means to evaluate the accuracy of the city’s own estimates based on state requirements and projected population growth, according to economist and Beacon Executive Director of Research Robert Kleinhenz.

“We were asked to take a look at the city’s estimate of housing needs through 2040,” Kleinhenz said. “We felt as though the number that the city had produced was a solid number. We followed their methodology and arrived at roughly the same number six years hence. Based on comparing the two numbers, it showed that maybe there was a little bit of improvement.”

The city’s estimates for the number of housing units that must be produced by 2040 to keep up with population growth is 28,524. This estimate includes 7,048 units specified in the city’s Regional Housing Needs Assessment and the estimated 21,476 units to alleviate those that are currently overcrowded, which is based on 2010 Decennial Census data.

Beacon, on the other hand, relied on more recent data from the 2016 Census Bureau’s American Community Survey and concluded that 26,442 units would be needed by 2040 to match population growth and overcrowding needs. Kleinhenz explained that these numbers represent the full range of potential growth paths at the most extreme levels. What was not taken into consideration in Beacon’s study were submarket breakdowns such as senior and veteran housing needs.

The housing study also focused on issues that may impact the future development of units, namely the forthcoming and highly controversial Land Use Element (LUE) maps, which lay out new Place Type zoning and building height limitations citywide. The maps have gone through several iterations, numerous public meetings and heated debates before the most recent version was released in January. The Long Beach City Council is considering the LUE during its meeting on March 6.

“There is an increase to the amount of space allocated for single-family homes, which I get, because it’s a suburban kind of lifestyle that Long Beach offers its residents,” Kleinhenz said. “But it also, at the same time, calls for a reduced level of low-density multifamily housing.”

Beacon’s report indicates that, compared to the current LUE (which has not been updated since 1989), the current proposal increases single-family residential zoning 4,294 acres. High-density multi-family zoning is increased 574 acres, while low-density multifamily zoning is decreased by 966 acres. These shifts will exacerbate the housing shortage by driving rents higher, pushing vulnerable residents out of the city and ultimately stifling economic growth, according to the report.

Beacon compared percentages of the three types of residential zones in Long Beach with San Diego and Oakland. The comparison showed that, while Long Beach allocates similar amounts of land to housing, particularly single-family and low-density multifamily, the city is severely lacking in high-density multifamily space. While San Diego and Oakland allocate 6.17% and 12.05% of land, respectively, to high-density multifamily zoning, Long Beach sits at 0.02%.

“The option, really, is to go up. We have to look at the possibility of adding another floor to buildings on some of these commercial corridors.”

Robert Kleinhenz
Executive Director of Research
Beacon Economics

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“This isn’t wage and salary growth; this is resident employment growth. It’s not like we’re building enough housing for everyone who works here, including those who might currently commute. We’re not even touching that issue,” Kleinhenz said. “We’re just saying, if you add enough housing units to accommodate what is expected to be civilian employment growth on the part of the residents of the City of Long Beach, you get that much larger number.”

Kleinhenz explained that these numbers were derived from the full range of potential growth paths at the most extreme levels. What was not taken into consideration in Beacon’s study were submarket breakdowns such as senior and veteran housing needs.

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The city’s estimates for the number of housing needs through 2040, according to Kleinhenz, explained. Continuing the job growth trend of the city, which has been 0.7% annually for more than a decade, according to Kleinhenz, through 2040, Beacon projected the number of units needed is actually 75,235.

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The Long Beach Coalition for Good Jobs and a Healthy Community began collecting signatures on February 17 to place a hotel workers protection ordinance on the November ballot, according to coalition Director Victor Sánchez.

“The good thing is it has been a two-year campaign, so the message is out there in the community and it’s not an issue that’s out of the know for a lot of residents and a lot of our volunteers,” Sánchez said. “We’re excited. We feel like we’ve got good momentum and we have a positive outlook for the coming weeks.”

If passed, the proposed Hotel Workplace Requirements and Restrictions ordinance would impose safety and workload-related standards on hotels with 50 or more rooms. Sánchez explained that the coalition does not have a total on the number of signatures collected so far, but that volunteers, not paid collectors, are out six days per week gathering them.

“When you look at the current national context and the need for women to have adequate protection in the workplace from sexual and physical abuse, I don’t know why this is even an issue that’s up for debate. It’s long overdue,” Sánchez said. “For us, we see it as part of the longer conversation about the need to make sure that women in the workplace are protected and have avenues to address any instances of sexual or physical abuse.”

When informed about Sanchez’s comments, Business Journal Publisher George Economides said the reason it’s “up for debate is that this push is not about protecting women, it’s about unionizing hotels and their employees. Let’s face it, if these hotels were a dangerous place to work and employees were being abused, the hotels would be out of business.”

Rent Control Initiative
Housing Long Beach (HLB) and its affiliates also continue gathering signatures for a rent control initiative to appear on the November ballot. Josh Butler, director of HLB, said signature collectors have reported a higher level of enthusiasm for this issue than they have seen in the past. Butler did have a total number for signatures collected but said the grassroots, volunteer-based effort is covering grocery stores and apartment buildings for signature collecting. If passed, the housing initiative would establish rent control on all commercial rental properties, which excludes rentable single-family homes, and provide other renter protections such as just-cause eviction.

Each initiative requires 27,000 signatures to be submitted to the city by June for certification.
Super Suds

(Continued From Page 1)

“Wanting to earn my keep, I saw the opportunity to continue improving the wash and fold business [a service where customers drop off their laundry to be washed, dried, folded and picked up at a later time].”

Two more iterations of a website were built, with the final version created by Marathon Consulting, a Virginia-based marketing consulting firm. As the brothers hoped, improved marketing via the website led to increased wash and fold business, which went from a couple orders per day to almost 30. With such a drastic increase in business, the brothers hired more staff and discovered a new problem — keeping track of orders from start to finish.

Before the business boom, Super Suds would keep track of its orders with handwritten tickets. As business increased, this method became impractical and the brothers sought out a more technologically advanced point of sale (POS) system. Internet searches turned up few options, most of which were originally designed for restaurants and then tweaked for laundromats.

The brothers consulted with restaurant software, according to Matt is that the services are rendered on the spot and the sale is done. When it comes to laundering, a restaurant POS system is unable to follow the laundering process from start to finish. “With wash and fold, it’s complicated. The customer could have different preferences, they can pay ahead of time, they can pay after. The product is not delivered immediately, and you have to keep track of all those moving parts.”

This revelation led the brothers to develop their own software from the ground up. The result was a program capable of tracking orders from start to finish, including specific customer preferences such as water temperature. As the business evolved, so did the program.

The brothers introduced pickup and delivery laundry service to their customers, who initially called in to schedule pick-ups. As the service gained popularity, the software received an upgrade that allowed for orders to be placed online. This game changer.

“As soon as we added that ‘schedule pickup’ button to our website, business went up 30%. It was transformative,” Matt said. “For whatever reason, people just like to see the pricing, see the information and schedule it themselves. It’s like booking your own airline ticket. When is the last time you called a travel agent?”

After experiencing such positive results, the brothers realized there was high demand for a laundromat owners could benefit from the software they had created. In June 2017, they unveiled their wash and fold software, Curbside Laundries, during the Clean Show, a trade show dedicated to the laundromat industry. Curbside would make it possible for all the laundromat owners could benefit from the software they had created. In June 2017, the brothers introduced pickup and delivery laundry service to their customers and then its remaining customers. Based on the current rate of growth, Matt estimates Curbside will be a “very strong” business within two years.

Matt explained the laundromat business model, historically, has been to buy an existing facility, spruce it up and, once business picked up enough, purchase another. However, with the success of their software and different approach to the laundromat business, the brothers hope to help fellow laundromat owners succeed. They stress that diversifying business through wash and fold, pickup and delivery, and dry cleaning services makes up for any coin-operated revenue that might be lost to incoming competitors. Matt said they treat each aspect of their operation as a different business, which is why the fold and wash increased from 25% of their business to more than half, surpassing the self-service laundromat.

With Curbside inquiries coming in faster than they can handle from laundromat owners nationwide, the brothers believe the trends they have experienced firsthand will continue. They explained that people are reclaiming their free time by utilizing technology and innovative services such as those offered by Super Suds, which will continue to prosper as a result.

“In the past, everyone took care of their own lawns, changed their own oil — those are things that nobody does anymore. Laundry is going the same direction where people are working longer and, if they have kids, they are taking them to different events,” Aaron said. “The free time that they can spend on themselves or with their families is valuable, and it’s worth it to go online, schedule a pickup and have [their clean laundry] returned. All they have to do is open the bag, put it in the drawer or on the hanger and they’re done.”

The following items were voted on at the February 20 Long Beach City Council meeting:

Spartan College Of Aeronautics Plans To Relocate To Long Beach Airport — The city council agreed to enter into a lease with Long Beach Airport Hangar Owner LLC to develop approximately 30,000 square feet of space at 3205 Lakewood Blvd. for a new aviation and aeronautics school. Long Beach Airport Hangar Owner LLC is an affiliate of Macquarie Corporate and Asset Finance, which has been engaged with Spartan College of Aeronautics to sublease the vacant space and relocate to the airport. A representative from the college was not available to comment.

City Enters Partnership To Benefit Local Entrepreneurs — City representa- tives agreed to enter into a partnership with StartUp Technologies, a Pasadena-based organization that connects entrepreneurs to mentors and other resources to help them launch their businesses. City staff plans to work with StartUp to promote their mo- bile-based platform to small business owners in Long Beach.

Program To Improve Business Corri- dors — Councilmembers voted to establish a business corridor improvement and prop- erty beautification partnership program to improve properties located along Pacific Avenue, Anaheim Street and Carson Street. Expected improvements include exterior painting, light fixture replacements and installation of awnings. Individual projects are not to exceed $25,000.

Mayor’s Appointments To Non-Char- ter Commissions Approved — The city council approved the mayor’s appointments to non-charter commissions. Care Pediatrician Jessica Schum was appointed to the Economic Development Commission. The appointee to the Tech- nology & Innovation Commission are Paris Vizmant, a strategic consultant and entrepreneur coach for tech companies, and Evan Marquardt, an aerodynamicist at elec- tric car startup Faraday Future. Former 9th District Councilmember Steven Neal was appointed to the Long Beach Transit Board of Directors. Garcia also appointed Alice Bruns, the lead developer at the Dis- abled Resources Center, Inc., to the Cit- izens Advisory Committee. The Citizens Advisory Committee on Disabilities, as well as Nubia Flores Cedeño, a board- member of the Community Advisory Com- mittee for Long Beach Unified School District. The mayor also reappointed Stacy McDaniel and Diane Arnold to The Long Beach Community Investment Company.

Councilmembers Approve Lifeguard Association Contract — The city council approved a memorandum of understanding with the Long Beach Lifeguard Association for 2017 to 2019. Provisions include three $25,000 per year, plus any additional recovery for city. The city council approved a memorandum of understanding with the Long Beach Lifeguard Association for 2017 to 2019. Provisions include three $25,000 per year, plus any additional fees negotiated annually. The city council approved a memorandum of understanding with the Long Beach Lifeguard Association for 2017 to 2019. Provisions include three $25,000 per year, plus any additional fees negotiated annually.

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Aquarium of the Pacific’s Aquatic Academy Spring 2018

Redrawing the Map of the World’s Coastlines

Sea level is rising and will continue to rise through this century and probably much longer. The rate of rise is accelerating as the ocean warms and expands as mountain glaciers, and particularly Greenland and Antarctica melt more rapidly than projected. The map of the world’s coastlines will be redrawn before the end of this century. Big changes of some nations and U.S. states will be swallowed up by the sea. Low-lying island states will be drowned and hundreds of thousands of residents have to find new homes. California will not be immune.

Join experts in exploring how rapidly and how much sea level might rise, the amount and causes of the uncertainty and how sea level rise will affect the world’s and California’s coasts and cities, the infrastructure we have built, as well as nature’s infrastructure, and what we can do to adapt.

When: March 7, 14 and 21 at 7:00 p.m. — 9:30 p.m.
Cost: $40 for adults, $35 for members, $10 extra for CEU credit in conjunction with CSULB (optional)
Where: Aquarium of the Pacific, 100 Aquarium Way, Long Beach, CA 90802
Parking: We will validate parking for course participants
RSVP: For reservations, contact Guest Services: (562) 590-3100, ext. 0
For additional information, email: Adriana Metz, ametz@lbccc.org or visit aquariumofthepacific.org/aquaticacademy

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Local Beach Business Journal

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Newswatch
Tech Industry Impact

(Continued From Page 1)

away CEO Warren Buffet stated, “The ballooning costs of health care act as a hungry tapeworm on the American economy. Our group does not come to this problem with answers. But we also do not accept it as inevitable. Rather, we share the belief that putting our collective resources behind the country’s best talent can, in time, check the rise in health costs while concurrently enhancing patient satisfaction and outcomes.”

Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon, acknowledged that the health care system is complex. He stated, “Hard as it might be, reducing health care’s burden on the economy while improving outcomes for employees and their families would be worth the effort. Success is going to require talented experts, a bigger mind, and a long-term orientation.”

Beyond these remarks, the only details the companies gave was that their new health care company’s initial focus “will be on technology solutions that will provide U.S. businesses and their families with simplified, high-quality and transparent health care at a reasonable cost.”

The discussion surrounding whether or not technology companies like Amazon could disrupt the health care industry is not a new one, according to Paul Hughes-Cromwick, co-director of the Center for Sustainable Health Spending at the Ann Arbor-based nonprofit health system research organization, the Altarum Institute. But the idea of a company with incredible technological sophistication partnering with two other firms to leverage their collective market clout is new. And, according to Hughes-Cromwick, it could have impacts beyond the employees of those firms.

Brendan LaCerda, assistant director and economist at Moody’s Analytics, pointed out that the core power of the partnership between Amazon, JPMorgan Chase and Berkshire-Hathaway is bargaining power. “Combined, they have like 1.2 million employees worldwide. It’s a well-documented fact in the health care research that the larger your company is, the better pricing you get on premiums for your employees,” he said. “And, according to Hughes-Cromwick, it could have impacts beyond the employees of those firms.”

LaCerda continued, “Amazon has this logistics network. They have this consumer-friendly website. If they are going to lower cost by bringing some efficiency, the most sort of obvious place would be in increasing price transparency where people could comparison-shop drug prices or medical device prices. And that would increase competition and presumably lower price for consumers.”

Pharmaceutical companies describe how the watch has helped them monitor their health vitals and, in some cases, even saved their lives. The company has secured a number of patents to turn its efforts into commercial, a series of Apple Watch wearables. “That early intervention saves money. So it seems like there is this role that wearable technology, smart devices, could provide preventative information to people and that would help lower the amount of money individuals are saving on health care.”

With the number of employees held between firms like Amazon, Berkshire and JPMorgan Chase, it is possible that the companies gave their combined employ-ment base as a massive pilot program for health management technologies, Hughes-Cromwick noted.
National Kidney Month: Highlighting The Human Body’s Filter

Approximately 30 million Americans have kidney disease, with many not even knowing this vital organ is compromised, according to the National Kidney Foundation (NKF). March 14 is recognized as World Kidney Day, while United States focuses on the integral organ all month long. Organizations such as NKF host workshops, Q&As and even offer free screenings throughout March for those at risk of kidney disease.

“The kidneys do the background work. They’re kind of like the guys who take the trash away every week,” Dr. Gia Tran, a nephrologist at Dignity Health – St. Mary Medical Center, said. “If you don’t have a trash man who comes in and cleans you out, toxins build up. That is the function of the kidneys. They filter 150 to 200 liters of blood per day, actively and continuously, doing the work for you.”

The kidneys’ importance to bodily function cannot be understated. The fist-sized organs regulate the body’s salt, potassium and acid content, remove drugs from the body, balance the body’s fluids, release hormones to regulate blood pressure, produce an active form of Vitamin D that promotes healthy bones, and control the production of red blood cells. When these functions are interrupted by blockages or organ failure, the results are deadly if left untreated.

Dr. Sapna Patel, director of Adult Inpatient Dialysis and section chair for the Department of Nephrology at MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center, said. “If you don’t have a kidney, you’re not going to live.”

According to LBMC, more than 661,000 Americans currently have kidney failure, which kills more people than breast or prostate cancer, making it the ninth leading cause of death in the country.

“By far, the most common causes of kidney disease are diabetes and hypertension, which account for [almost 75%] of the cases of chronic kidney disease in the U.S.,” Patel said. “The biggest thing for people to be aware of is the importance of preventative care before it starts. Go to those primary care visits, get your blood pressure and cholesterol checked, and prevent the onset of diabetes and high blood pressure.”

Since its two leading causes are, generally speaking, preventable issues, Patel said the simplest way of decreasing the chance of kidney disease is lifestyle management. A healthy diet and exercise are two key methods to maintain body health and avoid becoming part of the country’s rampant obesity, which leads to many cases of diabetes and hypertension.

Prolonged kidney disease requires a laboratory diagnosis because it does not show obvious symptoms in its early stages. Only nondescript issues like fatigue, poor appetite, weakness and a metallic taste in the mouth, symptoms common with many mild ailments, are clues that someone may be experiencing kidney disease.

Blockages in the body in the form of kidney stones, scars or tumors can also cause kidney disease if left untreated, according to Dr. Shahrad Aynehchi, a urologist and senior attending surgeon at Lakewood Regional Medical Center. He explained that kidney stones, which are hard deposits of minerals and salts, form and can lead to pain and infection, increasing the risk of kidney disease.

One of the most common causes of kidney stones is dehydation, Aynehchi explained. He said the risk of kidney stones increases in the summer months and is particularly prevalent in the southeastern part of the country due to excessively hot weather. High levels of sodium and a lack of citric acid intake also increase the risk of kidney stone formation. Staying hydrated, reducting the use of table salt with meals and adding some lemon juice to daily water are simple steps a person can take to avoid kidney stones, according to Aynehchi.

“We have a number of different tools at our disposal to destroy the stones or break them up to get the kidneys back to their normal function,” Aynehchi said. “Some of them could be treated with diet changes but, [with] the vast majority of them, it is not possible to completely eradicate them with diet changes or medication. So we need a surgical procedure to have them treated and removed.”

Once a stone has formed, Aynehchi said treatment is determined by the size of the stone. Small stones have an 85% to 90% chance of being passed by the patient in their urine. Larger stones can be broken down utilizing a special laser or by using extracorporeal shock wave lithotripsy, which breaks up stones using sound waves traveling through the body.

For larger stones, Aynehchi said a percutaneous nephrolithotomy is performed, which is a small centimeter-sized incision on the patient’s back to go in and physically remove the stone. These three methods are all minimally invasive, according to Aynehchi.

Prolonged kidney disease without treatment can lead to issues with other organs such as the heart, lungs and nervous system, according to Tran. For example, she explained that unfiltered blood can create calcium buildups in blood vessels, which may lead to stroke or heart attack. Additionally, she said an imbalance of electrolytes may cause neurological symptoms such as confusion.

Once kidney disease has set in, if it is not caused by a blockage and cannot be treated with medication or modifying the patient’s lifestyle, the only treatment option is dialysis. This is a process in which patients are hooked up to a machine that extracts and filters their blood per day, actively and continuously, doing the work for you.”

Dr. Sapna Patel, director of Adult Inpatient Dialysis and section chair for the Department of Nephrology at MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center, left, and clinical coordinator Linda Sheppard are pictured with a dialysis machine, which is used to treat patients with kidney disease. Kidney disease is the ninth leading cause of death in the United States, ahead of breast and prostate cancer. (Photograph by the Business Journal’s Pat Flynn)

New Catheterization Lab Debuts At MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center

Leadership at MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center recently celebrated the opening of a newly renovated catheterization laboratory (cath lab) for its Heart & Vascular Institute. The lab includes a variety of high-tech features, including diagnostic equipment used to visualize and treat heart abnormalities such as bi-plane imaging, which allows cardiologists to view the heart from multiple perspectives. The renovation of the cath lab was made possible by philanthropic donations, according to a statement from the hospital. The lab renovations will also benefit the adjacent MemorialCare Children’s & Women’s Hospital. “The MemorialCare Heart & Vascular Institute has a rich history of changing medicine through treadmill stress testing and pacemaker technology,” Dr. Rex Winters, medical director of invasive cardiology at the Institute, stated. “This renovation will help us drive the evolution of heart care in Long Beach and continue our legacy.” (Photograph provided by MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center)
Isn’t home where the heart should be?

The **MemorialCare Heart & Vascular Institute** has nationally recognized experts in minimally invasive cardiac procedures, such as the groundbreaking Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) procedure.

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Register for the 11th Annual Women’s Heart & Stroke Seminar at MemorialCare Long Beach Medical Center on Saturday, Feb. 24. Women and men are encouraged to attend. Call 1.800.MEMORIAL to register.
undergoing the invasive transplant surgery. When a transplant becomes the proper course of action for the patient’s health, the best case scenario is when a family mem-
ber or friend is a match and donates a kid-
ney. However, if this is not possible, pa-
tients must be deemed a candidate for a transplant and placed on the wait-list, which has strict criteria and works on a point system, according to Aynelchi.
When it comes time for a kidney trans-
plant surgery, the donor is sometimes a per-
son who recently died or a living person who has decided to donate. In the case of a
live donor, two surgeries must occur, often simultaneously: one for the donor and one on the recipient. According to Aynelchi, the donor surgery has made great advances and is often done laparoscopically, meaning a
small incision and minimal blood loss, with most people going home the next day.
“The person who receives the kidney, that is done as an open operation,” Ayme-
li said. “The surgery is mostly unchanged for the past 10 or 20 years. The
real progression has been that the medica-
tions are much better, so the body can tol-
erate that kidney.”
According to Patel, roughly 193,000 Americans are living with a functioning kidney transplant.

Leading Cause of Blindness
In Seniors Expected To Double
By 2050: What To Know

By SAMANTHA MEBLINGER
EDITOR

The incidence of age-related macular de-
generation, a leading cause of blindness among seniors, is expected to double by 2050 as the Baby Boomer generation ages, according to the American Academy of Oph-
thalmology. The disease, which damages the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye called the retina, currently affects about 2.1 million Americans. While the disease is not curable, it is possible to slow down its pro-
gression with early detection and treatment.
Dr. Rahul Khurana, an ophthalmologist and retina specialist, said that there are ap-
proximately two million people afflicted with macular degeneration in the United
States. Prior to about a decade ago, there were few options to treat the disease. Now, he noted, there is a number of ways to slow its progression. Khurana serves as an asso-
ci ate clinical professor of ophthalmology at the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine and also practices at the
six-office, Mountain View-based Northern California Retina Vitreous Associates.
Macular degeneration is a disease of the eye that causes damage to the retina, an eye tissue that processes images and relays vis-
ual information to the brain. The macula is an oval-shaped, yellow-orange area near the center of the retina responsible for the eye’s sharpest vision.
There are two types of the disease. “The

HealthWise
Take Your Health To Heart

Each year, about 610,000 lives are claimed from heart disease, making it the leading cause of death for both men and women in the U.S. More than 525,000 Americans have a heart attack and an additional 210,000 have a second or sub-
sequent heart attack. Nearly half of these will occur without warning signs. Knowing the risk factors of heart disease is the first step in preventing heart dis-
ease or taking steps to reverse it.
The major risk factors that can be controlled include smoking, high choles-
terol, high blood pressure, physical inactivity, obesity, stress and diabetes. The
more risk factors you have, the greater your chance of developing heart disease. Additionally, the intensity of each risk factor can affect your risk level.
In order to decrease your risk for heart disease, it’s important to learn how to
maintain a heart healthy lifestyle.

By Cindy Peters, RN, MSN, ACNP-BC

Smoking – Smoking is a leading cause of coronary artery disease. About
20 percent of all deaths from heart disease in the U.S. are directly related to
smoking. Quitting now can greatly reduce your risk of disease, including heart disease, heart attack and high blood pressure, as well as improve your overall health.

Diet – Improving your blood pressure and cholesterol can be as simple as improving your diet.
• Become educated and aware of the foods you eat. It is important to read and understand food labels to make heart-healthy choices.
• Eat more vegetables, fruit and whole wheat.
• Limit salt intake. While salt is a necessary mineral, most people consume far too much on a regular basis.
• Limit unhealthy fats and cholesterol. One simple way is to limit the amount of solid fat that you add to food when cooking, like butter.

Weight Management – Watching your weight also can help decrease your risk for heart disease.
Get moving and work out at least 30 minutes every day. Exercise helps improve heart health and can even reverse heart disease risk factors. Once you reach 40-years-old, exercise does not need to be vigorous.

Blood Glucose – High blood glucose levels increase your risk for developing Type 2 diabetes, which can lead to heart disease. If you already have been diagnosed with diabetes, maintaining an optimal glucose level can reduce your risk.

Stress – Another controllable risk factor for heart disease is stress. Too much stress can lead to heart disease and high blood pressure if left unmanaged. As stress levels increase, so does your risk for developing heart disease. Meditation can bring about a state of deep relaxation, which can de-
crease your heart rate and blood pressure and slow down your breathing. This gives your cardiovas-
cular system rest, in turn reducing stress.

Regular cardiovascular screenings with a cardiologist or primary care physician can help detect risk factors in early stages. All regular cardiovascular screening tests should begin at age 20 and the frequency of follow-up will depend on your level of risk. Screenings should include cholesterol, blood pressure, blood glucose, weight/height mass index (BMI) and waist circumference. You also should discuss your smoking, physical activity and diet habits with your physician.

Knowing your personal risk factors, getting regular cardiovascular screenings and taking simple steps toward a heart healthy lifestyle can decrease your risk for heart disease.

(Please Continue To Next Page)
first one is the dry macular degeneration, which is a slowly progressive form and is characterized by buildup of material called drusen underneath the retina,” Dr. Carlos Martinez, managing partner of Eye Physicians of Long Beach, said. “When the drusen become significant enough that it starts to interfere with the metabolism of the photo receptors, then you get visual loss.”

Dr. Dieter Hertzog, a fourth-generation ophthalmologist practicing at Hertzog Eye Care in Long Beach, explained that as drusen deposits enlarge and grow more numerous, people start to notice vision loss in low light conditions. “Then, during the day the central vision starts to drop off, too,” he said. If the disease is allowed to progress untreated, large swaths of central vision may be lost, he noted. Other symptoms include difficulty seeing at night and distinguishing colors, according to Martinez.

“The really bad one is really wet macular degeneration,” Hertzog said. “The wet type is where people develop leaks or bleeds in their retina. There are blood vessels that grow up from a layer called the choroid, which is under the retina, into the tissue and then leak or bleed.” Wet macular degeneration can cause rapid vision loss, he said.

“With wet macular degeneration, you can get the onset of scotomas, which are blind spots,” Martinez said. “Or you can get the deformation of images, called metamorphopsia, which basically means that when you look at a straight line, instead of looking straight it starts to look wavy.”

Macular degeneration is the most common cause of visual loss in patients older than 65, Martinez said. He recommended that patients 65 and older have yearly dilated eye exams to check for the disease.

“If one eye starts to lose vision, you often don’t notice it because the other eye kind of compensates,” Khurana said. “And that’s why it’s really important to get your eyes checked. You may be having signs or symptoms, and you may not even realize it because your other eye is doing well.”

There are three injectable medications that are used to treat wet macular degeneration, according to Hertzog. “They reduce production of a molecule called vascular endothelial growth factor,” he said. “And, basically, the gist of what they do is they prevent those blood vessel networks that have proliferated out of control from leaking and bleeding.” Using these drugs, it is possible to maintain a person’s vision and prevent blindness.

For dry macular degeneration, the only reliable treatment is a type of multi-vitamin called AREDS-2, Hertzog said. “It doesn’t help prevent development of the disease, but it does help prevent progression,” he explained.
Women In Business

(Continued From Page 1)

skyrocketed. The report found that these enterprises expanded by 467%, four times more than the overall rate of women opening businesses in the same time frame. As of 2017, ethnic minorities comprised 46% of all women-owned businesses. They totaled around 5.4 million businesses and generated approximately $361 billion in revenue.

The Guidant Financial survey found that the biggest reasons women started their own business was to pursue their passion, become their own boss or because the opportunity simply presented itself. This echoes the motivations of four Long Beach female entrepreneurs, all representing diverse backgrounds and fields. These women all hope to expand their enterprises, and each expressed a desire to fulfill an unmet need in their community. The owners of Khmer Bridal Boutique, DeadRockers, Sklar Center for Restorative Medicine and Global Transloading, LLC, have begun the new year with optimism.

When Lindsay Shaver was 18 years old, she started her own business dedicated to punk rock music culture. She was having trouble finding a place to buy alternative music and clothes in the South Bay area.

“I took matters into my own hands and started sourcing brands and finding cool stuff to sell,” she said. “I used to have booths at punk rock and roller derby shows – any place that let me set up.”

Shaver promoted her products through the social networking website MySpace before launching her own website one year later. Her efforts have grown into DeadRockers, a shop that sells vinyl records and patches from bands as well as novelties like coffin-shaped shelves and a teacup emblazoned with the word ‘poison.’

Shaver, whose favorite bands are The Clash and the Ramones, decided to set up shop in Long Beach because of its thriving music scene and acceptance of alternative culture. She mentioned that Fern’s Cocktails and Alex’s Bar, both located near 4th Street, were hot spots for punk rockers. Flyers from shows line the ceiling at DeadRockers; many of these shows took place at Fender’s Ballroom, an iconic rock music venue in Long Beach in the 1980s.

“A lot of times older people who went to these shows will come in,” Shaver said. “I think it’s really cool that it [DeadRockers] appeals to all ages. We’ll see kids who are 12 who want to buy their first punk rock record and then people in their 60s who remember the bands.”

As a female in the punk rock community, Shaver has faced the misconception that her husband owns the store. In fact, he is a carpenter who built the coffin shelves.

“I think it’s hilarious, but kind of flattering that people assume that only a man could do it,” Shaver said of owning her business. “I take it as a compliment.”

Even with competition from online retailers, Shaver has found that having her own shop has built up trust among her customers. She said she hopes to open a second location.

Lindsay Shaver
DeadRockers
1023 E. 4th St., Long Beach • 424/777-3228

Shannon Griego, the owner of construction waste-hauling company Global Transloading, LLC, learned her trade during a 17-year stint in the army.

“I was a transportation manager,” she said. “When I came to California I saw there was a big need for it here. I worked for other waste and construction companies and they always struggled when it came to how to dispose of and transport large volumes of waste.”

Griego also observed these companies missing opportunities to win some contracts, since the owners did not qualify as disadvantaged. The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) reserves 10% of its contracts for minority and women-owned businesses under its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program, according to the DOT website. The California Department of Transportation has also committed to awarding 12.5% of its federally funded projects to DBEs.

“The people I worked for in the past didn’t fit that criteria,” she explained. “Women don’t go into construction. I fit everything: disadvantaged, woman, minority, so I just decided to try and do it.” She started the business 15 years ago.

Griego, who is half Hispanic and half Native American, said that now only a small portion of her business is made up of these federal contracts. In the South Bay, Global Transloading has contracts with Environmental Construction Group, Inc., the Port of Los Angeles, the Port of Long Beach, the Long Beach Airport and the City of Long Beach.

“My favorite part is the challenge,” Griego said. “There’s a lot of challenge in going out and forming relationships with people who might be out of my comfort zone.”

Sustaining the workflow and earning enough money to maintain her employees is a trying aspect for Griego. “Traditionally, construction is very cheap,” she said. “We have to be very selective in the jobs we do.”

As a female business owner in the construction industry, Griego has found that she faces a stereotype that women do not understand logistics. “We’re working with a trucking company where the owner calls and asks to speak to a male employee because the men know what’s going on. A lot of people will ask me if this is my father’s business,” she said, laughing.

Griego’s goal is to expand her company, which has 15 employees and 545 independent truck drivers who work with her as needed.

“We’re one of the largest waste haulers in Southern California,” she said. “Hopefully, we’ll grow into a large company and keep everybody happy at the same time.”

Shannon Griego
Global Transloading, LLC
1842 E. 29th St., Signal Hill
562/495-9600 • www.globaltransloading.com
CCN Wellness Center is excited to announce their new Commu-
Women In Business

(Continued From Page 22)

Kaylene Men, the owner and founder of Khmer Bridal Boutique, moved to the United States as a Cambodian refugee when she was eight years old. Her family relocated during the country’s civil war, which took place between 1967 to 1975.

“The Cambodian government sent my father to Kansas for military training,” she said. “He was supposed to go back, but then the country fell and there weren’t any planes that went back to Cambodia.”

Upon finishing high school in Kansas, Men visited her sister who had moved to Long Beach. She fell in love with the city and decided to get a summer job at United Cambodian Community, a social services agency established to assist refugees. From there, she went on to become a gang counselor.

To combat the lack of identity she saw among the young people she mentored, Men started collecting Khmer artifacts to encourage a more positive image of her native country. Khmer is an ethnic group native to Cambodia. Their language, Mon-Khmer, is the country’s official language.

“There are a lot of stories to be told about Cambodia,” she said. “A lot of people only know about the negative things, like the gangs and the war. We brought a 2,000-year history, culture and food [to the U.S.] I started collecting things people gave me, like clothes and costumes. Through word of mouth, I became the person to go to for Cambodian culture. It ties the family and the social network together.”

Men turned her collection into a gift shop, which she transitioned into a bridal boutique.

Khmer Bridal Boutique
2434 E. Pacific Coast Hwy., Long Beach
562/607-3130

Dr. Susan Sklar, the founder and medical director of the Sklar Center for Restorative Medicine, started out as an obstetrician-gynecologist (OB-GYN), but decided to start practicing restorative medicine in 2007 when conventional health care failed to successfully treat some of her own health problems.

“We look for the underlying causes of disease rather than looking at the obvious symptoms,” Sklar explained. “A lot of factors interfere with our body’s ability to function in a healthy way, like our diets or toxins in the environment.” According to Sklar, restorative medicine approaches health from a more holistic standpoint. For example, she said she would examine the root causes of a patient’s depression or anxiety rather than prescribing an anti-depressant. Sklar often sees patients for gastrointestinal problems, hormone-related issues and autoimmune disorders such as rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis.

Another reason Sklar decided to change her specialization was because she grew tired of working with insurance companies. “I got burned out by all the regulations and paperwork,” she said. “Dealing with insurance companies takes a lot of attention away from patients.” She now operates a cash-based practice.

When Sklar was trying to launch her OB-GYN practice in 1984, she found it challenging to open a bank account. “I wasn’t made to feel welcome at the bank,” she reported. “We were two young women. I was 35 and my partner was the same age. They just did not take women seriously.” Another challenge was the process of maintaining her own practice. “You go to medical school and you learn about medicine but you just did not take women seriously.”

Sklar said engaging with the public is one of her favorite parts of operating her practice. This summer, she plans to teach a six-week course, “Maintain Your Brain: The Five Pillars of Alzheimer’s Prevention,” through the City of Lakewood Recreation & Community Services Department. “I’m always trying to be creative and think of ways to get my message out,” Sklar said. “People aren’t familiar with this kind of medicine. I won’t be listed in someone’s insurance book or online plan.”

Sklar currently employs three practitioners and said she hopes to bring in more.

“We combine the best in conventional medicine with the emerging technologies in restorative medicine,” she said. “We don’t just put a label on somebody, we just let the story unfold and based on that we find the clues that will help us get to the root of the problem.”

Kaylene Men
Khmer Bridal Boutique
2434 E. Pacific Coast Hwy., Long Beach
562/607-3130

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Sklar Center for Restorative Medicine
5000 E. Spring St., Ste. 402, Long Beach
Appointments: 562/294-4856
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Who's Who
Women In Business

Karen Codman
Karen Codman/FSC Securities Corp.
Karen Codman is an Investment Advisor Representative with FSC Securities Corp. and an Accredited Investment Fiduciary. She has been a financial planner for 22 years. Karen specializes in providing her clients with distinct 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.” Securities and advisory services offered through FSC Securities Corporation, member FINRA/SIPC, and a registered investment advisor. \( \text{Karen Codman} \) is an Accredited Investment Fiduciary of FSC Securities Corp. Investing involves risk. \( \text{Karen Codman/FSC Securities Corp.} \)

Gail Desilets
Marriage & Family Therapist
Gail Desilets is a licensed Marriage & Family Therapist with over 10 years of experience. She is truly an expert in the field. Gail creates win-win situations for all parties by being fair, transparent and discreet with all her transactions. Kristi is originally from Canada but has fallen in love with the Long Beach area. She also enjoys music, food and wine when she is not running her business. Visit www.HoarderHomes.com to learn more about the hoarding disorder.

Carina Cristiano
Account Executive
American Home Shield (AHS) Home Warranty
AHS is pleased to introduce Carina Cristiano as the Account Executive for Long Beach/South Bay. As a Long Beach native, she grew up in her family’s local restaurant business – Nino’s Italian Restaurant. For the last 10+ years Carina has been mobilizing thousands of business owners and community members through public speaking, teaching entrepreneurship and social media utilization as well as general business consulting. Now Carina loves adding to her AHS presentation portfolio: real estate marketing, home warranty and New Agent training. Carina is customer experience driven and a valued member of any business development team. Mobile: (519) 947-0674 • ccristiano@ahslink.com

Karen Codman
Karen Codman/FSC Securities Corp.
Karen Codman is an Investment Advisor Representative with FSC Securities Corp. and an Accredited Investment Fiduciary. She has been a financial planner for 22 years. Karen specializes in providing her clients with distinct 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.” Securities and advisory services offered through FSC Securities Corporation, member FINRA/SIPC, and a registered investment advisor. Karen Codman is an Accredited Investment Fiduciary of FSC Securities Corp. Investing involves risk.

Gail Desilets
Marriage & Family Therapist
Gail Desilets is a licensed Marriage & Family Therapist with over 10 years of experience. She is truly an expert in the field. Gail creates win-win situations for all parties by being fair, transparent and discreet with all her transactions. Kristi is originally from Canada but has fallen in love with the Long Beach area. She also enjoys music, food and wine when she is not running her business. Visit www.HoarderHomes.com to learn more about the hoarding disorder.
Local Initiatives Aim To Draw Women Into STEM Careers

As women still represent a minority in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), organizations such as the American Association of University Women (AAUW), software company Laserfiche and California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), continue reworking the equation to ensure these careers are accessible to young women.

The Long Beach branch of AAUW hosted its 15th annual STEM conference for seventh- and eighth-grade girls on February 23 at Long Beach City College. The organization partnered with seven Long Beach middle schools: Franklin Classical Middle School, Hamilton Middle School, Jackie Robinson Academy, John Muir Academy, Colin Powell Academy, Stephens Middle School and Washington Middle School to transport and supervise 250 of their students.

“We want to expose girls to STEM in middle school so, by the time they pick a college major, STEM will be within their grasp,” Conference Co-chair Frances Rozner said. Rozner, along with her Co-chair Mary Lamo, planned the event in February since students select their ninth-grade classes in March.

At the conference, the girls participated in two workshops of their choice to learn about specific careers through hands-on activities. Some of this year’s activities included excavating bones from packages of dirt with a paleontologist and learning the type of energy needed to burn off certain calories from a dietician.

“We contact organizations and ask if they have younger women to attend, if possible,” Rozner said. “We also try to get women of color. Our [students] are almost all Hispanic and black. They’ve told us they want to have women who look like them so they have a role model. Our girls are all from Title I schools. We wanted girls who wouldn’t normally have the opportunity to find out about these careers.” Title I schools are categorized under the United States Department of Education as those with a high number of students from low-income families.

Charlie Dodson, a history teacher at Long Beach Polytechnic High School, helped coordinate the transport of students to the conference when he taught at Hill Classical Middle School, which the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) closed in 2013. He said he has witnessed the positive impact of the conference on students during his years in education.

“It’s a pretty amazing thing,” he said. “It’s one thing to tell them, ‘I think you should go to college and become an engineer.’ That doesn’t really resonate with a 13-year-old. But I remember going to this one presentation [at the conference] by a civil engineer. She had the girls working with partners to create a suspension bridge out of string. You could see the lightbulbs going off and the gears moving in these girls’ heads.”

AAUW partnered with LBUSD in 2015 to determine the outcomes of the conference. Rozner said she obtains permission from the attendees’ parents to contact the girls four years later to find out how it influenced their educational choices. The school district also started tracking the high school classes the girls decided to take. At the end of the conference, attendees complete an evaluation with their impressions of the event.

“I think more women are getting degrees in STEM fields. Whether they stay in it or find work is still of doubt,” Rozner said. “Many of the companies tend to have a huge number of males, so it’s the culture. Research has shown that the culture needs to change within certain companies. That’s been one of our challenges when we try to find speakers. But I’ve been very impressed with the number of engineering firms in Long Beach that have young women.”

Long Beach-based software company Laserfiche has committed to creating an environment that fosters female success. Employees at the company said that this is due in part to the influence of its female founder, Nien-Ling Wacker, who started the company in 1987. Laserfiche specializes in content management solutions.

According to Human Resources Director Laura Victoria, women make up about half of Laserfiche’s employees and about 37% percent of its engineering team. A 2016 study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that women represent only 13% of the country’s engineering workforce.

Victoria also reported that about half of the directors at Laserfiche and half of its summer interns are female. “All of the women in leadership roles in the company are very nurturing and supportive, and offer their time and mentorship to younger women at the company,” Victoria said. “It’s great to have a founder who was a woman because she wasn’t afraid of putting women in leadership roles.”

Two Laserfiche employees, Cloud Product Manager Katie Gaston and Senior Vice President of Sales Hedy Belttary, spoke to the company’s flexible environment, which encourages its employees to take on different roles.

“If you have an idea, you can make it happen. I feel that’s something that not all companies support and I think Laserfiche is really good about,” Gaston said. “Even though we’re an established company, I still feel like we have the ability to be agile and grassroots. We make sure we can move our product and technology forward in the best way possible by supporting innovative ideas internally.”

[Please Continue To Page 28]
Sandy Riddle, Global Real Estate Advisor
Engel & Völkers Long Beach
Sandy’s passion and appreciation for the coastal communities of Southern California began at a young age when her father, a professional real estate broker, taught her the value of land and real estate. Her diverse professional background ranges from sales and marketing in the fashion industry to an athletic career as a champion figure skater, fitness coach, and lifelong health and wellness advocate. A longtime resident of Belmont Shore, Sandy has been an award-winning Realtor in the area for over 15 years. Today, clients locally and throughout the Engel & Völkers global network benefit from her remarkable experiences and competence. Her charming personality guarantees that each transaction is not only successful but enjoyable as well.

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Paige Fingerhut Charnnick Realtor+Probate Specialist
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A Long Beach native, Paige leverages expertise in probate, trust, and conservatorship sales, working closely with attorneys, CPAs, trustees, administrators, and conservators. Her company, Beach Equities, is celebrating their 45th anniversary this year. Paige treats each client with the utmost respect, and serves the community with distinction. “We serve our clients through unparalleled levels of expertise, experience, and dedication. They know every detail of their transaction will be handled smoothly, and with the highest level of integrity.” Paige is involved in many local charities and resides in Bixby Knolls with her husband Jason, their dog Teddy and their cat, Floyd.

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Teresa Figueroa, General Manager/Partner/CMT
CCN Wellness Center
CCN Wellness Center is excited to announce their new General Manager/Partner, Teresa Figueroa. She has decades of experience in the Holistic Healthcare and corporate field. The intensity of the corporate world led Teresa on a personal journey of health and balance via education in the Naturopathic and Allopathic areas of medicine. Teresa’s lifestyle and faith foundation exemplifies the health, nutrition, and the body/mind/spirit/prosperity connection. Teresa is trained in Thai Yoga, Shiatsu, and Reiki. Teresa’s passion and appreciation for the coastal communities of Southern California began at a young age when her father, a professional real estate broker, taught her the value of land and real estate. Her diverse professional background ranges from sales and marketing in the fashion industry to an athletic career as a champion figure skater, fitness coach, and lifelong health and wellness advocate. A longtime resident of Belmont Shore, Sandy has been an award-winning Realtor in the area for over 15 years. Today, clients locally and throughout the Engel & Völkers global network benefit from her remarkable experiences and competence. Her charming personality guarantees that each transaction is not only successful but enjoyable as well.

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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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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 15 years in Long Beach’s revitalized downtown. Garnica Interiors is a full service interior design firm providing comprehensive solutions for residential & commercial clients. Projects for her highly satisfied clients include residential, commercial offices, healthcare facilities & restaurants. Her desire to help clients create beautiful, functional interiors is also what drives Joen to help her community as a community leader, and a member of several non-profit boards throughout the city of Long Beach.

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Michelle (Shelley) Mann, Sr. Operations Manager
Encore Welding Supply
Raised in the small town of Estacada, OR, Shelley has a professional background in manufacturing and distribution. As Sr. Operations Manager, she is responsible for the operations and processes of all administrative functions at Encore. The company, a full-service welding, industrial and safety supply distributor offering specialty and industrial gases as well as a comprehensive selection of welding, industrial and safety products and equipment, opened its second location in Signal Hill last year. “At Encore, more than anywhere else I’ve worked,” she says, “our customers truly feel like friends.

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Heidi Nye, Publisher
Alamitos Bay Neighbors
Heidi Nye publishes Alamitos Bay Neighbors, the monthly magazine that she founded in 2014 for Naples, the Peninsula, Bay Harbour, La Rochelle, Spinnaker Bay, and Spinnaker Coves. Mailed to homeowners in these affluent neighborhoods, Alamitos Bay Neighbors is beloved for its hyper-local content and the featured residents on every cover. Business owners appreciate the magazine’s targeted approach and Heidi’s personalized service. The April deadline is fast approaching. Please call to schedule an appointment today.

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Joen Garnica

Eileen Rivera, Partner BRE #01443822
The Shannon Jones Team, Keller Williams Realty
Eileen, a founding partner of The Rivera Group, a Real Estate Team in the City of Long Beach, a 20-year real estate industry veteran. Eileen has built her business on the foundation of professionalism, integrity, in-depth community market knowledge, marketing savviness, and most importantly her effective negotiation skills. Her “client first” approach is her day to day philosophy. Her team defines her approach as integral to their success. Eileen and her family live in the community she serves. If you are interested in knowing the value of your home, contact her today.

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As the cloud product manager, Gaston’s primary responsibility is moving Laserfiche’s software onto a cloud-based system. The cloud is a network of servers that stores data without taking up space on a phone or computer.

Belttary said her favorite part of working at Laserfiche is the opportunity for advancement. “We’re a very merit-based company. We give people the opportunity to grow, and we don’t necessarily look at how long they’ve been here.”

In the past, representatives from Laserfiche have attended the AAUW conference. They have also taken part in both local and national initiatives to encourage women’s participation in STEM. Some of these include The Grace Hopper Celebration, which provides a networking forum for women in STEM careers, and the Young Women’s Empowerment Conference, held through Rep. Alan Lowenthal’s office.

Gaston said she thinks self-doubt can preclude women from pursuing these careers. “I still think there’s some stigma being female and saying, ‘Is it okay if I go into this career? Am I going to experience challenges because of my gender?’ The culture is changing to empower women to have that confidence, but I think it’s definitely an internal struggle of knowing you can do anything.”

Dr. Tracy Bradley Maples, the associate dean for academic programs at CSULB’s College of Engineering, also said she thinks stereotypes play a role in turning women away from STEM. She found that there was a higher number of women in her college computer science classes in the 1980s. “When I started out, computer science was a new field, and considered an equally good career for men or women. Now we have the stereotype that people who use computers are mostly males, stay up all night, and are socially awkward and nerdy,” she said. “That doesn’t appeal to a lot of women. That’s unfortunate because it wouldn’t represent what they’d be doing [in a STEM career].”

Females make up about 17% to 19% of CSULB’s engineering school, which is around the national average, according to Maples. The school conducts outreach efforts at local high schools and middle schools to encourage women and underrepresented minorities, such as African Americans, to study STEM. One of these initiatives is a mentorship program that pairs high school students with female engineering majors from CSULB’s chapter of the Society of Women Engineers.

“I think there’s some misunderstanding by women that [STEM] careers don’t offer enough flexibility,” Maples said. “Often women are looking for the whole package in a career. They want something that helps people and offers flexibility if they decide to have kids. They don’t normally think of engineering. But I just had a meeting with the owner of a very large construction company who allows his female employees to take a year off, and create a schedule that fits their childcare needs.”

Girls conduct experiments during workshops to learn about different STEM careers at one of the AAUW’s annual conferences. The attendees are all from Title I schools, which are classified by the United States Department of Education as those with a high number of students from low-income families.

Students from seven Long Beach middle schools had the opportunity on February 23 to explore careers they might not have known about at the annual American Association of University Women STEM conference. “We want to expose girls to STEM in middle school so, by the time they pick a college major, it will be within their grasp,” Conference cochair Frances Rozner said. (Photographs courtesy of AAUW.)
Terry Rogers, REALTOR®
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Terry Rogers is a dedicated, award-winning, top producing real estate professional. As a referral-based agent, she specializes in client satisfaction. Terry is a representative of all aspects of real estate with a broad diversity from the first time homebuyer, to investor or developer, particularly specializing in luxury homes, RELO, short sales, foreclosures, probate, and commercial properties. She ranks in the top 50 Agents for 2017. How may I be of service?

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Julia Sylva, Attorney-at-Law
Law Offices of Julia Sylva, Medical Cannabis Attorneys

Ms. Sylva is an experienced attorney, expert in real estate, land use, business and corporate formation (including nonprofits). She is a leader in drafting and interpreting local regulations related to commercial cannabis activities including ordinances, resolutions, initiatives, policies, procedures and permit applications. She also represents private clients seeking cannabis business licensing (state and local), and conditional use permits; she represents testing, cultivators, dispensaries, manufacturing, transportation, and research and development start-ups. She is a former Mayor, City of Hawaiian Gardens; CSULB (1978), Loyola Law School (1983).

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Summer Vance
Real Estate Consultant
The Shannon Jones Team, Keller Williams Realty

Summer Vance joined the Shannon Jones Team in 2016 and has been working in the real estate industry for seven years. Prior to Keller Williams, Summer was with Main Street Realtors in Long Beach, CA. She also spent seven years at Wachovia Securities, where she helped provide investment planning and management services for high net worth individuals. As a Realtor, Summer enjoys helping people embark on new stages of their lives and believes in putting clients’ needs first. She lives in Rossmoor with her husband and two children and enjoys gardening and surfing in her spare time.

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Tracey Witte “The Redhead Realtor to Remember”
Coldwell Banker Coastal Alliance

Tracey is a So Cal native. She’s lived in Long Beach since 1984. Before becoming a Realtor in 2000, Tracey worked in the Restaurant, Jewelry and Human Resources fields. “I’ve worked in customer service all my life,” she says. “Through listening, I discover my client’s needs and fill them.” It is critical that her clients know they are important and their feelings are valid. Her passions are helping people buy and sell homes, animals, exercising and her husband and family. Check out Tracey’s Facebook page, The Redhead Realtor to Remember, and watch her ongoing video series “Tracey’s Tip-Ins.”

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my first reaction is deep-seated frustration. I was 11 when Columbine took place. A freshman in college during Virginia Tech. A graduate student when Sandy Hook occurred. Notice, by the way, how the names of so many schools have become nouns used to denote an event of mass killing, rather than of a place of learning.

In between all these events were countless other shootings of varying degrees of fatality, interspersed among the benchmarks of my childhood and the years I and all Millennials came of age, like guideposts on a timeline, both pre- and post-9/11, the new version of B.C. and A.D. As a student at Lakewood High School, every morning I would get out of the car with fingers crossed, hoping the security guard with the metal detector wand wouldn’t be at my entrance that day. I didn’t know why, but having this stranger wave a wand over my person made me feel incredibly anxious. I know now that I felt that way because it was a totally unnatural circumstance. Being screened for guns every day is a constant reminder that entering your school, a place of learning, is dangerous. It’s like saying, “Good morning, Samantha. We’re worried that you could be shot today.” And that was the reality. It still is.

Millennials have not been taken seriously by older generations. They have cast us as frivolous, lazy and self-absorbed in an attempt to undermine any valid opinions we might have, particularly when those opinions involve hot button issues. Sadly, it has worked. Any time I tell someone my age I write a column about Millennials, they laugh and ask me if I write about selfies, brunch and avocado toast. Because people in my age group have so thoroughly bought in to the stereotypes that they don’t even realize they’re Millennials. And when I tell them that is indeed what they are, they almost always say, “But I’m not like them.” And I have to do my best not to chuck my avocado toast in their face.

Millennials have endured years of mass shootings, many at our schools. But now, after a disturbed young man murdered 17 children and educators at a school in Parkland, Florida, suddenly it’s time to be serious about keeping our kids safe in schools. And, while I’m incensed that it took so long for consensus that gun regulations at least need to be reexamined, I have to put a stopper in my exasperation and acknowledge that the sudden call to action is not because all the events that preceded it were unworthy. Rather, it is because of the perspicacity of Generation Z.

Change takes time. Millennials grew up in the dawn of widespread Internet use, and we adapted to it. We took ownership of it. But Generation Z? They grew up with the refined product. They were born into and understand the full power and fury of Facebook and Twitter just as well as any Russian operative trying to thwart an election. And as a result, they’re now making their voices heard en masse, as we have seen survivors of the shooting in Parkland do over the past few weeks. They’re mad. And now, they know how to go viral.

And guess what, Millennials? We don’t have to agree with them on everything, but we need to support them.

Older gens have propagated stereotypes to silence Millennials as soon as we came of age, and they’re pulling the same thing on Gen Z Internet trolls and far right activists have claimed that survivors of the Parkland shooting are paid actors. One conservative commentator, Dinesh D’Souza, even implied that they were entitled whiners, tweeting, “Worst news since their parents told them to get summer jobs” in response to a Buzzfeed reporter’s tweet of an Associated Press photo that he captioned, “The idea is the same method that has been employed against Millennials for years – to disarm the power of their voices via belittlement. As the adults closest in age to these children, we must refuse to follow this lead. We must uplift them. Carry them on our shoulders if we have to. In solidarity, outweigh those screaming to drown out young voices.

It doesn’t matter if we fully agree with them or not. The point is, they should not be silenced simply because of their age. And when there is a problem in this country, we should hold the first amendment near and dear to our hearts and support those who choose to use it – including us. We also hold the second amendment there as well.

These children are, as all children always have been, our future – whether you like it or not. And right now, our future is standing up to whether you like it or not. And right now, our future is standing up to whether you like it or not. And right now, our future is standing up to whether you like it or not. And right now, our future is standing up to whether you like it or not. And right now, our future is standing up to whether you like it or not. And right now, our future is standing up to
Festival Honors Both Established And Emerging Female Authors, March 10, Convention Center

By Anne Artley
Staff Writer

The Literary Women of Long Beach is holding its annual Festival of Women Authors on March 10, at 9 a.m. at the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center, 110 S. Pine Ave. Seven authors are slated to speak: Lesley Nneka Arimah, “What It Means When A Man Falls From The Sky;” Emily Fridlund, “History of Wolves;” Elsa Hart, “The White Mirror;” Nathalia Holt, “Rise of the Rocket Girls: The Women Who Propelled Us, from Missiles to the Moon to Mars;” Eowyn Ivy, “To the Bright Edge Of The World;” Tilar J. Mazzeo, “Irena’s Children” and Pamela Paul, “My Life With Bob: Flawed Heroine Keeps Book of Books, Plot Ensues.” In 2016, The Literary Women of Long Beach established the Harriet Williams Emerging Writer program, which sponsors seven emerging writers from California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), Long Beach City College and PEN Center USA to attend the festival. The program is named after one of the organization’s founders, who started it in 1982 when she discovered the lack of female authors on local high school reading lists. This year, three of the writers are enrolled in programs at CSULB and one at Long Beach City College. “It’s important to nourish writers who want to write,” Emerging Writers Program Chair Margaret Durnin said. “Each [emerging] writer will be seated at a table with one of the authors. It’s a way for them to connect with an established author and be encouraged to continue writing.”

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