As government action on climate change stalls, making individual action seem even more inadequate, a growing number of activists are focusing attention on community-level action, based on a model developed in Totnes, a small market town of 7,500 in Southwest England. Totnes is typical of tens, if not hundreds of thousands of towns worldwide that have become far less self-sufficient than they were until just a couple of generations ago. But in 2005, a movement began to reverse that process, laying the groundwork for an intentional effort to significantly reduce energy use and restore a level of community self-sufficiency that Totnes had enjoyed for eight centuries, before letting it slip away during the now-fading era of abundant cheap oil.

It all began with environmental educator Rob Hopkins. The process he started eventually became a local non-profit, Transition Town Totnes. The ideas developed spread to other towns, other countries, and other settings as well—even large metropolitan areas like Los Angeles—under the umbrella name of the Transition Network.

Initially, the Transition movement was driven by two main inter-connected environmental challenges—the energy resource depletion problem known by the shorthand term, “peak oil,” and the carbon pollution problem of global warming. Economic collapse was later added.
COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

San Pedro Chamber of Commerce
Founded in 1957
Location: 390 W. 7th St.
Telephone: (310) 832-7272
Website: www.sanpedrochamber.com

Plains has been a member of the San Pedro Chamber since 2005, and a Corporate Community Partner since 2007.

Current Chamber Event
2011 Honorary Mayor Campaign Ends May 15 – Honorary Mayor Announced May 19

Candidates and Charities
• Joe Buscaino / Charity: LAPD Harbor Boosters, Boys and Girls Clubs of the LA Harbor, Friends of the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, and Pedro Pals
• Joe Gatlin / Charity: Barton Hill Neighborhood Organization
• Mitch Harmatz / Charities: Toberman Neighborhood Center, Grand Vision Foundation, fNdings Art Center
• Dave Martinez / Charity: The Port of Los Angeles High School
• Carla Negri / Charity: The Relevant Stage

More details about the candidates and their fundraising events can be found on the Chamber’s website.

Pier 400, Berth 408 Project

Pacific L.A. Marine Terminal Project

The project will be constructed and operated in an environmentally friendly, transparent and responsible manner that meets the standards of the port’s Clean Air Action Plan, South Coast Air Quality Management District, State Land Facilities Division, City of Los Angeles and the State Fire Marshal

▼ The proposed facilities include a deep-water marine dock designed to accommodate offloading large ocean-going crude oil tankers, oil storage and a new pipeline system

▼ Pier 400, Berth 408 will be the only facility on the West Coast, and one of two in the United States, to accommodate a fully laden Very Large Crude Container class of tanker-increasingly the ship of choice in the global oil market

▼ A petroleum facility of this kind is already included in the POLA master plan, and the harbor is dredged to those specifications

▼ Pacific is committed to addressing environmental impact issues as effectively as possible and is leading the industry with an entirely new, 21st Century approach to reducing environmental impacts through state-of-the-art design, construction and ongoing operations

To find out more, please visit www.pier400berth408.com
At least once a week, Digna González takes public transportation from San Pedro to South Central Los Angeles, where she arrives at a place that is as much a part of her as she is of it.

“I am a field person, and that’s why I enjoy things of the field,” said González, 57, in Spanish.

González is part of a growing group of people caring for community gardens in urban settings. A master gardener, González, uses her skills at the Bougainvillea Community Gardens, near 110th and Grape streets. She joined the group several years ago, when living in the Jordan Downs Housing Projects.

Bougainvillea is part of the Los Angeles Community Garden Council, a nonprofit group that connects people with community garden space in their neighborhood. There are about 70 community gardens, serving about 3,900 families in Los Angeles County. Anyone who applies, and is eligible, may become a member and be entrusted to care for a lot of land within a garden. The gardens are self-maintained and self-policed by the membership.

There are three types of community gardens, privately owned gardens with short-term leases, public land with short-term leases and garden-owned land.

Several vacant, developable lots in public or private ownership are currently leased for community gardens. Many landowners opt to lease their land for a community garden until it is needed for development.

These days, González and the other gardeners fear rumors that the landowners, who bought the land from the city with the condition to use the area as a garden, are selling the land to another company that might do away with the garden. Efforts to confirm those rumors could not be completed by press time.

David Vigueras said he could relate to the fear of losing a community garden.

About a year and a half ago, some of the garden caretakers at the San Pedro All Year Round Garden heard news that the community garden would be taken over by the Eastview Little League.

Vigueras attended several meetings, spoke to Councilwoman Janice Hahn and even submitted letters to the editor of Random Lengths News to help fight that outcome.

In the end, the garden was spared because a site was found at Knoll Hill Park.

For Vigueras urban gardens are the key for a better future, and thus, worth fighting to maintain.

“We’ve really done a lot of damage to our Community Garden a San Pedro Eden

By Zamná Ávila, Assistant Editor

Harbor resident David Vigueras is proud to show the garden he takes care of at the San Pedro All Year Round Gardens in San Pedro. Photo: Zamná Ávila.

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Back to Eden

From p. 3

planet by becoming industrial,” Vigueras, 58, said. “If we just think more agriculture and reconnect with the earth, we would be better off and the planet will be better off.”

Vigueras, a road construction worker, has been gardening since he was 5 years old. His father worked for nursery in Lawndale and his mother’s father, a man from Zacatecas, Mexico, also worked in nurseries. Vigueras remembers how his grandfather would grow plants in his house and take them on the weekends to sell them at the swap meets.

“He didn’t speak very good English, but we spoke good English, so we were his little salesmen,” Vigueras recalled with joy. “We were cute.”

Ever since, wherever he’s lived, he’s made sure he had some sort of plant.

In 1999, the single parent moved with his now 19-year-old son and 25-year-old daughter to San Pedro. Soon after, he came across the city-owned San Pedro All Year Round Garden, a community garden for seniors 55 years old and older and controlled by the Los Angeles Department of Sanitation, whose workers park trucks at the top of the hill.

“And, I saw this garden, and I was just amazed… ‘God, this was a garden of Eden,’” he remembered. It took him three years to get a spot.

“I come here practically daily, at least to check on my plants and say ‘hi,’” said Vigueras, as he showed off his garlic, onion, strawberry, chayote, Japanese cucumbers and squash, and sunflower plants. “We are constantly growing.”

For Vigueras urban gardens also are a source of spirituality.

“I don’t even know how to say just how good it feels to have this experience,” said Vigueras, who describes his experience as a connection with his creator. “When the sun sets, that’s my goodbye time; that’s when I like to come here, say a short prayer and go home.”

Others see urban gardens more pragmatically and educational.

“It’s good to learn how to harvest vegetables because we may need in the future…because sometimes you just want your own grown potatoes because you know it’s healthy and you know ‘I did this; I accomplished this and it’s a good feeling,’ I guess,” said Leslie Acosta, a 15-year-old sophomore from the Port of Los Angeles High School, who sometimes volunteers her time at the garden at the nearby San Pedro Math and Science Technology Center.

Students and community members are able to visit the urban garden owned by the Los Angeles Unified School District. The hidden farm on Barrywood Avenue also houses goats, chicken, geese, a pig and a pony. Schools from all over the district take tours at the garden to learn about sustainability.

Science expert John Zavalney helps care for the garden and farm. Zavalney said that the plan is to harvest and sell to local restaurants to help maintain the garden and animals.

“Because of all the funding cuts the district is facing, we are lucky we are still alive,” he said. “So, we need to raise some money ourselves.”

And yet, he said, the center has received much support from LAUSD board member Richard Vladovic, who understands the vision of the Science Center.

“Gardening is something where you see it from beginning to end, it also can provide something real, which is food, and it’s also part of the solution,” said Rachel Bruhnke, a POLAHS teacher who also comes down to the Science Center.
Comedy Night with Justin Ezzi & Friends on April 26. Cost is $23 per person.

Casino bus ride to Pechanga Casino on April 26. Cost is $23 per person.

Algae Technology Curbs Industrial Emissions

By Megan Barnes, Community News Reporter

This past September, dozens of green technology companies competed to sign with PortTechLA, a technology incubator launched by the Port of Los Angeles, the City and the San Pedro and Wilmington chambers of commerce. Top prize

joy Bill 32.

"Dairies are an excellent source of installations for us because they’re being really aggressively pursued by the air districts of California to be shut down," Hinkens said. That’s because the biodigesters dairies use to generate their own power on site are polluters themselves.

When hooked up to the APARs, their emissions grow algae that can be re-used in the biodigesters and cattle feed.

"We were very fortunate because this was allocated prior to the state budget crisis," Hinkens said of the research grant. "This is a test that, the effects of which, will last a long time."

At least 36 dairies are lined up to utilize the technology once it gets the state’s seal of approval.

In the Harbor Area, PortTechLA is making plans to use the technology at the Department of Water and Power generating plant.

"They’re talking about giving us three to four acres near the DWP to put up a facility that would actually take the emissions off the plant, then convert those into algae that would go into anaerobic digesters and create biogas that can go back and help offset the fuel purchases of the plant," Hinkens said.

The facility would house 600 pyramids and a public receptacle for biological waste to be converted into biogas with the algae.

"That gets us off of petrochemicals and there’s more balance with us being able to be self-reliant," Hinkens said.

There are also testing plans with Southern California Edison.

Carbon dioxide and nitrogen emissions from polluters are fed into Advanced Algae’s pyramid shaped reactors and consumed by algae, which can double in growth every four hours. The process effectively cuts 99 percent of the emissions and produces algae that has a variety of valuable uses.

The only waste product in the process? Pure oxygen. Photo courtesy of Advanced Algae.

at the PortTechExpo went to Advanced Algae, Inc., the maker of innovative systems that use industrial gas emissions to grow algae.

Since becoming a client of PortTechLA, the year-old company has secured numerous research contracts and will soon be tested by the state for agricultural use.

“It’s an extremely efficient system, it’s gravity operated primarily and it incorporates features that facilitate a dynamic level of algae growth by just the physics of the design,” Chairman Dale Hinkens said.

Unlike most algae technologies that solely produce biofuel, Advanced Algae’s APAR (automated photosynthetic algae reactor) technology is an antidote to industrial emissions.

It works by using gravity to funnel nitrogen and carbon dioxide emissions with algae through pipes in large pyramid shaped reactors. The algae consumes 99 percent of the gases and grows, producing pure oxygen and algae byproducts that have a variety of uses.

Hinkens developed the idea after observing other technologies that use acres of ponds to grow algae.

“Our systems are a thousand percent more productive than a pond because we’ve gone vertical,” he said. “It stimulates algae growth rather than the algae just sitting at the bottom of the pond getting no sunlight.”

Parent company American International Remediation Corporation developed the technology for four years before Advanced Algae was incorporated.

This summer, the California Energy Commission will test Advanced Algae’s APARs at Fiscalini Dairies in Modesto. It’s part of an agricultural initiative to help the state meet reductions set by the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 or Assem-
West Basin Awards Recycled Water Construction Contract
CARSON—The Edward C. Little Water Recycling Facility in El Segundo, known as the only facility in the world that produces five different types of recycled sewer water, will be undergoing its fourth expansion since its original construction in 1995. The facility is being expanded to help realize West Basin Water District’s Water Reliability 2020 goal to double recycled water production by the year 2020. Parsons design-build team was awarded the contract.

The facility currently produces 30 million gallons per day. This expansion will increase capacity by an additional 15 million gallons per day.

Under the “Phase V” expansion, water purification facilities (microfiltration, reverse osmosis and ultrafiltrated advanced oxidation process facilities) will be expanded to produce an additional 5 million gallons per day of water supplied to the seawater treatment to prevent seawater intrusion and refill groundwater supplies. A single pass reverse osmosis membrane water purification system at the Chevron facility will also be expanded to provide an additional 500,000 gallons a day to NRG’s El Segundo Power Plant.

In a press release statement, West Basin Board President Ronald Smith noted that “Parsons has committed to conducting extensive local outreach to have from within West Basin’s service area, focusing on small and minority owned businesses and union labor.”

BP Sought to Influence Gulf Studies
Just weeks before the one year anniversary of the devastating British Petroleum Gulf oil spill, documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act revealed that BP officials were openly supporting scientists who were supported by a $500 million BP-sponsored environmental activist organization, Greenpeace.

Russel Putt, a BP environmental expert, wrote in an e-mail to colleagues on June 24, 2010: “Can we disaster — scientists who were supported by a $500 million BP-funded environmental activist organization, Greenpeace. This revelation reinforces critics’ concern about BP’s influence on research about the spill. BP faces billions in fines and penalties, and possible criminal charges arising from its disaster. Its total liability will depend in part on a final account produced by scientists on how much oil entered the gulf from its blown-out well, and the damage done to marine life and coastal areas in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. The oil company disputes the government estimation that 4.1 million barrels of oil entered the Gulf, but critics think the government’s efforts are much too conservative.

There is no evidence in the e-mails that BP officials were openly supporting scientists who were supported by a $500 million BP-funded environmental activist organization, Greenpeace.

DWP 20 Percent Energy Generation Due to Luck
LOS ANGELES—On April 7, the Los Angeles City Controller released a performance audit of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power’s renewable energy program, citing that the department’s achievement of generating 20 percent of its energy from renewable sources in 2010 was a matter of luck rather than planning.

The audit analyzed the Department’s efforts and examined whether it was well positioned to meet future renewable energy requirements, particularly since Gov. Jerry Brown committed to have the state generate a third of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2020. The audit shows that the department has only recently to the list. But it was also deeply informed by ecological insights and design practices developed over the past few decades, giving it a hopeful cast.

“Human beings are incredibly creative and adaptive,” Hopkins told Baltimore’s UtneRite magazine in 2008. “And there is nothing that indicates that the creativity and adaptability that got us up to the top of this peak is going to completely evaporate when we have to start designing our way down to another side.”

Indeed, a key Transition movement concern is what they call “re-skilling”—the redeveloping of the wide range of do-it-yourself capabilities that most people in most cultures took for granted until quite recently. It’s also about making the rapid rise in oil production—a concept related to sustainability, but deeper because it includes the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances, without sacrificing quality of life. According to a definition quoted by Hopkins, “Resilience is the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize while undergoing change, so as to still retain essentially the same function, structure, identify and feedbacks.”

Hopkins was living in Kinsale, Ireland in 2004, teaching permaculture design—an approach fostering sustainable land use based on ecological and biological principles, such as the mimicking or employing of natural patterns—when he went to a lecture on “peak oil,” the long-known but mostly-ignored fact that the rapid rise in oil production in any given area leads inevitably to a peak, followed by a long decline. U.S. oil production peaked in the 1970s, and world oil production has either already peaked or will do so in about a decade.

His initial response was to develop what he called an “Energy Descent Action Plan” for Kinsale with his students—a plan on how to deal with the prospect of much less abundant cheap energy. But paper plans were not enough. He wanted to do it for real. So he moved to Totnes, seeking to engage the whole town as his class. The planning process of how to do this anywhere was later laid out as part of his 2008 book, The Transition Handbook: From Oil Dependence to Local Resilience.

While the direct impacts of peak oil may still be debatable due to energy source substitution and other factors, the sudden onset of the Great Recession has shown how quickly the unimaginable can become real. This even while related developments have drawn attention to how even transient shortages and speculative bubbles can interact to wreak havoc. What’s more, cheap fossil fuels have helped drive other bubble economies—such as agricultural “water bubbles” based on over-pumping aquifers—which provide the same sort of potential threat as peak oil itself. According to the Earth Policy Institute, “Half the world’s people live in countries where water tables are falling as aquifers are being depleted.”

Carolyn Stayton first heard about the Transition movement in 2007, and is now Executive Director of Transition US. At first, she explained, most Americans discovered the movement on their own just as she did. But now most find out about it from groups near by that are engaged in building their Transition Initiatives,” she said. “It is quite contagious, in the best sense of the word, giving people an avenue for engagement and pro-activity through an easy-to- replicate model. The first adopters were generally well educated and of those people who had time to offer. Now we are seeing more youth engaged, and the Transition pro- cess is being picked up in more diverse communities…Its focus is on building a resilient community and the drivers of it are the people of that community. Everywhere it emerges, it looks different.”

Steve Chase is one of the well-educated early adopters. He’s the Director of Advocacy for Social Justice and Sustainability at Antioch University, New England, with decades of environmental activism and education experience behind him, and a co-founder of the Transition Keene Task Force, in Keene, New Hampshire.

“In many ways, Transition is just a weaving together and highlighting of many activities that are already happening in many local communities around the world,” Chase said. “What is different is in combining them and lifting them up in a clearer, more inspiring and challenging context—and making them stronger and more common practiced.”

Thus, people already interested or engaged in community gardens, installing solar panels, creating public transit, bicycling and walking infrastructure, and other locally-focused initiatives can simply continue what they are doing as they gradually work together in developing their own local Transition plan, expanding on these beginnings and in-
Congressional Candidates Confront Challenge of Broken Politics
By Paul Rosenberg, Senior Editor

There’s an enormous disconnect between the challenges people face in California’s 36th Congressional District, and the political machinations of far-off Washington, DC. The drastic budget cut agreed to by President Barack Obama in early April gave GOP House Speaker John Boehner more than $6 billion more in cuts than he originally asked for and cast a pall across the land.

With unemployment at 12.2 percent in Los Angeles County during March—40 percent higher than the national average of 8.8 percent—Washington seems to have lost its mind, worrying about future financial problems that could be handled by investing money now to revive our economy.

Doug Epperhart, past president of San Pedro Coastal Neighborhood Council cited “jobs” as the overwhelming primary concern, then added a second priority—the willingness to work across partisan lines, “rather than being a partisan hack.” However, that willingness on the Democratic side is precisely why Democrats have agreed to budget cuts and turned their backs on the time-tested path of deficit spending to fight a downturn.

Illuminating the roots of the problem, on April 11, political scientist Thomas Ferguson published a paper, “Legislators Never Bowl Alone: Big Money, Mass Media, and the Polarization of Congress” that traced much of the current dysfunction in Washington back to the early Gingrich era, and changes within Congress, which greatly enhanced the role of money in politics, while diminishing independent centers of power, influence and expertise. This money-dependence is a large part of why so many popular programs are being cut or threatened, while deeply unpopular tax cuts for the wealthy are adding more much to the deficit than the cuts can get rid of.

Although she did not mention Ferguson by name, KPFK’s Suzi Weismann kicked off an on-air April 15 debate between Marcy Winograd, Secretary of State Debra Bowen and Councilwoman Janice Hahn by essentially asking all three candidates what they would do about the problem he described.

“The Democrats learned from the Republican’s pay-to-play system, and basically decided to copy it,” Weismann said. “Will you feel that you have to join the system with the Democrats and Republicans. So I don’t start out with the sense that things are hopeless or broken, or that I won’t be able to accomplish anything,” and then turning to the money question.

“As far as the money goes, 90 percent of my contributions as of a week ago [came from donors contributing] $100 or less, and that was before Howard Dean sent out a request for people to contribute $10. That brought in another 986 small donors,” she explained. “That’s a very, very large grassroots and net-roots fundraising base for me is what allows me to keep my spine stiff and never worry about outside influences, because the people have my back, not the special interests.”

However, Bowen said nothing about the influence of money on other politicians or the system as a whole—which was the actual question posed.

Hahn simply ducked the question altogether, choosing instead to go directly into stump-speech mode.

“I’m running for Congress because I want to bring a fresh perspective to Washington,” she began. “I think it’s clear to me especially in these recent days how these budget debates that Washington is really out of touch with real Americans. I don’t just think they get it.

“These debates in Congress recently have been about numbers and I think the budget is a moral document. I mean, I don’t think we’re just debating dollars and cents, or how we balance the budget. This is about Americans’ lives and I want work more closely with the California delegation, Republicans and Democrats alike, and get the focus back on job creation…We’re never going to solve this budget debate, you know, just by talking about cutting spending or raising taxes, we’ve got to get the economy back.”

Meanwhile, on ground level, there is one local life-and-death issue particular to the Harbor Area that clearly lies in Congress’s court, as pointed out by Angelo Logan, executive director of East Yards Communities for Environmental Justice: the principle of “federal preemption” that ties state and local hands in reducing air pollution, which is written into federal law. The issue has long delayed implementation of the Clean Trucks Program, but also is an issue with railroads and shipping lines,” Logan pointed out. “For us to make good decisions to protect the public, they need to be looked at more locally. And yet a lot of these industries are protected by federal laws.” At the same time, ironically, the entire region is out of compliance with federal clean air standards. But only the federal laws protecting polluters actually hold sway on the ground.

Again, the issue comes back to money in politics. Those who make money polluting our communities are few in number and easily organized to spend whatever it takes to keep things just as they are.
The Los Angeles Disconnect

Why the city remains so dysfunctional even as it plans for the future

By James Preston Allen, Publisher

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, council members Janice Hahn, Tom LaBonge and Bill Rosendahl, and Gina Marie Lindsey, Los Angeles World Airports executive director announced today the findings of a report released by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LACEDC), which concludes that “new construction at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) will create nearly 40,000 jobs, generate $2.62 billion in worker income, $6.9 billion in revenue, and help the Los Angeles area recover from the ongoing recession.”

This, along with the news that the city is now attempting to connect the Metro Crenshaw light rail line to the airport, all seems like a move into the future, but what is missing from this? The Port of Los Angeles is also moving ahead with its plans of expanding hundreds of millions in public improvements and even though these two “ports” are part of the same city, there seems to be no imperative to connect the dots between these two “ports” are part of the same city, there seems to be no imperative to connect the dots between the LAX and POLA. It just seems so logical that if these two “ports” are part of the same city, there that if these two are part of the same city, there needs to be no imperative to connect the dots between the LAX and POLA.

The problem is historical if not political. Even as the oil companies and Detroit automakers helped push America into the auto age by buying up the Pacific Red Cars, Los Angeles has increasingly more disconnected from itself as the population expanded and an entirely new network of freeways dissected our landscape. Sure, if you have the luxury to travel at non-peak commute times, which seem to be getting narrower each year, you can travel from the Harbor Area into downtown L.A. in half an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than an hour. But commuting with the hoards can double your transit time to more than.

One can argue that it was just as time consuming to travel by Red Car 100 years ago in Southern California as it is today, with all of our expensive freeways and gas-powered cars.

Time is distance in our modern world and it’s going to get any smaller as time goes on.

We will never be able to solve our traffic problem for the longterm by adding Diamond Lanes and double-decking our freeways. If we don’t begin fully connecting this city with rail, the entire Los Angeles region will become even more dysfunctional than it is today. The mayor and all of his department heads, along with the City Council need to get off of their east/west mantra of rail connectivity and consider the logical transit paths that will challenge California agriculture as well as disrupt water supply. How might we cope?

Jobless recovery and government cutbacks mean the current “recession” is far from over, plus climate change and the end of cheap oil will worsen economic instabilities. What creative ways will we develop to feed our families?

Local resilience is our “safe harbor,” our secure haven amidst these paradigm-shaking changes. Resilience is our ability to flex and adapt — not crumble or rot when shocks like $150/barrel oil prices or another stock market shakedown come along. Resilience offers many answers to peak oil, climate change, and economic contraction. We need to develop resilience, the ability to rebound easily and delightfully. We also need to remember to laugh and have fun.

Being resilient involves using creativity that brings a diversity of approaches and multiplicity of solutions. It is simultaneously robust and flexible. And resilience-building contains the potential for an economic, cultural, and social renaissance the likes of which we have never seen.

If our communities were to produce a much greater percentage of their needs locally, without petroleum-dependent transportation, we’d be much better equipped to cope. Increasing our local resilience means doing things like growing food locally, harvesting aquifer water, and continued on following page

COMMUNITY Voices

The Harbor of the Future

By Joanne Poyourow, Transition Los Angeles

What might the Harbor Area look like in the future? Imagine what businesses and jobs might exist.

How would our lifestyles be different? How might it be in 2030, when we have dramatically less petroleum resources? With far less oil to fuel transportation, at accordingly higher costs, what will Port volume be like? Our current daily lifestyles are completely dependent upon oil.

We have built everything upon the erroneous presumption that this limited resource will remain very cheap and eternally plentiful. It is becoming increasingly evident this brief petroleum era is at its end.

When we contemplate the realities of the not-too-distant future, we discover that our current lifestyles are not very resilient. Right now, we are not very well equipped to navigate these sweeping changes.

How might the Harbor Area survive the unpredictable weather that is coming with climate change? Forecasts are for temperature swings, wild storms, erratic rainfall and further droughts that will challenge California agriculture as well as disrupt water supply. How might we cope?

Jobless recovery and government cutbacks mean the current “recession” is far from over, plus climate change and the end of cheap oil will worsen economic instabilities. What creative ways will we develop to feed our families?

Local resilience is our “safe harbor,” our secure haven amidst these paradigm-shaking changes. Resilience is our ability to flex and adapt — not crumble or rot when shocks like $150/barrel oil prices or another stock market shakedown come along. Resilience offers many answers to peak oil, climate change, and economic contraction, combined.

Think of a kid bouncing on a trampoline, with the surface ever-changing beneath him. The basic underpinnings of our life are changing, dramatically, like that undulating trampoline. We need to develop resilience, the ability to rebound easily and delightfully. We also need to remember to laugh and have fun.

Being resilient involves using creativity that brings a diversity of approaches and multiplicity of solutions. It is simultaneously robust and flexible. And resilience-building contains the potential for an economic, cultural, and social renaissance the likes of which we have never seen.

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Random Lengths News presents issues from an alternative perspective. We welcome articles and opinions from all people in the Harbor Area. While we may not agree with the articles and opinions, they are published, but for verification only and be kept to about 250 words. To submit advertising or news releases email ads@randomlengthsnews.com or news@randomlengthsnews.com.

Japan Radiation Worries Explain Iodine Demand

There is a credibility gap between what government says and what the people believe. The most recent evidence of this was the run on potassium-iodine tablets along the entire West Coast. Despite President Obama’s assurances that harmful levels of radiation would not hit American shores, people were taking precautions. From Los Angeles to Seattle, pharmacies and health food stores have been sold out of potassium-iodine tablets for days.

People have learned from Three Mile Island and Chernobyl that the default position of the nuclear industry after a disaster is to deny the extent of damage and the amount of radiation released. They have seen their own government slow to react to disasters like Katrina and they know they cannot rely on officials to respond promptly and openly in a crisis. We have reached the point where credibility is so strained that the more officials downplay a problem, the more people think one exists.

From previous page

Future Harbor

changing our lifestyles to “power down” and use less energy overall.

It also involves developing the kinds of businesses we’ll need for an oil-scarce, weird weather, economically con-
strained future — businesses like local shoe makers, bicycle re-
pair, sustainable health care, and sellers of homesteading sup-
plies. Transition groups encourage local businesses to explore their offerings into the avenues we’ll need for the realities of our future.

Within the Transition movement, we understand that the future for most of us won’t be entirely clear and more of a vague “green consumption,” any more than it will be Star Wars spaceships. We don’t have the oil or the timeline to build that stuff.

Australian David Holmgren says we will need to become “jacks of all trades and master of one.” We will need different skills for this future, skills like vegetable growing, food pres-
ervation, and sewing basic clothing. We need to build up the tools and skills and the know-
how within our local commu-

nies. And, particularly here in this huge city, we need to build the connections and working relationships between neighbors to form the cohesive local commu-

nities.

Transition groups are now forming in many areas of Los Angeles, including the South Bay and Rancho Palos Verdes. Interested people have contemplated forming groups in San Pedro, Carson, and Long Beach. You can find like-minded people in your local government and our commit-
to middle-class families to that debate in Washington, and I can only get there with your help.

In the past few months, your friends and neighbors have joined with me to make more than $7,000 phone calls and knock on thousands more doors. They’ve shared their frustrations with Washington, and their reasons for supporting my campaign to represent the 36th district.

Can you help too?

Every day we are making phone calls and knocking on doors — talk-
ing to residents about the issues they care most about.

Together we can win this cam-
paign for Congress, for people like Sarah Flores, and send a clear mes-
sage to Washington that we are ready to stand up and fight for what’s right.

Councillorwoman Janice Hahn
San Pedro

Is Employee Selection Stuck on Stupid?

In the far-away land of Dum Dumm, all applicants for a draper’s li-

tence are treated alike. Whether they drive little cars or big trucks, motorcycles or busses, all applicants must pass the same test — they must drive a golf cart around the block.

To sophisticated Angelesans giving all applicants the same driving test may appear to be — well, dumb. And requiring them all to drive a golf cart may even seem dumber. But Dum-Dum’s licensing procedure isn’t really so different from the way Los Angeles Hires Civil Service Employees.

Consider the city maintains a workforce for over 30,000 civilian employees. Those employees may represent as many as 1,000, sepa-
rate job classes. They are clerks and carpenters, managers and mechan-
ics, welders and water biologists. But programmers, all those em-
ployees were subjected to the same, phony working test.

Instead of evaluating what pro-
bationers actually do on the job, city departments rate all their new hires on a universal trait-list. Such as rat-
tings violate civil service rules; they violate federal EEO (equal opportu-
nity) guidelines; and they violate common sense. Moreover, based on a comprehensive re-
view of court cases, probationary rating used in city departments would not survive legal challenge.

In city service, the probationary period is not as working test... The job performance of newly appointed employees is not measured against established, job-related standards, employees routinely pass probation, achieve permanent status and gain property rights to the city jobs — all without having been fully tested. That, dumb-down the civil service system and wastes tax dollars.

If city leaders don’t understand the need to install modern selection practices—if they don’t understand the need to adopt a “productivity through participation” approach to performance management—Heaven Help those leaders! And, if Angelesans don’t understand they need to send city hall a message demand-
ing these changes, heaven help us all!

Samuel Sperling
Monterey Park

Destroying the Workers’ Rights

Adolph Hitler started his march to power, much the same way our governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin is attempting to destroy the working people’s rights to collective bargaining.

If Governor Walker is successful in ripping bargaining rights away from the unions, then he will have accomplished a big step in his doctoral power, that he seems to thrive on.

Walker, appointed industrialist Krupp to help him build a war ma-
chine. Walker has power, like the Koch brothers in his corner, as he goes about financing his phony scheme. Maybe he should have started by keeping the Wisconsin state tax structure in place. Right now, Walker has a Republican major-

ity and is in the driver’s seat to expand his influence to many special interest groups.

Nazism Spreads

In 1933 the Nazis burned the Reichstag (parliament) Building and Hitler immediately blamed the communists. Shortly after he per-
suaded Paul Von Hindenburg (Presi-
dent of Germany) to sign a law for the protection of people and the state. The law wiped out all indi-

vidual rights in Germany and al-

lowed Hitler to jail anyone without a trial.

The attack on workers rights is spreading from Wisconsin to other states, where other anti-worker gov-

ernors are using their power, along with anti-union majorities in state legislatures.

Have His Way

I’m sure that Gov. Walker, like Hitler, has had his way in get-
ing power. Their likeness continues forward to clearer weather, warmer temperatures, and probably lots of wildfires this year. As always, nature treats us to its annual prom-

ise of renewal.

Harbor Community Clinic is also looking forward to a renewal. We are coming to the end of a very long renovation project, and with that end, a new beginning. HCC will soon have 11 new patient exam rooms giving us the ability to serve thousands of new patients, very low-income and uninsured people and families who would otherwise go without healthcare services.

Harbor Community Clinic’s mission to provide primary and pre-
ventive healthcare services, regard-

less of a person’s ability to pay, has far-reaching effects on the commu-
nity. On any given day we may have to send city hall a message de-


The local publication you actually read              April 24 - May 5, 2011

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community actions may be enough, and if started now, could be executed in time to be stabilizing in a given place. What is happening in the Transition movement is the recognition that community is what matters most.”

Here in Southern California, Transition LA (TLA) functions as a “local area hub” which supports the growth of “pods” based on existing organizations, geographical neighborhoods, or specific topics, such as food, transportation, etc. There are seven active pods with two more in formation, according to local leader Joanne Poyourow. “I’d say the most important thing that TLA has accomplished so far is that we even exist, despite the naysayers.” Her Westchester pod’s accomplishments include building two prominent food gardens, “in a neighborhood which used to prohibit front-yard vegetables” and that “we are working with LAUSD and the mayor’s office to build one of them”; also that “we have gotten mainstream, non-‘alternative’ people to attend things like solar cooking workshops and tours of urban chicken coops; that our speakers have been invited to the Rotary Club, Loyola Marymount University, and Cal Poly Pomona. To us, these are indicators of very widespread change.”

Closer to the Harbor Area is Transition South Bay, which was established in 2009, according to organizer Carolyn Miller. For Earth Day, they’re also partnering with local government—the City of Manhattan Beach—to present “BAG IT!”, a documentary that examines our society’s use of plastic. The group got its start screening documentaries, “building awareness” Miller said, “then formed a community garden at a middle school in Redondo Beach.” Currently, they’re “working on getting one going in Manhattan Beach.”

There is a definite psychological dimension involved in the Transition movement, as suggested by talk of “oil addiction” and “global warming denial.” There’s even a chapter in the Transition Handbook titled “How peak oil and climate change affect us—Post-petroleum stress disorder.”

In a sense, Transition activists are a progressive mirror-image of the decades-old survivalist on the far right—a response to perceived societal breakdown. But unlike survivalists, they turn to community, to existing strongholds of civilization, looking to make them more civilized.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: (a) Harbor Direct Unlimited, 749 W. 26th St., San Pedro, CA 90731. County of L.A. Registered owner(s): Erwin J. Fleckstein, 749 W. 26th St., San Pedro, CA 90731. This business is conducted by an individual.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on March 10, 2011. Notice-in accordance with subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Business Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner.

A New Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner.

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Citizens have the most power to access, and participate in, government at the local level, yet this is where they participate the least.

Let's work together to change that. We want to hear from you.

Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council meets on the Second Tuesday of each month at POLA High School. Dinner is at 6:00 p.m. and the meeting follows promptly at 6:30 p.m.

For information visit or call: CentralSanPedro.org 310.919.8650

### All Government Is Local!

**Your neighborhood council is here to represent you.**

If you live, work, attend school or own property in central San Pedro, we need to hear from you. What issues are important to you? What needs to be fixed? If you don’t tell us, we won’t know. Representative government only works when elected officials know what their stakeholders want their government to do—or not do. It’s easy to get involved. Come to our monthly meeting and tell us what you think. Work on a committee. Tell your friends to come. Go to our website and take our survey letting us know what issues matter to you. Contact us on our Facebook page. [centralsanpedroneighborhoodcouncil].

### Do You Need Help With:

- Street Services • Crime & Graffiti Problems • School Issues • Senior Citizens • Development

We know how to navigate the city bureaucracies and can help solve some problems fairly quickly. CSPNC can advocate on your behalf on a large number of other issues that affect our community everyday. Representatives of local government bodies report at every meeting and take questions from stakeholders. Sometimes a solution is found at the meeting or soon after. Come, see, and participate in your local government.

### Free Public Boat Tours in May!

**Every Saturday in May**

May 7, 14, 21, & 28 • 11:30 a.m. & 1 p.m.

Berth 77, Ports O’Call Village, San Pedro

Seating is limited. Reserve your seat today!

(310) 221-4717 • www.portoflosangeles.org
an expectant mother, so that she and her unborn baby get the best possible care for the long-term health of the child; or provide many other services important to the health and well-being of local residents.

Over 76% of our patients live at less than 100% of the Federal Poverty Level ($22,350 for a family of four); another 19% live between 100 and 200% of the FPL. These people have few other options for healthcare and utilize HCC for routine preventative care, the occasional illness or monitoring of chronic conditions.

I hope that you will consider sending a donation to Harbor Community Clinic to help us serve the less fortunate.

Michelle Ruple
Executive Director, Harbor Community Clinic
San Pedro
began improving the linkage between its renewable energy plans and its financial plans. According to the controller’s report, the Department’s “plan” for achieving the 20 percent level was accomplished by incurring renewable energy costs with little discussion on the impact to the ratepayers.

Compromise Budget Bill: Gray Wolf Doosy
Washington, D.C.—The budget bill passed by Congress cutting $38 billion in federal spending, also included several noteworthy policy changes, including taking gray wolves off the endangered species list in five Western states.

The wolves will be removed from the list in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Utah, something many environmental activists oppose.

Congress has never previously taken an animal off the endangered species list directly, an act that bodes ill for many environmentalists that worry about the undermining of the Endangered Species Act.

There was also a rider that cut the funding for the establishment of a Climate Service at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a program intended to provide data regarding climate change.

Pay Your Fair Share B of A

Members of San Pedro Neighbors for Peace and Justice demonstrated outside of Bank of America April 18, the last day to file income taxes. The local protesters joined in on the nationwide uproar over a report recently revealing that Bank of America paid no federal income taxes for a second straight year and has reported a tax benefit of nearly $1 billion. According to a Charlotte Observer article published in March 2011, the Charlotte, N.C.-based bank’s annual reports indicated state, local and foreign income taxes totaling about $1.9 billion for 2010. Under U.S. law, BofA and other American corporations have been able to save on taxes by keeping profits made in foreign operations invested abroad. Photo: Zamná Ávila.

The Green Promise® designation is Benjamin Moore’s assurance that its environmentally friendly coatings meet and exceed the strictest industry standards, while also delivering the premium levels of performance you expect from Benjamin Moore.
INSECT WALK
AT THE BIXBY MARSHLAND

Join Biologist Emile Fiesler
as he shows and explains insect life at the marsh.
Learn about beetles,
dragonflies, butterflies, and more!

SATURDAY, MAY 7
10 a.m.
BIXBY MARSHLAND
Near the intersection of Figueroa Street and Sepulveda Blvd., Carson

For more information or to RSVP, please call 562-908-4288, Ext. 2303