

LOCAL NEWS

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Rescuing, reusing Navy sites in Long Beach

LONG BEACH PRESS TELEGRAM
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Schools, homeless center OK'd

By Neil Strassman
Staff writer

LONG BEACH — A new high school and middle school, a Job Corps center and facilities for the homeless will take the place of Navy housing in West Long Beach, Navy and city officials announced Wednesday.

The Navy property, 101 acres that was formerly the Savannah-Cabrillo Navy housing project, was transferred to other federal agencies, which will now make the land available for reuse. The

land is north of Pacific Coast Highway and west of Santa Fe Avenue.

It is the first Long Beach Naval Station land to be relinquished by the Navy since the station was ordered closed in 1991 by the federal Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

Navy and local officials praised everyone involved in the land transfer for working together and not delaying the reuse of the military property.

"Any of the groups interested

in the land could have held up the process," said Capt. Robert Kiesling, head of the Navy's base closure program on the West Coast. "It's the first transfer of Navy land from any base closings on the West Coast, and it shows a good cooperative attitude among the city, the Navy and the individual users."

Rep Steve Horn, R—Long Beach, who is now leading the fight to save the Long Beach Naval Shipyard from closure, called the land transfer "a huge

PLEASE SEE SAVANNAH/B3

SEPERATE ARTICLE UNDER SAME HEADLINE

Save Our Shipyard spurs action

By Neil Strassman
Staff writer

LONG BEACH — The local campaign to save the Long Beach Naval Shipyard and keep it off the federal base closure list has moved into high gear with a plea for community support included with this month's gas bill.

"Since 1942, we have benefited from the presence of Long Beach Naval Shipyard as a waterfront industry. Now, its future is threatened by the federally mandated base closures,"

wrote City Manager James Hankla on a card stuffed in the gas bill envelope.

Gas customers who want to support the yard have been asked to fill out the card and send it to the Southern California Save Our Shipyard committee, which will then send them more information.

The shipyard, with about 3,200 workers, barely survived the 1993 round of base closures. Shipyard supporters, who fear the yard will be on the list of mil-

itary bases to be closed in 1995, are already lobbying hard in Washington, D.C., and now they are organizing support at home in a big way.

"The response has been great," said Bill Gurzi, SOS chairman. "It shows that there's interest in the shipyard and a strong feeling in the community to take responsibility for trying to save the shipyard."

Gurzi said he hopes to be able to expand the SOS committee to include many more volunteers

PLEASE SEE SHIPYARD/B3

SAVANNAH: Schools, jobs, homeless

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payoff for the city ... a textbook example for the nation on how to conduct the base closure reuse process."

The federal Department of Education has been given 62 acres, which it will later transfer to the Long Beach Unified School District.

A pair of badly needed schools will be built on the west side site.

"We've been hoping for this for many months," said Dick Van Der Laan, district spokesman. "The timing could not be better."

The school district plans to build a 44-acre high school by fall 1998 and an 18-acre middle

school to open later. At least 2,500 students would attend the high school; Van Der Laan did not know the projected size of the middle school. Both campuses would ease overcrowding in a district that has grown steadily over the past decade.

RTA Blurock, a Costa Mesa architecture firm, has agreed to design the two schools. The company has worked on several Long Beach school sites, including Alvarado Elementary School, the Wilson High School science building and the future Jackie Robinson Elementary School.

The federal Department of Labor will get 13 acres for the development of a Job Corps center to help teach young peo-

ple the skills needed to enter the work force.

The federal Department of Health and Human Services will get 26 acres to turn over to Christian Outreach Appeal, a local homeless services provider. COA will provide transitional housing and family support services for homeless individuals.

No decision has been made on a proposed California State University/Long Beach research and training facility to be built on 30 acres of adjacent Navy land, said Kiesling.

The university's proposal is on hold, pending a decision on a similar research park proposed for land at Fort Ord, an Army base closed near Monterey.

SHIPYARD: Rescue effort gets results

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from the community.

"More cards have come back on this stuffer than on any similar piece sent out with utility bills," said Dave Elder, a special assistant to Hankla. More than 500 cards have been returned.

"We know that this is the last round of base closures for a while. We know it's critical that the community be mobilized to show support for the shipyard," said Elder.

Mayor-elect Beverly O'Neill said in a letter she sent to city business leaders inviting them to a July 12 meeting on the shipyard that "a fully coordinated community effort" is needed, if the yard is to be saved.

The final list of bases to be closed will be released by the Department of Defense early in 1995, and the base closure commission is expected to make its final decision on which bases to shut in June.

To volunteer

To contact the Southern California Committee to Save Our Shipyard, write to SCSO, 330 Pine Ave., Suite 100, Long Beach, CA 90802 or call (562) 967-8272.

Seal Beach Naval Station to cut 232 workers by Nov. 18

Special reports
SEAL BEACH - The Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station will reduce its work force by 232 employees as part of a planned naval personnel reduction, the Navy said Monday.

Currently, there are about 500 civilian workers at the base, and base spokesman Joe Orvedson, adding that the reduction is scheduled to

be completed by Nov. 18. A number of incentive programs are being offered, including one that provides a \$35,000 bonus. "Decision will be made by Nov. 18," he said.

As of Tuesday, 60 have accepted the incentive, and he is still considering their offers, Orvedson said.

Another 15 people are taking early retirement, he said.

Naval Station commissary will be open until Sept. 1995

The Navy has officially agreed to keep the commissary open until Sept. 1995, but the base's population and the thousands of military

depend on the area. The commissary's future will be decided in funding from one year to the next, said Pete Skjott, the commissary manager's spokesman in Virginia. "As long as that location proves it can handle the business, and we want to keep it open and get the funding to do so, we'll keep it open."

The old hangar, the large base department store where the new drug (seal) hospital pharmacy was relocated, is also expected to remain open through the next year.

The commissary was originally slated to be closed this September, along with the naval station. The Defense Comptroller Agency decided

to keep the store open to serve the active duty population and the thousands of military dependents in the area.

The commissary's future will be decided in funding from one year to the next, said Pete Skjott, the commissary manager's spokesman in Virginia. "As long as that location proves it can handle the business, and we want to keep it open and get the funding to do so, we'll keep it open."

— Neil Strickland

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