

City Council

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how the money ended up being spent. "Just so there's transparency, so members of the public can see how it's spent," Powell said. "I was told never to write a blank check."

Councilmember Tell said that he was fine with the money going into the District's general fund and that he trusted the District to spend it responsibly. "The second account thing really irks me," Tell admitted and said he thought it was courageous for the District to ask for the \$1.3 million.

Resident Paul Gross said he wanted the Council to change its budget process to handle such transactions. "I support where you're going tonight, but what you're doing is an extraordinary move and has an extraordinary impact on the budget," he said. "I don't think this is a one year thing-- last year wasn't a one year thing."

Mayor Cohen said the Council would devise a sustainable long-term plan and was committed to its partnership with the District. "I'm confident we're going to come up with something that's mutually beneficial, reliable and sustainable," she said. "We're going to have to rethink every aspect of our educational delivery system and how we do it. We are going to make the best of this situation."

Public Vocal About North Manhattan Traffic Issues

Dozens of residents also came to the meeting to discuss traffic mitigation measures for North Manhattan, formerly known as El Porto. City Traffic Engineer Erik Zandvliet presented research and survey data regarding North Manhattan's neighborhood traffic problems, which generally involves beach traffic on weekends and holidays, and drivers attempting to circumvent Highland Avenue

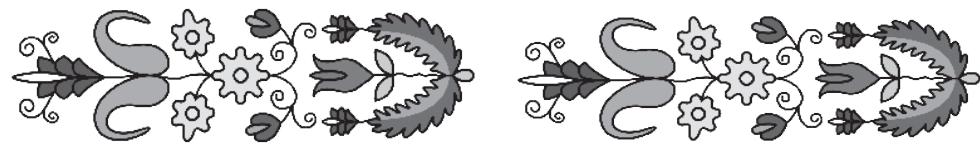
during rush hour.

Residents at times had different and opposing concerns regarding the traffic, in many cases depending on the streets on which they live. Throughout the deliberations, members of the public would call out from their seats to Council members or Zandvliet. After lengthy discussion with Zandvliet and public comments from dozens of residents, the Council ultimately decided to maintain the status quo regarding street and parking lot configurations in the neighborhood, with some slight adjustments.

The Council voted to approve a variety of traffic mitigation measures proposed by the Parking and Public Improvements Commission, including increased traffic enforcement, the installation of high-reflexivity speed limit signs, and the installation of stop signs on the fourth eastbound legs of the intersections at Ocean Dr. and 38th Street, 39th Street, 41st Street, 43rd Street, 44th Street and Rosecrans Avenue. The Council also instructed Zandvliet to look into making signage more readable and aesthetically pleasing.

AVP Gets Permit for MB Open in July

Council members unanimously approved granting a coastal development permit to the Association of Volleyball Professionals (AVP) to hold the 2009 Manhattan Beach Open on July 16-17. Under an agreement to be signed by the City with the AVP, 75 percent of all seating at the tournament will be free, while the size and scope of last year's tournament would remain the same. The Council also instructed staff to look into the possibility of raising additional revenue by selling naming rights of the tournament to interested corporations. •



The Maestro and Leaky Lopez

ADVENTURES AND MISADVENTURES OF BUILDING A RESIDENCIA IN BAJA

Local author Robert Parucha chronicles his humorous experience building his family's dream home south of the border.

Bob Parucha has spent the last several years traveling to Ensenada Mexico to help oversee production in an apparel factory. During his travels he becomes enamored with the rustic beauty of this part of the world known as the Mexican Outback. Empty beaches, awesome sunsets, head high surf – it is all available and Bob starts to daydream about building an ocean front home for his family.

The equation adds up, in his head at least. The land is affordable, building costs are one third of what they are in the states, and after careful investigation Bob concludes that a dream home in this beautiful environment is achievable. With the blessing of his wife whose only request is that he provide her with an ocean-view bath tub, Bob forges ahead with the project. Fortunately he meets Frank Binek, a fellow Christian who is in the throes of building his own residence in Baja.

Bob hires Frank's contractor, Arturo, aka "The Maestro" to plan and build the home

in Punta Piedra, a planned community about 50 miles south of the border. It takes over two years to build the *residencia* and in the process, Bob is forced to adjust to the attitude of *manana*, patiently enduring all of the surprises and pitfalls that come with building in a foreign country. Add to the mix an electrician named "Leaky Lopez" who also becomes the plumber and the laughs just keep coming.

Against all odds and in spite of the Maestro, Leaky and Bob, the *residencia* is completed and the new Baja home is "ridiculous" as his 17 year old son can attest. The Maestro and Leaky Lopez is 160 pages in length and chalk full of good humor and information.

About the Author

Robert Parucha received his Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Masters degree in Religious Studies from UC Santa Barbara. Robert also played Matt Miller on The Young and the Restless from 1985-1987. He resides in Manhattan Beach, California with his wife Jenny. They have three children; Trevor and Katie who attend college, and Robert who attends Mira Costa High School. •

Lakers

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tackles, and would be expected to protect the backside of Ram QB Marc Tinman Bulger. But if Bulger is back as the QB, does it really matter who the surrounding cast is? And did you see that the Rams have recently canned a couple of former Pro Bowlers--tackle Orlando Pace and receiver Torry Holt? As I always say, if your team is going to stink, it's better to stink with young wannabes than over-the-hill vets.

And to you Raider supporters, your fine team coached by the nondescript Cable Guy is set to make the seventh selection in the draft. Unfortunately, the Raiders can't draft a new owner or coach, so they will actually have to select a player. Offensive tackle Jason Smith from Virginia seems to be a player on the Pride and Poise radar. Someone has to protect underachieving QB JaMarcus Russell's big butt next season. •

Frankly

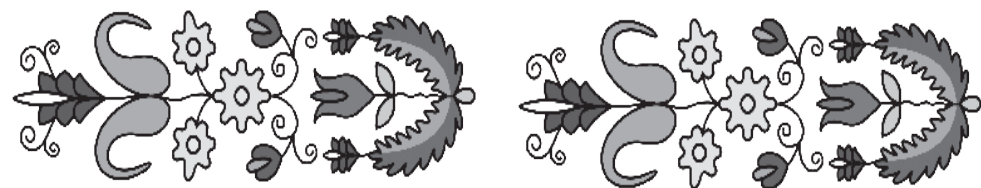
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Mariners. The loss wasn't that unexpected; the Angels are in a wheel-spinning funk at the beginning of the season. After posting the best record in MLB in the spring, the Halos can't seem to get the big hit when needed or a shutdown relief effort when the game is on the line.

No, the sad part of the deal was the way the game unfolded. Rubber-armed reliever Scot Shields, a true Angel, who has shown definite signs of slippage in the last year, was brought on in relief in the 2-2 contest. Shields allowed a leadoff double to Frankie

Gutierrez, and then threw away a sacrifice bunt, allowing the winning run to score. Game over.

As Angel fans watching on TV presumably TV cursed at Shields, the camera caught the beleaguered righty exiting the dugout, heading to the clubhouse. And what did the camera eye catch? A water cooler-busting tantrum? Nope. It caught Shields quietly picking up the jersey of fallen Angel Nick Adenhardt, which was hanging in the dugout, and heading to the solace of the clubhouse. Now that was touching. And sad. Just a game, folks.



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