

Hot Topics in San Clemente

Dead Beached Whale

An adult gray whale washed ashore last Sunday at Lower Trestles at San Onofre State Beach. The 40-foot, 60,000 pound whale was dead before it washed ashore according to scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Scientists collected samples to determine how the whale died. A second gray whale died in the ocean and was observed from the San Clemente Pier. The intestines from this whale washed ashore in San Clemente Sunday evening and were buried by the City's Beach Maintenance staff on the beach that same evening. Whale entrails were also buried by state park staff at the state beach.

Many people shared their opinions on social media on what should or should not be done with the whale entrails. Statements about the oils from the whale blubber would seep from the sand into the water and attract sharks. It is important to point out that there is no verifiable scientific evidence or physical pictures connecting increased sharks to the statewide standard "burial in place" practice when sea mammals wash ashore. For those whose concerns are not relieved by this fact, no whale blubber or actual whale carcass was buried on the San Clemente beach, yet only the whale intestines.

The City's beach maintenance staff has always buried dead seals and sea lions or other large fish without any issues. This is common practice up and down the coast. In fact, burial in place is one of the three management accepted practices for dead animals on the beach. The others include towing out to sea, or a land based removal via trucks, which is being done with the dead beached whale at Trestles. It is an expensive process and the state has contracted with an independent company experienced at dissecting whales and hauling them to landfills to handle the disposition of this gray whale. So, the City of San Clemente's practices are in line with those of the State of California and other beach cities, such as Huntington Beach, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles County, and more.

Sober Living Homes

Cities throughout South Orange County continue to collaborate on how to handle the flood of sober-living homes in residential neighborhoods. San Clemente currently has a temporary moratorium on new group homes, though this expires on July 7th. This was necessary due to the rise in resident complaints about some homes whose clients were not abiding by good neighbor laws and threatening their quality of life and character of their neighborhoods.

A bit of history on the origins of sober living homes and their growth. They grew as Alcoholics Anonymous expanded and also in response to the state's elimination of beds for treatment/rehabilitation. Starting in 1970, recovering people in California joined to create places to support recovery in each community, operating according to AA principles, as it is believed that people recovering from drug or alcohol addiction do best when in a community setting.

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We have become more informed about residential treatment and sober living facilities in San Clemente due to the rapid growth of such homes here. We have all become educated on the Federal Housing Act and American for Disabilities protections of group homes. Though most group homes are positively serving their clients, we have gotten a taste of the “bad actors” that have opened shop and do not necessarily abide by good neighbor laws, nor positive recovery efforts. Instead, some recovery businesses have put profits over client’s well-being. In these high risk environments, we have seen people relapse and even worse, they overdose.

Often I am asked why we as the City are not doing more to respond to the problems. First and foremost, we must follow the law and the solution to the issues we have encountered is to change the law. I do believe the City has been very responsive to residents’ complaints of code violations, and your City Council has supported every bill that has been proposed to modify law as it relates to sober living homes and residential treatment facilities in local neighborhoods. Change is needed for the sake of the patients and residents who share neighborhoods with sober living homes.

Most recently, your City Council approved letters of support at their April 19th City Council meeting for Assembly Bill (AB) 2772 and Senate Bill 1283. Both of these bills were defeated in the state legislature. However, on May 3rd City Council will consider supporting AB 2255 and AB 2403 as they relate to group homes. Learn more about these bills and the City support letters, by visiting www.san-clemente.org and click on Agenda Reports. I also participated in the Sober Living Forum in Irvine that drew elected officials, city managers and code compliance professionals from all over Orange County. In fact, there is a public town hall meeting on this subject that will be held in Laguna Hills, and I encourage you to attend. It will be held on Thursday, May 12th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Laguna Hills Community Center at 25555 Alicia Parkway, Laguna Hills. The event is called “Sober-Living Homes in Orange County” and will offer a discussion about laws governing residential recovery facilities and sober living homes, federal and state fair housing and disability laws, recent litigation involving cities, options for regulating residential recovery facilities and sober living homes, and more.

Quieting the Train Noise

Construction of safety improvements at all train crossings in Orange County took place three years ago, which included the 9 crossings in San Clemente. The program was funded 88% by Orange County Transportation Authority and cities paying 12%. The Audible Warning System (AWS) was a significant part of the crossing safety upgrades, which after appealing to the Federal Railroad Administration for a waiver, can finally be used at the pedestrian crossings along the Coastal Trail. In 2005 the FRA issued laws governing the use of train horns at grade crossings nationwide, which included implementing various safety measures and warning signals which no longer required trains to sound their horns, thus establishing what is known as a Quiet Zone. But, this FRA rule only applied to vehicular crossings. Though the City was able to obtain Quiet Zone status at North Beach due the nature of its vehicular crossings here, all other crossings in town are pedestrian only and remained subject to trains having to sound their horns when approaching each crossing.

The FRA’s waiver required the City to install just over 2,000 feet of fencing as a condition of the train horn waiver before it can activate the AWS to quiet the train horns. This construction was completed yesterday. There are a few more steps the City must take before the train horn waiver can become effective. The plan is to complete all actions so that routine sounding of train horns will stop by the Memorial Day weekend. It’s been a long road, but the City will finally reach its ultimate goal and promise to the community to enhance rail safety and reduce sound impacts for all residents and visitors. Stay tuned for an announcement of a ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate this milestone!

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Operation Lifesaver Rail Safety Campaign

The City of San Clemente joined forces with Operation Lifesaver on a rail safety national public awareness campaign just in time for the busy summer months to work together to change people's behavior around railroad tracks and crossings. At the last City Council meeting Sara Logan with Operation Lifesaver provided an informative presentation which can be found on the City's website at www.san-clemente.org. The "See Tracks! Think Train!" slogan appears on newly installed banners you will see in the highly populated Pier Bowl/Pier and North Beach/Metrolink areas.

Although passive signs and active traffic control devices are installed along the train tracks and at-grade crossings, it is important to continue driving home the message that pedestrians and motorists need to maintain constant awareness of the trains. This is especially true now with the impending use of the Audible Warning System. In exchange for modifying the audible warning, our community has a renewed responsibility for using the crossings as provided. The City will work with our partners, Orange County Transportation Authority and Operation Lifesaver to do our part to prepare our community for the changes the waiver anticipates relative to eliminating random crossing at unmarked areas along the rail right of way. We need to avoid trespassing on tracks, which results in serious consequences, or the quiet enjoyment from no train horns that we will soon experience, can easily be revoked. Please remember that even if you think it is ok to cross the train tracks if a train is not coming, think again. The only safe place to cross tracks is at a designated crossing and to do otherwise is plain dangerous.

If you have any questions about these topics or others, please call Veronica Ferencz at (949) 361-8322 and she can set up a time for us to meet or talk over the phone.

James



Meet the Mayor– Saturday, April 30th 8:30-10:00 a.m.

Join Mayor Bob Baker as he hosts his second 'Meet the Mayor' event on Saturday, April 30th at the **Panera Bread** in the **Talega Village Center** from 8:30to 10:00 a.m. This is a great opportunity to meet Mayor Bob Baker ask questions and share your concerns. Mayor Baker will be joined by Community Development Director Cecilia Gallardo-Daly.

'Meet the Mayor 'is provided as an extension of Mayor's Hours offered at City Hall on Monday afternoons for those unable to make it to City Hall during the work day and school day.

Ole Hanson Beach Club Rehabilitation

February-April 2016



Pictures were taken from April 4, 2016—April 22, 2016

Roof tiles installed.



Stucco siding installed and painted.



Drywall installed and painted.



Elevator installation underway.



Ole Hanson Beach Club Rehabilitation

February-April 2016



New pool deck poured.



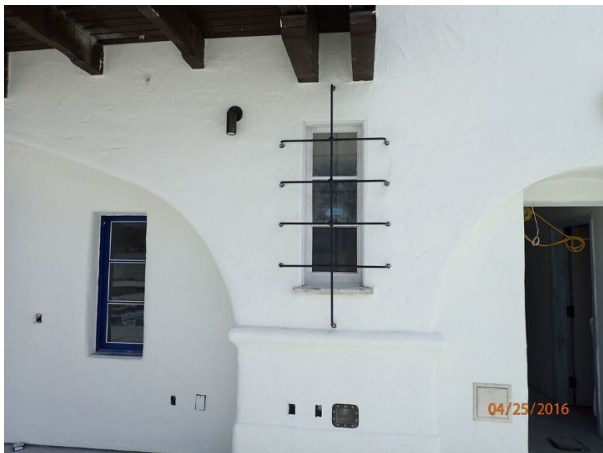
Preparations for deck tile underway.



Preparations for restroom tile underway.



Installation of exterior architectural features underway.



24 Hour Graffiti Hot Line-When You See It, Report It

The City of San Clemente funds a graffiti-removal program for public property and the public right-of-way; however, this program would not be successful without the public stepping up to report graffiti when they first see it. Citizens and volunteers should report graffiti incidents using the City’s 24-hour graffiti-removal hotline. A community commitment to no tolerance for the crime of graffiti vandalism is one way to maintain our beautiful town. If we don’t remove graffiti, then our property values decline, business is driven away, and we send a message that nobody cares about the community. Removing graffiti tells the vandals that people care about the community and that their work has little chance of being seen. Call 24-hour Graffiti Removal Hotline: (949) 361-8385.

Planning Award

April 21st the City in partnership with non-profit developer National CORE was awarded the 2016 ‘Small Development’ recognition for the new Las Palmas Village apartment community in Sa Clemente. The annual Affordable housing Award breakfast celebrates affordable home accomplishments for very low-income families living in Orange County. The event was hosted by the Kennedy Commission and the Affordable Housing Clearinghouse in Orange. Las Palmas Village provides 19 units of workforce housing for San Clemente residents and is conveniently located within walking distance from San Clemente’s historic downtown area.



Events in May

May 1st	Cinco de Mayo	12:00 p.m.	Max Berg Plaza Park 12 pm
May 20th	Student Beach Concert	6:00 p.m.	North side of San Clemente Pier
May 30th	Memorial Day	11:00 a.m.	Community Center -11:00 a.m
May 30th	Memorial Day Remembrance	2:00 p.m.	Park Semper Fi

Upcoming Meetings

May 3rd	City Council Meeting	6:00 pm-City Hall-Council Chambers
May 4th	Planning Commission Meeting	6:00 pm-City Hall –Council Chambers
May 10th	Beaches, Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting	6:00 pm-City Hall-Council Chambers
May 12th	Coastal Advisory Committee Meeting	7:00 pm-Community Center
May 17th	Special Presentation of City Budget To City Council	5:30 pm-City Hall-Council Chambers
May 17th	City Council Meeting	6:00 pm-City Hall-Council Chambers
May 18th	Planning Commission Meeting	6:00 pm-City Hall-Council chambers
May 24th	Budget Workshop /Public Hearing	4:00 pm-City Hall-Council Chambers

Visit www.san-clemente.org to view agendas for meetings



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