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Serving the Villages and Neighborhoods of Irvine

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Publisher's Perspective

2016

Welcome, readers! January, 2016 marks a new month, a new year and a new issue of *Irvine Community News & Views*. On behalf of our entire staff, I take this opportunity to thank you and each and every one of our thousands of readers. In just one year we've become not just Irvine's newest paper, but Irvine's most widely circulated community newspaper as well.

Please continue to pass the word to others, will you? *Irvine Community News & Views* — in its traditional hold-it-in-your-hands format — is available free in more than 100 stores and shopping centers throughout Irvine.

A full listing of shopping centers and stores where *Irvine Community News & Views* is available can be found on page 4.

Of course, *Irvine Community News & Views* is also available online — delivered free, straight to your inbox. If you haven't already done so, please join our online followers now. And please share ICNV with friends and neighbors, and help us continue to grow in 2016.

www.IrvineCommunityNews.org

Finally, with this issue we're introducing a new four-page section (pages 7-10) that we call Living. Anchored by our acclaimed family-friendly calendar (pages 8 & 9), our Living section focuses on the indoor and outdoor experiences that shape the quality of life we enjoy in Irvine.

Franklin J. Lunding

Franklin J. Lunding, *Publisher and Editor*

Franklin J. Lunding (FJL) is a businessman and lawyer. He has served on the Irvine Planning Commission and, prior to that, as Chairman of the Irvine Transportation Commission.

Traffic, Traffic, Traffic

Is Irvine's Master Plan Unraveling?



More Growth, More Traffic. The City Council approved 10,000 housing units at the Great Park. But the added traffic affects all Irvine neighborhoods, as shown here on University Drive near Jeffrey and the I-405.

Irvine's once-vaunted planning standards are being systematically ignored as the City Council and Planning Commission continue to approve massive residential developments. The most immediate result has been a surge in traffic — producing what the *Register* describes as “brutal” rush-hour traffic affecting all parts of Irvine.

At a recent gathering of planners and long-time Irvine residents, the sentiments — and the resentments — were clear: “I don't even recognize Irvine anymore,” said one retired Irvine resident, and then she added, “it's just grown too big and too stressful.”

Another resident asked, “What's happening to our beautiful planned City?” And yet a third resident, a professional planner, responded to the first two: “Too much growth. Too much development. Too much density. And traffic, traffic, traffic. It's ruining Irvine.”

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Irvine Community News & Views provides a forum for Irvine residents and others to post events and voice their opinions. Irvine Community News & Views does not necessarily endorse the opinions expressed in this publication.

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→ continued from page 1 → **Is Irvine's Master Plan Unraveling?**

While people can argue about whether Irvine is being “ruined,” few can doubt the objective reality — traffic is overwhelming the City, from one end to the other. And the explosion of traffic is the direct result of recent City Council and Planning Commission development approvals that are expressly disregarding the standards set forth in the Irvine General Plan — the City’s detailed blueprint for carefully master-planning the City’s development.

Just before Christmas — when few were paying attention — residential developer FivePoint Communities pushed through massive tentative tract maps, allowing for the accelerated construction of 4,184 new houses at the Great Park. The Planning Commission did so, even knowing that the environmental and traffic studies demonstrated that more than a dozen critical intersections in town, including in residential neighborhoods, are destined to become dysfunctional, dropping to a Level of Service “E.” This is just one step short of the dreaded “F” — which means intersections that are failing and gridlocked.

Former City Councilmember and long-time Planning Commissioner Mary Ann Gaido was the lone “no” vote on the Planning Commission. When later asked about her vote, Gaido said, “You either stand by our once-solid planning principles — and our



General Plan — or you don’t.”

Gaido added, “I’m deeply concerned that under the current leadership of a pro-developer Mayor, City Council, and Planning Commission, the master plan for our entire city is unraveling.” **ICNV**



“You either stand by our once-solid planning principles — and our General Plan — or you don’t.”

MARY ANN GAIDO

What do YOU think?

Do you approve or disapprove of the job that the Mayor and City Council are doing to control growth and traffic?

Take the Irvine Community Poll!

Simply go to:
<http://IrvineCommunityNews.org/Poll>

The Irvine Community Poll is owned by Irvine Community News & Views. Unlike other proprietary polls, we publish our survey results. This is a way that your voice can be heard — and we can help serve the Irvine community.

Testing for Toxics at Portola High School Site Awaits DTSC Action

The construction of the Portola High School on a now-known contaminated site continues unabated. Even after a large cache of odorous soil, contaminated by toxic petrochemicals was discovered on the school site in November of 2014, the Irvine Unified School District’s (IUSD) policy has been to remove contaminated soil when they accidentally find it as construction proceeds, but, to not otherwise test the entire site.

However, during a recent phone conversation with a high official in the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) in Sacramento, the “widespread public anxiety” reported in ICNV’s December issue seemingly had a positive impact. The official said that the information will be “passed forward.” The article and a copy of the newspaper had been sent to the official prior to the phone conversation.



After discovery of toxic contamination while constructing this storm drain at the Portola High School site in November of 2014, the City’s environmental consultant reported that he expected DTSC to immediately order new testing for toxic petrochemicals. The expected testing never happened.

It also appeared from the conversation that no analysis had yet been done by the DTSC of the extensive materials sent to them that would contradict the basis for their previous acceptance of the school site as purely agricultural, a status that required no comprehensive testing for the toxic petrochemicals already discovered on the site.

The possibility of the DTSC holding a public hearing, locally,

was also raised in the conversation. Again, the words of the official were, “I will pass that information forward.”

Probably no one reading this was aware of the first “fake” public hearing, held on February 18, 2014, and run by IUSD, at which their Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) was presented. Notice of that “hearing” was buried in the rarely read Public Notices sections of the *Irvine World News* and the *OC Register*. The “announcement” also appeared on the IUSD website under Business Services/Facilities Planning and Construction section. This critical public hearing, held at the February 18, 2015 Board meeting was, in fact, Item “24. a. Public Hearing: Preliminary Environmental Assessment (PEA) for High School #5 (Site A) — one of 27 agenda items! The IUSD agenda was posted on the IUSD website just four days earlier.

If the DTSC holds a public hearing, it will provide the IUSD an opportunity to explain their reasons for not testing the site for the toxic petrochemicals found along almost the entire perimeter.

ICNV will continue to monitor this important story. **ICNV**

**For more information and documentation, go to:
www.TestForToxics.org**

Irvine Living Wage Volunteers Merge with Statewide Fair Wage Initiative — to Raise State Minimum Wage to \$15 Per Hour

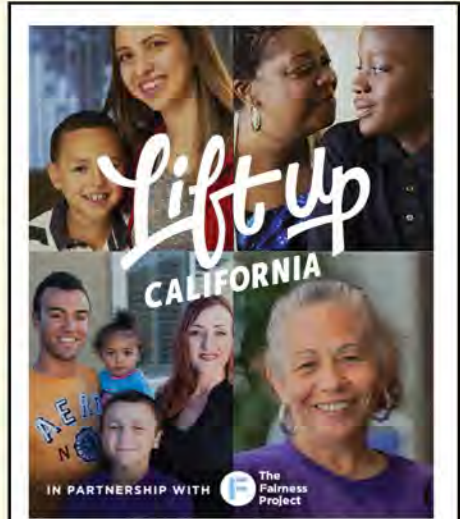
Two separate but related “living wage” campaigns in Irvine have now become one big campaign — to raise the California minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

Last September, two initiative petition campaigns were under way in Irvine. The first was the Irvine Living Wage campaign, a local effort to restore Irvine’s own minimum wage to \$11 per hour for the City’s hundreds of contract service workers — janitors, maintenance workers, and landscape workers. (Last June, the Irvine City Council had voted to cut the wage to \$9 per hour.) The other initiative was a statewide petition effort to raise the State minimum wage for all workers in California from its current \$10 per hour to \$15 over a period of 5 years.

After gathering thousands of signatures by early December, Irvine Living Wage proponents and volunteers learned that the statewide initiative petition had surged beyond the required half-million signatures, guaranteeing the \$15 per hour Fair Wage Act a place on the November, 2016 statewide ballot.

Mary Ann Gaido, one of the leading proponents of the Irvine effort, said: “We’re thrilled that the Fair Wage Act initiative has qualified for the State ballot in November, 2016.” Gaido, a former Irvine Councilmember and longtime Planning Commissioner, added, “Since they got across the signature-gathering finish line first, and since the Fair Wage initiative included everything that was in our Irvine Living Wage initiative — and more — our volunteers met and decided to fold our efforts into the more ambitious statewide \$15 per hour campaign.”

Mitch Marsile, a healthcare worker at Kaiser Permanente in Orange County and local spokesman for the Fair Wage Act, said: “It’s great to have Irvine’s Living Wage Coalition and volunteers on board with our statewide effort. Of course, we have to get a majority in November, and that means rolling up big vote counts in large metropolitan counties, including Orange County.” Marsile noted, “We want to win a majority in Orange County, and to do that we need a solid majority in Irvine. Now that we’ve joined forces, I think we’re going to do it.” **ICNV**



Lift Up California is the statewide organization that is leading the campaign for the \$15 per hour state minimum wage.

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Contact Mary

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THE COUPON CONNECTION *by Cheryl Honig*

Hi, I'm Cheryl Honig, Advertising Coordinator for the *Irvine Community News & Views*. I enjoy getting to know business owners and managers in Irvine, and helping them create compelling ads that increase awareness for their products and services. Thank you to all the businesses **highlighted in red** on page 4 – it is a pleasure to work with you! I invite business owners to call me to discuss how we can work together to spread the word about your business throughout Irvine!

I look forward to hearing from you!

Cheryl Honig • 949-284-6079 • cheryl@irvinecommunitynews.org

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Impressive in Irvine

by Cheryl Honig

As I work my way around Irvine, I have the pleasure of discovering unique and innovative businesses, and meeting the most generous, dedicated, and hard-working people. I am excited to understand what makes businesses successful, and thrilled to learn what motivates people to excel at their chosen craft. As I listen intently, I am drawn into their world — emerging at the end of our visit as one of their biggest fans. These businesses and people are... **Impressive in Irvine.**

EVOFITNESS

An Evolutionary Approach

Can two people with decades-long careers in corporate America transform themselves into successful entrepreneurs? Lola Cady and Ed Ryan can, because transforming their clients into healthier and more physically fit people is what they do best! Lola and Ed are the proud owners of EvoFitnessUSA: a unique fitness studio that offers a combined approach to training and nutrition with a proven track record for countless number of clients. **“The EvoFitnessUSA vision is to create a community of healthy people, and our mission is to offer our clients a fitness program to transform and evolve their lives through sustainable, healthy lifestyle choices,”** Lola explained, as we sat together in the EvoFitnessUSA studio. Lola conducted a full body analysis on me during our first session together, and took me through a back and chest workout that left my arms feeling like wet, limp noodles!



I wondered why 2 people who worked in Information Technology for various pharma corporations would choose the fitness world for their first venture into entrepreneurship. Lola and Ed have always enjoyed keeping physically fit (bicycling, kayaking, and resistance training), and wanted to share their passion for health and well-being with others. Besides Lola and Ed, the “Trio of Trainers” includes Dennis Smith, who after a long background in competitive swimming, became obsessed with competing in triathlons. “Teaching our clients to enjoy their workouts, and to harmonize their physical fitness with other personal goals is super rewarding for me,” says Dennis, with compassion for his clients.

The EvoFitnessUSA workout consists of 20-minute sessions of low-impact resistance training 3-4 times per week (ALWAYS supervised by a trainer), a full body analysis every 4 weeks, nutrition consultation, and an individual food plan with continuous personal guidance. Your progress is constantly monitored to ensure you are heading in the right direction, and every session is by appointment, so there is never overcrowding or waiting. No cardio training is required, and the workout is suitable for all ages and capabilities, whether your goal is weight loss, toning, improved health or all of the above! My goal is to increase muscle tone and transform my arms from the “cooked pasta” look to something more akin to Popeye’s spinach arms. Hmm... pasta and spinach, this article is making me hungry!



Training session with Ed

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The Irvine Housing Market: 2016

The 2015 Irvine housing market was strong throughout the year, fueled by the residual momentum of a bullish 2014. A barometer of housing market strength can be seen by looking at homes sold with sales prices of \$1 million and up. In Irvine, in 2014, there were 426 sales at \$1 million and up. But as of December 10, 2015, according to the California Regional Multiple Listing Service, there were 502 Irvine homes that had been sold for more than \$1 million.

This 17.8 percent increase is fantastic news. And as we move into 2016, this segment of the market will continue to gain strength as new construction provides an array of homes to suit a varied audience of buyers. Builders of new homes in Irvine at Beacon Park, Hidden Canyon and Orchard Hills will continue to thrive in 2016 as they remain hyper-focused on the \$1 million and up market segment.

Irvine’s “bread and butter” market segment of home sales — homes between \$700,000 and \$1 million — grew by 11.1 percent in 2015, with 814 homes sold as of December 10, compared with 733 homes sold in this market segment in 2014.

The increase in sales volume in both \$1 million and up homes and the “bread and butter” market segments compared to 2014 shows that 2015 was a very healthy selling year for Irvine. What will we see in 2016 for the Irvine real estate market? In spite of gradually rising interest rates, I expect that home sales in Irvine will continue to be strong as home sellers leverage the market strength and take this opportunity to trade up to a bigger home, or cash out and downsize.

**Michael Mei is a real estate agent with Coldwell Banker Platinum Properties, specializing in Irvine’s luxury home segment. He received the prestigious International President’s Elite award from Coldwell Banker for being in the Top 2% in the world for his sales volume. Michael Mei has been a resident of Irvine for over 21 years, and currently lives in Irvine with his wife and three children.*



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by Michael Mei*

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Community Calendar

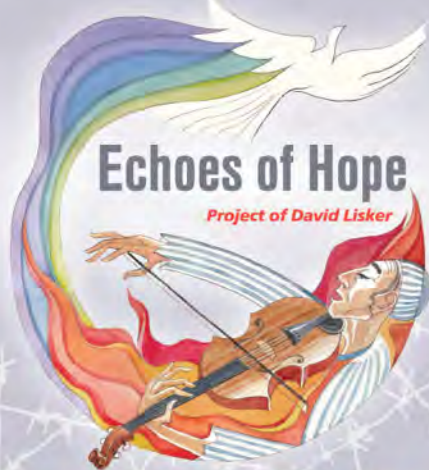
January 2016/February 2016

Echoes of Hope

A powerful classical music concert presented by David Lisker, an acclaimed Juilliard-trained violinist, and protégé of Itzhak Perlman, *Echoes of Hope* celebrates the lives and music of six Jewish composers from the Holocaust. Commemorate International Holocaust Remembrance Day with this rare and profoundly moving program. The premise of this concert is not to emphasize the tragedy that was the Holocaust, but rather to inspire the listeners with the profoundly moving works that these talented composers were able to create in the midst of one of the darkest times in human history.

**Irvine Valley College
 Performing Arts Center
 5500 Irvine Center Drive
 January 24th, 4-6pm.
 Tickets: \$10-\$20
 Info and Tickets: 949-451-5333.**

Celebrate the work and lives of brilliant Jewish composers who were directly affected by WWII and the Holocaust. Schulhoff, Klein, Dauber, Ullmann, Haas, and Weinberg



Sunday, January 24, 2016 @ 4:00 PM
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 For tickets and info: (949) 451-5333 | www.ivcarts.org
 Tickets \$10-\$20

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 Certified Farmers Market. OC Great Park. Rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Info: OCGP.org 	4 Near: An Exhibition. Irvine Fine Arts Center. 10am-9pm. Info: 949-724-6880 	5 Homework Help. Katie Wheeler Library. Teen tutors assist elementary and middle school students with completing their homework assignments. Held downstairs in the Community Room. 3:30pm. Info: 714-669-8753	6 Mid-Week Hike: Agua Chion and The Sinks. 8am-1pm. Info & Registration: LetsGoOutside.org 	7 Planning Commission Meeting. Irvine City Hall. 5pm. Info: 949-724-6000 	8 Toddler Storytime. Heritage Park Library. 11-11:30am. Info: 949-936-4040 	9 Garden Workshops: Fruit Tree Pruning Made Simple. OC Great Park Farm + Food Lab. 10-11am. Info: OCGP.org Open Microphone Review at Knowlwood's in Old Town Irvine. Hosted by Ray Starsiak. 7-9pm. Info: RStarsiak@live.com.
10 Certified Farmers Market. OC Great Park. Rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Info: OCGP.org Clinic in the Park. OC Great Park Farmers Market. 10am-2pm. Info: ClinicInThePark.org	11 Parenting of Teens Workshop. University Park Library. 6pm. Info: 949-786-4001	12 City Council Meeting. Irvine City Hall. 5pm. 	13 Mid-Week Hike. Quail Hill. 8am-1pm. Info & Registration: LetsGoOutside.org	14 Live Music at Eureka! 4143 Campus Dr. Each Thursday night Eureka! features Live Music at their University Town Center location! 8pm. Info: 949-596-8881 	15 Chess at the Rancho Senior Center. 11am-1pm. Info: 949-724-6800 	16 Read to a Dog. University Park Library. Children 12 and under are invited to read to licensed therapy dogs! This is an opportunity to improve reading skills while meeting new canine friends. All participating dogs are part of B.A.R.K. Free! No registration required. 11am-12pm. Info: 949-786-4001
17 Certified Farmers Market. OC Great Park. Rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Info: OCGP.org 	18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. 	19 Family Storytime. Heritage Park Library. A storytime for children 3 to 6 years old and their families. 10-10:30am. Info: 949-936-4040	20 Independent Visions: Women Artists of California 1880-1940. Irvine Museum. 11am-5pm. Info: 949-476-2565	21 AWE Lecture: Sustainable Architecture. OC Great Park. 7-8:30pm. Info: OCGP.org	22 Live Music Fridays. Ugly Pie Co. 3939 Portola Pkwy. 6pm. Info: UglyPieCo@gmail.com 	23 The Art Lab: Creation Stations. OC Great Park. Play, create and explore at our self-directed creation stations. 10am-4pm. Info: OCGP.org
24 Certified Farmers Market. OC Great Park. Rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Info: OCGP.org 	25 Family Storytime. Heritage Park Library. 7pm. Info: 949-936-4040	26 City Council Meeting. Irvine City Hall. 5pm. 	27 After Work Fitness Hike. Paved Hicks Haul Road. 6-7:30pm. Info & Registration: LetsGoOutside.org 	28 Homework Help. Katie Wheeler Library. Teen tutors assist elementary and middle school students with completing their homework assignments. This drop-in program is held downstairs in the Community Room. 3:30pm. Info: 714-669-8753	29 Movie Matinee. Lakeview Senior Center. Enjoy lemonade, popcorn and a movie with friends every Friday. 12:15pm. Info: 949-724-6900	30 Birding in Round Canyon. Limestone Canyon Nature Preserve. 8-11am. Info & Registration: LetsGoOutside.org
31 Certified Farmers Market. OC Great Park. Rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Info: OCGP.org 	1 FEBRUARY Homework Help. Heritage Park Library. 4:30pm. Info: 949-936-4040	2 Groundhog Day. 	3 Storytime in the Garden. OC Great Park Farm + Food Lab. 10-11am. Info: OCGP.org	LIVE MUSIC FRIDAYS 6:00PM If you would like to perform in store Please email us sample at uglypieco@gmail.com 3939 Portola pkwy Irvine, CA 92602 714.389.1119 UGLY PIE CO. BEAUTIFULLY CRAFTED PIZZA	IRVINE MUSEUM Euphemia Charlton Fortune (1885-1969) <i>Study of Monterey Bay, circa 1918</i> 	

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.



"Jackson" is a male, neutered, American Staffordshire Terrier mix. He is almost one year old.

For more information about "Jackson" and other adoptable pets, or the IACC, call 949-724-7740 or email info@irvineshelter.org

Clinic in the Park • Sunday, January 10
Free • No Appointment Needed • Family Fun
 When: Sunday, January 10, 10AM - 1PM
 Where: Great Park Farmers Market
 Exit Sand Canyon (Irvine), Enter on Marine Way

Move More and Eat Healthy in 2016

- Healthy Eating tips from a Registered Dietitian
- Adventure Farm Tour: Learn about the Great Park Farm and Farm to Table information
- Obstacle Course for Kids!
- Healthy Drink tips from Healthy Smiles for Kids
- Woodbridge Walk-In

Visit: www.ClinicInThePark.org
 Email: clinicinthepark@gmail.com
 Call: (949) 385-3067
 @clinicinthepark

Staying Fit and Well

Let's Go Outside

Take part in a relaxing combination of hiking and yoga in picturesque Bommer Canyon, in Irvine, every Wednesday morning from 9:30 a.m.-11 a.m., beginning Jan. 6, 2016. Classes focus on breathing, stretching, endurance and strength. Your body will be energized and your mind will be refreshed all while taking in the views of local meadows, oak, sycamore groves and rock outcrops.

You can register for free at www.LetsGoOutside.org.



Put your ad **HERE**
Contact Cheryl
 cheryl@irvinecommunitynews.org

FOR SALE: 82 Cunningham, Irvine (Lambert Ranch)

Listed @ \$1,799,888



No Mello Roos!
 4 Bedroom 4.5 Bath at nearly 3,900 sqft
 24hr Guard-Gated Community



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 INTERNATIONAL
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This gorgeous home is located in The Hill enclave of Lambert Ranch, offering a spacious great room accented by impeccable craftsmanship and featuring an ideal Feng Shui layout with energy flowing from room to room. This home expresses how families want to live.

www.82Cunningham.com



JUST LISTED

236 Lemon Grove, Orangetree, Irvine, CA

This 2 story condo is in Irvine's Village of Orangetree. It has 2 larger master bedrooms, each with their own private bath, and another 1/2 bath downstairs, with kitchen / living / dining room areas. Outside you'll find a laundry area and patio with a shade trellis. Close to college, Spectrum and transportation. Recreational amenities include pool, spa, weight room, tennis, walking trails, and more!

Perfectly priced at \$455,000



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Educational Equity

We are hearing a lot about "educational equity" these days. Expressing an ideal that most Californians share, the State Constitution guarantees that all of California's children are entitled to a free and equal public school education.

An equal education — or educational equity — means fundamental fairness in the allocation of resources for modern school buildings, classrooms and science labs, as well as computers and other equipment and technologies essential to support academic success. But how is this achieved in a school district — like the Irvine Unified School District — where many schools were built 30 or even 40 years ago? It is clear that the old facilities in the small neighborhood schools, like Turtle Rock Elementary built in the 1970s, don't measure up to what's available at the new and modern mega-schools like Stonegate Elementary.



SCHOOLWATCH
 by Carolyn Inmon*



Turtle Rock Elementary



Stonegate Elementary

Clearly, this major challenge can only be met by marshaling millions of added dollars for school modernization — and carefully allocating those dollars in ways that make educational equity in Irvine a reality, not just a slogan.

IUSD is now considering plans to place a School Facilities Improvement Bond Measure on the June 2016 ballot. According to IUSD, "This measure would be structured to require that all funds go directly to improve Irvine's oldest schools."

We'll take a closer look at this proposal next time.

**Carolyn Inmon is a retired Irvine teacher. She has taught at virtually every grade level, from K - 12, as well as community college. She served as President of the Community College Association from 2005-2007. Carolyn always welcomes your comments and your ideas at: Carolyn@IrvineCommunityNews.org*

Irvine's Hidden Sports Gem: Disc Golf

You can play soccer, shoot hoops, or play catch at just about every community park in Irvine. Something you won't find at your local community park, however, is a lesser-known sport called Disc Golf — unless you visit Deerfield Community Park off Irvine Center Drive and Culver. There, you will find Irvine's very own Disc Golf Course.

Disc Golf, otherwise known as Frisbee Golf or "Frolf," is played with a heavier and more durable Frisbee than you'd use to play catch at the beach. This allows you to throw it farther and harder. The game is played by golf rules. You "tee off" by throwing your Frisbee toward the "hole" — which in this case is a metal basket with chains to catch and hold the Frisbee. There are 9 par 3 "holes" spread out around Deerfield Community Park.

The popular Deerfield Disc Golf course was redesigned recently. The City changed its layout to eliminate conflicts between Disc Golf players with their flying Frisbees and the many residents and school kids using the park for other purposes.

I highly recommend checking the course out. The Deerfield Community Park Center has discs you can borrow if you don't have one of your own. Disc Golf in Irvine is fun and it's free. You can't beat that!



SPORTSWATCH
 by Joel Smith*



**Joel Smith is a hometown Irvine athlete and Concordia University graduate who excelled in soccer, and now coaches in Irvine.*

A Cultural Loss



CULTURECORNER
 by Steve Layton*

Sadly, a bright cultural light in Irvine will be dimming next Fall. The Irvine Meadows Amphitheatre will be shutting down when its lease runs out and the land reverts to the Irvine Company. According to a recent Register article, the Irvine Company plans to expand its Los Olivos apartment complex, soon displacing the existing Amphitheatre's parking lot, with 1,950 apartments, and yet more to follow later. The entire Amphitheatre — the stage, the support facilities, the seating for 16,000 people — will be demolished...gone forever.

This means that next season will be the last for enjoying warm summer evenings at Irvine Meadows, picnicking and listening to the Pacific Symphony. Popular concerts and concert performers will also be searching for a new home. For nearly 35 years, Irvine Meadows has hosted some of the truly great performing artists, including Michael Jackson, Bob Dylan, James Taylor, and Jimmy Buffet, who closed the Amphitheatre's 2015 season.

Is there reason to think that there may be an iconic, cultural treasure like the Irvine Meadows Amphitheatre in Irvine's future? Perhaps. The only space large enough to support such a complex is Irvine's Great Park, where a major amphitheatre could be located — blending into a proposed Cultural Terrace, with museums, arts complexes, and possibly a modern metropolitan library. But the clock is ticking, and time is running short.

Meanwhile, as you continue to make your plans for 2016, keep in mind the Irvine Meadows Amphitheatre's upcoming summer season — Journey and the Doobie Brothers are reportedly scheduled to appear at Irvine Meadows on May 12th.

**Steve Layton is a semi-retired businessman. He remains very active in the Irvine community as a supporter of the UCI Drama Department, and currently serves on the Leadership Committee of the New Swan Shakespeare Festival.*



WORDSWATCH
 by Harris E. Kershner*

Meaningful Change

"In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."

—Abraham Lincoln

Sources differ as to whether this quote is properly attributable to Lincoln. Regardless of its source, the thought that this quote expresses is a valuable one. At the turn of the year, many of us make resolutions regarding mundane matters. I submit that we would all be well served to take

some time to reflect upon what truly meaningful changes we each can make to put more life into our years — and more meaning into our lives.

**Harris E. Kershner is a local attorney, specializing in Employment Law. He has lived in Irvine for over 30 years, and currently resides in Woodbridge.*

OPEN FORUM *FREE SPEECH FOREVER!*



It's Time to Test for Toxics — There Is No Other Choice

This time, our Open Forum/Community Voices pages are devoted exclusively to the continuing Portola High School toxics controversy. ICNV remains at the forefront of this toxic contamination story, peeling back the layers of what has become a growing public scandal and a threat to the health and welfare of thousands of future faculty, staff and students.

Now under construction, Portola High School is located on a 40-acre site on the former El Toro Marine Corps Air Station — a massive military base that was also designated a Superfund site. The high school site is now known to be contaminated along its perimeter with toxic (and cancer-causing) petrochemicals. Virtually the entire interior of the high school site (about 35 acres) remains untested for these same toxic and cancer-causing petrochemicals found in a large quantity at the site's perimeter.

To conduct independent, comprehensive soil-gas testing of the entire Portola High School site would cost less than \$100,000 — a pittance compared to the estimated \$300 million cost of the high school, and especially considering the risks to health and safety from *not* testing.

I'm a lawyer, a businessman, a grandfather, and the husband of a retired Irvine teacher. And, yes, I'm the Publisher and Editor of *Irvine Community News & Views*. Here are my two-cents worth: Whether the Irvine School Board and City Council want it or not, tests for toxic petrochemical contamination at the Portola High School site will have to be conducted sooner or later. Conducting those comprehensive tests now would reassure the public that the site is safe. Or, the tests might identify problems that could be addressed before faculty, staff and students occupy the new school when it opens in September of 2016.

There is yet another alternative — the worst outcome: The School Board and the City Council can continue to do nothing until "disease clusters" and even "cancer clusters" begin to emerge among teachers, staff and students, in perhaps two or three years or even ten years after the school is opened. Then, testing will take place in the midst of a health and safety crisis that could have been avoided.

As Dr. Harvey Liss has declared on the new website, www.TestForToxics.org, and in his Call to Action (reprinted on page 15), "The legal, financial and moral liability of such a catastrophic scenario is incalculable."

Franklin J. Lunding is the Publisher and Editor of Irvine Community News & Views.



■ The way things are going, I suggest the School Board and City Council schedule an opening day (September, 2016) re-naming of Portola High School and its sports teams. How about Hazmat High...home to the Toxic Avengers? —*Edward S. Pope*

■ I am very concerned about the possible short-term and long-term effects this can have on our children and the staff. It is better to find out prior to populating the school than later when thousands have been exposed. —*Timra Buckner*

■ It's simply a no-brainer. No child should be put at risk, or teacher, or staff. I wonder if any of the City Councilmembers will have children going to Portola High School when it is finished. I doubt it. —*Phyllis J. Lutjeans*

■ Human lives matter! Our children and teachers will be affected greatly down the line. Independent, comprehensive testing is necessary. —*Thao Le*

■ I want my grandchildren to go to a safe school. —*Anneliese Henauer*

■ What's wrong in asking for a fair test? Better safe than sorry! —*Archana Vonipenti*

For more information and documentation, go to: www.TestForToxics.org

A CALL TO TEST FOR TOXICS AT PORTOLA HIGH SCHOOL

by *Harvey H. Liss, Ph.D., P.E.*

Here are the facts concerning the Portola High School site, where Irvine's newest high school is now under construction and scheduled to open in September of 2016.

■ **Fact No. 1.** The Irvine Unified School District — with funding assistance from the State of California — is building Portola High School (at a cost of nearly \$300 million) on a former Superfund site that is now known to be contaminated with toxic petrochemicals, including but not limited to: benzene, toluene, xylenes, trimethylbenzene, tetrachlorethylene, trichlorethylene, and naphthalene.

■ **Fact No. 2.** These toxic (and, in some cases, carcinogenic) petrochemicals have been discovered during major excavations nearby (November, 2013) and on-site (November, 2014), and from 10 of 11 on-site soil-test wells that were drilled along the perimeter of the 40-acre site, in 2014. (See accompanying map.)

■ **Fact No. 3.** While the interior of the school site has been tested for agricultural pesticides, it has not been tested for the toxic petrochemicals that were accidentally found nearby, and along the perimeter of the site.

■ **Fact No. 4.** To conduct comprehensive soil-gas testing (involving about 100 test wells covering the entire interior of the school site) would cost an estimated \$100,000.

Given the incontrovertible evidence of toxic contamination on the Portola High School site — and the relatively small cost of conducting independent, comprehensive soil-testing for petrochemical contamination throughout the site's interior — we call upon the Irvine School Board and the Irvine City Council to order such testing, immediately.

The failure to do so raises the likelihood that any contamination will remain undiscovered until avoidable diseases, disabilities, and even deaths among Portola High School teachers, staff and students begin occurring because of prolonged exposure to these toxic and carcinogenic petrochemical contaminants. The legal, financial and moral liability of such a catastrophic scenario is incalculable.

■ I want this site independently tested for safety. —*Crisantos Hajibrahim*

■ I have children who will one day attend this school. Quite frankly, I'm appalled that [comprehensive] testing was not done PRIOR to building. These children are our future! How can we put them in harm's way like this? —*Sandra Losito*

■ I work in environmental consulting and, given the history of the site, I'm shocked at the lack of testing done. The history and use of the site property [for military purposes] is known, yet whoever reviewed the phased studies of the site failed to ask for further testing in areas that were to be developed. —*Michelle Nagy*

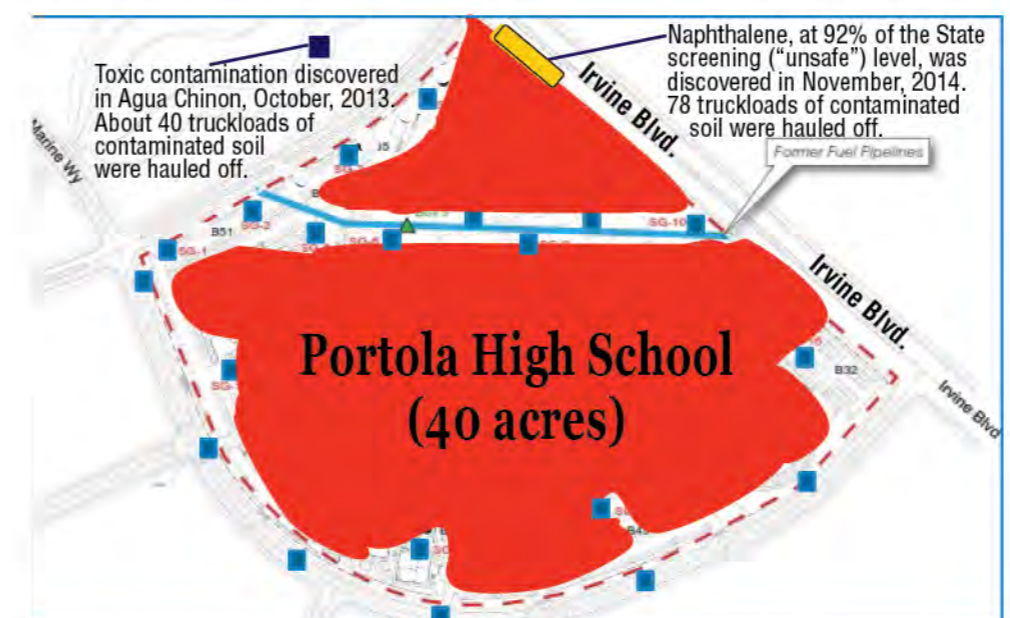
■ I am familiar with soil contamination and how it can move through the soil and air. If there is reasonable doubt about the school's safety, I highly recommend surface and subsurface testing not only at the school site but in the surrounding soils. Rain-supersaturated soils can move plumes of toxins great distances. —*Robert Beehler*

■ I'm considering moving there, but am concerned about my children's safety. —*Eileen Lai*

■ I take AP Environmental Science at Northwood High School and I understand the negative effects of landfills, and especially how they affect humans. —*Cody Herman*

■ It is irresponsible to build a school on this site without knowing whether any remedial action needs to be taken to protect students, teachers and staff for years to come. —*Gerlad Zevin*

■ The residents of Irvine must know if the school site is safe. At a small cost of \$100,000, this issue can be put to rest once and for all. Is the School Board afraid of what this testing will find? —*Jake Jacobs*



The Portola High School site. RED AREAS were *not* tested for Volatile and Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) — the toxic petrochemicals that were accidentally discovered on-site (■), and that were also detected in the soil-gas test wells (■) drilled at the perimeter of the Portola High School site.

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. Letters may be edited for publication. Unpublished letters will not be acknowledged or returned.

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