



# Corona del Mar Residents Association NEWSLETTER

Winter  
2005

by Michael Toerge

## Happy Holidays!

Your Corona del Mar Residents Association wishes you and your family a wonderful holiday season, good health and all the best in the coming new year. Please be sure to enjoy the **Corona del Mar Christmas Walk** scheduled for **Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** Your hometown merchants will open their doors and share holiday cheer, live music and treats with you, your children and your pets.



### Centennial Plaza

The Centennial Plaza, located at the southwest corner of Marguerite and PCH, was dedicated on Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>. As part of the dedication ceremonies, the time capsule was sealed and the clock tower unveiled. This project is truly a success story and a testimonial for what can be accomplished with hard work and committed community volunteers. There are too many individuals involved to list them independently, but the community of Corona del Mar owes a debt of gratitude to the CdM Centennial Celebration Committee, its board of directors, its members and donors for their efforts to promote the centennial celebration and create Centennial Plaza, a center-piece for our community. If you have not yet done so, stroll by the Plaza and take a look at the colorful tiles created by our residents and business leaders. It is inspiring and it acts as a reminder of the sense of community we experience in our Village. The Corona del Mar Residents Association wishes to express its thanks to all that were involved and all that contributed their time and money to this worthwhile cause.

### A Test for Locals

If you have internet access, and haven't yet browsed our new CdMRA website, here's an enticement for you to do so. **Log on to [www.cdmra.org](http://www.cdmra.org)** and enter our "**Locals Only Contest**". It's fun; it's fast. See how well you know our Village!

### How to Contact CdMRA

◆ If you have Internet access:

Website: [www.cdmra.org](http://www.cdmra.org)

Email: [info@cdmra.org](mailto:info@cdmra.org)

◆ By U.S. mail:

P.O. Box 1500

Corona del Mar, CA 92625

◆ By Phone: (see back page)

Contact your Section  
Representative or any  
Board Officer

**CORONA DEL MAR RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**  
**P.O. Box 1500**  
**CORONA DEL MAR, CA 92625**

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## Leaf Blowers

What the heck is that noise? Oh, it's the neighbor's gardener using that darn leaf blower again. He's blowing dust and landscape clippings into the air and off his property. But wait a minute, he's blowing his problem over to my property and onto the sidewalk and roadway. Sound familiar? Have you ever wondered why the leaf blower, a tool to simplify the lives of the landscape maintenance professionals at the expense of the environment (both air and noise), is tolerated in a quiet residential neighborhood such as CdM? I'm sure leaf blowers have a reasonable application in some areas, but don't they just get on your nerves? I guess, if they are used properly, like aimed to keep the debris on the site of origin and operated at low RPMs, the leaf blower can be a useful and compatible tool. But many of the landscape maintenance crews in our neighborhoods do not employ such neighborly consideration when using their leaf blowers. They rev them high and low, loud and louder and spread their target all over the neighborhood.

The leaf blower issue is really two issues, the suitability of blowing debris into the air and onto other people's property and the loud noise they generate. Why do we tolerate such a tool? What ever happened to

a broom and dust pan? Are we obligated to allow such disruptive tools to be used in our community? Do we have a choice? How do you feel about leaf blowers? Do you think they add to or take away from your quality of life?

Let us know how you feel. Should the City initiate an ordinance to rid our neighborhoods of the noisy contraptions or do you favor the use of leaf blowers? Should the leaf blower be subject to more restrictive noise limits? Are the City approved hours of operation for loud power tools acceptable? Did you know that it is a violation of the City's Municipal Code (10.28.045) to operate loud power tools, including landscape maintenance tools, before and after certain hours? Allowed hours of operation are: **7:00 am to 6:30 pm Monday through Friday, 8:00 am through 6:00 pm on Saturday and no loud power tools on Sunday or Holidays.** I've never quite understood why we can muffle a 300 horsepower automobile to an acceptable noise level, but for some reason the noise created by a one-half horsepower leaf blower gets a free pass into our eardrums. Should we at least demand they be quieter? Should all landscape power tools, lawnmowers, edgers, hedge clippers and leaf blowers be required to have mufflers to lower noise to reasonable levels? What do you think? Is this an issue for your CdM Residents Association to address with

the City Council? See "**How to Contact CdMRA**" on page 1 to learn how to submit your comments and suggestions to CdMRA.



## CdM State Beach Project

In case you haven't noticed, the Big Corona Beach Amenity Project is under construction. Construction kicked off the third week of September and is scheduled to be completed before the summer crowds in April of 2006. During construction, some of the regular beach facilities are not available. The restroom buildings have been demolished and replaced with temporary facilities and the number of volleyball courts have been reduced from 10 to 5 for the duration of construction. The City's Recreation Department will be holding meetings with the public to address the layout and configuration of volleyball courts, fire rings and public safety access ways on the sand. Please contact **Andrea McGuire, Recreation Superintendent** for the City at **644-3151** for information on the time and location of the public meetings.

## CORONA DEL MAR RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

**NAME:**

**STREET ADDRESS:**

**MAILING ADDRESS:**

**TELEPHONE:**

**E-MAIL ADDRESS:**

**COMMENTS:**

Please send a check in the unbelievably low amount of only **\$12** for one full year (Jan. 1 - Dec. 31), along with this application to:

**Corona del Mar Residents Association  
P.O. Box 1500  
Corona del Mar, CA 92625**

## One-Way Streets

Living in Corona del Mar, you probably know the drill, as you drive down one of the flower streets, cars parked on both sides, you invariably meet a car approaching in the opposite direction. You angle to the right, come to a slow creep and hope the other driver does the same. You know your side view mirrors are going to hit but somehow you get by without touching. I'm amazed that some of our resident thrill seekers know the exact width of their car. They storm past as if you weren't there and leave you wondering, "How do they know?" Well, a few residents have suggested that the City consider altering the street design to accommodate one-way streets. An argument for such a change is illustrated above.

The one-way street suggestion is not new to Corona del Mar. It was studied by the City several years ago. As a result of that study, Hazel Drive, north of Coast Highway, was redesigned to be one-way to eliminate congested north bound Coast Highway traffic from turning right at Hazel to avoid the Poppy Street signal. Hazel Drive south of Coast Highway is also one-way due in part to extremely narrow street width and to eliminate the opportunity for cars to exit Hazel onto the fast moving south bound Coast Highway. However, further effort to incorporate a one-way street design throughout the Village ceased due to several practical reasons. The primary reason is due to speed. People want to get where they want to go and they want to get their now. Some fail to remember that we live in a residential area where children and adults are present. Many of the homes in the Village have little or no yards causing children (and some adults) to use the sidewalk and street to do what kids do. Without the opportunity to be confronted by opposing traffic, one-way streets would allow drivers to drive faster in our residential community,

thereby increasing the danger to all. If that reason is not enough, consider that the quaint rectangular grid that is Corona del Mar is crisscrossed by an angular Coast Highway and a ravine commonly known as Bayside Drive. Many streets dead-end at the cliffs on both sides of Bayside Drive. The combination of the angular Coast Highway and the dead-ends at Bayside Drive complicate any attempt to design a logical one-way street system. While residents would become familiar with a creative design that accounts for the unique physical features of our community, our community is host to thousands of visitors each year and these visitors don't use the streets enough to become familiar with a creative one-way traffic circulation system. Some believe that it is hard enough trying to get around town in the summer when visitors and beachgoers are trying to enter and exit our community without a bunch of confused drivers trying to maneuver a unique one-way street system. Anyway, those are the known arguments for and against a one-way street system in CdM. What do you think? See "**How to Contact CdMRA**" on page 1 to learn how to submit your comments and suggestions to CdMRA.



## Condominium Conversions

On October 11, 2005 the City Council passed Ordinance number 2005-19, an amendment to the condominium conversion ordinance of Title 19 of the Newport Beach Municipal Code to increase the minimum number of on-site parking spaces required upon conversion of a duplex to comply with current development standards. This means that all new condominium projects, whether newly constructed or

## Condo Conversions cont.

converted from an existing duplex are required to provide at least two on-site parking spaces for each unit. In 1994 the condominium ordinance was changed to allow existing duplex developments to be converted into individual condos without the requirement to provide current code parking. A duplex that provided a single two-car garage could be converted into two separate condominiums by simply splitting the garage and providing only one on-site parking space per condominium. This was an attempt by the City Council to encourage home ownership in West Newport by creating motivation for property owners to convert their rental properties into condos thereby introducing homeowners into the area rather than seasonal renters. However, according to the City Council, this ordinance has had a negative affect in CdM and other areas of the City by allowing new condominium development to proceed without providing adequate on-site parking and has resulted in congested street parking. No other coastal city in Orange County allows condominiums to be converted without providing parking pursuant to current code. Prior to the October 11, 2005 code amendment, Newport Beach was the only coastal Orange County city offering such a development concession.

Recognizing that some duplex owners acquired their properties with the intent to convert to condominiums, the City Council created a grace period allowing owners to submit their "complete application" for condo conversions under the prior and more lenient condo conversion code until 180 days following adoption of the ordinance. If you are planning to exercise this right, please contact the Planning Department (644-3228) to get details on what constitutes a "complete application" and to confirm the date for submitting your application to qualify within the grace period.

## General Plan

The General Plan of the City of Newport Beach has been undergoing a complete re-write over the past three years. The General Plan in Newport Beach is comprised of several elements which work together and, when combined together, make up the General Plan. There are the Housing Element, Land Use Element, Recreation and Open Space Element, Harbor and Bay Element, Noise Element, Circulation Element, Public Safety Element, Conservation of Natural Resources Element and the Local Coastal Plan.

You may recall that the City established the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), a volunteer group of 35 residents (no council members) of varying backgrounds and orientations, to act as the voice of the citizenry in the General Plan rewrite. Remember, the Visioning process was conducted a couple of years ago and several public workshops were organized throughout the City to solicit citizen input to the plan. This information was summarized in a handout entitled "Community Directions For The Future, a summary of the General Plan update visioning process." In this document, the consensus of those that participated in the visioning workshops and GPAC meetings is summarized. Issues ranging from community character, potential development areas, areas where zoning density should be reduced, areas to revitalize, size of homes, traffic impacts, etc. are addressed. During the visioning process and continuing through to completion of the General Plan, the City has engaged the services of a municipal consultant with expertise in creating the framework within which public input is woven into the General Plan.

The Planning Commission and City Council are set to embark on their independent public hearings of arguably the most debated aspect of the General Plan, the Circulation/Mobility and Land Use Elements. These elements will set the municipal policy that will affect this City for decades. Balancing the City's finite land resources with the public's demand for these resources is the central issue. How does the City provide for its fair share of population growth and housing demand with municipal resources that some believe are over capacity today? Is there a location in the City that is more suitable than another to accommodate residential growth? If so, where, the Airport Area with its high capacity roadway system or Fashion Island in a mixed use environment or somewhere else in the City, or nowhere at all in the City? How should the City handle the increasing regional traffic that travels through our City, traffic that is not influenced by land uses within our City? How does the City craft policy that serves the best interests of the citizens while facing the reality of regional and internal population growth and impacts? Anyway, I hope you get the picture. This is real stuff

## Board of Directors, Officers & Advisors

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Val Skoro (949) 673-3456  
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Debbie Allen (949) 644-9264

### Section 4 - CdM Southwest

Michael Toerge (949) 675-9312  
Bud Rasner (949) 673-4123

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Open

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Carl Jeremias (949) 720-9086

### Section 10 - Cameo Shores

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District 6: Richard Nichols

District 7: John Heffernan

#### Planning Commission

Michael Toerge (949) 675-9312

#### Parks Beaches & Recreation

Debra Allen (949) 675-9312

that will affect the residents of Newport Beach for years to come and you should be sure, if you have an opinion, to share it before the policy gets written. The Visioning process was the most opportune time to express your views, but if your views have changed or if you did not get the opportunity to express them then, now is the time. There are several public hearings scheduled in the coming months with GPAC, the Planning Commission and the City Council. Please contact the City's **Planning Department at (949) 644-3228** for information and meeting times. The rewritten General Plan is expected to be complete by the end of June 2006 so it can be presented to the public and placed on the ballot for voter consideration in November of 2006.



## Membership Renewal Reminder

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members who have supported CdMRA this past year through their dues and donations. Just a reminder - your membership expires on December 31 of each year. Please consider renewing your membership within the next few weeks (\$12 per year). Checks should be mailed to our PO Box 1500, CdM 92625. If you want to check on your dues status, or provide any membership information changes (including your email address), please contact CdMRA using one of the options listed on page 1.