

Manhattan Beach Sun

The Weekly Newspaper of Manhattan Beach

Herald Publications - El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Hawthorne, Lawndale, & Inglewood Community Newspapers Since 1911 - (310) 322-1830 - Vol. 2, No. 36 - September 03, 2009

Inside This Issue

Business &

Professional.....21

Business.....5

Calendar.....2

Classifieds.....19

Crossword.....19

Dear Carol.....7

Frankly Plank.....6

Pets.....23

Real Estate.....9

Sports.....6

Weekend Weather Forecast

Friday

Sunny

82°



Saturday

Sunny

78°



Sunday

Mostly Sunny

72°



A Whale of a Shot



Photo by Cody Martin. Cody is a Middle School student who has been photographing whales and dolphins for three years. He received his first digital still camera as a reward for making honor roll three straight trimesters. He has entered his photos into the biennial American Cetacean Society photo contest, winning second place on his first try and first place the next time.

Council Votes for Utility Rate Increases

By Evan Ortega

Residents will be paying higher utility bills for the next five years beginning January, after the Manhattan Beach City Council voted unanimously Tuesday to increase rates to maintain and replace the city's aging infrastructure. Sewer rates will double for most households, and vary slightly depending on the size of a household's meter, with most households paying an extra \$5 to \$6.50 a month for their sewer bill. Water rates will increase by several dollars a month, about 30 percent a year for the next three years, before dropping to increases of 12.5 and 7.5 in the last two years.

If water usage declines by 10 percent, utility costs would rise at a slower rate for the first several years. "We created the structure to control that and have given people the ability to control it," said consultant Ed Cebon, who was hired by the City to help determine utility rates.

Public Works Director Jim Arndt explained the rate increases are needed in order to cover basic costs of repairing or replacing broken water and sewer pipes, and because of a 20 percent increase in wholesale water prices which began Tuesday. He said the City is moving toward a tiered rate system where households who use more water will pay more. "Folks have the control of how much they use and consequently how much this rate increase will affect them," Arndt said. "This is a real change and as you remember, your environmental task force made that recommendation for promoting conservation."

Arndt gave an overview of the city's infrastructure problems, explaining that areas like the Sand Section suffer from reduced water flows, which can be particularly problematic in emergencies. He said much of the city's water flows through unlined cast iron pipes installed in the 1950s which soon became obsolete just a decade later. "The combination of the size, the age and the type of material

causes us a problem," Arndt said.

Arndt told the Council that much of the sewer system consists of clay pipe constructed in the 1920s. Because the material is clay, the sewer problems are more related to structure and support of the pipes rather than corrosion, he said.

Councilmember Mitch Ward reported that the City has spent a lot of time dealing with aging infrastructure, including police and fire facilities. "Now we are focusing on the things we can't see, but we know that they've been there and we know that they're going to be substantially expensive to address," he said. "I think this is an appropriate step to try to

address that problem based on the water use by each individual resident."

The City will mail a notice of rate increases to each ratepayer and will hold a public meeting at the October 6 Council meeting.

El Porto Traffic

City traffic engineer Erik Zandvliet gave a presentation to the Council regarding possible vehicle traffic access and parking alternatives for the county's El Porto Beach Parking Lot. Zandvliet presented five options that would alleviate traffic problems on some streets while possibly causing problems on

See City Council, page 21

Stay-at-Home Moms Join Together for Friendship, Networking

By Evan Ortega

Shortly after Michelle Llorin gave birth to her 16-month-old daughter Isabella, she went back to work doing public relations for Mattel, oftentimes flying to New York for business. After enrolling her daughter in a daycare program, she spent the next several months trying to adjust her lifestyle as a working professional while also being a mother. "When I had my first baby, something changed and I just felt that I wanted to be with my baby all the time," Llorin said. "I found myself constantly thinking about the child."

Llorin and her husband Dylan looked at their finances to see what they would have to change in order for her to take care of their baby at home full-time. One of the biggest sacrifices the couple

made was to hold off on buying a new home. "We decided to put that on hold," Llorin said. "But I wouldn't change my decision, I mean this is the best decision I made for the family."

After training somebody to take her place at work and bidding farewell to her colleagues, Llorin settled into her new life, which became a little lonely. "It was really hard for me because I felt isolated and alone," she said. "I've been working all my life. I didn't know any other moms with babies that stayed home--not a single person."

On trips to the park with her daughter, Llorin would see other moms with kids who seemed to be in the same predicament. While her daughter took

See Moms, page 8