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## Publisher's Perspective

### “Must” Reading

**Freeway, Tollway, Lalloway.** Our *Irvine Community News & Views* front-page story is about yet another nasty consequence of overdevelopment — *jam-packed freeways*. This, in turn, is giving rise to a cynical scheme — pushed by Irvine Councilmember Jeff Lalloway — to put \$20-per-day (round-trip) toll lanes on the I-405. (*Believe me, folks, I'm not making this up!*) Please read this important story, and then take our online Irvine Community Poll to register your own views on the Lalloway tollway plan.

**ICNV vs. City Hall.** Our job at *ICNV* is to report the news...but now we've become the news. Here's why: While *ICNV* is available to readers in over 100 Irvine stores and other locations, including two public libraries, we've been *banned* from Irvine City Hall. This is despite the fact that the *Irvine World News*, *OC Weekly* and other free publications have been available in City-provided news racks in the entrance lobby at City Hall. The City's hostile and discriminatory action cannot be allowed to stand. It violates the First Amendment protections of Free Speech and Free Press — freedoms that have been traditionally respected in Irvine. So, *ICNV* has sued the City of Irvine in Federal Court. Please read our page 3 story.

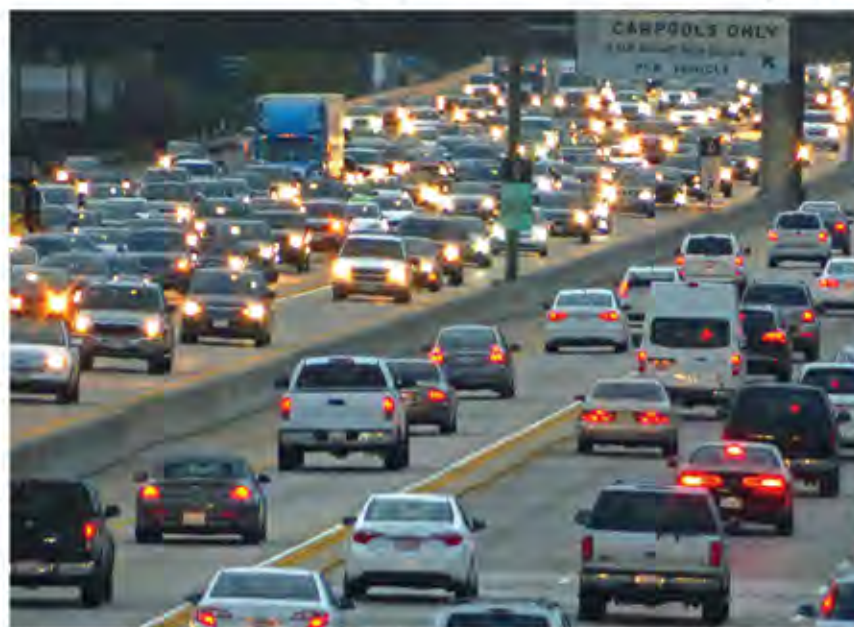
**TestForToxics.** The Portola High School toxic contamination already discovered along the site's perimeter — and the failure of the School Board and City Council to order *comprehensive* testing for toxic petrochemicals on the *entire* school site — is a growing Irvine scandal. Dr. Harvey Liss, who first broke this story for *ICNV*, has established an excellent website and a reporting platform — [www.TestForToxics.org](http://www.TestForToxics.org) — to cover the toxics scandal. See his “TestForToxics” report on page 13. It's “must” reading.

*Franklin J. Lunding*  
Franklin J. Lunding, Publisher and Editor



[www.IrvineCommunityNews.org](http://www.IrvineCommunityNews.org)

# Freeway, Tollway, Lalloway



*The I-405 in Irvine. As Chairman of OCTA, Irvine City Councilman Jeff Lalloway won approval of a plan that will add costly toll lanes to the I-405 freeway.*

**Despite denials, Irvine City Councilman Jeff Lalloway has continued to vote for controversial toll lanes on the I-405. Critics say that Lalloway's toll lanes would cost Irvine commuters \$20 per day, and are part of a “bait-and-switch, double-taxation scheme.”**

Since 2013, Irvine Councilman Jeff Lalloway has been the City's representative on the powerful Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA). As Irvine's representative — but *without* City Council consultation or approval — Lalloway has repeatedly embraced and voted for a controversial plan to put four *toll lanes* (two in each direction) on the I-405 freeway. At the same time, he has been telling the public he opposes adding toll lanes to the I-405.

As an OCTA Board member, in 2013-14 Lalloway voted to advance the I-405 tollway project — a project backed by Orange County's big business interests, developers and Caltrans, which is the State's giant transportation and road-building agency.

In October, 2014, while seeking re-election to his City Council seat, Lalloway was challenged on his pro-tollway votes. He falsely claimed he opposed the I-405 toll lanes.

Then, shortly after Lalloway won re-election (by just 210 votes), he became Chairman of OCTA, and orchestrated an April, 2015 vote — yet another OCTA vote in favor of the toll lanes as part of a massive \$1.7 billion plan to widen the I-405.

There is little doubt that major improvements are needed along the I-405 freeway to somehow accommodate tens of thousands of additional daily commuters because of massive growth and development in Irvine and south Orange County. Anticipating these problems in 2006, then-Irvine Mayor Beth Krom, joined

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**Irvine**  
COMMUNITY NEWS & VIEWS

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→ continued from page 1 → **Freeway, Tollway, Lalloway**



by long-time Planning Commissioner Mary Ann Gaido, rallied a remarkable 74 percent majority of Irvine voters to support ballot Measure “M2” — which provided for an extension of a countywide half-cent sales tax to produce billions of dollars over 30 years for Orange County transportation projects, including widening and improving the I-405.

Gaido, who continues to serve as a City Planning Commissioner, recently recounted the history. “The voter-approved Measure M2,” she said, “promised freeway improvements that would be fully funded by extending the special countywide half-cent sales tax. But turning the I-405 into a hybrid freeway-plus-tollway was never part of the package.” Gaido added, “If voters had even suspected this kind of

bait-and-switch tollway tax scheme, they would have voted NO — and I would have voted that way, too.”

When, in 2006, voters approved the “M2” half-cent sales tax extension, the yearly cost to the average Irvine commuter was less than \$100 per year. The Lalloway tollway-tax proposal will cost regular users of the I-405 toll lanes thousand of added dollars each year.

According to Caltrans projections, under the Lalloway-OCTA tollway plan, the morning and afternoon rush-hour commuters who use the I-405 toll lanes would pay at least \$10 each way. This means for Irvine commuters to have a tolerable round-trip commute to Huntington Beach or Long Beach, it would cost at least \$20 per day, or more than \$4,000 per year.

The Coalition of Freeway Cities

**“The plain truth is that the I-405 was always intended to be a freeway, not a tollway. Let’s keep it that way!”**

— MARY ANN GAIDO  
IRVINE PLANNING COMMISSIONER

— an organization comprised of local officials representing Costa Mesa, Westminster, Fountain Valley, Huntington Beach, and other cities opposed to putting toll lanes on the I-405 — has been especially vocal about the “crushing new tax on motorists” that toll lanes would bring. One former elected official said: “It’s double and even triple taxation. It’s a huge tax on top of the more than 80 cents per gallon in federal and state gas tax, and state and local sales tax that we are now paying every day.”

Planning Commissioner Gaido told ICNV she will be placing the tollway matter on an up coming Planning Commission agenda. Gaido, who served on the City’s original Transportation Commission, said she will propose that the City of Irvine “take an official position opposing the tollway plan,” and join the Coalition of Freeway Cities working to ensure that any new lanes on the I-405 are free lanes, not toll lanes.

Gaido put it this way: “The plain truth is that the I-405 was always intended to be a freeway, not a tollway. Let’s keep it that way!”

**What do YOU think?**

**Do you favor or oppose the Lalloway-OCTA plan to build toll lanes on the I-405?**

**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.**

**Irvine Community News & Views v. City of Irvine**

**Newspaper Sues City of Irvine in Federal Court to Uphold Free Speech and Free Press**

In a complaint seeking damages and injunctive relief, the *Irvine Community News & Views* sued the City of Irvine for violations of rights to free speech and equal protection of the law under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, and under similar provisions of the California Constitution.

The federal lawsuit centers on the actions of the City of Irvine in repeatedly refusing to allow *Irvine Community News & Views (ICNV)* to be distributed free of charge from news racks located in the public lobby of Irvine’s City Hall — in the same way that *OC Weekly* and the *Irvine World News*, and many other publications are distributed. According to the complaint, the City is apparently motivated by “discriminatory animus against the viewpoint and the content of ICNV,”



competing newspaper publications.”

As part of his press briefing, publisher Lunding released a letter from Peter Scheer, Executive Director of the highly regarded First Amendment Coalition, based in northern California. Scheer’s letter, initially directed to Irvine City Attorney Todd Litfin, called the City’s position “mistaken” for one overriding reason: “ICNV’s City Hall distribution... is constitutionally protected under the First Amendment.” Scheer added, “The issue is not even close.” He then went on to call out the City for its prohibited “content-based regulation of speech,” citing precedent established by the U.S. Supreme Court and numerous federal court decisions over the past 45 years.

Lunding said, “While we are prepared to litigate this matter for as long as required, the plain truth is that this dispute shouldn’t

have to be dragged out over a period of months or even years. We simply wish to vindicate the right to have *Irvine Community News & Views* placed alongside other newspapers for free distribution at City Hall. The City — with City Council approval — could bring about that result tomorrow, or even today.”

The case, *Irvine Community News & Views v. The City of Irvine*, was filed in the Federal District Court for the Central District of California (Southern Division) in Santa Ana, and was assigned to Federal District Judge Andrew Guilford. Preliminary court proceedings have yet to be scheduled.

**FPPC Investigates Christina Shea**



Irvine City Councilmember Christina Shea, who is accused of violating the State’s conflict of interest laws, is officially under investigation by the State Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC), according to a January 28th news report first published by *Voice of OC*.

The probe, apparently confirmed in a letter from the FPPC, follows revelations that Shea sent emails and text messages to City planning staff requesting hurry-up approval of renovation plans, construction permits and corporate sign alterations submitted by Irvine-based KIA Motors, a long-time major client in Christina Shea’s consulting business.

*Voice of OC* reported that “on multiple occasions” Shea told City planning staff — in emails and text messages — to assist KIA with its requests to get its plans through the process “as soon as possible.”

A former planner with the City, speaking on condition of anonymity, told *Irvine Community News & Views*, “This is precisely the kind of insider favoritism and corruption by elected officials that State laws and our City conflict of interest and ethics ordinances are intended to prevent.” According to this former City employee, “Apparently, Shea thinks its okay to take tens of thousands of dollars in so-called consulting fees and then use her position to pressure staff to get fast-track, favorable treatment for her corporate client.”

After the *Voice of OC* story broke, Dan Chmielewski, who writes *The Liberal OC* blog covering City and County political issues, sought to file a complaint against Shea with the FPPC — only to learn that the Councilwoman was already under investigation by the State agency for possibly violating the State’s Political Reform Act provisions prohibiting conflicts of interest.

**Still No Action on Toxics at Portola High School**

**...and fewer than 200 days until the High School opens.**

**See Page 13 – TestForToxics.org**

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

Red highlighted businesses have an ad in this issue. Check it out!

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Ralphs  
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Togo's, Great Sandwiches  
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Heritage Park Regional Library

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Ralphs

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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](mailto: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.**



The açaí (ah-sigh-EE) berry and all its health benefits — antioxidants, fiber, protein and heart-healthy fats — has arrived at Campus Plaza across from UCI. Enter **Vitality Bowls** — a superfood café owned and operated by long-time friends and co-workers Nila Jaan, Shadi Hazzan, and Ameet Seth, three enthusiastic and passionate people who wanted to start their own business, and give back to the Irvine community.

While living in San Francisco, Shadi and his wife Maureen, who manages the Irvine location, fell in love with the Vitality Bowls products and obvious dedication for making delicious and healthful açaí bowls, smoothies, fresh juices, soups, and panini sandwiches. They approached their friends Nila and Ameet, and together they chose Irvine for their Vitality Bowls franchise store. "I recognized the need for a healthy alternative in this area," remarks Nila, a graduate of UCI with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Social Behavior.



Detox Bowl

Ordering a bowl or smoothie at Vitality Bowls may feel like speaking a different language, but do it anyway and ask questions. The staff is well educated and will help you understand the difference between açaí and goji (both berries); guarana, chia and flax (all seeds); and ginkgo, maca and spirulina (all end in vowels!). I'll learn more about these on my next trip to Vitality Bowls!

All menu items are made fresh to order without any trans fats, high fructose corn syrup, fillers, added sugar or artificial preservatives. Vitality Bowls takes pride in creating unique flavor combinations that are great for your body as well as your taste buds. They source organic and local produce whenever possible and all bowls and smoothies are packed with vitamins and minerals.

Check out their coupon in The Coupon Connection on page 5, and get yourself a UCI Bowl which includes the Vitality Bowls Superfood Blend, bananas, strawberries, granola and honey.

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Owners of Vitality Bowls — Shadi Hazzan, Nila Jaan, Ameet Seth

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# Irvine Living

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## The Right Time to Sell...The Right Time to Buy

Historically low interest rates will continue to fuel a strong selling season. Home values have risen substantially since 2013, and the number of Sellers who entered the market in 2015 did not increase at the same dramatic rate. In 2016, we are at lower inventory levels than we had in 2015 at this time of year. So, the question is . . . what are potential Sellers waiting for? Are they waiting for no particular reason? Or are they waiting for home values to increase?

Unfortunately, waiting may turn out to be the wrong choice. If potential Sellers are trying to time the market for the ideal moment — when prices “peak” — that moment appears to be right now. We are not expecting continued double-digit growth for 2016. The growth in Home Value is now more normalized at 2.5% per year. It makes sense to sell now for nearly all situations: to move up, to move down, to cash out, or to move out of the area. The current market is being fueled by historically low interest rates — presently at 3.9%. Buyers are looking to leverage those rates and wanting to buy now before interest rates inevitably begin to climb.

As we head into April, we can expect Buyer demand to

peak over the course of the next two months and remain at an elevated level throughout the Spring market. The number of Days on the Market to sell a property in Irvine is now 62 days versus 56 days a year ago. There are two reasons for this: 1) Sellers are overpricing their homes, so they tend to sit longer on the market; and 2) Buyers are financing the purchase of the property rather than paying all cash, and financing means it takes longer to close the transaction.

So, it's best to price your home fairly based on the most recent comparable sales within the neighborhood.

\*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 22 years. He lives in Irvine with his wife and three children. Michael welcomes your comments and inquiries: [michael@mmgroupintl.com](mailto:michael@mmgroupintl.com) or 949-285-7818.



REAL ESTATE  
by Michael Mei\*

## FOR SALE: 29 Small Grove, Irvine (Portola Springs)

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**Amazing Sunset Views!**  
5 Bedroom Residence at 4,209 sqft  
Nearly a 10,500 sqft lot w/ Premium View



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This impeccable 5 bedroom home expresses how families want to live in a true California lifestyle. See amazing & beautiful sunsets every day while perched in the Irvine highlands. Enjoy an evening swim in the stunning backyard pool or rekindle conversation with friends & family next to a cozy outdoor fireplace.

[www.29SmallGrove.com](http://www.29SmallGrove.com)



# Community Calendar

## Celebration of Protection and Preservation at Panhe

Panhe is the 9,000 year old historic village of the Acjachemen/Juaneno people and continues to be a sacred and ceremonial site. Many significant ancestral sites in Orange County have been destroyed to make way for modern development, but Panhe has been preserved within the San Mateo State Beach Campground. Each year a celebration is held in the campground featuring Native American singers, dancers, flute music, as well as food, basketry demonstrations, artisans, exhibits, and vendors. The public is welcome, and it is free. The event is sponsored by the United Coalition to Protect Panhe and the San Onofre Parks Foundation.

**March 20, 10am-4pm.**  
**San Mateo State Beach Campground.**  
**Info: Rebecca Robles at [rebrobles1@gmail.com](mailto:rebrobles1@gmail.com) or the San Onofre Parks Foundation (949) 366-8599 [sgoggins@sanofoundation.org](http://sgoggins@sanofoundation.org)**



A prehistoric Achachemen/Juaneno house exhibit shown at a prior Panhe Celebration.



A flake tool (flintknapping) demonstration.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>IRVINE MUSEUM</b> Karl Yens (1868-1945) <i>Half Dome, Yosemite</i></p>		<p><b>1</b> Short Story Book Club. Heritage Library. 2:30-4:30pm. Info: 949-936-4040</p>	<p><b>2</b> Bunco at the Rancho Senior Center. First Wednesdays. 12:30-3pm. \$5. Info: 949-724-6800</p>	<p><b>3</b> Planning Commission Meeting. Irvine Civic Center. 5:30pm.</p>	<p><b>4</b> OC Writers Read &amp; Critique. OC Great Park Gallery. 11am-1pm. Info: OCGP.org</p> <p><b>OC Writers: Read &amp; Critique</b></p>	<p><b>5</b> Garden Workshops: Planning and Planting the Small Space Veggie Garden. OC Great Park Farm + Food Lab. 10-11am. Info: OCGP.org</p>
<p><b>6</b> Certified Farmers Market. OC Great Park. Rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Info: OCGP.org</p>	<p><b>7</b> After Work Fitness Hike. Hicks Haul Road. 6-7:30pm. Info: LetsGoOutside.org</p>	<p><b>8</b> City Council Meeting. Irvine Civic Center 5pm.</p>	<p><b>9</b> Y(OURS): Lindsay Buchman Exhibition. Irvine Fine Arts Center. 10am-9pm. Info: 949-724-6880</p>	<p><b>10</b> 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</p>	<p><b>11</b> Movie Matinee. Lakeview Senior Center. Fridays at 12:15pm. Info: 949-724-6900</p> <p><b>Lakeview Senior Center</b></p>	<p><b>12</b> Great American Write-In. Hosted by Women For: Orange County. Delhi Center In Santa Ana. 9:30am-1:30pm. Info: WomenForOrangeCounty.org</p>
<p><b>13</b> Certified Farmers Market. OC Great Park. Rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Info: OCGP.org</p>	<p><b>14</b> Orchard Hills Evening Hike. Come out and enjoy the evening on the Orchard Hills loop trail. 6:30-8:30pm. Info: LetsGoOutside.org</p>	<p><b>15</b> International Discussion Group. Rancho Senior Center. Participate in thought-provoking conversations about current national and international topics. 9:30am-10:30am. Third Tuesdays. Info: Bob Meyers 949-786-2097</p>	<p><b>16</b> Wildflower Planting. Irvine Native Seed Farm. Sign up to help behind the scenes at the Irvine Ranch Conservancy's one-of-a-kind native seed farm in Irvine! 8:30am-12pm. Info: LetsGoOutside.org</p>	<p><b>17</b> St. Patrick's Day. Planning Commission Meeting. Irvine Civic Center. 5:30pm.</p> <p><b>Happy St. Patrick's Day</b></p>	<p><b>18</b> Live Music Fridays. Ugly Pie Co. 3939 Portola Pkwy. 6pm. Info: UglyPieCo@gmail.com</p>	<p><b>19</b> Preserving the Season Workshop: Fermentation. OC Great Park Farm + Food Lab. 10-11am. Info: OCGP.org</p>
<p><b>20</b> Certified Farmers Market. OC Great Park. Rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Info: OCGP.org</p> <p><b>Annual Panhe Celebration.</b> San Mateo State Beach Campground. 10am-4pm. Info: 949-366-8599</p>	<p><b>21</b> Homework Help. Heritage Park Library. 4:30pm. Info: 949-936-4040</p>	<p><b>22</b> City Council Meeting. Irvine Civic Center. 5pm.</p>	<p><b>23</b> Mid-Week Hike. Quail Hill. 8am-1pm. Info: LetsGoOutside.org</p>	<p><b>24</b> Irvine Police Department Awards. Irvine Marriott Hotel. Reception 5:30pm, Dinner and Ceremony 6:30pm. Info &amp; Tickets: Katie Brannen at 949-724-7045</p>	<p><b>25</b> Full Moon Hike. Hicks Haul Road. 7-9pm. Info: LetsGoOutside.org</p>	<p><b>26</b> Writer's Ink. Katie Wheeler Library. This reading and writing workshop is for 1st - 3rd grades only. It is taught by Writer's Ink, a group of high school volunteers. 3-4pm. Info: 714-669-8753</p>
<p><b>27</b> Easter. Certified Farmers Market. OC Great Park. Rain or shine. 10am-2pm. Info: OCGP.org</p>	<p><b>28</b> Toddler Storytime. University Park Library. 11am. Info: 949-786-4001</p>	<p><b>29</b> Homework Help. Katie Wheeler Library. 3:30pm. Info: 714-669-8753</p>	<p><b>30</b> The Nature of Water: Our Most Precious Resource. Art Exhibit at The Irvine Museum. 11am-5pm. Info: 949-476-2565</p>	<p><b>31</b> Morning Nature Hike. Orchard Hills. 8-10:30am. Info: LetsGoOutside.org</p>	<p><b>LIVE MUSIC FRIDAYS</b></p> <p><b>UGLY PIE CO.</b>          BEAUTIFULLY CRAFTED PIZZA</p>	



# March 2016

## 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.

"Stilts" is a female, spayed, Italian Greyhound mix. She is about two years old.

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



## The Home Depot Garden Sale Event

**Saturday, March 19  
 8am - 12pm**

Woodbury Town Center - Irvine Blvd.  
 @ Sand Canyon.

This event features discounts on drought friendly plants, vendor displays, and children's activities.

## Let's Go Outside

Signs of spring are on their way in the City of Irvine's Bommer Canyon, where wild hyacinth has begun blooming along Turtle Ridge trail. Many trails in this area are open to hikers and bikers for self-guided access from dawn to dusk. A wide variety of guided activities are also offered by the City of Irvine in partnership with the Irvine Ranch Conservancy.

Info: [LetsGoOutside.org/Explore/IOSP](http://LetsGoOutside.org/Explore/IOSP)



**FOR SALE: 88 Cunningham, Irvine (Lambert Ranch)**

Listed @ \$1,899,000



**No Mello Roos!**  
5 Bedroom 5 Bath at nearly 3,950 sqft  
24hr Guard-Gated Community



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This beautiful home is located in The Hill enclave of Lambert Ranch & sits on a highly desirable cul-de-sac offering a flowing brick driveway. Rediscover cooking in this chef-inspired, gourmet kitchen which includes a breakfast bar, granite counter tops, custom cabinetry, and Professional series stainless steel appliances.



[www.88Cunningham.com](http://www.88Cunningham.com)



**Veronica Khajavi**  
Master Travel Consultant  
I've been traveling all over the world for the past 20 years, and love the opportunity to immerse myself in a country's culture. The possibilities for travel are endless, and as they say, vacation is not a place — it's an experience! Beautiful memories are priceless and irreplaceable, and I look forward to working with you to arrange your incredible journey!

Hop on a plane from Southern California and within six hours you'll be in a paradise called Costa Rica! This compact country, the size of West Virginia, offers one of the most biodiverse landscapes in the world — golden beaches, emerald rain forests and spectacular scenery. Its accessibility, welcoming locals and unrivaled beauty have made it one of the world's most attractive destinations.

On a recent trip to Costa Rica, I stayed in the La Fortuna area at Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort, located about 3 hours from either San Jose or Liberia airport. The resort is nestled in the evergreen jungle with natural pools fed by thermal waters of the Arenal Volcano. Book your stay through us and enjoy preferred rates and amenities such as daily breakfast, a spa credit,

unlimited access to the hot springs, and a complimentary room upgrade!

Time here is your own, as the Costa Ricans truly live by their motto "Pura Vida" — loosely translated as "enjoy life." Choose from zip-lining, river rafting and hiking, or traverse the many hanging bridges on a canopy tour. At the end of the day, relax and sip a piña colada while soaking in a thermal pool.

As a final treat, leave for the airport a little early and take a peaceful hike to Rio Celeste, where your reward is a beautiful turquoise waterfall.

Costa Rica has something for everyone, and our personal relationships and expertise enable us to arrange any type of trip to this vacation paradise. So let me send you there!

**Veronica Khajavi • Travel Store**  
**949-517-9804**



Costa Rica Beach



Costa Rica Poas Volcano



Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort

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**IUSD's Complicated School Bond**



**SCHOOLWATCH**  
by Carolyn Inmon\*

As I reported last month, the Irvine Unified School District (IUSD) is putting an unusual — and unusually complicated — school bond on the June 7th State primary election ballot.

To recap, in an effort to modernize and upgrade a number of schools in Irvine — at a cost of tens of millions of dollars — IUSD has come up with a proposed school bond that is targeted to older neighborhoods with older schools in need of improvements, including investments in new technologies. Unlike a traditional school bond — with its costs and benefits spread across the entire school district — this bond involves creation of a "sub-district," called a School Facilities Improvement District (SFID) that includes only the specific schools and neighborhoods needing help.

To complicate things further, only those residing in the SFID will be voting on the bond issue. According to IUSD, if the measure passes, it will cost the average homeowner an added \$121 to \$203 per year. Excluded from the SFID benefits — and also excluded from voting on the bond issue — are the neighborhoods surrounding the following elementary schools: Alderwood, Cypress Village, Eastwood, Portola Springs, Stonegate, Woodbury, Beacon Park (K-8), Vista Verde (K-8). Also excluded are Jeffrey Trail Middle School and Portola High School.

The Irvine schools and neighborhoods and voters that are in the Tustin Unified School District — Myford Elementary, Peters Canyon Elementary, Orchard Hills Elementary and Middle School, and Beckman High School — will also have no say on the bond issue.

Under State law, for the bond issue to pass, a 55% majority is needed of those voting in the SFID. I told you it's pretty complicated!

**Next time we'll look at the "pros" and "cons" of the bond issue.**

\*Carolyn Inmon is a retired Irvine teacher. She has taught at virtually every grade level from K - 12, and at the community college level.

**Irvine's Booming Adult Sports Leagues**



**SPORTSWATCH**  
by Joel Smith\*

Sports aren't just for kids. Thousands of grown-ups — even seniors — participate in Irvine adult sports leagues. The City offers male, female, and coed leagues for Irvine sports enthusiasts in soccer, softball, basketball and tennis.

Take it from me: Competing in these recreational sports leagues is a great way to connect with friends and co-workers. I have played in many adult sports leagues around town — I'm just blown away by how popular they are. Also, it's amazing how well organized these City leagues are, and how great the fields are. To register, you can go to: [www.cityofirvine.org/athletics-sports](http://www.cityofirvine.org/athletics-sports).

The soccer and softball leagues play at various City venues — Harvard Athletic Park and Heritage Park, just to name two. Basketball leagues play in various high school gyms. You can apply to be in a league as a "free agent" or you can get your own team together. And you can pick a suitable skill level. (Yes, there are plenty of "over-the-hill" or low-skill opportunities.) The price of participation in City recreational leagues is very reasonable — a bargain, really.

Personally, I'll be out at Quail Hill Community Park this month, playing in the spring adult soccer league. Maybe I'll see you out there!

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



The Great Park now offers adult sports leagues at: [www.OCGP.org](http://www.OCGP.org)



**WORDSWATCH**  
by Harris E. Kershner\*

**ICNV vs. City of Irvine**

"To suppress free speech is a double wrong. It violates the rights of the hearer as well as those of the speaker." — Frederick Douglass

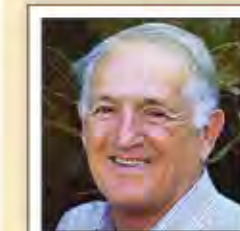
On multiple occasions, *Irvine Community News & Views* has addressed the issue of censorship and suppression of free speech. (See "Does Irvine Have A Censorship Problem?" 10/15; and "Suppression of Free Speech is Wrong." 11/15.) Frank Lunding, the Publisher of this paper has asked, many times, to be allowed to place free copies of *ICNV* on newspaper racks in City Hall, on the same terms as other papers are allowed to distribute their publications.

As noted in this month's quote, it is not only the speaker, but also the listener, whose rights are infringed when free speech is restricted. People who work in City Hall and people who visit City Hall have the right to pick up and read a copy of *ICNV* if they are so inclined.

The City has stubbornly refused to allow free copies of *ICNV* to be placed on newspaper racks in City Hall. To redress this violation of free speech, *Irvine Community News & Views* and Frank Lunding have filed suit in Federal Court to vindicate the newspaper's First Amendment rights. Stay tuned for how the City responds to this issue.

\*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.

**Look What's Back!**



**CULTURECORNER**  
by Steve Layton\*

This month, let's pause to appreciate some airborne long-distance "commuters" that have returned to Irvine — the flocks of migrating birds that winter each year in Irvine's San Joaquin Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary. They join the resident bird populations and human "birders" who visit this amazing wildlife refuge, in the midst of our busy metropolitan community.

Along Campus Drive near Jamboree are 300 acres of coastal freshwater wetland ponds. These ponds are bordered by 12 miles of easily accessible and comfortable trails (no bikes, no dogs), with ample parking and restroom facilities. Maintained by the Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD), these serene wetland ponds serve a vital ecological purpose — catching, holding, and purifying water that flows down the San Diego Creek; then returning the clean water eventually into Upper Newport Bay and the Pacific Ocean.

Open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Sanctuary is free of charge. The trails are outstanding, with benches that offer quiet places to sit and reflect on nature's sights and sounds. Don't be surprised to see some serious "birders" in camouflage, peering through 2-foot lenses mounted on tripods. The Audubon Society reports 200 bird species at the Sanctuary. However, you won't need long lenses to spot Osprey, Herron, Egret and — during the summer — majestic White Pelicans, as well as ducks and other birds.



So wear comfortable shoes, bring binoculars and a camera, and experience some beautiful natural tranquility — right here in Irvine. You may wish to start at the on-site Audubon House, 5 Riparian Way, entering off of Campus Drive (just west of University Drive). For a preview, visit: [www.irwd.com/san-joaquin-marsh](http://www.irwd.com/san-joaquin-marsh).

\*Steve Layton is a semi-retired businessman. He remains very active in the Irvine community as a supporter of the UCI Drama Department.

# Red, Red Wine! Makes me feel so fine!

by Peter Dills

Welcome to my first wine column. I try to keep it simple – Wine 101.

For starters, let's stay in California and open the dark reds as we travel to Paso Robles. Why Paso Robles? Because Paso Robles benefits from the perfect climate for producing award-winning premium wines. Simply stated, Paso Robles is outstanding wine country.

Located in California between Los Angeles and San Francisco, Paso Robles is home to more than 200 wineries, mostly comprised of boutique and small family-owned vineyards. I recently enjoyed the **San Simeon 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon** from the San Antonio Winery. This Paso Robles stand-out is aged for at least 18 months in French oak barrels leading



Peter Dills

to structured tannins, and provides texture and depth with a lengthy, somewhat spicy finish.

**Tannins? The Dills Definition** – Tannin is the textural element that makes the wine taste dry, though I use the word often to describe how it feels on my tongue — dry, sandy, bitter, etc.

Winemaker Anthony Riboli tells me that this wine is one of his favorites when he is relaxing and enjoying dinner with his family. He went on to say, "As a fourth generation winemaker,

I really want every consumer to taste the quality and care that our family imparts into every bottle of San Simeon 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon. From estate vineyards to artisan winemaking, we want the consumer to feel part of our family... to feel special." Thanks Anthony!

### THE DILLS SCORE

Each month I will give you my Dills Score. Starting with a base of 50 points, I have added 8 points for color, 8 points for aroma or "nose," 8 points for taste, 8 points for finish, and 8 points for my overall impression, which includes my value rating.

**Total Score for the San Simeon 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon is 90!**

**Retails for \$26.00. When on sale at Vons and Pavilions - \$20.**

*Peter Dills, proud son of noted restaurant critic Elmer Dills, readily admits to being born into a world of food! Contact him at [www.peterdills.com](http://www.peterdills.com), or on twitter @KINGofCUISINE. Listen to Peter every Sunday at 5 PM on KLAA AM 830.*

# Teen News & Views

by Isabella Villano



Isabella Villano

Hello, Irvine Community! My name is Bella, and I am proud to be joining *Irvine Community News & Views* as a student writer and aspiring journalist.

In this first article, I want to let you know a little about me — and explain my somewhat unconventional educational path. From the time I was in the 8th grade until my 10th grade year in 2014, I had the opportunity to volunteer at two laboratories at UC Irvine. In order to dedicate more time to this kind of work, I decided to enroll in IUSD's outstanding Independent Study Program.

Independent Study is different from Home Schooling. Students complete online courses and textbook-based activities in order to earn high school credits. Although we are not required to be on campus every day, weekly class meetings are held to ensure that we are successfully grasping the content of our course work. Like all IUSD students, individuals in my Independent Study Program take standardized tests, apply to colleges, and receive regular high school diplomas. But the freedom and flexibility of the program has allowed me to dedicate more time to extracurricular activities and take on real jobs and internships.

Over the last few years, I have had opportunities to get involved in civic affairs — attending City Council meetings, volunteering in local political campaigns, and now joining in voter registration efforts in this important election year. At my school, I am president of a club focused on politics and history.

Through my writing, I hope to provide *ICNV* readers — whatever your age — with a better understanding of how teens and young adults view our Irvine community and the world in which we live.

**IT'S 2016,  
AN IMPORTANT  
ELECTION YEAR.**

**Irvine Community News & Views is proud to join the State of California, the City of Irvine, UC Irvine, and other major institutions in urging citizens to REGISTER TO VOTE.**

**You can now register online in a matter of minutes!**

<http://registertovote.ca.gov>

**Register to Vote Today!**

# TestForToxics.org

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

Welcome! You can read periodic updates on my blog at my new website, [TestForToxics.org](http://TestForToxics.org). I hope you will subscribe, if you aren't already a subscriber. And I give my hearty thanks to the *ICNV* for printing my blog in this space, monthly.

In brief, the under-construction Portola High School is on a site where large quantities of soil contaminated with naphthalene and other petrochemicals have been accidentally found and removed. Carcinogenic (cancer-causing) benzene and many other toxic petrochemicals have also been detected in soil-gas test wells at the perimeter of the school site.

**Unfortunately, there has been vast dissemination of misinformation for unknown reasons leading to the widespread misunderstanding that the school site has been fully tested and declared safe.**

For example, we recently heard the following tragically misinformed, false statement from Irvine Councilmember Jeff Lalloway, who bellowed at the January 26th City Council meeting: "Every single expert that we've heard from has told us that this school site is safe."



Toxic contamination was discovered while constructing this storm drain at the Portola High School site in November of 2014.

The truth is that the 35-acre interior of the school site has *never* been tested for toxic and carcinogenic petrochemicals, and, as far as I know, there is no "expert" on record who has declared the site "safe" for children. In fact, the safety of the school site is *unknown*. Only the results of proper testing of the *entire interior* of the school site can determine whether or not the school site is safe.

[See map at bottom, right.]

The plain truth is that experts have stated that the site demands further testing to draw any conclusions. For example:

■ The City's own environmental consultant, David Richter, after evaluating the discovery of the massive contamination at the school site, along Irvine Boulevard, expressed his alarm in a report to the City on November 13, 2014, that the discovery was "unanticipated" — it was a "changed condition" that he expected would trigger State officials to immediately decertify the site, and commence comprehensive testing. Richter's report was ignored.

■ Environmental engineering Professor Yoram Rubin of UC Berkeley, in an interview with the *OC Register*, published on May 3, 2014, stated, "They don't have enough information to make any determination about the level of risk. There's a need for more extensive site investigation."

■ In an *ICNV* article published on July 1, 2015, Ralph (Ray) Catalano, Professor of Public Health at UC Berkeley, and former member of the Irvine City Council, observed: "Under the circumstances, it would be dangerous and irresponsible for the School District to go forward without immediately undertaking comprehensive soil and soil-gas testing of the Portola High School site, using agreed upon test protocols. He added, "In light of the risks, it's the obvious and prudent thing to do."

**For references and documentary materials, go to:  
[TestForToxics.org](http://TestForToxics.org)**

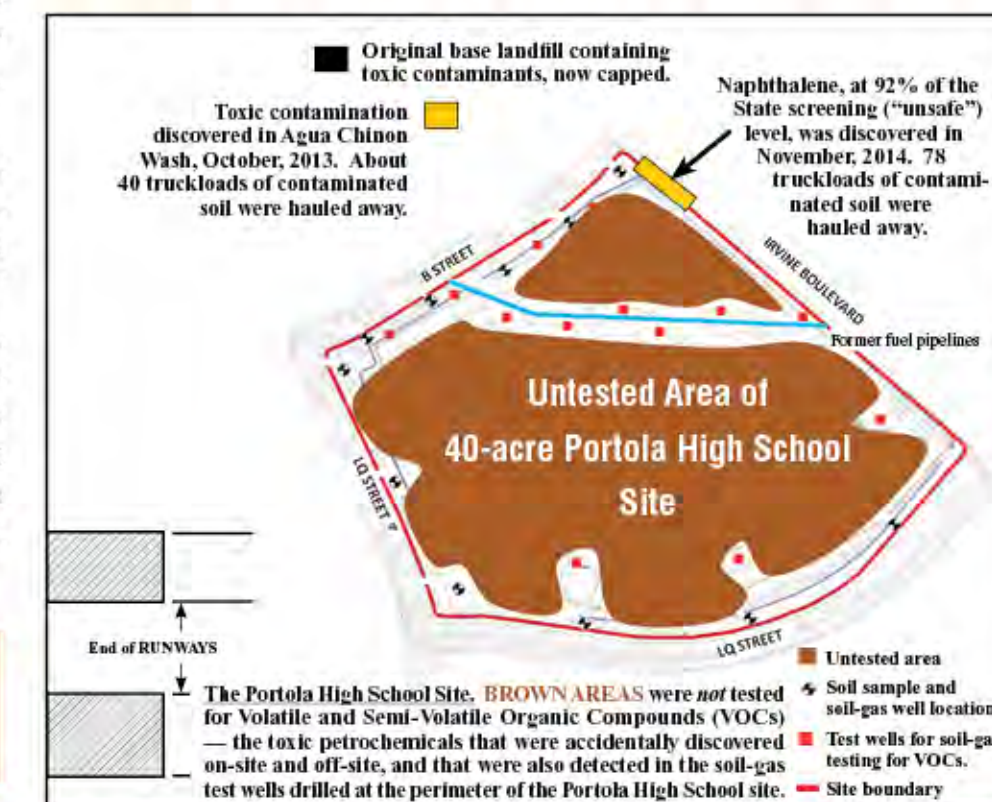
# A CALL TO TEST FOR TOXICS

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 and carcinogenic petrochemicals, including but not limited to: benzene, toluene, xylenes, trimethylbenzene, 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, below.]
- **Fact No. 3.** While the interior of the school site has been tested for agricultural pesticides, it has *not* been tested for the toxic and carcinogenic petrochemicals that were found 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 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 toxic and carcinogenic petrochemical contaminants. The legal, financial and moral liability of such a catastrophic scenario is incalculable.



# OPEN FORUM *FREE SPEECH FOREVER!*



## Listening to More Community Voices

Dear Readers:

As publisher and editor of Irvine Community News & Views, I have the opportunity to read each and every email, letter, and written comment we receive — and there are hundreds of them! I also have the opportunity to then share some of these comments and insights with the rest of the Irvine community.

So, welcome once again to our Open Forum/Community Voices pages — this is the venue we've created for you and your neighbors to contribute to the dialogue on matters of community interest and community concern.

Page 14 is just a small sample of the growing community anxiety and outrage expressed by Irvine residents regarding the petrochemical contamination already discovered in large quantities at Portola High School. What can you say about the foolish and dangerous refusal of the School Board and the City Council to order that the entire interior of the site be tested immediately for the same toxic and carcinogenic (cancer-causing) petrochemicals discovered along the lengthy perimeter of the Portola High School site?

Page 15 is yes more communication about traffic. We are becoming a City obsessed and overwhelmed by traffic. Whether told in words, or cartoons, or photo collages, the sentiment expressed is the same: *Do something to fix it!* — FJL

## Toxics

■ To build a high school where known carcinogens and jet fuel were dumped and NOT test is criminal.

—Penny Pawley

■ There should be criminal liability if even one child suffers from this.

—Sam Pawley

■ Keep our kids safe!

—Jennifer Assouad

■ Schools need to be safe — and free of toxins affecting our children and community. If what happened at Porter Ranch with the methane gas leak hasn't opened people's eyes, then I don't know what will.

—Loretta Khorey

■ I am 88 years old, but I'm concerned about the future health of the younger generation.

—Richard Goldstein

■ My child would go to Portola High School. Let's learn the lesson of Flint, Michigan before it's too late and a child or a teacher is actually harmed from toxic chemical exposure.

—Kerri Strunk

■ How deplorable that this testing has not been done. I have a friend right now with leukemia, and five of her fellow teachers also have some form of cancer. They all taught in the same pod at an elementary school in San Bernardino County. Also, with what has happened at Porter Ranch, filling the air with toxic contamination and displacing homeowners...do we want this in our community?

—Karen Nelson

■ This is one of the most incredible, dishonest and damaging situations I can imagine for our students and the staff at this school site. How this could happen defies logic. The ultimate result of this remains to be seen, but I fully expect lawsuits in the future. Probably lots of them. According to many experts, we are most likely looking at long-term health problems for any number of individuals.

—Shirley Lorenz

■ Whatever is wrong with the soil [at the Portola High School site] and/or the surrounding area, should be everyone's concern. Let's not make the mistake of overlooking potential problems.

—Pamela Mammen

■ I have driven Irvine Boulevard to go to and from work for years. There is a stretch that ALWAYS has an acrid, chemical smell, that is so strong my head turns and I can barely catch my breath. It starts right where the new Portola High School is being built. I drove it again this evening with three kids under 10 years old. All of them yelled about the smell, unprompted, and they still had the smell/taste in their mouth over an hour later. I did too. I am not a conspiracy theorist, but this is obviously a spill or leak of some sort — it's just too strong. I suggest all the Councilmembers, Mayor, state district representatives, and our Governor stand out there for two minutes and tell me that smell doesn't scare the crap out of you. Get that area tested and cleaned up before something major happens to our kids and the community.

—James Nickelson

■ As an educated parent, I am disgusted by the lack of attention IUSD has given the real exposure risk to our children.

—Robert Blumenfeld



"OMG! We wouldn't have to wear these suits if they just tested the place!"



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.

## Traffic, Growth and Development

■ We have lived in Irvine for more than 20 years, and we are disgusted with the current leadership and composition of the Irvine City Council. What ever happened to the Master Plan that we are supposedly celebrating in Irvine's 45th year?

—Sharon Nantell

■ What Irvine is doing at this point is stupid. We are already extremely over-populated. Stop overpopulating a place that is already overpopulated. I'm all about other people. I'm a people person, but when it takes four times longer to get home from work because of Irvine's traffic, there's definitely an issue.

—Jon Grahi

■ Irvine's traffic is fine! It may get slightly worse, but it still is much better than many other cities around, and you cannot assume that Irvine is going to be traffic free! We do live in the L.A. area, not the middle of nowhere. I think Mayor Choi and the City Council are doing their best.

—Anthony Fitzgerald

■ In the four years that we have lived here, we have been disgusted with how bad the traffic has gotten. We loved Irvine when we first moved here, and now it's to the point where we don't want to leave the house. We hate having to deal with the traffic.

—Robin Fay

■ The Council is working for developer FivePoint Communities, and that means overbuilding and overdeveloping. The increased traffic is but one of the consequences; the other is the quality of life in Irvine as overcrowding becomes the norm.

—Aris Papayanou

■ Having lived in Newport Beach, we had a planning tool called "Green Light" to fight this insane growth and traffic. I know it can be done. There has to be a vote of the people every time a project will have major traffic impact. We successfully fought the Irvine Company using this tool.

—Carolyn L. Carr

■ My once serene home by Hicks Canyon is now inundated with traffic, and now they're building above Portola Blvd. also. I take Culver to the 405 to go to work, and it's often backed up for two or three lights in the right lane to get onto the 405 freeway going north. So much for the serene neighborhood I thought I was moving into in 1979.

—Linda Cauble

■ Not only is traffic in Irvine terrible, but the overall services provided by the City have been in decline for the last few years. The City Council has contributed to this steady decline by systematically refusing to follow any plan resembling the City's original plans for growth.

—Craig Norris

■ Trucks loaded with building materials are on the streets during rush hours in the morning. I know they have to deliver materials to building sites, but they are slow, which causes traffic to back up. It takes a longer time to go to work now; moreover, it's dangerous when many drivers speed up to pass these trucks, or change lanes recklessly. Traffic is just terrible now in Irvine! Please do something!

—Lisa Chow



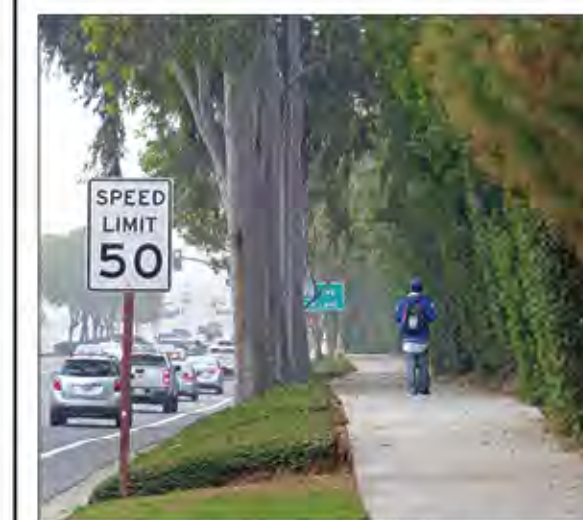
## The Alton/Jeffrey Traffic Mess



The peak morning and afternoon rush hours are especially bad at the center-city intersection of Alton Parkway and Jeffrey Road, adjacent to the southeast quadrant of Woodbridge Village.



Alton, once a lightly traveled road, is now crowded with tens of thousands of cars daily, affecting the quality of life in Woodbridge.



This beautiful Woodbridge Village edge — along Jeffrey, between Alton and the I-405 — will be replaced with two added traffic lanes if the City Council approves this recommended "mitigation" measure to cope with thousands of additional cars and trucks.

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.



**Why does the Irvine Unified School District absolutely refuse to comprehensively test the entire, under-construction Portola High School site for those toxic and carcinogenic petrochemicals accidentally found in massive quantities on the site?**

**Has the site really always been “just a farm,” as they say?**

*See page 13, inside. Also, visit and subscribe to:*

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