



IN A

# Nutshell

No. 99

Official community newsletter of the City of Walnut Creek

MARCH/APRIL 2002

## City Council establishes goals for 2002

The year 2002 has all the hallmarks of being a benchmark for Walnut Creek as the City Council tackles several major needs and issues.

The Council will be grappling with:

- hiring a new city manager
- adopting a new two-year budget
- approving a new housing element
- initiating work on a new 10-year growth management plan, and

and

- beginning the process of updating the City's General Plan.

At its annual retreat on Jan. 11, the Council also discussed other goals for 2002, which include reviewing the City's tree ordinance and celebrating Walnut Creek's vast open space holdings with a special public event.

The first order of business, however, is

**COUNCIL GOALS, see back page**

## Could state budget crisis hurt WC?

By DON BLUBAUGH, City Manager

The City needs your help. You have doubtless read over the past two months about the budget problems facing the State of California. Without dropping a lot of numbers, let me suggest that the State's budget shortfall exceeds \$12 billion, due in large part to the shrinking economy.

The last time there were money problems in Sacramento, there was a raid on local government budgets to balance the State's budget. That loss

**FUNDING CRISIS, see back page**



City officials want to provide a place where skateboarders can practice their flip tricks.

## City studies options for skatepark

Three years after the City closed its only skatepark, officials are moving forward with plans to open a new facility in one of its parks.

The proposal of creating a skatepark was raised by several residents at last year's Community Conversations sessions. As a result, the City formed a Skatepark Task Force with representatives from the Park, Recreation & Open Space Commission, City staff, the business community, the Youth Council, and the Police Department.

The City's goal is to open the new skatepark by summer 2003, said Task Force chair Leo Harrod. Unlike the previous facility, the new skatepark would have free admission.

"It's an effort to create something for teens today," said Deputy City Manager Dolores Lendrum.

The task force has identified Walden Park or Heather Farm Park as the pre-

ferred sites for the skatepark.

"It's difficult to find a site," said Lendrum. "It must be easily accessible, centrally located, and visible from the street."

The new skatepark is envisioned to be 12,000-13,000 square feet in size with no-maintenance concrete ramps.

The previous skatepark, which was operated at the rear of Heather Farm Park from 1997 to 1999, used portable equipment that was deemed beyond repair.

In its first year, the skatepark attracted about 40 users daily. However, by the third year use had dropped to under 10 users a day. The City charged a \$4/day user fee.

After the City closed the first skatepark, it contributed \$25,000 towards the YMCA's regional skatepark that was opened in Pleasant Hill.

A final decision on where to build the skatepark is expected to be made later this spring by the City Council.

## City Event Calendar

### March

22-23  
**WC Seniors' 2nd Hand Sale**  
(See *What's Happening*)

23  
**MYOB Job/Career Fair**  
(See story on page 6)

30  
**Easter Egg Hunts**  
(See *What's Happening*)

### April

9  
**Spring Concert**  
(See story on this page)

20  
**Trail Day**  
(See story on page 5)

## City Meeting Calendar

**City Council\***  
March 5, 19; April 2, 16  
7 p.m.  
City Hall, 1666 N. Main St.

**Planning Commission**  
March 14, 28; April 11, 25  
7:30 p.m.  
City Council chamber

**Arts Commission**  
March 18, April 15  
4:30 p.m.  
Leshner Center for the Arts

**Transportation  
Commission**  
March 21, April 18  
7:30 p.m.  
City Council chamber

**Design Review Commission**  
March 6, 20; April 3, 17  
7 p.m., City Council chamber

**Park, Rec & Open Space  
Commission**  
March 4, April 1  
7 p.m., City Council chamber

\*City Council meetings are  
televised live on AT&T  
Channels 6 and 99 (Ch. 1  
on a cable box). Repeated  
the following Saturday at 1  
p.m.

**Walnut Creek Currents, a  
City-produced 10-minute  
video digest on City  
activities and services, can  
be seen seven days a week  
on AT&T Channels 6 and  
99 (Ch. 1 on cable box) at 6  
a.m., 9 a.m., noon, 3 p.m., 6  
p.m., 6:50 p.m.**

## Concert Band kicks off 15th anniversary with Spring Concert in April

Celebrating its 15th anniversary as the official band of the City of Walnut Creek, the Walnut Creek Concert Band will perform American music at its annual Spring Concert on April 9 at 8 p.m. at the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts.

Tickets are \$7 and are available March 11 at the Center Ticket Office or by calling 943-SHOW.

In 1987 the City Council selected the organization to be its official band to promote community identity and to enrich civic pride by providing free and low cost concerts to the community. Formal concerts are presented at the Regional Center for the Arts in April, August and December for a modest ticket price.

The band is also featured at PARKconcerts in Civic Park on Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, and at the Holiday Tree Lighting event. These concerts are



Harvey Benstein conducts the Walnut Creek Concert Band at a PARKconcert in Civic Park.

free and open to the public.

In 1998, Harvey Benstein became the Music Director and under his leadership the band has grown in popularity and depth.

The band comprises volunteer musicians from around the area and rehearses weekly at Walnut Creek Intermediate School. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Walnut Creek Concert Band, contact Benstein at 284-1583.

## What's Happening

### 'Kids Scene' brochure available

*Kids Scene*, a brochure listing popular City-sponsored summer activities and programs for youth ages 3-17, as well as for disabled ages 6 through adult, is now available. Registration for teen summer programs begins March 1; all other program registrations begin March 6. Call 943-5858 or find *Kids Scene* on the City's website at [www.walnut-creek.org](http://www.walnut-creek.org).

### Home composting workshops scheduled

Learn how to reduce your garbage by one-third or more by attending a free "Home Composting for Busy People" workshop in Walnut Creek. The 90-minute program will be held at The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Dr. on Tuesday, March 12 and Tuesday, April 9 beginning at 7 p.m. Reservations are required; call 906-1806. The workshops are presented by the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority.

### Ruth Bancroft Garden spring opening

Special tours will highlight the Spring 2002 grand opening of the Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1500 Bancroft Rd., on Saturday, April 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 210-9663 for information.

### Garden Faire at The Gardens

The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Dr., will host its third annual Garden Faire — Celebrating the Year of the Roses on Sunday, May 5, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., free. Hands-on activities for kids, exhibits, food, and music. Call 947-1678.

### WC Seniors' Second Hand Sale

The Walnut Creek Seniors' Club's annual Second Hand Sale will be Friday, March 22, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Saturday, March 23, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Civic Park Community Center, 1375 Civic Dr. A wide variety of items will be available, including clothing, books, furniture, collectibles, jewelry, and toys. Donations of these and other items may be dropped off at the Community Center on Thursday, March 21 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. All proceeds benefit the Walnut Creek Seniors' Club. For more information, call 943-5852.

### Bunny Breakfast and egg hunts March 30

Children can meet the Easter Bunny for a pancake-and-sausage breakfast and then go on an Easter Egg Hunt at Heather Farm Park on Saturday, March 30. The breakfast is \$5 and runs from 8 to 9:45 a.m. at the community center. Easter egg hunts will begin promptly at 10:15 a.m. at both Heather Farm Park and Larkey Park for preschoolers through 5th graders; Heather Farm is accessible for disabled children.

### Spring Art Days at Shadelands Arts Center

Children ages 4 to 10 are invited to celebrate the arrival and joy of spring during *Spring Art Days*, April 1-5, at the Shadelands Arts Center, 111 No. Wiget Lane. The program, sponsored by Civic Arts Education, groups students by age with activities appropriate to each group. Sessions will be 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The fee is \$20 per child per session. To register, call 943-5846.

# City Hall/Police additions to be ready in July

City employees expect to move into the new Police/City Hall additions this July as work continues at a brisk pace on the first phase of the project.

After employees are moved into the 35,000-square-foot expansion, work will begin on Phase 2, which calls for seismic retrofitting of the older buildings, new flooring, and general updating. Afterwards, some employees will be moved back to their original workstations.

## The Corners retail project

Developer Brian Hirahara hopes to break ground this spring on The Corners, a 33,000-square-foot office/retail development at the southwest corner of Main Street and Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

Pottery Barn for Kids will be a tenant in the new project that will also feature a courtyard surrounding a 200-year-old oak that the City required to be preserved in the rear of the property.

## EBMUD treatment plant

The EBMUD Board of Directors awarded a contract in January to improve



its water treatment plant on Larkey Lane in northwest Walnut Creek. District officials are working with the City and Contra Costa County to iron out specifics of the project.

Additionally, EBMUD is planning to begin work later this year on a new pipeline that will carry water through Walnut Creek to the San Ramon Valley. That project will require tunneling from the Civic Park ballfields to Newell Avenue.

## Main Street utility undergrounding

In February, PG&E resumed work to place overhead utility lines underground along North Main Street from Civic Drive



Architect Hans Baldouf's rendering of The Corners office/retail project, which will be built on the southwest corner of Main Street and Mt. Diablo Boulevard to replace the existing building (at right). The 200-year-old oak tree shown in the rendering will be preserved in a new public courtyard.



to the BART tracks.

# WC garbage rates go up 5% in March

Walnut Creek residents will be paying an additional 59 cents a month for weekly curbside garbage, recycling, and green waste service beginning March 1.

The Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority approved the 5 percent rate increase on Jan. 31. The rate will increase from \$11.79 to \$12.38 a month for 32-gallon waste cart service.

It was the first rate increase since 1996 for Walnut Creek residents.

# Reserve seats now for City Bus Tour

Some of Walnut Creek's most precious landmarks will be visited on the next City Bus Tour set for Saturday, April 20.

City Public Information Officer Brad Rovanner will lead this 3 1/2-



Shadelands Ranch Museum will be a stop on the tour.

hour excursion, which starts at 8:30 a.m. Stops along the way will include historic Old Borges Ranch, Shadelands Ranch Historical Museum, The Gardens at Heather Farm, Lindsay Wildlife Museum, and the Diablo Valley Lines Model Railroad.

Tickets are \$10 per person and must be reserved in advance by phone. Seating is limited. To reserve up to four tickets, call (925) 256-3505 and leave your name, address, phone, and number of tickets.

# How you can participate in public process on projects

There are many ways citizens can participate in the planning process for new developments within Walnut Creek. Following are tips on how you can become part of the process:

- To find out about new projects that are on the horizon, read the *Nutshell* and local newspapers or check the City's website at [www.walnut-creek.org](http://www.walnut-creek.org).
- The City Council meets the first and third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.; meetings are televised live on Channels 6 (Channel 26 in Rossmoor). Agendas are posted the previous Friday on the City's website. You may also obtain a City Council agenda by calling the City Clerk at 943-5818.

The website also posts agendas for

the City's five commissions: Planning, Design Review, Transportation, Arts, and Park, Recreation & Open Space.

- To comment on a development proposal, citizens may do so in writing, by phone, or in person. To send a letter, mail it to City Hall, 1666 No. Main St., Walnut Creek, CA 94596. E-mails may be sent to [manager@walnut-creek.org](mailto:manager@walnut-creek.org) and they will be directed to the appropriate person for response.

To speak with someone in the Community Development Department, call 943-5834.

To make comments in person, citizens may address a commission or the City Council during the appropriate portion on the meeting agenda.

# Park It here

## Another 1,200 parking spaces to be available in downtown

With more stores, restaurants, and movie theaters opening up in downtown Walnut Creek in the next year, the City has made sure developers provide ample off-street parking for the public.

When the dust settles this year on two new downtown retail projects — Plaza Escuela and Olympic Place — another 1,224 free parking spaces will open up, bringing the amount of downtown public off-street parking to nearly 5,300 spaces (that doesn't include individual parking lots on store property, such as Barnes & Noble and Ross, or metered parking lots such as the library and the City-owned lots on Main and Locust streets).

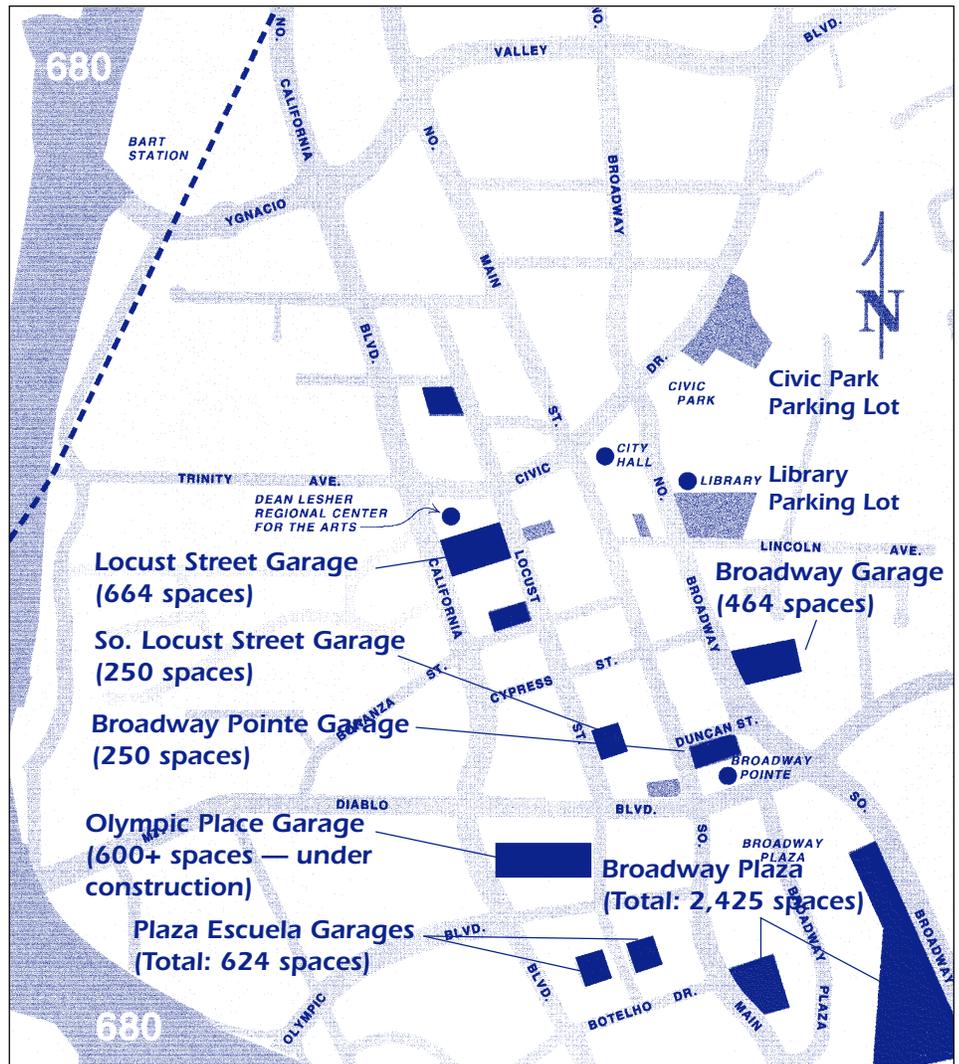
Broadway Plaza and Broadway Pointe already offer a total of 2,625 free parking spaces to its customers.

Additionally, the City of Walnut Creek operates three public garages with a total of 1,378 spaces (see box at right).

There is usually always parking available on the upper floors and roof at the municipal garages, and the Free Ride shuttle, a free service subsidized by the City, stops at both Locust Street garages.

The City last fall conducted a downtown parking study to measure the supply of current downtown parking and the public usage, as well as to identify additional areas where parking might be needed. The results of the study will be presented to the City Council this spring.

One more thing: Feeding parking meters can result in a parking ticket, so use a public garage and avoid the hassle.



## For off-street parking, try a City public garage

### Locust Street Parking Garage (664 spaces)

1625 Locust Street (next to the Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts)

**Hours:** Monday—Friday, 5 a.m. - 1 a.m.; Saturday, 7 a.m. - 1a.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. - 1 a.m.

### Broadway Parking Garage (464 spaces)

1390 No. Broadway (at Cypress Street)

**Hours:** Monday—Friday, 6 a.m. - Midnight; Saturday, 7 a.m. - Midnight; Sunday, 8 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

### South Locust Parking Garage (250 spaces)

1350 Locust Street (between Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Cypress Street)

**Hours:** Monday—Friday, 6 a.m. - 1 a.m.; Saturday, 7 a.m. - 1 a.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. - 1 a.m.

Parking is 50 cents/hour (up to a maximum of \$3) before 6 p.m. If parking for less than one hour, the rate remains 50 cents. Users entering a garage after 6 p.m. will pay a \$2 flat fee. Holiday hours for all three garages are the same as Sundays unless otherwise posted. Validated parking is available from many downtown businesses.



# Lime Ridge

## Eastern frontier haven for folks, various critters

First of a series

A golden eagle soars above the oak-lined ridge that separates Walnut Creek from Concord. A redtailed hawk quickly swoops in to stake his territory, and the two magnificent raptors perform an aerial ballet that is both graceful and menacing.

Welcome to Lime Ridge Open Space.

This 980-acre wilderness on the eastern boundary of Walnut Creek was the last of the City's four open space preserves to be opened to the public, but it has the potential of being the most popular.

Lime Ridge gets its name from the lime deposits that made the area a prime location for mining from the late 1870s until the late 1960s.

When City officials christened Lime Ridge Open Space on Nov. 15, 1997, it was the first time the public was given the opportunity to explore Walnut Creek's final frontier. In addition, Walnut Creek oversees about 200 acres of the preserve that belong to the City of Concord.

Lime Ridge rounded out Walnut Creek's other open space recreation areas: Shell Ridge, home to the Old Borges



Ranger Tracey Walker surveys the view of Mount Diablo from Lime Ridge Open Space.

Ranch (1,420 acres); Sugarloaf, off Rudgear Road (177 acres); and Acalanes Ridge, off Pleasant Hill Road (179 acres).

### Walnut Creek Open Space: Our Local Frontier



#### Lime Ridge Open Space

980 acres

Open sunrise to dusk

Entrance: End of Valley Vista Road

"It's a natural island in a sea of urban development," said Open Space Ranger Tracey Walker, who oversees Lime Ridge.

Indeed, increased housing development in Concord to the east and Rancho Paraiso to the south has created new problems as homeowners find themselves face-to-face with myriad creatures who have made their home on Lime Ridge for tens of

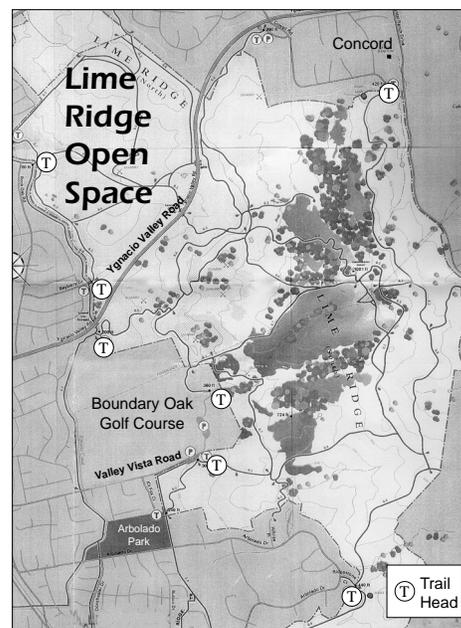
thousands of years.

Lime Ridge is populated by mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, and raptors that have been known to feed on domestic pets. A variety of snakes, scorpions, and spiders also are neighbors.

Walker notes, however, that the biggest problems aren't creatures — but people. Illegal activity such as youths shooting animals and off-road vehicles tearing up the trails are among the chief challenges facing the City as it attempts to make Lime Ridge a haven for resident creatures and visiting humans.

"It's important to honor and understand our past," said Walker. "We want to make sure contact with the environmental past continues."

Ranger-led hikes are available for groups of 10 or more. For more information, call Ranger Walker at 930-7731.



## Volunteers needed for Trail Day 2002

Join the City of Walnut Creek Open Space staff and other volunteers for Trail Day 2002 on Saturday, April 20.

Participants should meet at 8:30 a.m. at Arbolado Park on Arbolado Drive.

This year's Trail Day will focus on constructing a new link to Shell Ridge's Costanoan Trail.

No experience is necessary (Note:

this project is not for children under 12 and pets are not permitted.) Tools and shuttle to the site will be provided. Be sure to wear sturdy footwear and bring gloves, water, a hat, and sunscreen.

A thank-you barbecue for volunteers will be provided at noon by the Walnut Creek Open Space Foundation.

To sign up, call Supervising Ranger Randy Hawley at 943-5899 ext. 135.

## Teen job/career fair March 23 at Las Lomas

For the fourth straight year, the City will host the popular MYOB Teen Job Expo on Saturday, March 23 at Las Lomas High School.

This free event will be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the high school gym at 1460 So. Main St. It is open to all students.

Teen job seekers will find representatives from many local companies and non-profit organizations. Juniors and seniors who would like to learn more about majors leading to new, exciting, cutting-edge careers can meet exhibitors who work in these industries and pick up pertinent information at the expo.

MYOB, or Mind Your Own Business, attracted several hundred local high school students last year. More than 50 booths are expected to be available to participating businesses and organizations. Companies



High school students get to meet representatives of many local companies and non-profit organizations at the MYOB Teen Job Expo.

that want to register for a booth at this year's event may call Susie Baggot by March 15 at 646-5559 or register on-line at [www.walnut-creek.org/myob.htm](http://www.walnut-creek.org/myob.htm)

MYOB 2002 is co-sponsored by the Acalanes Union High School District and Las Lomas High School.

## WC citizens insist they want art & independent films

Based on the mail Mayor Sue Rainey is getting at City Hall, folks seem to be clamoring for an art/foreign film theater in Walnut Creek.

Ever since Century Theaters announced its plans two years ago to build a 14-screen cinema in downtown Walnut Creek, there has been great public interest in having the company dedicate one of those screens for the showing of art, foreign, and other independent films that can usually only be seen at cinemas in San Francisco or Berkeley.

In the November 2001 issue of the *Nutshell* we suggested people write to San Rafael-based Century Theaters to express their interest. Mayor Rainey and Mayor Pro Tem Gwen Regalia have also encouraged people to write City Hall with their comments.

As a result, more than 200 letters, e-mails and phone calls in support of the proposal have been received in the mayor's office. Among the messages already forwarded to Century Theater's president Ray Syufy are these:

— "Please have at least one theater devoted to art and foreign films," wrote Walnut Creek resident Carol Bilodeau. "This city needs it and the people will support it."

— "Yes. Yes. A thousand times yes, to having at least one screen for foreign and art films at the new theater in Walnut Creek. Build it and they will come!" wrote resident Michelle N. Landon.

In response, Nancy Klasky, vice president of marketing for Century Theaters, said in January that "we definitely will look at playing art and independent films at that theater."

She noted, however, that the company's commitment to do so will depend on the availability of those types of films and the support of the public.

"Since art and independent films aren't available at all times, we will play them as the bookers deem they will work well at the theater," Klasky said.

The new Century Theaters complex is expected to open following the 2002 holiday season at the northwest corner of Locust Street and Mt. Diablo Boulevard as part of the Olympic Place project.

### How to get rid of old TVs, computers, etc.

Did you know that 6,000 computers become obsolete and are put aside by Californians every day?

However, these lead-filled devices are prohibited from going to the landfill.

Pleasant Hill Bayshore Disposal has begun a fee-based curbside service that allows customers to dispose electronic devices that contain cathode ray tubes (CRT's), such as computer monitors,

scanners, TV sets, and some camcorders.

There is a \$25 fee for each item collected, which pays for disassembly and removal of hazardous materials.

Customers may also recycle up to three items of electronic waste that don't contain CRT's (e.g. printers, keyboards, and personal computers) for a fee of \$5.

To schedule a pick-up, call 603-1144 Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.

## Signs: What you can and can't do

There are literally tens of thousands of signs in Walnut Creek, and because of their proliferation around town the City has adopted rules in its Municipal Code to govern what is and isn't permitted.

Most of the signs you see are legal, otherwise they wouldn't be there. However, signs are illegal if posted on trees, utility poles, benches, fences, living vegetation, or any object in the public right-of-way.

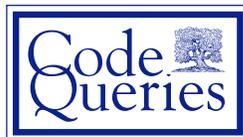
Political signs may be posted on private property with the owner's permission. Temporary banners and grand opening banners may only be used with Planning Division approval. Permits can

be obtained at the second floor counter at City Hall.

Real estate "open house" signs are limited to no more than four directional off-site signs, no more than three feet tall.

They're permitted in the public right-of-way when adjacent to property lines so they don't interfere with normal vehicle or foot traffic. They're not allowed on any part of the

public roadway, including center dividers and traffic islands, but they're OK on private property with the owner's permission. Further, "open house" signs may be displayed only on weekends, holidays and broker tour days.





By Officer Tony Keeler

## Even in Walnut Creek

You don't typically associate the term "substance abuse" with a community like Walnut Creek. We think that substance abuse is



relegated to low-income urban areas and single parent families. However, if you look at the WCPD jail guest registry, you will discover that substance abuse plays a role in many of the arrests. Does substance abuse affect your spouse, your children, or your children's friends?

So, what are we doing about it? The Walnut Creek Police Department teaches the D.A.R.E. program to fifth graders, conducts an awareness program for seventh graders, and coordinates the *Every 15 Minutes* program for high school students. We believe that it is critical to educate young people about the hazards of substance abuse and the associated behaviors.

In the last two years the Police Department has worked closely with the local high schools, other agencies, John Muir Medical Center, and the community to implement the *Every 15 Minutes* program. The involved agencies staged realistic, fatal car accidents, however the participants were all high school students. Perhaps there is no tangible way to measure the impact, however, high school juniors and seniors witnessed their peers portrayed in horrific accidents. Some students were "dead at the scene" while other victims were airlifted to a hospital and later "died," other students were "arrested" for felony DUI. In April, the Police Department and other agencies will present the program again at Las Lomas High School.

The young audience will get an idea of what it would be like if a tragedy were to strike close to home. Students aren't impressed by statistics. Perhaps, young drivers will be impressed by a glimpse of what "could be" and make responsible choices in their lives.

For further information check out our website at [walnutcreekpd.com](http://walnutcreekpd.com).

# Crime in WC kept in check in 2001

Criminal activity in Walnut Creek was relatively stable in 2001, according to latest statistics compiled by the Police Department.

Of the 35,045 calls to police for the entire year, only 5,882 were investigated as crimes (the rest were service-related calls and not regarded as crimes). There were no homicides in 2001, just as there were none in 2000.

Other major crimes reported in 2001 — such as rape, robbery, aggravated assault, and grand theft — were also at about the same levels as in the previous year (see box).

"I'm pleased with the fact that overall we haven't seen any major increases," said Police Chief Tom Soberanes. "We seem to be following the national trend in that we've seen some increases in crime over the last two years, although our increases haven't been as significant as those experienced by other jurisdictions. I believe it is because our officers have tried to address trends proactively that we have been able to limit significant increases."

Burglaries showed an increase in 2001, as did vehicle burglaries.

"I'm concerned with the increase in burglaries and it's something we plan to address this year," said Soberanes.

Arson reports jumped by 55 percent,

Crime	2000	2001
Homicide	0	0
Rape	7	8
Robbery	31	32
Aggravated Assault	69	71
Burglary (structure)	340	467
Burglary (vehicle)	505	561
Grand larceny/Theft	318	313
Petty Theft	781	850
Auto Theft	225	291
Arson	18	28
Vandalism	854	856
Sex Offenses	48	42
Drunk Driving	346	274
Weapons	46	57
Hate	3	10

Total reported events 34,032 35,045  
(Note: not all crime activities are listed)

from 18 to 28, but drunk driving reports fell by 20 percent.

The City has worked in conjunction with other police agencies within the county and used a state grant to beef up drunk driving enforcement and education that Soberanes feels may have contributed to reductions in drunk driving incidents.

Injury accidents were down slightly, from 298 in 2000 to 271 in 2001. There were two fatalities in both years.

Of the 10 hate crimes reported in 2001, only two were related to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

## Use beneficial bugs, not pesticides

Springtime is coming, and so is gardening time. But before you spray off those annoying aphids or ants, do you know that beneficial creatures that already frequent your garden can reduce the need for chemical pesticide? Yes, these beneficial bugs — lacewings, ladybugs, ground beetles, syrphid (hover) flies, tiny parasitic wasps and spiders — feed on a wide variety of pest insects and mites.

Pesticides can pollute Bay Area waters and kills beneficial bugs. When pesticides are washed into storm drains by rain and over-watering of lawns and gardens, they

wind up in our creeks, the Bay and Delta. So, instead of using pesticides, we can control garden troublemakers safely by calling out the pest patrol — the hardworking bugs that eat the pests.

Teach your children and young ones to recognize helpful bugs and how to spot garden troublemakers. You'll discover what you can do to attract these beneficial creatures that will help keep your garden healthy and beautiful by getting your own FREE copy of "A Kid's Guide to Backyard Bugs" by calling 943-5834 or picking it up at City Hall, 1666 No. Main Street.



# Funding crisis

## From front page

continues today with Walnut Creek losing \$1.3 million a year in revenues. It amounted to a "double whammy" because our local Walnut Creek revenues were also down because of the 1992-93 recession.

Simply put, we need to make sure we are not robbed again.

Walnut Creek could potentially lose an additional \$2.4 million a year in revenues if the state decides not to reimburse the City for lost motor vehicle license fees (VLF). VLF funds are among the top revenue sources for cities because they

## Council goals

### From front page

to find a successor for City Manager Don Blubaugh, who will retire June 17 after 14 years at the helm. The Council is expected to make an announcement of its selection in late April or early May.

Meanwhile, staff has informed the Council it will need to tighten its belt when it adopts an operating budget for 2002-2004 later this spring. It's expected to be a fat-free spending plan as current forecasts indicate there will be a \$1.9 million shortfall in sales tax revenues in the current two-year budget due to lean

pay for important local services such as police, libraries, recreation, and cultural programs.

Governor Davis has told us that he will not balance the State budget "on the backs of local government." Although this is an encouraging sign, we cannot become complacent.

We need to let our folks in Sacramento know that we are watching. We know that balancing the State budget will not be easy, but we do not need a repeat of the "double whammy" that happened to us in the mid-90's.

economic conditions.

On another front, the Council will consider approving a revised housing element for the General Plan on April 16 (following the Planning Commission's public hearing tentatively scheduled for March 14).

The Council also needs to start work on a 10-year growth limitation plan to replace the current plan, which sunsets in 2003.

If there is time this year, the Council will begin the process of drafting the first major revision of the General Plan since 1989.

While the Governor and our Legislature at this point seem committed to protecting our local revenues, my genuine concern is that the budget picture will worsen at the 11th hour, setting the stage for deals to be struck to balance the budget, possibly at the expense of local governments.

I strongly urge all residents to let our State leaders know how you feel about this situation. Here are their addresses:

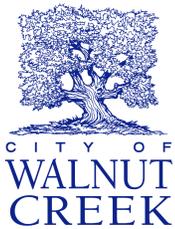
Governor Gray Davis  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Hon. Lynne Leach  
State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 3132  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Hon. Tom Torlakson  
State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 2068  
Sacramento, CA 95814

This is the time for your voice to be heard. Make it clear to them that you expect State leaders to stand by their vows and not balance the State's budget on the backs of local governments.

This will benefit us all.



**CITY COUNCIL**  
Sue Rainey, Mayor\*  
Gwen Regalia, Mayor pro tem  
Charlie Abrams  
Gary Skrel  
Kathy Hicks

\* Available by appointment:  
Call 943-5812.

**CITY MANAGER**  
Donald Blubaugh  
**CITY ATTORNEY**  
Thomas Haas  
**CITY CLERK**  
Barbara Rivara  
**CITY TREASURER**  
Ronald Cassano

### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

**ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**  
Rosie Coan, Director  
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
Paul Richardson, Acting Director  
**CULTURAL & COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
Gary Pokorny, Director  
**POLICE**  
Tom Soberanes, Chief of Police  
**PUBLIC SERVICES**  
Arlene Hildebrand, Director/Asst. City Manager

## IN A Nutshell

Published bi-monthly and mailed to  
Walnut Creek residents and businesses

Editor:  
Brad Rovanpera

We welcome your comments and questions.  
Please call 943-5895 or 943-5800  
Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Please recycle this issue of the Nutshell

Visit our web site at [www.walnut-creek.org](http://www.walnut-creek.org)



1666 North Main Street  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
WALNUT CREEK CA  
PERMIT # 282

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*  
POSTAL CUSTOMER