



an insider look at city hall

# CITYWATCH

citywide edition

April 20, 2006  
Volume 4 Issue 14

**CityWatch Today**—This is a good news/bad news issue. Neighborhood Councils ... in particular, members of the NC Congress ... are feeling better after the DONE reversed its course on their right to sit at the June 17 Congress of Neighborhoods table.

On the other hand, a gang of doubts and concerns linger. We offer a couple of examples on the cover page and Page 3 ("Insight").

And, it's a busy issue. There is much going on in the grassroots world: NCs represented on the 912 Commission, the Council File # Issue picking up momentum, NCs are on the clock for weighing in on the DWP water rate increase, billions of dollars proposed for

paving LA's streets ... and more.



We hope you find it helpful.

--Editor

## Say What?

*"Our lives begin*

*to end*

*the day we become*

*silent*

*about things*

*that matter."*

--Martin Luther King



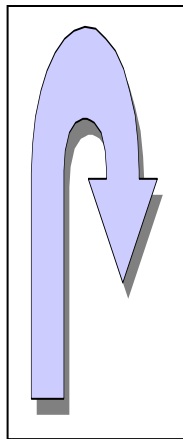
### CityWatch Special Report

## DONE Does U-Turn. Agrees to Full LANCC Participation in June Forum

*Asst DONE GM: 'Problem was just a misunderstanding'*

By David Lowell

The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment reversed itself today and restored all of the pieces to the LA NC Congress participation in the June 17 Congress of Neighborhoods. The reason for the glitch, says DONE Assistant GM, Lisa Sarno, was some miscommunication.



For those of you who stepped out of the room for a bit, here's some back story. The DONE scheduled the next Congress of Neighborhoods for June 17. The NC Congress (LANCC) asked to participate again, as it had last year. General Manager Greg Nelson gave the OK. A LANCC representative participated in the planning sessions for the June event.

**Updated Story**

Now comes the resignation of Mr. Nelson followed instantly by more active participation in the DONE decision-making by Deputy Mayor, Larry Frank. The LANCC representative calls to reconfirm participation in the June event and is told his name is no longer on the welcome list. Discussion ensues. Mr. Frank agrees to a room but none of the other usual courtesies that accompany participation, like being mentioned in the program so attendees might find their way to their room.

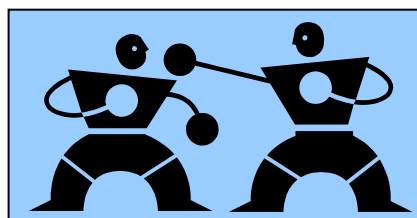
See Page 12. "DONE Does U-Turn"

### Perspective

## NCs v. Mayor's Office: Issues Remain Unresolved Leaving Some NCs Uneasy

By Ken Draper

The issues between the Mayor's office and the NC Congress appear to be resolved. The issues between the Mayor's office and Neighborhood Councils are not.



of NCs find it unsettling.

We'll take our good news any way we can get it. The handshake between the DONE and the NC Congress is good news. But, it may be the tip of the iceberg. The policy gap between at least the Mayor's Lieutenants ... if not the Mayor ... and Neighborhood Councils remains considerable. A growing number

See Page 12. "Perspective"

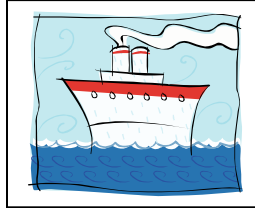
## CityWatch Op & Ed

### ViewPoint

## It's Full Speed Ahead on LANCC Participation at the June Congress

By Brady Westwater

**DONE** agreed today that the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Congress will not only have a room at the DONE-organized June 17 Congress of Neighborhoods, but that the LANCC will also be listed in the program, will be included in the pre-registration materials and will be represented at the hospitality table in front of the main meeting room. In addition, if there is space in the City Departments and Trades Showroom, there will also be a table reserved for LANCC.



This was all quickly agreed to once it was understood by both parties exactly how the formative LANCC had participated in last year's DONE Congress and how LANCC had been led to believe it would participate in this year's DONE Congress. Before this, there had been some

confusion and misunderstandings, both within DONE and between DONE and the LANCC group. The result of miscommunication, DONE says, that has now been resolved.

See Page 10. "Full Speed Ahead"

### Opinion

## Has the Mayor's Takeover of DONE Violated the City Charter?

Two significant things came out of the new City Charter in 1999: **The Neighborhood Council system and a transfer of power to the Mayor.** Now, in effect, the Mayor gets to run the city and the City Council gets to set policy. The question is whether there are any limits to that power. In the case of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, at least for the moment, there may be.

Neighborhood Councils were created, the Charter tells us, to "...make government more responsive to local needs ... and to monitor the delivery of city services." The DONE's job is to support that effort. So you can see the dilemma when a mayor who sees city departments as his Charter-approved domain comes face to face with Neighborhood Councils whose Charter mandate is to hold government accountable and to monitor his departments.



This Mayor's answer to this fork in the road, it would appear, is the virtual takeover of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, leaving the current General Manager with no voice and the Interim General Manager saying that she does not "have the authority" to make a decision as simple as whether a coalition of NCs can have their name on the program or a seat at a hospitality table at the upcoming Congress of Neighborhoods.

See Page 11. "Mayor's Takeover of DONE"

## CITYWATCH

The E-Newsletter for LA's NC's

April 17, 2006  
Volume 4 Issue 14

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## CityWatch Op & Ed-2

### CounterPoint

## Former Encino Officers Tell the Truth

By Barbara Hand

We appreciate the opportunity to address the inaccuracies in a recent CityWatch article "Encino NC Officers Resign After Failed Attempt to Remove a Member." written by David Lowell (*CityWatch-April 3*). None of the

three officers cited in the article were ever contacted about their reasons for resigning by either Mr. Lowell or any member of DONE, including the General Manager. Being that there were no reasons stated at the time of our resignation, it is speculation on the part of those cited in the article, not the facts. We will present the truth that was lacking in the article.

Untruth: Article states that three officers "accused a board member of harassing people at Lake Balboa Park and led an effort to have that member tossed."

**Back Story**

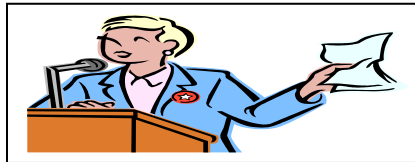
*Three Encino Neighborhood Council officers, President Linda Goldstein, Vice President Sharon Lambert and Treasurer Barbara Hand resigned recently. CityWatch reported the story on April 3. The three former officers take issue with some of the information reported. This is their perspective.*

Fact: The president of the West Van Nuys Lake Balboa NC had received serious allegations of harassment by the Rec and Parks representative of the ENC against patrons of Lake Balboa, so serious that their Council is currently seeking a restraining order. The president of WVNLCB requested an opportunity to speak before the ENC. Supporting documentation is available from West Van Nuys Lake Balboa NC showing that the accusations were not brought by the three ENC board members.

Untruth: Article states that the three officers resigned "after their attempt to remove a board member was determined by the City Attorney to be illegal."

#### **City Attorney: "Questionable" not "Illegal"**

Fact: The president of the ENC contacted the Deputy City Attorney about the allegations presented to her approximately two weeks prior to the scheduled special meeting. Even though the DONE approved bylaws allow for action to be taken, she requested advice from the Deputy City Attorney, who finally responded to her request after two weeks, and just prior to the special meeting. The Deputy City Attorney's response was that it was "questionable." It was not stated to her that it was "illegal."



Untruth: Article states that the officers resigned "over an ongoing controversy," in regards to changing three "selected" seats to three "elected" seats.

#### **Decision to Resign Reached Independently**

Fact: It is insinuated from the statements made in the article that this was an assault on these three seats, when in actuality it was an attempt to follow the suggestion of the Deputy City Attorney. The "selected" seats are in violation of the Plan (Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils), as ENC bylaws do not legally allow for selected seats. The effort to correct the situation, and therefore prevent possible decertification, was met with obstacles. A vote to retain the "selected" seats occurred at a previous meeting. If the officers resigned due to this vote as cited in the article, then

**See Page 11. "Officers Tell the Truth"**

### Insight Who's Behind the Stonewalling

*CityWatch has suggested elsewhere on these pages that there appears to be a specific effort by the Mayor's office to hamstring Neighborhood Councils and to diminish their influence.*

*In further support of that belief, we offer a portion of a recent memo from the Lead Research Assistant with the Collaborative Learning Project School of Policy, Planning and Development at USC. He has been attempting to facilitate an agreement between four Neighborhood Councils and the Department of Transportation.*

*"This is a quick update on the status of the MOU with the Department of Transportation that was formulated through the Collaborative Learning Project at the University of Southern California. Three of the four neighborhood councils have approved the MOU.*

*As you know, we have been seeking to schedule a signing ceremony for the document. However, there is a delay, perhaps indefinitely. According to DOT officials, the Mayor's office has instructed that they not sign the MOU. I understand those of you who are involved in efforts to forge an agreement with the Department of Planning may be facing a similar hurdle.*

*DOT officials cannot tell me how long the delay will last, or what the final decision will be. As soon as I hear news from them, I will share it immediately with you."*

*If it talks like a conspiracy to sabotage the independence of NCs. If it walks like a conspiracy to sabotage the independence of NCs. Then ...*

**-CW**

**NC Watch****On 912 Panel Having NC Reps: Yes  
On NC Council File #: Lookin' Good**

By Sara Epstein

**Neighborhood Council influence is on a roll.** The DONE has agreed to provide a level playing field for the LANCC at the June Congress of Neighborhoods (**See Page 1**), the Education and Neighborhoods Committee is sending a proposal to City Council that includes NC recommended representatives on the soon-to-be-formed Review Commission and the NC Council File # Proposal got a good hearing Wednesday at the Rules Committee. Most observers came away feeling it now stood a good chance of City Council approval.

**912 Commission**

**The Education and Neighborhoods** Committee agreed (2-1) to send the Alex Padilla version of the 912 Commission ordinance on to City Council, for all practical purposes, as he drafted it. Including seven members to be recommended by Neighborhood Councils and then appointed by the Mayor.

The dissenting vote was Councilwoman Janice Hahn. She doesn't oppose NC representatives on the commission, she said, but she wants each City Council member to have their own appointment. Her version will be included in a minority report.

**Proposal Highlights**

- In addition to allowing Neighborhood Councils to provide seven "recommendations," that would then be appointed by the Mayor, the proposal calls for five appointees by the Mayor, four by the City Council President and three by the City Council President Pro Tem, creating a commission of 19 members.
- The panel will be called "The Neighborhood Council Review Commission."
- The Commission's term would be one year, with the possibility of a 90 day extension.
- The Scope of Review is wide-ranging and not overly specific, but does include examination of stakeholder definition, NC outreach, funding and the effectiveness of the city as it relates to Neighborhood Councils.

The bill is due before the City Council April 21. (**To see the complete Padilla proposal draft: [www.CityWatchLA.com](http://www.CityWatchLA.com)--click on "Issue 14 EXTRA).**

**Council File Number Proposal**

In what one observer called, "A great meeting," the Rules Committee, Chaired by Eric Garcetti, got another step closer to approving a Council File Number proposal, designed to allow Neighborhood Councils to request file numbers and get their issues officially on the record at City Hall.



The Rules Committee is supportive of the proposal, which has set a record for Community Impact Statements ... now at 48. The key elements to be worked out include the number of co-signers that would be required and the implementation process. Recommendations on the co-signer number range from one to 18.

Jason Lyon, the shepard on the File Number proposal from day one, calls it, "A vital issue of neighborhood empowerment."

**See next column**

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**From previous column**

"It allows us," he says, "to have our own independent voice in Los Angeles city government ... without consideration of political expediency."

What's next? It is expected that the Rules Committee could send a final bill off to the City Council as early as May 10. ■

**Special Report****Hot New NC Issue: Animal Welfare***18 Councils have added Animal Welfare Directors Already*

By Denise Fleck

*It's a man's sympathy with all creatures that truly makes him a man. Until he extends his circle of compassion to all living things, man himself will not find peace.*

These words, spoken decades ago by Albert Schweitzer, ring true to a special group of dedicated and caring Los Angelenos. Appointed to be the eyes and ears of those who can not speak for themselves, The Directors of Animal Welfare (DAWs) work with their Neighborhood Councils to tackle problems, initiate proposals and hold events aimed at solving problems or creating awareness on issues that help humans and animals live together harmoniously.

**Back Story**

*The Board of the Mid City WEST Community Council just appointed a Director of Animal Welfare to its Advisory Council.*

*Two weekends ago, the NC Congress addressed the issue of elephant cruelty at its Senate meeting.*

*Animal Welfare is becoming one of the hot new issues finding its way to NC agendas.*

*Here's what all of the fuss is*

In October 2004, Valley Glen Neighborhood Council member, Dr. Charlotte Laws, introduced the idea of appointing a representative to each Neighborhood Council to handle animal-related issues. The Director of Animal Welfare program was part of her proposal to make Los Angeles a *No-Kill* City. With approximately 40,000 dogs, cats and small animals euthanized in L.A. annually, at a cost of \$14 million, it is a crisis in need of resolution. Valley Glen promptly appointed Laws to the position for their area.

Additionally, Laws proposed the formation of a *California Animal Commission*. Comprised of non-paid individuals committed to animal welfare, the Commission would serve in an advisory capacity to help cities and counties achieve the *no-kill* goal at their public shelters. According to Laws, "This

would be an important first step towards ending the needless killing of tens of thousands of animals each year." If formed, California would be the first to have such a Commission and would lead the nation by recognizing the plight of its animals.

In Los Angeles County there are 2.6 million dogs & cats in private homes, so helping them peacefully cohabitate with humans makes good sense. Recently Ed Boks, General Manager of the L.A. Department of Animal Services (LAAS), wrote a letter to all 87 Neighborhood Councils encouraging them to support the DAW Program and select a stakeholder as their representative. Eighteen Neighborhood Council DAWs have been appointed to date, so the program is still looking for more individuals to get involved. Eleven committees offer something for everyone. Examples: Spay/Neuter Education; Elephant exhibit issues at the L.A. Zoo; disaster preparedness; horse trails; animal cruelty cases.

See Page 13. "Hot New NC Issue"

**Legal Tips****Whose Fence?**

**Q:** No one knows who built the fence between my home and my neighbor's, or when. We both thought it was our boundary.

Recently, he hired an engineer who said the fence is a foot inside his property line. My neighbor insists I move it back a foot. That will force me to dig up my roses. Can he force me to do that after all these years?

**A:** He can probably force you to move the fence, if you accept his survey. Before hiring a contractor, consider obtaining your own survey. Not all engineers reach the same conclusions.

If you eventually do move the fence, perhaps you can induce your neighbor to share the cost. It would be a neighborly thing to do.

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**News That Was ...****Empowerment Congress SE Joins LANCC; Becomes #39**

Council Chair, Julian Rogers, reported that his Neighborhood Council ...Empowerment Congress Southeast ... approved ratification and has now joined the LA Neighborhood Council Congress. ECSE becomes the 39<sup>th</sup> NC to sign on. The new NC Congress continues to grow at a rate of slightly more than one per week.

**#39**

"We fully expect to have over half of the Councils in the city," offered LANCC Chairman Leonard Shaffer, "by the time the June 17 BONC Congress convenes." (Information on the LANCC, including meeting minutes, agendas, the Charter, membership is available at: [www.LANCCongress.org](http://www.LANCCongress.org).)

## Progress Continues on Planning MOU ... Along with Concerns

*Taskforce Chair, Robert Lamishaw, reports*

Neighborhood Council Planning Chairs and Presidents continued to work on a Memorandum of Understanding between the City Planning Department and LA's growing number of Neighborhood Councils. The process has been underway for several months. The April meeting focused on issues regarding the Education of NC Planning Committees and the Delivery of Services they expect from the Planning Department. The focus is to allow NCs to do a better job of evaluating proposed development and provide input to the Planning process as envisioned by the City Charter.



Another major topic of discussion was the growing concern regarding the Mayor's seeming reluctance to constructively engage with NC's by limiting access to department heads and staff. It is unclear at this time if the Mayor himself has made a decision to try to weaken the NC structure or if his staff is providing him with poor advice on the power and importance of Neighborhood Councils, but it is clear that there exists an unwillingness to constructively and meaningfully engage with NC's on important issues.

While the Mayor has given reassuring speeches about his support for NCs, his actions belie the rhetoric. Attendees agreed to take these concerns back to their respective Boards and to let the Mayor know that NC's are not a threat to be eliminated but a vital and constructive part of LA's future.

*See next column*

**CITYWATCH:KNOWMORE**

[www.CityWatchLA.com](http://www.CityWatchLA.com)

### *From previous column*

Progress is continuing on the MOU with the clear expectation that an MOU will eventually come to pass that will improve the level of communication, education and notification and allow NC's to take a more proactive and constructive part in the Planning Process for the City of Los Angeles.

## DONE Changes Personnel Services; 30 NCs Affected

*Here's the DONE report*

Three years ago the DONE entered into a contract with PDQ Personnel Services to provide temporary clerical and accounting services to Neighborhood Councils. That contract will expire April 24. The Department has now reached an agreement with a new service, Apple One Employment Services.

**NEW!**

DONE understands that NCs will want to continue their clerical and accounting services uninterrupted. To accomplish that, NCs that are currently using PDQ will need their employee/s to register with the new company, Apple One.

To make the process quick and efficient, provide DONE's Funding Section with the name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of your current PDQ person to Milena Albert ([milena.albert@lacity.org](mailto:milena.albert@lacity.org)) or 213.473.5115. DONE will assist Apple One with coordinating the registration process for you.

Currently, 30 Neighborhood Councils are using temporary staff services.

## Millions of \$\$ for Gang Prevention

*Report from the Mayor*

Moving to decrease gang activity, Mayor Villaraigosa has awarded \$1.1 million to five local community organizations for gang prevention, intervention and re-entry programs. The Mayor will expand the program with an additional \$2 million next year.

## Billions of \$\$ for Street Repair

*Report from Councilman Smith*

Councilmembers Greig Smith and Tony Cardenas proposed a \$1.5 billion infrastructure that would repave over 4,000 miles of dilapidated streets. That's 60 percent of the City's 6,500 miles of streets.

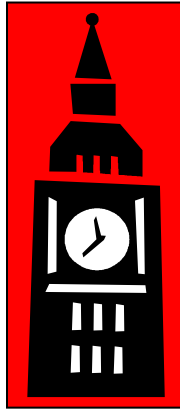
The bond, according to Smith, would enable the City to repave the 4,000 miles in eight years. Without this action, at the current rate of repair, it will take 80 years. ■

**NC/DWP MOU**

**NC Clock Now Ticking on DWP Water Rate Increases**

Staff Report

The independent audit is in and the LADWP has made public their proposed water rate increases. In accordance with the NC/DWP agreement, the Neighborhood Council 90-day clock is now running.



As NC leaders point out, Neighborhood Council response to this special audit and to the proposed increases is especially important. "It was," one Council President notes, "the lack of notification and openness that triggered NC opposition and led to the MOU."

**Where & How**

**Saturday, April 22, 2006** at 1:30 pm at the John Ferraro Building located at 111 N. Hope Street, Los Angeles the following public presentations / meetings will be taking place:

- BWG will present its third party review of LADWP's power and water revenue requirements.
- LADWP management will present its proposed power and water Rate Actions.

Presentations will be followed by a Question and Answer period.

City Council Energy and Environment Committee Public Hearing

The City Council's Energy and Environment Committee will hold two additional public hearings in early to mid-May on the results of the BWG review and LADWP's proposed Rate Actions at:

- Marvin Braude Center -Van Nuys
  - Mark Ridley Thomas Constituent Service Cntr-So LA
- Additional LADWP Community Presentations

LADWP also intends to hold public meetings in other areas of the City. A final schedule will be provided through these email notifications to the NCs and posted at [www.ladwp.com.nc](http://www.ladwp.com.nc).



**Reminder**

**Mayor's State of the City Address**  
**Tuesday, April 18 (5:30 p.m.)**  
**Channel 35**

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## We've Got Mail



### Mayor's Staff Make Bonehead Move; May Need Friends

What a bonehead thing for the Mayor's advisors to pull. ("Mayor's Staff Reverses DONE Promise"-CityWatch-April 3.) With the School Board agenda, the immigration tightrope and the upcoming union contracts, this is exactly what Villaraigosa needs, a confrontation with Neighborhood Councils.

Even if they win, they can't win. Bringing the Neighborhood Council movement to its knees is no legacy for a mayor who loves that up-from-the-streets reputation.

It's going to be an interesting year. Antonio storm-troops his way into the LAUSD, turns his back on the unions and immigrants and shuts down Neighborhood Councils.

Interestingly, the Mayor would do well to keep the NCs around. If he keeps alienating his support, he might need a few friends.

--Donald H. Hart, PhD  
Northridge



### NC Advice: Don't Underestimate Us

The Charter says we're advisors. Well, here's some NC advice to the Mayor's henchmen. Don't ever underestimate Neighborhood Councils when they come together for a cause.

--Dennis Barbarie  
Venice Stakeholder



### City Attorney: Extrapolating to the Absurd

I am a strong believer of avoidance of conflict of interest appearances let alone actual conflicts, but I am very unhappy with the way in which the DONE training, staffed by the City Attorney's Office, was held. The CA presented their "interpretations" of the LAW as fact without any backup. We were told that if we don't follow their interpretation they will not defend us. They are taking good ideas and extrapolating to the absurd.

It was obviously designed to protect the CA office from ever having any liability to defend anything on an NC Board. Needless to say I have substantial disagreement with the CA interpretations.

Since the CA is doing NOTHING for us, their budget for efforts supporting this type of effort should be commensurate ... LET'S SAVE THE MONEY AND APPLY IT TO THE DEFICIT.

--Denny Schneider  
NCWPCR



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We salute the efforts of every  
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# CITYWATCH SuperPlanner

**WEEK OF APRIL 17, 2006**



## City Council

April 18, 19, 21 (10 a.m.)  
City Hall (Council Chamber)

## Budget & Finance

April 17 (1 p.m.)  
City Hall (Rm 1010)

## Board Public Works

April 17(9:30 a.m.)  
City Hall (Rm 350)

## PLUM

April 18 (2 p.m.)  
City Hall (Rm 350)

## Mayor's State of the City Address

April 18 (5:30 p.m.)  
♦ Channel 35

## Mayor's Budget Due

April 20

## Important Public Meeting **WATER RATE INCREASE**

### **Auditor & DWP Management Report**

April 22 (1:30 p.m.)  
DWP Building  
First & Hope Streets

- ♦ *Opportunity for NCs to get info, ask questions of Auditors & DWP Management*  
*A MUST for NCs. Especially MOU signatories.*

### Other

## Valley Vote

April 17 (6:45 p.m.)  
Galpin Ford (2<sup>nd</sup> Fl)  
15555 Roscoe Blvd  
♦ *Bill Rosendahl-Featured*

## Gay & Lesbian Caucus

April 17 (7 p.m.)  
LAFD Training Cntr  
1700 Stadium Way  
Info: [www.glnc.info](http://www.glnc.info)

## Learn Better to Live Better

April 18 (6 p.m.)  
City Hall  
Media Room-4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
♦ *Discussion of problems imposed on students, stakeholders by LAUSD*

## FUTURES

### **NC Review Commission** **PROPOSED TIMELINE**

<u>Action</u>	<u>Latest Date</u>
<b>Vote/Approval by City Council</b>	<b>Apr 21, 2006</b>
<i>(Allow for first and second read) April 28</i>	
<b>Ord Signed by Mayor</b>	<b>April 25/26, 2006</b>
<i>May 1 or 2</i>	
<b>Ord Publication Date</b>	<b>April 27, 2006</b>
<i>(Must be published in local newspaper for 1 day)</i>	
<b>Ord Effective Date</b>	<b>May 29, '06</b>
<b>Commission Appointments</b>	<b>June 23, '06</b>

## North Hills West Arts & Crafts Fair

Sunday, April 22 (10a-5p)

VA Campus

16111 Plummer Street

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## Emergency Preparedness for Seniors

April 27 (9 a.m. – 1 p.m.)

City Hall (Rm 350)

Info: [www.lacity.org/dod](http://www.lacity.org/dod)

## San Pedro Community Forum

April 29 (10 a.m./- 12 n)

Brown Bldg

455 West 6<sup>th</sup> St

## LA's Annual Day of Service

May 7

♦ *Anticipating 25,000 turnout*

## LANI 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Forum

May 18 (8 a.m. – 2 p.m.)

USC Davidson Conf Center

Info: [www.lani.org](http://www.lani.org)

***Send announcements related to  
Neighborhood Councils and grassroots  
LA to: [Editor@CityWatchLA.com](mailto:Editor@CityWatchLA.com)***



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**April 24**  
**At a Computer Near You**

**Full Speed Ahead** *From Page 2*

Clearly, between a still relatively new Mayor and his staff ... and having the DONE's General Manager being replaced for the first time in five years ...it will take some time for the Neighborhood Councils and DONE to develop the same kind of working relationship they had with Greg Nelson. But the speedy – and fair - resolution of this bump in the road bodes well for the future.

So, now the Neighborhood Council Congress can get on with the business of informing the NC's about the citywide issues facing LA, providing them with the tools they need to make informed, individual decisions on these issues and then helping them give their input to the Mayor, the city departments and the City Council. *(Brady Westwater is a writer and sometime contributor to CityWatch.)* ■

Adv

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**Officers Tell the Truth-From Page 3**

why didn't we do so right after the vote was taken? Documentation showing the Deputy City Attorney's suggestion is available.

The decision to resign was reached independently by each of the three officers for numerous reasons. The repeated lack of timely responses about important issues by DONE and the Deputy City Attorney prevented the ENC from moving forward, and the ongoing failure of the ENC to represent the best interest of all their constituents are just some of the reasons upon which the three officers based their decision to no longer remain a member of the Council. It was a difficult decision to leave the Council after years of hard work and commitment to the ENC and the community. . (Barbara Hand is the former Treasurer of the Encino Neighborhood Council.) ▣

**Mayor's Takeover of Done**

-From Page 3

And that begs yet another question. The Charter also tells us that "The Mayor and Council shall not transfer powers, duties or functions of the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment to any other department, office or agency ...during the first five years after implementation of the Plan."

So, does this virtual takeover by the Deputy Mayor violate the Charter? Does it violate, at least, the spirit of the Charter?

Just asking.

--CW

Adv  
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 "LA's Hottest Scene!" -Los Angeles Magazine  
**The Melrose Trading Post**  
 Antiques & Collectibles Market



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**Need to Know**  
**Open Invitation: Add Your Voice to the LAUSD Discussion**

**This is an invitation** to participate with the *Learn Better to Live Better* meeting that will be held at the **Downtown City Hall in the Media Room on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor at 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 18, 2006.**

We will be meeting to discuss problems that the Los Angeles Unified School District imposes on the students and stakeholders in our communities. This meeting will consist of doctors, attorneys, students, parents, teachers and all walks of life. Yes, even some organizations as well. We will also be putting a survey together to question participants who won't be attending our meetings to better understand what the stakeholders' questions are.

If you are interested in having a voice and participating in this exciting endeavor of changes then get involved. Please RSVP this week. Parking is limited in downtown, but free parking is provided if you give us your car information such as: make, model, year, color and license plate number. We will let you know parking information prior to the meeting.

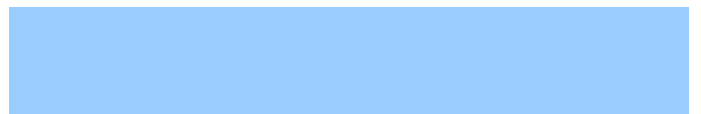
If you should have any questions or do not have a computer, please don't hesitate to call me.

**Donna Schwalm**  
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## Perspective-From Page 1

Here are some examples. Some believe that Mayor's Deputy Larry Frank has virtually taken over the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment. As one DONE insider noted, "Traditionally DONE has had limited interaction with the mayor's office. Now it is frequent." Frank called the shots in the DONE vs. the LANCC dispute.

There have been instances reported where new Assistant GM, Lisa Sarno ... who was inserted into that position by the Mayor's office ... went around her boss to report directly to the Mayor's staff. Enforcing the perception that the Mayor wants more control over Neighborhood Councils.

The Mayor's people don't hesitate to use the DONE to attempt to influence NCs or to promote their boss' agenda. The recent DONE memo to Councils, urging NCs to provide input on the NC Review Commission, included a copy of only the Mayor's proposal for the creation of the commission. His was only one of many. And, the Mayor makes liberal use of the DONE personnel to organize and promote the Mayor's Day of Service, even though this is not a Neighborhood Council event per se.

**Related**  
For yet another example of City Hall interference, see "Insight" Pg 3

### Department Heads Reigned In

Some NCs feel the Mayor's Deputies and department heads have been reigned in. Are less responsive than they were at the outset. Fewer calls taken. Less available to meet. Discussion of MOUs off limits.

It is true that some of the NC anxiety results from a new DONE, whose priority seems to be the Mayor's agenda, after four years of a DONE whose priority seemed to be the protection and support of independent Neighborhood Councils.

### Comes Down to This

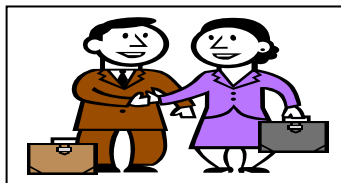
There are other examples, but in the end it comes down to this: Frank has said, "There is a significant role for Neighborhood Councils." Making every effort to quickly define how significant, will go a long way toward closing the policy and philosophical gap between NCs and the administration. A timely search for a new DONE General Manager, involving NC input, would make a statement, for example. The Mayor needs to demonstrate that he is dedicated to Neighborhood Council independence. And their charter mandate to hold elected officials accountable.

The perception that he is out to diminish the role of Neighborhood Councils and to smother the voice of dissent needs to be corrected soonest. ■

## DONE Does U-Turn-From Page 1

Sensing an attempt by the Mayor's office to make them invisible, the LANCC leadership fired off a letter to His Honor looking for relief. It came today with DONE's agreement to not only provide a room for the event, but listing on the program and in the pre-registration materials. They also agreed to space at the hospitality table outside of the main room and table in the Trades Showroom, if space is available.

Sarno said the LANCC-DONE misunderstanding was the result of miscommunication within the department and then between DONE and the LANCC. It was not an attempt to derail or diminish the new NC Congress.



Leonard Shaffer, LANCC Chairman, says he's "Gratified by all of the support we saw from individuals and Neighborhood Councils and I'm pleased that it turned out to be nothing more than a misunderstanding." **See next column**

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### From previous column

Nothing provokes and unites Neighborhood Councils like being ignored or treated as though they are insignificant. It was that perception that fueled the NC demand for an agreement with the DWP. Northridge West President, Jim Alger, who sparked the DWP rate increase revolt two years ago, was back in the fray again, demanding a boycott of the June Congress. Other NC leaders urged picketing or demonstrations.

Alger offered this response to the DONE change of heart: "Regardless of the reasons, once again Neighborhood Councils proved ready, willing and able to respond immediately to a threat."

Whatever the motivation, the LANCC letter to the Mayor, the call for a boycott, the growing restlessness of NC or simply the discovery by the DONE and Frank that they may have erred, both sides appeared happy that the brief skirmish had been resolved and everyone was ready to make nice again. ■

## Hot New NC Issue-From Page 5

According to Burbank DAW George Shea, "The value of the DAW Program is simply that if you're into animal [issues], you can feel isolated - a bunch of separate groups not knowing what each other is doing and with no real clout behind us. Becoming a DAW has brought it all together for me...I'm not alone in my struggles; we exchange ideas and support each others goals."

Reseda DAW Missy Woodward was already active in her Neighborhood Council before being appointed its Director of Animal Welfare. Emergency Preparedness is a high priority in Reseda Community members will be CERT (Certified Emergency Rescue Team) trained and preparations will be made for their animals as well.

Another case in point: Through the combined efforts of several DAWs, the West Hollywood Neighborhood Council and the West Hollywood Sheriff's Department recently arrested a puppy dealer who was abusing underage puppies.

### Atwater Village No Longer Dumping Ground

Atwater Village, situated near the Los Angeles River, has long been a dumping ground for unwanted pets, so its five DAWs organized a monthly Pet Adoption Fair at the Farmer's Market on Glendale Blvd. Additionally, the group educates residents who are unaware of leash and chain laws.



In Lake Balboa, Lisa Reveen is busy on an avian cause. Attorney Tiffany Krog, the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council DAW, hopes to put her legal expertise to use for the animals by encouraging LAAS to establish a screening process for potential adopters of Pit Bulls.

### DAW Welcomes All Points of View

The Directors of Animal Welfare have a lot on their plate. With kudos to Laws, the program has created an environment that welcomes all causes and points of view. The individuals come from diverse backgrounds and different priorities, yet they are finding the organization an excellent forum to make things happen. NC DAWs include realtors, attorneys, rescue workers, hair stylists, photographers, actors, business professionals, athletes and at least one medical doctor.

"If you're looking for a neighborhood issue that touches all of your stakeholders," says one Neighborhood Council President, "don't overlook animal welfare." (*Denise Fleck is the founder of Sunny-dog Ink and is an animal issues writer. She is also an Animal Care Instructor specializing in Pet First-Aid & CPR and Caring for Senior Pets. She can be reached at: [denisefleckshadowhills@yahoo.com](mailto:denisefleckshadowhills@yahoo.com).*)

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### Need to Know

For information on becoming a Director of Animal Welfare or for adding a DAW to your Neighborhood Council, visit [www.dawprogram.org](http://www.dawprogram.org) or contact DAW's President Charlotte Laws at [drlaws@adelphia.net](mailto:drlaws@adelphia.net) or 818.781.5280.

## LANCC Status Report

*The LA Neighborhood Council Congress membership continues to grow at the rate of a little more than a council a week. There are now 39.*

*The following Neighborhood Councils have joined the LANCC as of April 14.*

Arroyo Seco  
Atwater Village  
Bel Air Beverly Crest  
Canoga Park  
Central San Pedro  
Coastal San Pedro  
Del Rey  
Downtown Los Angeles  
Empowerment Congress SE Encino  
Granada Hills North  
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