

**MY TURN**

'Tis the Season

For politicos, we have just entered the Holiday Season.

After the summer political doldrums, Labor Day represents the First Day of Christmas, with the following weeks full of parties, fundraisers, flyers, forums, and cigar mixers. And just like Christmas, I typically leave this time of year broke, tired, bloated and hung over.

As we get closer to the Holy Day (Election Day), the more intense these things will be. Soon my mailbox, email inbox, and voicemail will fill. Every time my blackberry buzzes at 11 p.m., although she knows better after going through the Primary Elections with me, my girlfriend will still give me a suspicious look.



BY JACK WU

But darling, don't worry; it's only Meg Whitman explaining to me why Jerry Brown is a knucklehead, or perhaps an email from the Van Tran for Congress Campaign reminding me that I haven't sent in my pledge money...

For the past month, it's been one fundraiser after another, most of them held in Newport Beach, but ironically, most of them for folks not on the ballot for the Newport Beach voter.

To start September, there was a fancy lunch at the Pacific Club for Rep. Dana Rohrabacher with special guest South Dakota's US Sen. John Thune. While Rohrabacher used to represent lots of Newport Beach, only a very select few up in Santa Ana Heights get to call him their own now. In attendance were many of the Newport Beach moneyed elite...and me. Sen. Thune is rumored to be a potential presidential candidate in 2012, so it was pretty neat to meet him (and get a picture, too).

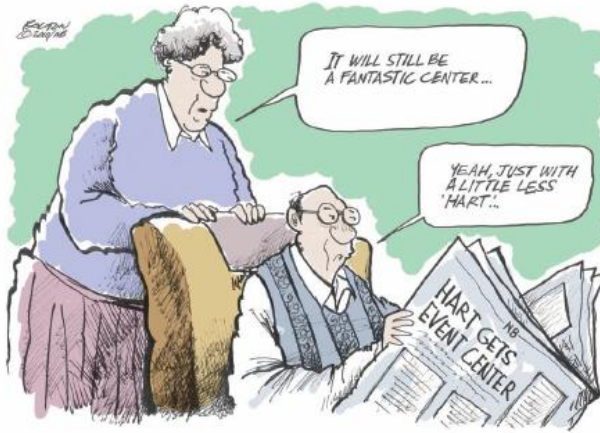
Then I went to a Breakfast fundraiser at the Balboa Bay Club for Assemblyman Van Tran, the Republican nominee for Congress running against Hugh Hefner's favorite congressman, Rep. Loretta Sanchez. In attendance were some of Newport Beach's finest, yet not one in Newport Beach can vote for him.

Next was a Kick Off fundraiser for Kevin Muldoon held at Muldoon's (no relation) in Fashion Island. Kevin's running for the South Orange County Community College District to replace 70<sup>th</sup> Assembly District nominee Don Wagner. Doesn't sound familiar? It shouldn't. This district has Saddleback College and Irvine Valley College. In attendance were Newport Beach Mayor Keith Curry, Councilmember Leslie Daigle, Council candidate Ed Reno, and political consultant/deity Dave Ellis, amongst other Newport Beach attorneys, wealthy donors, and me. Blink twice and I would have thought I was at a Newport Beach-centric event. But most of the people there couldn't

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# Forum

COMMENTS, RANTS AND RAVES



CARTOON COURTESY BY STEVE BOLTON

**INBOX**  
EMAIL TO EDITOR@NEWPORTBEACHINDY.COM

At our September Parks, Beaches and Recreation Committee meeting, one item on the agenda was a recommendation to the City Council on renaming the soon-to-be-reopened Oasis Senior Center.

The center has undergone a total renovation during the past 16 months and a virtually new facility will reopen to seniors next month. As with any project like this, fundraising was a key to getting the project off the ground and completed. Evelyn Hart, former Parks, Beaches and Recreation commissioner, councilwoman, mayor and Citizen of the Year was instrumental in the fundraising drive and a force behind getting the project completed on time.

Few people in Newport Beach are as respected as Evelyn Hart, and I suspect that had someone other than Evelyn been out in front of this effort, the facility might still be in the planning stages.

I have served on the Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission for more than seven years and I received more e-mail and telephone calls over this issue than any other we have addressed. The list of those issues includes banning smoking on the beach, restrictions on the uses of Corona del Mar State Beach, removing trees from neighborhoods and dog parks to name just a few. Those who contacted me were evenly divided for and against adding Evelyn's name to the Oasis Senior Center.

Those who want to see Evelyn's efforts

recognized have been advocating that the Oasis Senior Center be renamed the Evelyn Hart Oasis Senior Center. The issue was taken directly to the Mayor, and of course, his response, though unofficial, was positive.

Then, the idea became the topic of a newspaper editorial. After that, those who have a long history (approximately 30 years) with the Oasis Senior Center became concerned that this "train had left the station" so to speak, and began to voice their concerns as to whether or not adding Evelyn's name to the Oasis Senior Center was appropriate.

The point here is that there had yet to be any dialogue between the important constituency groups (i.e. the Friends of Oasis Senior Center and the City who owns and manages the facility) on the issue and it had already become divisive.

It seems to me that there could be a lesson learned here to avoid a sensitive issue like this being placed on a Parks Beaches and Recreation hearing agenda for a recommendation to the City Council in the future. First, had those who supported the idea of adding Evelyn's name to the Center, done some research on existing city policy for naming buildings after individuals, they would have been alerted to the significant challenge before them. Before asking the Mayor's opinion, had they asked the opinion of constituency groups associated with the

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**HOW TO CONTACT THE CITY COUNCIL**



Keith Curry Mayor curyk@plm.com  
Michael Henn Mayor Pro Tem mhenn527@hotmail.com  
Leslie Daigle Councilmember leslieidaigle@aol.com  
Nancy Gardner Councilmember gardnernc@aol.com  
Steve Rasansky Councilmember parahdigm@aol.com  
Ed Selich Councilmember edselich@roadrunner.com  
Don Webb Councilmember dwebb@newportbeachca.gov

**PUBLISHER**  
THOMAS H. JOHNSON  
TOM@NEWPORTBEACHINDY.COM

**EDITOR**  
ROGER BLOOM  
ROGER@NEWPORTBEACHINDY.COM

**SPORTS EDITOR**  
BRIAN LICHTERMAN  
BRIAN@NEWPORTBEACHINDY.COM

**SOCIETY EDITOR**  
LYNN SELICH  
LYNN@NEWPORTBEACHINDY.COM

**STAFF WRITER**  
SARA HALL  
SARA@NEWPORTBEACHINDY.COM

**COLUMNISTS**  
CINDY CHRISTESON, JILL FALES,  
JIM FITZPATRICK, CHRIS TRELA,  
MIKE WHITEHEAD, JACK WU

**EDITORIAL CARTOONIST**  
STEVE BOLTON

**DESIGN / PRODUCTION**  
ARTEPT@FIREBRANDMEDIAINC.COM  
**ART DIRECTOR**  
SONIA CHUNG  
**GRAPHIC DESIGNERS**  
AISHA HAKIM  
ALLIE PARMENTIER

**OFFICE MANAGER**  
LYNN COOK

**ADVERTISING & CIRCULATION:**  
TEL: 949 675-4639; FAX: 949 675-4655

**ADVERTISING SALES**  
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TINA LEYDECKER

**MAILING ADDRESS:**  
2865 EAST COAST HWY., #320  
CORONA DEL MAR, CA 92625  
TEL: 949 675-INDY (4639);  
FAX: 949 675-4655  
WWW.NEWPORTBEACHINDY.COM

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