



June 2015

Serving the Villages and Neighborhoods of Irvine

Volume 2, No. 6



## Publisher's Perspective

Stories Worth Reading

Welcome to the June issue of *Irvine Community News & Views*, available both online and in the physical "hold-it-in-your-hands" format at stores, shopping centers, and other public places throughout Irvine. (See page 8 for locations.)

This issue has *two* Front Page stories you don't want to miss. The top story is a report on yet one more bad idea from Councilmember Christina Shea — this time to repeal Irvine's minimum wage (about \$11 per hour). Shea's proposal would drive the wages for Orange County janitors, gardeners and other low-income contract workers down below the poverty line. This Shea attack on the working poor, joined by Mayor Choi and Councilmember Lalloway, is shameful!

The Front Page "below-the-fold" story features Part 4 in ICNV's investigative series on the toxic contamination at the Portola High School site. This is a blockbuster report revealing that most of the prior tests were worthless because, for most of the school site, the soil testing was done at a depth of only 6 inches. Moreover, that testing didn't even include the most worrisome toxic contaminants.

**After you read this story, you'll want to join the more than 1,000 Irvine residents who have already signed our on-line petition (Page 4) urging the City and IUSD to do comprehensive, independent testing to ensure school safety.**

On a happier note, take a look at the outstanding photo and related story about Irvine's open space. (See Page 2.)

Finally, check out Page 8 — Spotlight on Small Business — for a listing of the more than 70 stores, shopping centers and other public places where you can pick up a free "hold-it-in-your-hands" copy of *Irvine Community News & Views*.



*Franklin J. Lunding*

Franklin J. Lunding • Publisher and Editor  
www.IrvineCommunityNews.org

# CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO CUT IRVINE MINIMUM WAGE

While other cities across America, including West Coast cities like Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Long Beach and San Diego have been adopting ordinances raising their local minimum wage — climbing toward a \$15 per hour minimum wage by 2020 — Irvine is apparently America's only major city headed in the other direction, actually *cutting* its minimum wage by more than 20%.

Councilmember Christina Shea and Mayor Steven Choi have been leading the effort to repeal Irvine's "Living Wage" law — now set at a minimum of about \$11 per hour (or about \$13 per hour for those not receiving health benefits or other job benefits). The practical effect of the Shea-Choi repeal proposal would be to allow the hourly wage paid to hundreds of low-income workers to fall to the state minimum wage of just \$9 per hour.



Councilmember Christina Shea leads City Council in repeal of the Irvine Living Wage Ordinance.



Mayor Steven Choi decries Living Wage as "subsidy."

The elimination of the Irvine Living Wage requirement would hit certain workers the hardest — mostly landscape workers, janitors and maintenance workers who are employed by private firms under "outsourced" contracts with the City.

At its May 26th meeting, the Council

→ continued on page 2 →

## FLAWED TESTING FOR TOXICS AT SCHOOL SITE CONTRADICTS OFFICIAL ASSURANCES OF SAFETY

by Harvey H. Liss

### Part 4 INADEQUATE TESTING

The Irvine Unified School District's (IUSD) reliance upon flawed test results could seriously jeopardize future students, teachers and other school personnel at the proposed Portola High School site. The environmental testing underlying the decision to construct the new high school was performed as if the area was merely an "agricultural site." In fact, the area may have been used for over 50 years as a dumping area for the toxic waste of an active military air base.

#### RISK

In the April issue of *Irvine Community News & Views*, we quoted a former senior Orange County school facilities official who was asked his opinion about the designated site for Irvine's next high school, Portola High. He looked at the

→ continued on page 3 →



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→ continued from page 1 → **COUNCIL CUTS IRVINE MINIMUM WAGE**



Councilman Jeff Lalloway

voted 4 to 1 for an outright repeal of the Irvine Living Wage Ordinance. Joining Shea and Choi in supporting the motion were Councilmembers Jeff Lalloway and Lynn Schott. Speaking against the motion was Councilmember Beth Krom who reflected her sadness that Irvine, once in the lead on the Living Wage issue, was now alone among America's cities in actually heading backwards.

"This is about what kind of City we want to have," Krom said. She noted that it was during her term as Mayor (2004-2008) that she and then-Irvine Councilmember Larry Agran first proposed and won adoption of the Irvine Living Wage Ordinance, which initially pegged the City's minimum wage at \$10 per hour. This was well above the federal and state minimum wages of about \$7 per hour at the time, and enough to enable a full-time Irvine "living-wage worker" to live in Irvine above the federal poverty line.

In supporting Shea's repeal proposal, Mayor Steven Choi invoked a confused analysis that suggested Irvine was somehow "subsidizing" other cities in Orange County by prescribing a wage that was higher than the state minimum wage of \$9 per hour.

Councilmember Jeff Lalloway went even further, intimating that he was opposed to the entire idea of any minimum wage requirements. He dismissed the Irvine Living Wage as what he repeatedly termed a "feel-good wage." He seemed to be saying that it makes its advocates feel good but the working poor don't really deserve a living wage.

Hearing Lalloway's arguments, one member of the audience leaned over to a companion and said, audibly, "That's why he's known at City Hall as 'The Bully' and 'Mr. Mean'."

About a dozen citizens testified against the repeal proposal, pleading with the Council to have compassion for Orange County's working poor, and asserting that it would be immoral and contrary to Irvine community values to push low-wage workers and their families into poverty. Irvine resident Gail

Lewis, usually testifying as an animal welfare advocate, this time called on Councilmembers who "profess to be Christians" to ask themselves whether hurting the working poor is what Jesus would countenance. [ICNV]



**OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT RENEWED**

Twenty-seven years ago, in 1988, the voter-approved Irvine Open Space Plan provided for the permanent preservation of 16,000 acres of hillsides, canyons, and wetlands — to remain forever free of development. For decades now, these beautiful open spaces have been managed by the Irvine Ranch Conservancy. Recently renamed the New Irvine Ranch Conservancy, the organization has just entered into a 10-year renewal and extension of its open space management agreement with the City. In addition to caring for Irvine's open space, the New Irvine Ranch Conservancy sponsors a wonderful array of programs and ways to experience the natural wonders of our community.



Take a walk on Irvine's miles and miles of open space trails — either self-guided or with the help of an expert guide. For more information, contact: Let'sGoOutside.org. Photo credit: New Irvine Ranch Conservancy.



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→ continued from page 1 → **FLAWED TESTING**

map and said, "The Irvine School District has chosen the very worst place in Orange County to build a school." He went on to say: "It is well known that the military dumped everything at the end of the runways — it was a dangerous place." (See Graphic 1.)

Ignoring this fact, the Irvine School Board and administration claimed its 40-acre high school site at the end of the massive El Toro runways was simply "agricultural" land. This proved to be an imprudent and risky presumption that led the School District and State officials to rely on a soil testing program that was inadequate and misleading.

**DECEPTION and REALITY**

Before IUSD officials could obtain State approval for the location of the \$300 million Portola High School on "Site A," along Irvine Boulevard, a Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) had to be prepared and submitted to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). The School

have been buried there as part of the long-ago military operations. These VOCs would include benzene, naphthalene, toluene, xylene and other toxic and carcinogenic (cancer-causing) agents associated with jet fuels, gasoline, diesel, hydraulic fluids, engine coolants and solvents. These were the hazardous chemicals and materials used and discarded in vast quantities at former military bases around the country.

By deleting those 42 big black dots from the map — because there was no testing for VOCs — an entirely different picture of the tested area emerges. What's left is a map that shows scant testing on the 40-acre Portola High School site. (See Graphic 3.)

It should not be surprising, then, that the most recent discovery of toxic contamination was found at a depth of 15 feet. As a result of that discovery, almost 1,000 cubic yards — 78 truckloads — of material containing naphthalene and diesel oil were hauled off. That was in mid-November 2014 during trenching to construct a box storm-drain on the edge of the high school

of the 40-acre high school site that has not been properly tested for toxic contamination is precisely where the future school buildings and teachers, staff and students will be located.

**WHAT CAN BE DONE?**

It is evident that now — after two major toxic contamination discoveries during trenching operations — that the Portola High School site begs for comprehensive testing by a truly independent firm to determine once and for all what additional toxic contamination is lurking... and to understand where it is all coming from.

This is precisely the kind of time-out and renewed investigation that the City of Irvine's environmental consultant, David Richter, called for in an urgent memorandum six months ago. So far, his warnings have been ignored by the City, the School District, and the State Department of Toxic Substances Control.

Dr. Harvey H. Liss, a former Irvine Planning Commissioner, holds a Ph.D. in Applied Mechanics and is a California Licensed Civil Engineer. Dr. Liss is a longtime resident of Woodbridge, the iconic Irvine village he helped design in the 1970s.



**1 RISK**



**2 DECEPTION**



**3 REALITY**

Graphic 1 - Aerial Photo - RISK: A former, senior Orange County school facilities official said: "It is well known that the military dumped everything at the end of the runways — it was a dangerous place." Graphic 2 - Soil Sample Locations - DECEPTION: 67 soil sample locations have been touted frequently as proof that extensive soil testing had been performed. Graphic 3 - REALITY: At 42 of the 67 soil and soil-gas sample locations, samples were taken only 6" deep and tested only for agricultural contaminants, as if the school site had always been a farm. The reality is that of the entire interior of the Portola High School site (Site A), more than 25 of the 40 acres, where buildings will be located, remain completely untested for toxic and cancer-causing Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and semi-volatile organic compounds.

District's PEA report included a map showing the locations where soil samples were tested for toxic contamination. (See Graphic 2.) That map showing 51 big black dots and 16 small red squares is, in fact, deceptive. It looks like a lot of testing was performed on the school site.

The reality is entirely different. After detailed investigation of the 200-page lab report submitted to the State DTSC, it turns out that of the 67 locations where soil and soil-gas samples were taken, at 42 of these locations the samples taken were a mere 6-inches deep, literally just scratching the surface. Moreover, the tests were only for agricultural contaminants, such as pesticides.

At those 42 locations, there was no testing for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and semi-volatile organic compounds that may

site. (See Graphics 1 & 3.) Also, there was a prior discovery of extensive toxic contamination during trenching in the nearby Agua Chinon in October of 2013. (See Graphic 1.)

The only worthwhile testing for VOCs was performed in wells along the former underground fuel pipelines crossing the school site, and also near the perimeter of the school site. (See Graphics 2 & 3 with the small red squares that denote wells that range in depth from 5 feet to 40 feet, where some useful testing was performed.) However, the two 40-foot deep soil-gas wells in the interior of the site (see Graphic 3) were used to test only for methane. (None was found.)

IUSD officials and the State DTSC stand by their claim that the Portola High School site is "safe." The plain fact is that the vast majority

**Sign the  
Irvine  
Safe  
Schools  
Petition**

**See Page 4**



# Community Calendar

## Studio Arts Festival

The Irvine Fine Arts Center will host the 21st annual Studio Arts Festival on Saturday, June 6 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. The juried Festival will showcase more than 100 Southern California artists and their original works of art in ceramics, sculpture, jewelry, painting, photography, fiber and glass. Admission and parking are free.

The Center is located at 14321 Yale Avenue, Irvine (in Heritage Park).  
Info: 949-724-6880

The Irvine Fine Arts Center presents the 21st annual

## STUDIO ARTS FESTIVAL



Saturday, June 6, 2015 • 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Irvine Fine Arts Center

More than 100 Artisans

Painting, sculpture, photography, jewelry, fiber art and more!  
Music • Food • Free Admission

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> <b>Kids Book Club - University Park Library.</b> A book club just for kids! If you are 8-12 and love reading, come and share your thoughts about each month's selection. It's just for fun and there will be food! 6:30-7pm. <b>Info:</b> 949-786-4001	<b>2</b> <b>Full Moon Hike - Bommer Canyon.</b> If you've ever wondered what happens in the open space when the sun goes down, then sign up for the popular full moon hike. Experience the serenity of a moonlit night in Bommer Canyon. 7-9:30pm. <b>Info:</b> LetsGoOutside.org	<b>3</b> <b>Parks and Facilities Master Plan Community Workshop.</b> An interactive Community Workshop to assist in the development of a Parks and Facilities Master Plan. The completed Parks and Facilities Master Plan will help guide projects at new and existing parks and facilities over the next ten years. Irvine Civic Center 6pm. <b>Info:</b> 949-724-7338.	<b>4</b> <b>Planning Commission Meeting.</b> Irvine Civic Center. 5:30pm. 	<b>5</b> <b>OC Writers: Read &amp; Critique - Great Park Gallery.</b> The OC Writers: Read & Critique gathering is dedicated to providing writers with space and time to write, learn and network. Bring your own manuscripts-in-progress to work on in this welcoming and supportive environment. 12-2pm. <b>Info:</b> OCGP.org	<b>6</b> <b>Open Mic Review at Knowlwood's in Old Town Irvine.</b> Hosted by Ray Starsiak. 6:30pm. <b>Studio Arts Festival.</b> Irvine Fine Arts Center. 9am-5pm. <b>Info:</b> 949-724-6880
<b>7</b> <b>Certified Farmers Market.</b> OC Great Park. 10am-2pm. Rain or Shine. <b>Story Time in the Garden.</b> Great Park Farm + Food Lab 10-11am. <b>Info:</b> OCGP.org <b>Annual Super Pet Adoption.</b> Irvine Animal Care Center 6443 Oak Canyon Road 10am-4pm. <b>Info:</b> 949-724-7740	<b>8</b> <b>Teen Advisory Group.</b> Katie Wheeler Library. Ages 13-18. TAG meets on the second Monday of each month to discuss and plan library activities and to help the library keep up with teen trends. Snacks provided. Drop-ins always welcome! Meets in the downstairs community room. 5-6pm. <b>Info:</b> 714-669-8753	<b>9</b> <b>City Council Meeting.</b> Irvine City Hall. 5pm. 	<b>10</b> <b>After Work Fitness Hike.</b> Hicks Haul Road. Every Wednesday night the Irvine Ranch Conservancy hikes on the paved Hicks Haul Road. Hikers will enjoy wonderful sunset views and a panoramic overview of OC. The hike is about 3.5 miles to the top of Loma Ridge and down. 6-7:30pm. <b>Info:</b> LetsGoOutside.org	<b>11</b> <b>Homework Help.</b> Katie Wheeler Library. 13109 Old Myford Rd, Irvine. 3:30pm. <b>Info:</b> 714-669-8753 	<b>12</b> <b>Great Glow &amp; Flow Yoga.</b> OC Great Park. Pre-registration required. \$25. Ages 16+. 8:45-10pm. <b>Info:</b> OCGP.org 	<b>13</b> <b>Writer's Ink.</b> Katie Wheeler Library. This reading and writing workshop is for 1st - 3rd grades only. It is taught by Writer's Ink, a High School group of volunteers. 3:30-4:30pm. <b>Info:</b> 714-669-8753
<b>14</b> <b>Flag Day.</b> <b>Certified Farmers Market.</b> OC Great Park. 10am-2pm. Rain or shine. <b>Clinic in the Park.</b> OC Great Park Farmers Market. 10am-2pm. <b>Info:</b> ClinicInThePark.org	<b>15</b> <b>Republican Central Committee Meeting.</b> OC GOP Head Quarters 1422 Edinger Ave. Suite 110, Tustin. 7pm. <b>Info:</b> OCGOP.org	<b>16</b> <b>Preschool Storytime.</b> University Park Library. 4512 Sandburg Way. 11am. <b>Info:</b> 949-786-4001	<b>17</b> <b>Sunset Yoga in Bommer Canyon.</b> Hiking and yoga in Bommer Canyon. Hike around a 1-mile loop through the local meadow and find unity within nature. Return to our yoga mats where we will be led in 45 to 60 minutes of guided yoga, as the Canyon slowly calms down from the day. <b>Info:</b> LetsGoOutside.org	<b>18</b> <b>Little Learners Art &amp; Play.</b> Irvine Fine Arts Center. Explore and make friends while making a mess in this free-form creative workshop geared to introduce Little Learners to different art media in a studio environment. Create with instructors to provide technique tips and tricks. Parent participation required. Art supplies provided. Age 3-6. <b>Register online:</b> irvinequickreg.org	<b>19</b> <b>Business Lunch with the Mayor.</b> Chamber of Commerce meeting with Mayor on Friday, June 19 at Hotel Irvine. The Mayor's keynote address will focus on the business community, development initiatives and the job market within Irvine. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit irvinechamber.com. A recording of the event will also be available at cityofirvine.org the following day.	<b>20</b> <b>Wilderness Access Day.</b> Bommer Canyon. Enjoy self-guided access in the southern portion of Irvine's Open Space Preserve. The southern Open Space Preserve trail will be open for self-guided hiking and biking. The Bommer Canyon Cattle Camp will be available for parking, but please take note that your vehicle must be removed from the Cattle Camp area by 2 pm. 8am-2pm. <b>Info:</b> LetsGoOutside.org
<b>21</b> <b>Certified Farmers Market.</b> OC Great Park. 10am-2pm. Rain or Shine. <b>Garden Beats.</b> OC Great Park Farm + Food Lab. Entry-level percussion learning experience communicating through rhythm and rhyme. 2-3pm. <b>Info:</b> OCGP.org	<b>22</b> <b>General Meeting of the Democratic Party of Orange County.</b> DPOC Meeting Hall. 7-9pm. <b>Info:</b> OrangeCountyDemocrats.com	<b>23</b> <b>OC Great Park Board Meeting.</b> Irvine City Hall. 2pm. <b>City Council Meeting.</b> Irvine City Hall. 5pm.	<b>24</b> <b>Mid-Week Hike Through Agua Chinon.</b> Recharge your batteries with a refreshing mid-week hike through the Agua Chinon Wash in Limestone Canyon Nature Preserve. Hike distance is 10-12 miles. 8am-1pm. <b>Info:</b> LetsGoOutside.org	<b>25</b> <b>Morning Nature Hike in Quail Hill.</b> The hike is seven and a half miles with some climbing, but rewards you with fantastic views overlooking Laguna Canyon and many Irvine locales. <b>Info:</b> LetsGoOutside.org	<b>26</b> <b>Sunlight and Shadow: The Tradition of Plein Air Painting.</b> This exhibit runs from June 2 - September 24 at the Irvine Museum at 18881 Von Karman Avenue, Suite 100. <b>Info:</b> IrvineMuseum.org	<b>27</b> <b>Seasoned Chefs Culinary Workshop.</b> OC Great Park Farm + Food Lab. 10-11am. <b>Info:</b> OCGP.org
<b>28</b> <b>Certified Farmers Market.</b> OC Great Park. 10am-2pm. Rain or Shine. <b>Democrats of Greater Irvine Monthly Meeting.</b> Irvine Ranch Water District, Duck Club. Doors open at 2pm for a social half hour and the meeting usually begins at 2:30. <b>Email:</b> DemsofIrvine@gmail.com	<b>29</b> <b>Toddler Storytime.</b> University Park Library. 4512 Sandburg Way. 11am. <b>Info:</b> 949-786-4001	<b>30</b> <b>Book Club &amp; Discussion for Adults.</b> Katie Wheeler Library. 13109 Old Myford Road. 10:30am. <b>Info:</b> 714-669-8753				

# June 2015

## Adoptable Pet of the Month

Each issue we feature one "adoptable" pet from the Irvine Animal Care Center.

The Irvine Animal Care Center (IACC) is a progressive and innovative municipal animal shelter that continually strives to strengthen the human-animal bond and improve the welfare of animals by promoting their humane care and treatment. The Center's 3.73 acre, park-like facility cares for thousands of homeless, neglected and abused animals every year. All animals in their care receive veterinary care, high-quality food, soft bedding and daily socialization.

"Derby" is a male, neutered, Chihuahua smooth-coated mix, weighing 7 pounds. She is 5 1/2 years old.

For more information about Derby and other adoptable pets, or the IACC call 949-724-7740 or email [info@irvineshelter.org](mailto:info@irvineshelter.org)



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- Opportunity drawings

6443 Oak Canyon Road, Irvine 949-724-7740 [irvineshelter.org](http://irvineshelter.org)

## Coming in July: New Swan Shakespeare Festival

This summer's productions will be "Macbeth" and "Much Ado About Nothing" The New Swan Theater is located on the Gateway Plaza, adjacent to Aldrich Park and Langson Library on the campus of the University of California, Irvine. Tickets may be purchased through the box office at: (949) 824-2787 or online at [www.arts.uci.edu/tickets](http://www.arts.uci.edu/tickets)

## Place Your Ad Here

For more information on our ad programs call (714) 406-1831 or email [info@irvinecommunitynews.org](mailto:info@irvinecommunitynews.org)

# SPOTLIGHT ON SMALL BUSINESS

By Mary Edmonds

## THANK YOU TO THESE IRVINE BUSINESSES...WHERE YOU CAN PICK UP IRVINE COMMUNITY NEWS & VIEWS

### Alton Square/Alton & Jeffrey

- Chronic Tacos
- Donut Star
- Kriser's for Your Pets-All Natural Life
- MOOYAH burgers-fries-shakes
- Ralphs

### Culver Plaza Shopping Center / Culver & Irvine Center Drive

- All That Barbeque / Korean BBQ
- The Car Spa

### Cypress Village Shopping Center

#### Jeffrey & Trabuco

- Albertsons
- Cumin
- Da Luau Hawaiian Grill
- Honey Pig

#### Farm Stands

- Manassero Farms
- on Jeffrey between Irvine Valley College & Barranca Parkway
- Manassero Farms
- at the corner of Jeffrey & Walnut

#### Harvard & Michelson

- Irvine Lanes

#### Harvard Place / Harvard & Main

- Einstein Brothers Bagels
- Irvine Optometry – Dr. Ruth Tang, O.D.
- Nutrishop/Sports Nutrition
- Ralphs
- Rubio's
- SeaFit - Pilates+TRX
- Z-Pizza

#### Heritage Plaza / Culver & Walnut

- Caspian Restaurant
- Ralphs

#### Northpark Plaza Shopping Center

- Albertsons
- Champagne French Bakery Cafe

### Oak Creek Shopping Center

- Baja Fresh Mexican Grill
- Daphne's Greek Cafe
- Gelson's
- Jack's Surfboards
- Maizuru Sushi Bar - Japanese Restaurant
- Mustard Cafe
- Orange Theory Fitness
- Upper Crust Pizza

### Old Myford Road & Irvine Blvd.

- Katie Wheeler Library



### University Park Center

- Culver & Michelson
- Ameci Pizza & Pasta
- Barber Shop
- Java Bakery Cafe
- Mag's Donuts & Bakery
- Tacos & Co.
- The Grill

### University Town Center / Campus Drive

- Center for Living Peace
- Kochee Kabob House
- Stax Cookie Bar
- Eureka
- California Gogi – Korean Grill
- Peet's Coffee & Tea
- Ray's Pizza – New York Style
- Yushoken - Izakaya & Ramen

### Walnut Village Center / Culver & Walnut

- French's Bakery
- Starbucks Coffee
- Subway

### Westpark Plaza / Alton & Culver

- Albertsons
- Sprouts Farmers Market
- Starbucks Coffee

### Woodbridge Village Center

- Champagne French Bakery Cafe
- Irvine Car Wash
- Pedego Electric Bikes
- Ruby's Diner
- Treuhart's Fine Jewelry

### Woodbury Town Center

- Ralphs
- Rock n' Road Cyclery
- NIKO NIKO Sushi

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## SENIORS AND FAMILIES WITH SENIORS

Making real estate decisions when you are a Senior is *different!*

Does this sound like it applies to you or your family? Have all options been explored?

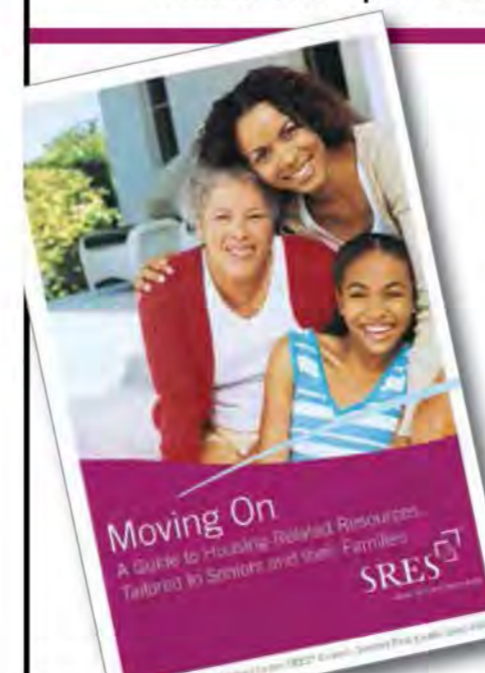
- Is moving the best alternative? If so, where?
- What are the tax-related implications of the sale?
- Do you need a variety of services:  
Handyman? Accountant, including tax advice? Senior moving specialist? Housekeeping?  
Elder law Attorney for wills/trusts? The counsel of a lender? Home health care?  
Estate sale specialists? Access to community resources? AND MUCH MORE!



### Jane Olinger

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**A Guide to Housing Related Resources**  
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irvinecommunitynews.org/jane-olinger*

*Jane Olinger*

RE/MAX Premier Realty



My uncle owned and published a group of community newspapers in Gary, Indiana, and other nearby small towns. He taught me that a true community newspaper invites, encourages, and facilitates civic activism. "That's how you maintain and improve your community," he said. That's what we try to do with *Irvine Community News & Views* and our **Open Forum** and **Community Voices** pages.

Here's how. First, why not participate in our online **Irvine Community Poll**? This month, we're asking our readers what they think about the City Council's actions to cut Irvine's minimum wage. This online poll also provides an opportunity for you to offer your comments. We publish poll results and a sampling of comments we receive.

Also, you can still join the more than 1,000 Irvine residents who have already signed the Safe Schools petition (printed on Page 4). The online

Safe Schools petition calls on the Irvine School Board and the City Council to suspend construction and order comprehensive soil testing at the contaminated Portola High School site. Here, too, we welcome your online participation, and your comments.

Among the many **Community Voices** we're recently heard from are scores of Irvine residents who have sent us letters or comments on a range of subjects — the Irvine minimum wage, the toxic contamination at the Portola High School site, the Great Park "Fraudit," and other matters from folks who seem to be very unhappy with our City Council and School Board leaders... and ready to say so.

As we approach July 4th — Independence Day — it's time to remember anew that perhaps the most cherished of freedoms to emerge from the American Revolution is Freedom of Speech, later enshrined in our Constitution's First Amendment. As we say here at ICNV, *Free Speech Forever!* - **FJL**

## DO YOU FAVOR OR OPPOSE CUTTING THE IRVINE LIVING WAGE? WHAT DO YOU THINK?

### A Note from the Editor

The **Irvine Community Poll** is owned by *Irvine Community News & Views*. It was created to give you and other residents a real opportunity to be heard regarding community events and issues in Irvine.

**Here's how the Irvine Community Poll works:** We present a question of public importance. You can take the poll by simply going to our online website: [www.IrvineCommunityPoll.org](http://www.IrvineCommunityPoll.org). It takes just a few minutes to read the background and answer the poll question.

The Irvine Safe Schools Petition (see Page 4) is a joint project of *Irvine Community News & Views* and Planning 2020 Inc., one of Irvine's leading environmental organizations. So far, more than 1,000 Irvine residents have signed the online petition, calling on the Irvine School Board and the Irvine City Council to order more testing for toxic contamination at the site of the now-under-construction Portola High School, on Irvine Boulevard.

Nearly one-third of those signing the Safe Schools Petition also offered comments as to why they signed the Petition, sometimes providing powerful insights about their concerns. Here is a sample of the comments we've been receiving.

-**F.J.L**

The City's own minimum wage ordinance, known as the "Irvine Living Wage Ordinance," prescribes the minimum hourly wage that the City pays its own employees and those working for the City under a contract with a private firm providing important services for the City — for example, janitorial services or landscape services. The prescribed Irvine Living Wage, affecting hundreds of workers, is currently about \$11 per hour (\$10.82) or about \$13 per hour if no health or other benefits are provided.

Four Councilmembers — Mayor Steven Choi, and Councilmembers Christina Shea, Jeff Lalloway, and Lynn Schott — voted on May 26th to repeal the Living Wage Ordinance, effectively cutting Irvine's minimum wage from its current \$11/\$13 per hour to the State's prescribed minimum of \$9 per hour.

**What Do You Think?** Do you favor or oppose the Irvine City Council's action to eliminate the Irvine Living Wage? The Council voted on May 26th to repeal the Living Wage Ordinance, effectively cutting Irvine's minimum wage from its current \$11/\$13 per hour to the State's prescribed minimum of \$9 per hour.

## What Do You Think?

Go to [www.IrvineCommunityPoll.org](http://www.IrvineCommunityPoll.org) to take the poll!

### READER COMMENTS ON THE PORTOLA HIGH SCHOOL TOXIC CONTAMINATION ISSUE

It is important that students, their parents, and teachers feel safe at school. As an environmental geologist myself, I am aware of the potential health risk issues that may occur due to exposure to toxics — it is important that all these potential issues be investigated, evaluated, and mitigated if necessary.  
— Ron Halpern

I live close to this area and it is possible my children could end up going to this school. This is extremely shortsighted and should be immediately investigated. It was already known when the decision was made that there was a waste site nearby.  
— Lorne Cheeseman

With known toxic contamination, why would IUSD and the City of Irvine be eager to build a high school on that site? It's an idiotic, unsafe proposal.  
— Leah Jordan

Another example of our City officials asleep at the wheel!  
— Arthur Strauss

Please do not forget what happened to Belmont High in L.A. and also to Malibu High School. Irvine authorities need to wake up.  
— John Barbod

→ continued on page 11 →

## More Comments on High School Toxics

Safety and welfare should be above politics. If nothing else, consider the significant potential — almost the guaranty — of liability.  
— Susan Weingarten

I want the truthful disclosure of all land use information.  
— Linda Jones

My child will be at this school location. Is it safe? Hello! This is a serious issue.  
— Simone Sami Suleiman

This is the worst location to build a new high school.  
— Jean Yuan

When it comes to kids, error on the side of caution.  
— Lawrence Plon

My children may be future students at Portola High. I want to ensure that they are attending an environmentally safe school. I want independent, comprehensive testing for toxic contamination to be conducted at the proposed school site!  
— Margaret Cheng

It seems very cavalier of the School Board and City Council to proceed with this plan without involving experts who can testify about the safety of the location.  
— James Harris

Children and teachers deserve a safe place to learn and work.  
— Charlotte Goldstein

We are against building schools on toxic land.  
— Yingzi Peng and Haibo Jiang

Portola High School on this site is a planning disaster unworthy of Irvine.  
— Ed Pope

We want a safe environment for our kids. Please stop construction of Portola High School until there is an independent examination of the site.  
— Myunghui Shin

The safety of our kids in Irvine comes first. This kind of poor planning by Irvine officials is absolutely not acceptable. Action needs to be taken.  
— Khurshed Ali

The real sadness of this situation is that the City Council has knowingly put the safety of our children at risk.  
— Doris Hannon

Let's keep our kids safe! We don't want another Beverly Hills High or Malibu High!  
— Farrah Nikraz

Toxic waste near kids...are you kidding me?  
— James Chien

As an Irvine resident, as an educator of 29 years, and as a parent of two children, I say that having a safe school for our City's children and the educators who teach them should always be part of any school plan.  
— Martha Clay

Why wasn't the testing done before the site was selected for a school? Someone dropped the ball. I just want my grandchildren to be in a healthy environment.  
— Sonya Leys

City residents — also known as voters — deserve to have all the facts brought to light so we can decide as a community what is best.  
— Rutherford San Pedro

Another look at the toxicology findings can't hurt. The integrity of the Mayor and the School Board appear to be questionable.  
— Tom Stricker

I worked as a para-professional for IUSD back when the El Toro Marine elementary school was there. The children had hives and strange rashes, and no one did anything to help back then. Protect all children — they are our future. Do not expose them to toxics and lives that could possibly include learning disabilities, chemotherapy, or worse. I have lived in Irvine for more than 30 years. We all know there is a toxic hazard here — I would not allow my grandchildren to attend Portola High School. Would you?  
— Pamela Economakos-King

My husband died from work exposure to these same kinds of chemicals — I think the area needs an investigation.  
— Fran Lugo

Let's not needlessly tarnish our School District's fabulous reputation. Let's put rumors to rest with adequate testing and full disclosure.  
— Marilyn Smith

The safety of the Portola High School site should be the first priority. Irvine schools are highly regarded. If the school is deemed unsafe at a later date, that will be the end of the Irvine School District's and the City's reputation for excellence.  
— Emma Teeple

Irvine needs openness not only in government, but also in discussions about the information and findings upon which our leaders base their decisions.  
— Alan Levitt

My first cousin attended Beverly Hills High School in the 1970s. Thirty years later, a number of former students and teachers were diagnosed with the same type of cancer. Research determined that students and teachers were exposed to carcinogens from oil well drilling on the property. Scary...  
— Susan Levine

The City Council recently voted to give another \$80,000 to its lawyers for unspecified billings in connection with the Great Park Audit.



"Don't you just love this game?"

### IRVINE CITY COUNCIL DECORUM

Re: Irvine City Council Meeting of Tuesday, April 28, 2015

I was appalled at the uncalled for outburst at the end of this meeting by Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Lalloway, which was directed against Councilmember Beth Krom who has been a dedicated public servant for 15 years — both as a Councilmember and Mayor (2004-2008). Mr. Lalloway should be ashamed of himself. He needs to apologize for his ad hominem attacks.

For Shame!

Carl Mariz

Letters to the editor are welcome. Please include your name and ZIP code. Letters for publication must be addressed to Editor, 4199 Campus Drive, Suite 550, Irvine, CA 92612 or email [Editor@IrvineCommunityNews.org](mailto:Editor@IrvineCommunityNews.org). Letters may be edited for publication. Unpublished letters will not be acknowledged or returned.

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