



A Message From Our President Don Williamson

Dear Members:

While driving around Corona, with the summer winding down, we are beginning to notice an increasing number of campaign posters for many candidates and state ballot initiatives. Election Day will arrive very quickly with this election cycle having an increased importance because it includes a presidential contest. Do not however discount how crucial the contest for two City Council seats is to the future of Corona.



The demolition of Corona's Carnegie Library is seen here in April 1978. The site has remained an empty field ever since. Photo is courtesy of the Corona Public Library.

In the history of Corona, the results of local elections have been critical in determining the town's policies and development. Many of the circumstances that exist in Corona today were largely do to decisions made by city officials. The names of most who have governed here are lost to time but the results, good and bad, of their terms in office remain for citizens to live with in perpetuity.

From a CHPS perspective, Council decisions that ended poorly in the past fifty years are the urban renewal project that ultimately ended most business conducted downtown and the destruction of the Carnegie Library on Eighth and Main. With the planned expansion of the 91 freeway through Corona scheduled to occur in the next few years, there will be more options to be considered that may affect historically significant elements of Corona.

In this issue, we asked each of the six individuals currently seeking a seat on the Corona City Council to discuss there views regarding some issues that are important to all of us as members of the CHPS.

The responses that each contender provided are included in this newsletter. Please read what they had to say and thoughtfully consider the responses. Each

of these candidates is accessible so you are free to contact them directly with any additional questions or concerns. What happens in Corona depends upon the decisions and abilities of those that we elect, so vote accordingly.

We thank all who attended the tribute to Frances Martinez on the occasion of what would have been her 100th birthday. CHPS was pleased to co-sponsor this event with the Martinez family. More details will appear in the Nov-Dec 2012 CHPS Newsletter..

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Plan to attend our Quarterly Meeting on Saturday, September 22 at 10:00 a.m. Renowned Riverside County historian and columnist for the *Press-Enterprise*, Steve Lech along with Nancy Wenzel, will be presenting "Movies Made at the Mission Inn". Their program will include details on the entertainment industry's utilization of the historic Mission Inn as the backdrop for their projects. The Quarterly Meeting is to be held in the Community Room of the Historic Civic Center, 815 W. Sixth Street, Corona.

Remember to check this newsletter for the status of your membership with CHPS. Dues support our projects and efforts to maintain our town's beloved remnants of the past.

September 9, 2012 marks the 99th anniversary since the first Corona Road Race around Grand Boulevard. Keep an eye out as events to celebrate the centennial of this historic event develop in the months ahead.

September 9 is also the date that California joined the United States in 1850. So give a wave to our state star on every American Flag you see that day to mark our 162nd year in the Union.

Sincerely,
Don Williamson



Next Quarterly Meeting: "Movies Made at the Mission Inn"

Steve Lech and Nancy Wenzel will be providing a presentation of **Lights, Camera, Inn-Action**, the behind-the-scenes story of movies shot at the Mission Inn and nearby Riverside. The two have spent months locating these gems from the past and selecting just the right film clips for your viewing pleasure. Come prepared to be entertained for the morning! It will be more than worth the investment of your time.



membership to come prepared to groan and laugh – these movies aren't Hollywood's best!!"

Steve is a prolific local history writer on Riverside County topics and will have his books available for purchase and signing.

Nancy Wenzel is the former Curator of History for the Mission Inn Foundation.

When: Saturday, September 22 at 10:00 a.m.

Where: Community Room of Historic Civic Center
815 West 6th Street, Corona

Light refreshments will be served

Steve Lech writes: "In short, we've known of these movies for quite some time. However, only now did I have the tools to put them into a PowerPoint presentation complete with clips and stills. You should tell your

Our Tradition Continues: Holiday Party & Annual Meeting



The magnificent Woman's Improvement Club of Corona, built in 1913, will once again be where our yearly Holiday Party festivities and Annual Membership Meeting will be held.

Date: Thursday, December 6, 2012 from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Location: Woman's Improvement Club of Corona
1101 South Main Street

Please set this date aside so that you can join in the spirit of the Holiday Season with other members of the Corona Historic Preservation Society. We always enjoy great camaraderie, a delicious meal and musical entertainment provided by Corona High School's Madrigal Choir.



Our Preservation Grant Program

The CHPS Grant Committee along with the Board of Directors of the Corona Historic Preservation Society would like to assist local homeowners in making necessary improvements to their historic homes.

We will process any application within 60 days after submittal. Once a grant has been approved and reimbursement limits established, funds will be made available upon completion, inspection and onsite final approval.

Take this opportunity to do some fixing up and have part of the material cost covered by CHPS. Remember we are interested in helping people beautify their homes for others to see, so applications are primarily for curb appeal projects.



If you have a place that you feel needs help, either your own or a neighbor's, please feel free to contact Chairman Mark German (951) 500-2767 or send him an E-mail at <mgerman@ca.rr.com>. He will help in any way possible to provide the information you need.

Grant applications are available at the Community Development Department at Corona City Hall, 400 South Vicentia, and at the Heritage Room of the Corona Public Library.

More information and grant applications can be downloaded from our Website:
<<http://corona-history.org/grants.html>>

Please share this information with others!

City Council Election Information

Five questions pertaining to historic preservation issues were sent to all six City Council candidates in August so that their responses could be incorporated into this issue of the CHPS Newsletter. We express our deep appreciation to the five candidates who took time out of their busy schedules to respond. This process is to help you, our members, in making your decision as to whom to cast your vote in the upcoming election on Tuesday, November 6, 2012. *Responses are printed exactly as submitted.*

Please keep the candidates' stated positions in mind and PLEASE BE SURE TO VOTE!

QUESTIONS

- 1) Blighted conditions in Corona's central core continue. The tough economic times we continue to experience at all levels have contributed to the statewide elimination of economic development departments. With tight or limited funding, what ideas do you have for revitalizing homes and yards within "The Circle" to protect its historic resources?**
- 2) What is your opinion of the establishment of a Cultural Heritage Board as in Riverside, or a Historic Commission as in Norco, to oversee proposed changes to all properties currently considered as historic resources on the City of Corona's Heritage Inventory and Local Landmark list?**
- 3) When the city's ambitious Downtown Redevelopment Plan was adopted in 1998, many decisions were based on outcomes that have never materialized. What are your thoughts on whether the Downtown Plan should be revisited, updated or corrected?**
- 4) With the statewide elimination of redevelopment agencies, there is now city-owned space (property) inside the Grand Boulevard Circle and elsewhere to which historic homes could be relocated and saved from demolition. What insights or ideas do you have on this situation and what solutions can you offer to ameliorate the problem?**
- 5) With the city's motto "To Cherish Our Past, To Plan Our Future" in mind, what specific actions do you intend to take to preserve Corona's historical resources and heritage for future generations?**

Candidate Kevin Button's Responses

- 1)** We need to work together as a community to take care of our heritage. City leaders can help rally community groups to volunteer time to help maintain yards and property in "The Circle". We need to see more community involvement in our city and I believe we can accomplish this goal with strong leadership on our City Council.
- 2)** I believe a Historic Commission would be a great way to build community support for projects and to draw the community closer to the historical heritage we have in Corona. We cannot allow any more of Corona's history to vanish as it has with previous councils.
- 3)** I would like to see the Downtown Plan revisited. Without a Redevelopment Department we would need to create a citizen committee to work with developers and business owners, so we can create a consensus on the plan and acquire buy in from the Downtown area. It will be a lot of hard work, but if we create a vision for the area and build coalitions in the city to where everyone is working towards the same goal, I know we can build a new Downtown.
- 4)** I would like to see as much history in Corona saved as possible. We would need to work with developers to devise a plan that would grant the land at a reasonable price so the houses could be relocated and properly restored. Once again, community involvement in these decisions is vital to build awareness of Corona's historic past.
- 5)** We need to build community awareness of our historic past. I think projects like the Historic Home Tour are a great way to accomplish community awareness. Also, projects that celebrate our past are needed to teach our citizens about our history. As a member of the Parks and Recreations Commission I support community events like the 100th Anniversary of Corona's Races. This is an outstanding event that will teach Corona residents a great deal about the early years of Corona and the races we hosted on Grand Boulevard.



City Council Election Information *(continued)*

Candidate Aaron Hake's Responses

1) I believe a back-to-basics approach can start moving downtown and the entire city in a positive direction with regard to aesthetics and "curbside appeal". Simple things like prioritizing tree trimming and maintenance, sidewalk repairs, and code enforcement can establish a tone in our neighborhoods that we take pride in Corona and want it to look good. This is a constant theme I hear from Corona residents when I knock on their doors. Proper maintenance of the public right-of-way should encourage private homeowners to do the same. However, government can only do so much. I believe residents must carry much of the responsibility for assisting one another and holding each other accountable to maintain high standards for private property. Finally, I believe the city can do a better job of setting specific architectural standards for development adjacent to and within "The Circle" to enhance to the historic character of downtown, thereby adding momentum to homeowner's sense that investment in maintaining their properties is worthwhile. The City must lead by example.

As a former board member of the Corona Historic Preservation Society, I provide my commitment to be an advocate within City Hall for preservation, promotion, and enhancement of Corona's oft-overlooked rich history and culture.

2) I support increasing opportunities for citizen participation in our local government. I've surveyed surrounding cities and found that Corona has one of the fewest opportunities per capita for residents to serve in advisory positions in city government. This must change. American government is of the people, by the people, for the people.

A new body to oversee the city's historic and cultural assets is an idea that I am willing to seriously consider as part of a comprehensive review of all areas where additional citizen input would be beneficial. I believe the City should welcome the expertise and perspective of those who are focused on preserving and enhancing Corona's history. Civic engagement is a sign of a healthy democracy and a strong community. As Chairman Pro-Tem of the Corona Planning Commission I have taken seriously my official role to oversee historic preservation in Corona. I have met with members of CHPS regularly to consult on specific issues. I also voted against a modern architectural scheme for a new building on Grand Boulevard, expressing my strong desire for architecture that reflects the historic character of downtown.

3) I believe Corona's Downtown Specific Plan should be reviewed through an open, inclusive community process in the very near future. Three recent events drive the need for the city to take a fresh look at its vision for downtown: (1) Elimination of Redevelopment Agencies by the State of California; (2) the SR-91 Freeway widening project and related improvements; (3) Grand Blvd's designation as a national historic place.

We live in an economy that is drastically different than what existed in 1998, the last time the downtown plan was updated. It is a basic business practice for any organization to constantly review and update its plans to reflect and adapt to the changing environment. Stagnation of our downtown has been a civic concern since I moved to Corona in the 1980's; there is no reason why the City's plans should stagnate also. I want to see the City Council lead an effort to define what we want our city's future to look like; one cannot separate downtown from our future.

While city government cannot reform downtown single-handedly, the City Council should provide decisive leadership in the areas it can to lay the foundation for a downtown that lives up to its potential. This is one reason why I am running for City Council.

4) Elimination of redevelopment agencies requires the city sell all of its property holdings, including properties in downtown. Unfortunately, the City has very little control over who acquires these properties if a reasonable offer is made. State law places decisions regarding the city's unloading of redevelopment properties in the hands of Sacramento bureaucrats. Candidly, providing land for the relocation of historic homes will likely continue to be a matter settled by private parties. However, the city should remain vigilant to opportunities to connect and facilitate property owners who could benefit from these types of arrangements. I am happy to listen to further ideas from CHPS and property owners regarding approaches that could save historic homes.

5) This question highlights the underlying theme of my campaign: building on our rich history and progress to raise the bar and plan for a city that is thriving for decades to come based on the assets that made us great in the first place. My specific efforts will be as follows:



City Council Election Information *(continued)*

A) Focus on the Downtown Specific Plan. I will work with my City Council colleagues and the Planning Commission to initiate an inclusive review of downtown plans that takes into account recent game changing impacts to downtown, economic reality, and a long-term vision for what we ultimately believe downtown should be.

B) Increase opportunities for direct citizen engagement in city decision-making.

C) Support CHPS efforts to bring Corona history curriculum to schools, the Library, and other public places to more closely acquaint residents with our rich history.

D) Support the City's and CHPS's efforts to commemorate the centennial of the 1913 Road Races on Grand Blvd. Moreover, I believe this event should become an annual tradition that brings Corona's automotive history full circle, connecting our past to our present can provide a significant boost to our economy through tourism and business attraction which will only brighten our future.

Of course, I cannot do this all on my own. However I know I have the leadership and collaborative skills to move the ball forward. I will work hard to build consensus with my colleagues on the City Council, residents, businesses, and great civic organizations like CHPS. Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions and share my vision for leadership on Corona's history and culture.

Candidate Dick Haley's responses

1) Pride - By having the Parks and Community Service Department work to maintain the trees and parks within The Circle; and Public Works maintaining the streets within The Circle, we can instill pride and encourage property owners to improve their own properties. There are many lovely homes that are owned by the elderly who have neither the funds nor the ability to maintain them. Service clubs, such as the Rotary Clubs and others, all have service projects. We could encourage them to participate in The Circle Wide service project to improve and maintain some of these properties. We have had service clubs work with homes in disrepair in the past and they can do that again.

2) Oversight - The Corona Cultural Heritage Board must be convened to establish benchmarks as to what properties actually qualify for Historical Property status. This 501c3 organization could be comprised of local people who have a sincere interest in the Preservation Historical Landmarks. It would also take an inventory of sites as well as add new sites that qualify. It would give direction and guidance to service clubs so that the home would be restored to their original style and quality. It could work with the city's zoning and building department to insure the integrity of The Circle and other zones that qualify.

3) The Churette - The Downtown Redevelopment Plan was done 14 years ago. Our city has grown immensely since that time. That study is now out of date with the Corona of 2012. We must begin anew, have a vision, establish goals, instigate a timeline for completion and begin an action plan to bring back Corona.

4) City Owned Property - Agreements could be made with The Corona Cultural Heritage Board, the City of Corona and the historic homeowner. An agreement could specify that the homeowner would have the home relocated to city owned property within the guidelines as established by The Board. If all those requirements were satisfied, the city could deed the property to the house owner at a pre-negotiated amount. This would encourage more historic structures to be relocated into the Historic Zone of Corona.

5) To Cherish Our Past, To Plan Our Future - I grew up in the greater Boston area. This is where one may see The Old North Church, walk into Fanuel Hall, and board Old Ironsides. I value our past and see the importance in preserving it for the future. This is a complex issue that can be and quite frankly must be attained. We must have a vision for our city. The Circle may be the best place to start to establish the Corona Historic Park. This area can be the jewel in Corona. It will be a destination point for visitors, a reason to get off the 91 to stop for lunch in a revitalized Downtown, a focal point to encourage businesses to come to Corona. Citizens can drive to library then walk to a number of boutique shops and eateries. We can bring back the hometown of yesteryear! The vision must be clearly communicated to the City of Corona, the business community, the service clubs and most importantly to the citizens who may not be aware of the heritage of our fine hometown.

This is a worthwhile goal for the citizens of Corona, the business community, the City of Corona and it is the right thing to do!



Candidate Joseph Richards' responses

1) I have lived in several big cities where it has seemed like "pave-it-all" was the mentality. Back when the 91 Freeway was constructed, "the Circle" began to suffer economically. Admittedly, when I chose to make Corona my home, it was not the historical sites that attracted me. I have always been an outdoors type, and I was thrilled to be so near the Cleveland National Forest. However, since I moved to Corona, I have seen several examples of how such a beautiful natural resource can be slowly chipped away. The same goes for Corona's historic circle. Progress was the likely mentality behind the tragic demolition of the historic Carnegie Library. The future was a fast food franchise that does not appear to have ever been built. As a council member, I will be mindful not to welcome change in the name of progress at the cost of Corona's history and cultural heritage. It would not be fair to the people who have lived here, or the people who will make their future here.

2) I am not opposed to the idea of an historical society board establishment, whether on a volunteer basis, case-by-case basis, or full-time government-sanctioned basis. Ultimately, a City Council is responsible for the actions of such a delegation. Therefore, I can appreciate the delicacy of the decision to essentially entrust the "right" people with the capacity to influence the future of the face of the city. My job as a Member of the City Council would be to listen with open ears to the advocates who have devoted their time, tirelessly, to preserving the history and character of Corona.

3) The Downtown Plan of 1998 appears to have been merged into a much broader and farther-reaching Redevelopment Plan. I encourage city residents to visit the following websites:

<http://www.discovercorona.com/CityOfCorona/media/Media/REDD/CRZ%20Documents/12_Redev-Plan_Final-5-31-11_1.pdf>

<[http://www.discovercorona.com/CityOfCorona/media/Media/REDD/CRZ%20Documents/15_RTC-Appendix-A-Implementation-Plan-\(5-31-11\).pdf](http://www.discovercorona.com/CityOfCorona/media/Media/REDD/CRZ%20Documents/15_RTC-Appendix-A-Implementation-Plan-(5-31-11).pdf)>

If elected to City Council, I would work to ensure the Redevelopment Agency responsible for the Redevelopment Plan is looking out for the best interests of Downtown Corona.

4) According to the current Redevelopment Plan, the estimated cost of the Historic Home Relocation project is approximately \$30,000. "The Agency acknowledges the importance of preserving historic residential structures and provides assistance in the form of a rebate associated with costs related to the relocation of these structures." It is apparent that with limited funds, and qualified land use, historic home relocation must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If it turns out that the highest and best use of a parcel of land is historic home relocation, then my answer to your second question could potentially result in a viable solution to the question of precisely what the Circle City should do with the empty lots.

5) Specifically, if elected as a Member of the City Council, I would work with Corona government, businesses, utilities, and residents of the City of Corona to ensure the Redevelopment Plan advances the best interests of future generations. Corona has a cultural heritage worth preserving. I hope that I can be a part of the preservation of Corona's cherished past. I hope that I can incorporate that ideal into Corona's future.

Candidate Jason Scott's responses

1) The situation regarding revitalizing homes and yards within Grand Blvd. has been discussed for a period of time. Encouraging homeowners and property owners to care for their individual homes is the challenge, but certainly not exclusive to this area. I support any non-profit organization efforts, including CHPS, to promote pride and improvements by homeowners for homes needing it. I would gladly assist with such efforts.

I wonder whether the residents in this area whether homeowners or renters view the historical significance of their homes as others do. They may see their homes as just the place where they live. It is likely they have no idea that CHPS members or others see their homes from a historical perspective.

2) Presently, the City and CHPS have an excellent relationship through dialogue and collaboration. This current system allows the CHPS Board and City personnel to communicate and work through any items that might arise. I am aware of this from my ten years of serving the community.

CHPS represents this interest very effectively and does an excellent job of communicating whereas another group using various appointed community members, who may not be CHPS members, might not have the same insight and knowledge we currently find.



