



SCOTT VARLEY/MORE SAN PEDRO

Builders of the Vue, a planned 16-story glass condo tower, hold a foundation-laying ceremony at its location at Fifth and Palos Verdes streets.

# taking form

## 16-story Vue development helps build an economic renaissance

By Dennis Lim  
MORE SAN PEDRO

The site of the former Pacific Trade Center has been demolished, broken up into small pieces and hauled away. However, on Oct. 12, the first steps were taken toward constructing a 16-story residential tower in its place.

Galaxy Commercial Holding, the developer behind the project, poured the ceremonial first block for the high-rise building. The block, along with hundreds of pounds of concrete, will form the foundation of the Vue, downtown San Pedro's first high-rise residential building.

Those at the ceremony said the Vue, along with three other



COURTESY PHOTO

VUE/4 An artist's rendering of the Vue condominiums.



## ready for action

After being closed for more than a year, Bogdanovich gym sparkles at reopening.

18



## On the Cover

Photo illustration by Steve McCrank, More San Pedro

## MoreInside

Calendar	58-59
Chapman	11
Classified	61-70
Education	16
Home Guide	Inside
Letters	15
Littlejohn	13
Marconi	12
Sports	18
Tank Nelson	11

# more

## LOCAL NEWS

### Supporters will soon put light back in historic lighthouse

By Dennis Lim  
MORE SAN PEDRO

Missing for more than 60 years, the light that once illuminated the night at the Point Fermin Lighthouse may return as early as November.

The lighthouse has remained unlit since World War II. Fearful of a Japanese attack, the military blew out Point Fermin's light two days after the Pearl Harbor attack. In the process, it also removed the lighthouse's lens, took apart its electric lantern and built a sentry station in its once-luminous place, according to a history of the lighthouse from the San Pedro Peninsula Chamber of Commerce.

After the war, the light ended up in the hands of a private collector in Northern California who had refused to return the item, said Point Fermin Lighthouse's historical site curator Kristen Heather.

Sixty-five years after its removal, the lens and electric lantern will return to San Pedro thanks to a trip to the nation's capital by Heather.

After taking over as curator, Heather joined an exhaustive research effort already underway by the boosters of the lighthouse to prove the light belonged to Point Fermin.

However, instead of fruitlessly looking at local records as her fellow boosters did, Heather

decided to search through the much larger National Archives in Washington, D.C. There, she found records of the lighthouse dating back to its founding in 1874 and a 1912 photo of the lens and lantern, she said.

After studying the photo and the contested item, a lens specialist determined it belonged to the lighthouse. The Coast Guard, which owns the lighthouse and the light, will take possession of it within the next two weeks, Heather said. It will likely return to Point Fermin in November, but a full celebration won't be held until Dec. 16 to coincide with the lighthouse's 132nd birthday celebration.

"Everybody here is just immensely overjoyed," Heather said. "Everybody here has spent many, many years before I arrived trying to have the light returned home to San Pedro."

Not in working condition since its dismantling in 1941, no plans have been made to make the light operational, Heather said.

John Olguin, a large supporter of the lighthouse, first announced the light's impending arrival at a dedication ceremony for a large downtown development, the Vue, on Oct. 12.

"When that light is returned, that will be a great day for San Pedro," Olguin said. "Finally after decades of effort we will have our light back."

### VUE

FROM PAGE 3

residential developments already under construction downtown, will usher in an economic renaissance of the city's historic business district.

"Years ago, when we first started to look at how we improved downtown, the consultants we hired said, 'You need more housing,'" Councilwoman Janice Hahn said. "I agreed, and like downtown Los Angeles, we will see a revitalized core when these buildings rise. We are building 3,000 units to support the downtown businesses who have lived through the lean times and will see a reward."

When completed in 2008, the \$175 million Vue will have 318 units selling from \$300,000 to \$1.6 million.

It will provide views of the harbor, Palos Verdes Peninsula and the rest of San Pedro.

The 16-story building will take the place of the 11-story, Pacific Trade Center which stood vacant at the site for years. Sixteen pounds of explosives brought that building down in a rolling cloud of debris and soot in August.

Honorary Mayor Anthony Misetich said the Vue's unique glass exterior will make San Pedro's waterfront stand apart from other port cities.

"This will be a landmark in San Pedro," Misetich said. "People will see it from miles away either on the sea or on land and know they're close to San Pedro."

The single block of con-

crete used at the Oct. 12 ceremony will go on display at the Vue's sales office. It will likely be planted into the building's foundation after it is laid, said Kelsey Kazarian, a spokeswoman with the Vue project.

Within five months, construction on the actual structure will begin, said Gary Watts, senior vice president of Galaxy Commercial Holdings.

At the Oct. 12 ceremony, the developer also announced it will name the pool at the Vue after former lifeguard John M. Olguin, who started the Cabrillo Marina Aquarium, founded the Cabrillo Beach Fourth of July and was named Citizen of the Year by the San Pedro Peninsula Chamber of Commerce.

Olguin, 85, said he welcomed the honor and the development to his childhood neighborhood, noting that he grew up a few blocks away from the site of the Vue.

"Beacon Street used to be here, and it was a lively place in its day," Olguin said. "There were people on the street all the time — alcoholics, women of the night and me, a newspaper boy, standing on the corner."

Olguin said he would push the developer to open the private pool to the public during the summer months.

For now, the private pool will only be open to residents of the Vue and their guests, said Lauren Cohen of the development team with Galaxy Commercial.

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