

EasyReader

Letters, Part I

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Best of the post office

Dear ER:

Its spring, the garden is budding and it seems time for your Best of the South Bay picks. Let me suggest a new category: Best of the South Bay Public Servants. Please accept my nomination of the staff of the Manhattan Beach Post Office.

Why? Well for one thing, in recent memory none have appeared scowling at the Torrance Court House. They are almost without exception the most genuinely pleasant people to toil for the public good.

A second reason. Well unlike a few other public servants, our local postal people do not invest in TV and Radio ads to remind us, in case you might forget, that they are doing their jobs as best they can. They did run an ad modestly noting that they will work until 7 p.m. to serve our needs — if only Hermosa's City Hall could offer as much.

If a third reason is needed, well consider that while the public may offer a carrier a free-will gift for the holidays, I challenge ER to name a soul to have received a crystal tchotchke from any postal employee.

Less you conclude that all of the postal service deserve equal acclaim consider this: a. Unlike Redondo, the Manhattan Beach staff bravely conduct business face to face and have yet to blame the occasional misstep on that evil scapegoat- "the substitute" or "the consultant" or like ilk; and finally b. Unlike Hermosa, there's reasonable parking — at the risk of alerting the parking patrol, even a Hummer may loiter at Manhattan Beach Main. It's time for the Easy Reader to lift off the proverbial bushel basket so that these fine folks' light may at last shine.

Rob Combs

Manhattan Beach

No "Middle" ground

Dear ER:

In Miyo Prassas' letter (March 23) the possibility of using "Pier Ave. Middle School" is again raised as an option to the new construction of science labs, multi-use gymnasium facilities and the Library/Media Center at Hermosa Valley. This has been discussed numerous times over several years of extensive community meetings and workshops. After careful consideration the Board chose not to do so for several reasons.

First, the School District does not own the site. The Hermosa Beach Community Center is owned by the City. The School District can make only very limited claims to the use of the auditorium, gymnasium and tennis courts per the Lease Agreement.

Secondly, the existing rooms do not meet minimum state standards for classroom size, it is not ADA compliant (lacking ramps and an elevator for student/parent/teacher access), the gym is substandard, there is no library, multi-purpose room or lunch area, and electrical systems for handling state-of-the-art technology and telecommunications hookups are virtually nonexistent. And that's just for starters, along with the additional administrative and maintenance costs that would be required. There are currently no state matching funds available to make this happen, Measure J funds cannot be used, and the District does not have other funding sources to acquire the site even if it wanted to.

Our students deserve the best. Frivolous lawsuits, construction delays and escalating costs have made this extremely difficult. By voting "YES" on Measure A in June, voters will finish what 65% said they wanted with the passage of Measure J in 2002, and much, much more at Valley, View and North school sites. It's a continuing investment in our children's education and in our community.

Lance Widman,

Hermosa Beach School Board