

'Common sense' growth in HB

I am not sure who wrote the editorial supporting new housing development on the Beach-Edinger Corridor, but I bet the person doesn't visit regularly, or live in, the immediate areas of Edinger and Goldenwest, or Edinger and Beach ["HB needs more housing," Opinion, March 23]. If the editor did, they would know that on Saturdays and Sundays in the neighborhoods around Goldenwest College, when the swap meets are in session, that people park in these neighborhoods, jaywalk across the streets and leave their trash everywhere. Try driving on Goldenwest between noon and 5 p.m. from Heil to Bolsa and see how long it takes to travel that short distance, or try driving on Edinger from Edwards to Beach Blvd. Try driving on McFadden from Edwards to Beach, or McFadden to Gothard to Center and the Bella Terra. This existing traffic is bad enough. It is bad enough on weekdays, but especially bad on weekends. So now, the editor is going to support building 1,375 residential units on Gothard between Heil and McFadden (a three block area)? Are all the people in these new residences going to stay at home all day Saturday and Sunday? Of course not! Are they all going to walk to their destinations of choice? I don't think so.

I am not against new building in Huntington Beach, but how about having some common sense? The Bella Terra has some nice restaurants, movie theaters, shops and a Costco. These businesses draw in a lot of people, and I will not begrudge them their right to make a profit. Neither will I begrudge those who buy and sell their wares at the Goldenwest swap meets on the weekend. However, building 1,375 new residential units in an already crowded small area



BOB ENGLEHART, CAGLE CARTOONS

with limited parking and heavy traffic makes no sense at all. Do the right thing and support no additional building of residential units on Gothard between McFadden and Heil.

Frank Wissel
Huntington Beach

Having previously served on the Huntington Beach Planning Commission for 22 years, I was not opposed to well-planned high density projects that met common sense standards. The project at Beach and Ellis is a perfect example of a poorly designed project. Built to the sidewalk, no landscape and poorly designed parking. One hundred units to the acre is overkill. Visualize 200 cars trying to leave the parking garage to access Ellis. There is no project that warrants 100 units to the acre. The city needs to set a limit of 60 units or less to the acre with standards like adequate parking and landscaping. Putting development on a fast track creates problems when street improvements are not in place. An example is the 405 South one-lane ramp at Edinger and Beach. A second lane is needed. Cars are now backed up from Beach and Ed-

inger to Gothard. Huntington Beach can meet development goals and be a city for current and future residents without creating Downtown L.A. housing.

Tom Livengood
Huntington Beach

PLANNING FOR SLUMS

We need more anti-slum planning. There are no jobs for the expected tenants of the enormous high-density housing that already has made an unsightly mess of what used to be a beautiful beach town. Haven't 4,000 jobs recently left HB? Like the New York and Chicago tenements that had been sold a few times, the people who could, fled the high crime and disease. Is the expectation that HB will become a bedroom community for other towns with our always-increasing traffic jams and lack of parking? Will new tenants want to live in a town where patients die in ambulances stuck in traffic, police and 911 are useless, and there are typically 30 mattresses on the floor of one-room apartments? Not likely. Other nearby towns can offer civilized living, and that is where the solid citizens will go.

Joseph Mastropaolo
Huntington Beach

INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED FIRST

"Huntington Beach needs housing" is like saying drug addicts need money. Huntington Beach has an addiction to public-sector spending. Addictions are expensive. Huntington Beach needs to kick the addiction and allocate resources to infrastructure.

It is inevitable that Huntington Beach will grow - we have the best weather in the world. The city infrastructure is at maximum capacity. Take a look at Beach Boulevard. It is a five lane parking lot.

We need to divert money away from public sector spending and build a big city. We need safe bike paths across town, overhead pedestrian crossings and a real mass transit system. Huntington Beach was named after the railroad magnate Henry E. Huntington. We should bring back his Red Line.

We need to transform our sleepy surf town into an awesome Surf City.

Tim Cully
Huntington Beach

No clemency for Bergdahl desertion

As a highly decorated Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam war, I do not want to see any kind of plea deal with Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl ["Bergdahl charged with deserting army," Nation, March 26]. Any deal other than a general court martial would be a dishonor to every veteran who has ever put their life in harm's way for their fellow warrior. You want to see the all-volunteer military service collapse? Go ahead and cut a deal with this guy. I don't think you would find many veterans recommending the military to any relative as a result.

Bill Ring
Mission Viejo

BERGDAHL SHOWS PRESIDENT'S INEPTNESS

This unsurprising outcome underscores just how inept this president is, this time with regard to foreign affairs, in at least two ways.

First, our long-held doctrine of not negotiating with terrorists was intended to prevent further kidnappings. Once the bad guys know there will be no deal, and further, that they've become targets of the fearsome

SEALS,

taking our

people becomes a lot

less interesting. As

with Osama bin Laden,

we've shown we can,

and will,

go anywhere

to "get our man." Until

this president

came

along, they knew that kidnapping

just didn't pay. He changed that for the worse.

Second, trading five of theirs for one of

ours reminds one of the old line - "there's a

sucker born every minute." For a president

whose use of the word "fairness" is

prolific, making this deal was plainly

ludicrous even if Bergdahl had been a model

soldier, which he clearly was not, a fact

Obama knew at the time. But he made the

deal anyway. Facing the likelihood of life in

prison, one wonders if even Bergdahl is

happy about the deal.

It is this kind of poor judgment that

underlines the resistance of many in

Congress and Israel to his deal-making

with Iran. He has shown he has no ability to

understand the greater good and the

consequences of his actions. Nor does he

seem to care.

The problem here is not that Obama is

inept. It was clear that candidate Obama

had no experience of any kind to qualify

him for the job; we knew that, and elected

him anyway. It is our fault. If his first term

wasn't enough to convince us, surely the

second is. But as he pointed out, "the

election is over, and I won." Well, Mr. President,

the midterms are over, and you lost.

Start acting like it.

M.J. Knudsen
Trabuco Canyon

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Now I have heard it all about Sgt. Bowe

Bergdahl, who deserted his post in

Afghanistan during combat and was

supposedly captured by the Taliban. It

has taken many months for the Army

brass to determine that this guy

deserted. If the facts are true, and

that six other army soldiers died

looking for this deserter, he should be

stripped of his rank, with full loss of

pay, and sentenced to Leavenworth

prison for a long period of time.

This president and his administration

released five Taliban terrorists from

Guantanamo Bay for Bergdahl that

are now trying to get back into the

fight against our soldiers in the field

of battle. If there were ever a

presidential election that was

important, it is 2016. This country

will not be able to take another

four years of a so-called "progressive

movement." We seem to be

alienating our allies overseas,

and in the Middle East, in an attempt

to appease our enemies.

The president's claim for the

Bergdahl fiasco is that, "We don't

leave our troops behind." While that

is true, the fact is, Bergdahl

left his troops behind.

Tony Barone
Huntington Beach

HOW WILL OBAMA HEAR OF DESERTION CHARGES?

Will Obama now tell us (again) that he just found out about it - "like the rest of us" - while reading the newspaper and watching the television news?

Catalina Eddy
Garden Grove

Jews continue Obama support despite Israel

The back and forth comments between President Obama and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel don't appear to be abating anytime soon. The uncharacteristic dressing down of a staunch ally of this country seems best likened to that of a peeved youngster having a temper tantrum for not getting his way. The public manner of Obama's late congratulatory call to the prime minister, widely disseminated to the media, demonstrates the significant lowering of support for Israel and its leader. It further displays the inability of two strong personalities to significantly reduce their vitriol. Republican Senator Marco Rubio of Florida gave a speech before congress on March 19. His admiration of the democratic Jewish state situated in a hotbed of inflamed Middle East tensions was something every previous president had given, with the possible exception of Carter.

One must conclude that Obama is 100 percent confident of not losing the overwhelming Jewish support the Democratic Party has been accustomed to having for far too many years. Speaking as a Republican Jewish person, I cannot fathom why Jews blindly subscribe to whatever rhetoric the Democratic Party promotes, especially when it comes to Obama excoriating Israel and its leadership. A solid Republican I am not. Being for abortion and women's rights does not endure me to what has become the far-right conservatism of the party. But, it is evidently clear Obama may not be the Christian he professes and retains the Muslim background of his father's family. This is evidenced by his outward respect for Israel's mortal enemy Iran and its Shia population. While waiting for the outcome of his proposals to Iran for not becoming a nuclear armed nation, which may come to fruition by the end of March, Israel's pulse is palpably beating at what it sees as this country selling them out.

Barry Wasserman
Huntington Beach



JOHN DARKOW, CAGLE CARTOONS

RATTLESNAKES NOT ONLY TRAIL DANGER

The other day, near the Ridge Road entrance of Crystal Cove State Park, my girlfriend jumped four feet back after nearly stepping on a rattlesnake, which, thankfully, gave her a very loud warning. We then watched in awe as the fat, reddish brown serpent slithered off the trail into the sagebrush.

This letter is meant to serve as a cautionary tale to our fellow hikers, but not about rattlesnakes. There is something far more dangerous to hikers in Crystal Cove State Park: Mountain bikers. At least rattlesnakes, unlike Crystal Cove's mountain bikers, give hikers a warning if they get too close.

I've hiked and mountain biked throughout Los Angeles, Northern California and the Rocky Mountains, but never before have I encountered such discourteous mountain bikers as I have in Orange County. Generally, in other places, mountain bikers will ring a bell as they approach a hiker or shout "To the left!" Or, at the very least, slow down. Not in Orange County, apparently. If my girlfriend's rattlesnake encounter had occurred as one of these silently speeding mountain bikers approached, I fear what could have happened. Fast-moving metal is not kind to human flesh.

On the day of our hike, the trail was filled with hikers, some of whom were pa-

rents with their children and people who appeared to be retirees. I watched in horror as mountain bikers, traveling at about 25 mph, weaved in and out of pedestrian traffic without warning.

If such behavior continues, a serious, perhaps even fatal, bike-versus-hiker crash is bound to happen. Maybe the solution is to install a trailhead drop box full of reusable bells that mountain bikers are required to wear to let hikers know they're approaching, a practice I've seen on certain trails in Santa Barbara County. Or, if that's too much to ask, how about Orange County's mountain bikers cease being jerks before they give all of us who love the sport a bad name.

Walt Cook
Newport Beach

PRESIDENT BROWN?

Rarely does Jerry Brown make the wrong call, but when he says he is too old to run for president, he's off base. There's such a thing called wisdom, and it comes with age. The older you get, the smarter you become, especially when it comes to really big-time issues, the kind which are coming to the fore on a national scale - oil, immigration, climate change, foreign policy, the economy and, of course, potable water. Jerry's old enough to have melted his idealism into some pragmatism, and perhaps that's just what we'll need.

Harry Rocky
Laguna Woods

HOW TO SEND US A LETTER

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