



[HARBOR HAPPENINGS]

Riding a wave, straight up



An unidentified "Jet Pack Pilot" took flight in the Redondo Beach Harbor last Wednesday.

PHOTOS BY AMYLYNNE HICKS.

by Chelsea Sektnan

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's a man with a jet pack in the Redondo Beach harbor.

Late Wednesday morning, a "Jet Pack Pilot" was spotted across the South Bay promoting Air, a new brand of carbonated water with alcohol. He started his jet-pack journey in the Redondo Harbor and was towed to both the Hermosa and Manhattan Beach piers to promote the alcoholic drink. Bystanders who saw the air-lifted man stopped in their tracks to snap pictures of the unusual sight.

"It's very much catching people off guard," said Air representative Charlotte Robertson. "Everybody's first impression



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is, 'what is this thing?' Then they obviously want to see if they can ride it."

Air founder Minott Wessinger decided to use a jet pack as a marketing device for his new product after seeing it in the water in Spain a year ago. The 30-pound jet pack, technically called a Jet Lev, can go up to 25 mph and up to 30 feet in the air. The pack is trailed closely by a boat that is connected to the pilot with a hose, which supplies water to power his lev-

itation. The pack can go for four hours and up to 80 miles. To buy one personally would cost about \$100,000.

"Both the water and the jet pack are pretty revolutionary," Robertson said. "We thought using the jet pack would help build brand awareness. The device in and of itself is pretty revolutionary."

The intentionally unnamed "Jet Pack Pilot" will be traveling the country promoting the product all summer long. He will also be at the Manhattan Beach Six Man event and may sponsor a team.

"The reaction has been absolutely incredible," said Robertson. "A lot of people have never seen a jet pack... It's just a great way to tell people what we're doing." ER

[WATER QUALITY]

Studies warn to check beach health before swimming

by Chelsea Sektnan

Two non-profit organizations, Heal the Bay and the Natural Resources Defense Council, (NRDC), recently released reports on the health of L.A County beaches. The NRDC gave Redondo beaches a low grade, while Heal the Bay announced a rise in water quality and average ratings for South Bay beaches.

According to NRDC, California was ranked 21 in beach water quality out of 30 states. The study indicated that nine percent of the beaches compared poorly exceeded national EPA stan-

dards. According to NRDC, this means that 1 in 28 swimmers could potentially become ill from contaminations in the water or on the beach.

"Because polluted runoff is the biggest known source of pollution that causes swimming advisories or beach closings, EPA needs to reform the national requirements that govern sources of polluted storm water..." said the NRDC release.

Of Heal the Bay's 441 beaches monitored, 407 beaches received a grade of A or B from their A-F system used to measure contaminations. That is a two

percent leap from the 2010-monitoring year. Seven of the 10 beaches that made the "California Beach Bummer" list are located in L.A. County. However, none of them are in the South Bay.

"In general, open ocean beaches with no known pollution sources have excellent water quality during summer dry weather, with a five-year trend of 98 percent A grades. In other beach types, such as storm drain impacted or enclosed beaches are more inconsistent," the Heal the Bay annual report

➤ See **BEACH GRADES** on page 25



For the latest updates on Redondo Beach news, City Council, crime, education and local happenings, follow @redondoreader on Twitter.





Dave Bond from the LA County Department of Public Health tests the water quality at the Redondo Pier in early June.

**PHOTO BY
CHELSEA
SEITMAN**

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Beach Grades

gave the south side of the Redondo Beach pier a year-round grade of B in the summer and C in the winter. One hundred yards south of the pier received a summer grade of B and a winter grade of A. Topaz Street north of the jetty and Sapphire Street both received A ratings during both seasons. Recently the scores have increased, and Heal the Bay rated the Redondo pier with an A+ and the Topaz jetty an A rating, in dry weather. Wet weather grades can vary greatly depending on storm runoff.

"On average the pier in Redondo has had problematic grades," said Mike Grimmer from Heal the Bay. "This year it got B during summer which seems to be an improvement."

Three Redondo Beach beaches were graded by the NRDC and were rated on a five-star basis. Only one, Torrance Beach, received four stars. The others located at the Topaz Jetty and the Redondo Beach pier earned only two stars, based on water-quality, monitoring frequency and public notification of contaminations. No beaches in the South Bay received a five-star rating.

"When there's storms there is big impact on water quality," said Kirstin James from Heal the Bay.

Those grades can change on a day-to-day basis depending on daily or weekly water quality tests done by the L.A. City Environmental Monitoring Division, the L.A. County Department of Public Health and the City of Redondo Beach.

► See **BEACH GRADES** on page 30

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[EDUCATION EMANCIPATION]

Rotary awards six scholarships

by Chelsea Sektnan

The Redondo Beach Police Officers' Association donated \$1,000 to the Rotary Community Foundation's annual Rotary Redondo Beach High School Scholarship Awards program. Six Redondo Union Students, Charles Angulo, Daniel Garzon, Jazzolyn Kelly, Angeline Lee, Wesley Pate and Joy Ohiomoba were each awarded \$1,000 scholarships by the program. "These are impressive students.

They are smart, motivated, inspiring and will, during their lifetime, be significant contributors to the world around us," said Ian Miesen, Chair of the Redondo Beach Rotary New Generations and a Redondo Beach Police Officer. "As a member of both Rotary and the Redondo Beach Police Officers' Association it is a great feeling knowing together we helped six great graduates from Redondo Beach pursue college opportunities." ER

[TOY STORY]

Scouts collect over 7,000 toys

by Chelsea Sektnan

Toys are getting a new life at Alta Vista Elementary School with the help of Daisy Girl Scout Troop #3845. The kindergarten, first and second grade girls, along with a local Brownie Troop collected over 7,000 toys over the course of the project.

The toys will be donated to a Toy Loan Program, a free service which allows children to borrow toys from a Toy Loan Center the same way they would borrow books from the public library. The toy loan project is a voluntary program sponsored by the L.A. County Board of Supervisors and the Department of Public Social Services.

Locally the closest Toy Loan Center is in Gardena at the Asian Service Center at 14112 S. Kingsley Drive. There are also loan centers in San Pedro and Long Beach as well as all over Los Angeles. ER



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY KRISTINA VUCHO.

Daisy Girl Scout Troop #3845.

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Beach Grades

Currently there is no system to indicate water quality to beachgoers while they are at the beach, but Heal the Bay is working with the L.A. County Department of Public Health to implement a system to indicate grades to beach goers that would be attached to lifeguard stands. "That's in the works and hopefully something that will come up soon," said James.

"It's important to check most recent data," said Grimmer. "Most beaches in California are safe to swim at, but checking is important."

Many beachgoers have also been reporting an uptick in plastic bags and trash in the water and on the beach. Because of L.A.'s recent ban on plastic bags, researchers hope less plastic will make its way into the water.

"A lot of plastic pollution has been documented by many researchers," said James. "By eliminating the source of this plastic pollution we can help improve our water body."

Hydraulic dredging by the Army

Corps of Engineers in Marina Del Rey to move 760,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment from Marina Del Rey to the Port of Long Beach, Dockweiler Beach and Redondo Beach for the South Bay beach replenishment project, has also been affecting short-term water clarity, but not contamination issues, according to Heal the Bay. Researches expect the water to clear once the dredging project is finished in September 2012.

To stay safe, Water Quality Scientist Amanda Griesbach recommends not swimming within 100 meters of discharge pipes no matter the grade.

"They tend to have higher levels of bacteria," said Griesbach. "Currently Redondo Beach is looking good, but that can change daily. It's really important for public health protection that the grades are as high as they can be."

Visit www.beachreportcard.org to view the Heal the Bay daily report card and www.nrhc.org to see a comprehensive analysis of California beaches.ER