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Desde la Logan: Our Focus on Barrio Logan for-the-Month “Wrap Up”

by [Brent E. Beltrán](#) on May 9, 2013 · [0 comments](#)

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By Brent E. Beltrán



In April many of us here at *San Diego Free Press* focused our journalistic efforts on my community of Barrio Logan. Twenty three articles were written about this vibrant, working class neighborhood.

They were stories that broke the old stereotype of Barrio Logan being a violent, gang infested place where people are scared to go to. I’m proud that our little website that could helped advance the image that Barrio Logan is a beautiful place to not only live but visit and enjoy.

On March 24 SDFP held a contributors meeting at Ryan Bros. Coffee on Main St. I have been working on the board of directors of the Barrio Logan Association with Tom Ryan, co-owner of Ryan Bros., and he was happy to allow us to use a private room at the coffee shop for our meeting. We had a packed space full of volunteer contributors to this site.

I had the honor of leading the segment of the meeting that focused on Barrio Logan. Prior to the meeting I created a list of potential story ideas that the writers could consider writing about (though everyone was welcome to come up with their own). My list of ideas focused on art & culture, quality of life, crime/justice, education, organizations, politics and food.

The first articles were published on April 2. They included an article entitled [Easter Celebration 2013 in Barrio Logan](#) by Alejandra Enciso Guzmán that focused on the first

community Easter at the recently opened Mercado del Barrio; my monthly column within a column Las Monthly Ondas event listing that focused on [Chicano Park celebrating 43 years](#); and Ernie McCray’s beautiful piece, [The Two Ends of a Bridge \(Seeking Environmental Justice\)](#), which told of the disparity between the two communities on each end of the SD-Coronado Bridge. It was a great beginning to our Barrio Logan month.



Veteran community journalist John Lawrence continued with a piece on the much needed opening of Gonzalez Northgate Market, [Barrio Logan No Longer a Food Desert: Gets Spiffy New Supermarket](#). I followed him on the same day with my Desde la Logan column, [San Diego Free Press to Focus on Barrio Logan this Month](#) (I kind of lagged and should have had it written and published on the last day of March!). This piece highlighted the fact that SDFP was turning our attention to Barrio Logan and touched on some of the articles that were going to be published during the month of April.

Annie Lane was next in line. Being the resident SDFP photographer she walked through parts of Barrio Logan after the meeting at Ryan Bros. and snapped away at anything that caught her eye. She published 48 of her photos in the column, [Field of View: Barrio Logan](#).

On April 7 I was back in action with a column called [West Coasting Tour Brings More Love to Barrio Logan](#). This piece was about a new mural by my friends Isaias Crow, Werc Alvarez and their painting partner Maxx Moses that went up across the street from Chicano Park on the side of La Central Market.



Bill Caballero Voz Alta

A few days later former journalism professor and trumpet player Bob Dorn pumped out the piece (which I helped edit, go figure!), [Jam Sessions with Bill Caballero at Barrio Logan's Voz Alta](#), which focused on the musical treasure that is the weekly Latin jam session coordinated by trumpeter Bill Caballero at the small art gallery Voz Alta Project.

Next up was the first of what we hope are many articles by Letitia Rogers, a Clairemont resident who learned to admire the community of Barrio Logan. Her piece, [I'm not Sure if I Adopted Barrio Logan or if It Adopted Me...](#), dealt with how she overcame the negative stereotypes of Barrio Logan and how she fell in love with the neighborhood and all it has to offer.

Then came the first of four food reviews by SDFP's resident food critic, Judi Curry. The first was a review of the Barrio Logan institution, [Las Cuatro Milpas](#). That was later followed by one on [Ryan Bros. Coffee, There Must Be A Magnet Pulling Me to Barrio Logan](#) which was about the San Diego Public Market, and then the final one near the end of the month on [Blueprint Café](#).

With Chicano Park Day approaching I sent a Facebook message to numerous artists, activists and professors asking them [What Does Chicano Park Mean to You?](#) They were happy to oblige and tell me.

Earlier in the month I tweeted the folks at the Environmental Health Coalition asking them if they would be interested in submitting an article regarding their proposal to update the Barrio Logan Community Plan (I had no interest in asking for an article from the toxic industries that are pushing a competing plan). They responded in the affirmative and submitted, [Barrio Logan Community Plan Update: Will It Address Community Environmental Challenges?](#)

The day before Chicano Park Day, John P. Anderson’s column SD For Free went live. And, since it was Barrio Logan month, he dedicated his column to the [Chicano Park Day](#) celebration. On April 20, Chicano Park Day, my wife Olympia Andrade Beltrán’s first (I hope of many) SDFP article went live. Her piece, [Drums Beat at the Heart of Chicano Park](#), gave an overview of the history of Danza Azteca and its significance to Chicano Park. On the day after Chicano Park Day Annie Lane published her second [Field of View](#) column on Barrio Logan. This one featured 54 photos from the previous day’s celebration. Chicano Park Day was well covered by SDFP!



Sigsbee at Harbor – Rail
Project Improvement
Sidewalk

Next came, in my opinion, one of the most significant pieces that was published during Barrio Logan month. It was John P. Anderson’s [Parts of Barrio Logan Have No Sidewalks – Does Anyone Care?](#) This article detailed the lack of sidewalks on Harbor Dr. between Cesar Chavez Parkway and the bridge that goes over the train yard towards the San Diego Convention Center. This is a very dangerous stretch of roadway for pedestrians who want to walk to the Embarcadero South and Seaport Village.

As someone who would like to walk there with his toddler in a stroller this issue is important to me. Since the article was published I have heard from District 8 Councilman David Alvarez’s office that there are future plans to add sidewalks. John P. Anderson and I have been asked if we’d like to attend meetings on the plan and possibly testify. We will and we’ll keep SDFP readers and Barrio Logan residents informed of any developments.

The same day that the above article was published Anna Daniels ran her column City Heights Up Close and Personal, [A Freeway Runs Through It: A City Heights-Barrio](#)

[Logan Conversation](#). Her column dealt with the parallels between her City Heights and my Barrio Logan.

As the month started to wind down SDFP’s Frank Gormlie sat down with [Victor Ochoa – Mural Maestro of Chicano Park](#). This profile detailed the early life and beginnings of one of San Diego’s greatest muralists and someone who has never strayed from his activist ways.

At the beginning of the month I sent an email to Councilman David Alvarez’s office asking if he’d be interested in submitting an article on Barrio Logan. Much like the one that fellow [Councilman Todd Gloria](#) turned in for North Park month. One of his representatives, Lisa Schmidt, responded that he would. And he did. On April 29, [City Councilman David Alvarez: How I See Barrio Logan](#), went live on our site. It details a little history of this community and some of the future projects that will happen.

The final article for Barrio Logan month was written by another San Diego Free Press newcomer, Avital Abooty. She’s the project coordinator for the Greater Logan Heights Community Partnership. Her piece, [What’s in a Name? Five San Diego Neighborhoods in Search of an Identity](#), details the struggle to find a unifying name for the five communities that make up San Diego’s historic barrio district.

As you can see San Diego Free Press focused a lot of our attention on the community of Barrio Logan in the month of April. More than any other media outlet in San Diego. But we are not finished. There are more articles to write and pieces to publish. Barrio Logan is a living, breathing community whose stories deserve to be told just as much as any other community in San Diego.

I promise to continue writing the vital stories of my community through the regular column Desde la Logan and other SDFP writers will continue to serve not only Barrio Logan but all underserved communities of San Diego. We are all volunteers so it may take awhile to get to every community but we are committed to making that effort.

We are already working hard to write pieces on this month’s chosen community, Golden Hill, and will follow that up with Clairemont (where I went to high school) in June. If you believe in our motto of Grassroots News & Progressive Views and you’d like to write about your community, send us an [email](#). We’d love to expand our reach and serve as many communities as possible.

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Brent E. Beltrán

Brent E. Beltrán is a third generation pocho that lives next door to Chicano

Park in San Diego's Barrio Logan. He's the former publisher of Calaca Press, is married to his dreaming heart watcher and is the proud father of a baby Dino-saur. He's an MMA watching junkie who likes to get his nerd on by viewing superhero and sci-fi movies/tv shows while he's not shouting at Republiklans for being blatant assholes and Democratras for being spineless chumps. He can be contacted via email at desdelalogan@gmail.com and through his Twitter account [@DesdeLaLogan](https://twitter.com/DesdeLaLogan).

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