

IN A

Nutshell

No. 154

Community newsletter of the City of Walnut Creek

SUMMER 2011

Economic renewal includes fresh start for old co-op site

Something fresh will be “sprouting up” at the corner of Geary and North Main, commonly known as the old co-op site.

Sprouts Farmers Market grocery store, which emphasizes fresh, locally grown food, is to be the anchor store for a small retail center approved by the City Council in late April. The store is expected to open in Spring 2012.

Sprouts is just one example of new projects coming to Walnut Creek as the economy shows signs of recovery.

A 24-Hour Fitness Club, complete with a pool and basketball court, and Chick-fil-A, which describes itself as a “quick-service chicken restaurant,” are slated to be built on the site of the former Kaiser concrete batch plant.

RENEWAL, see back page

Center REP takes home 12 Bay Area awards, announces new season

Walnut Creek’s own repertory company, Center REP, won 12 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle awards, more than any other company. Award winners included *Dracula*; *Becoming Britney*; *A Marvelous Party*; and *She Loves Me*, which won seven awards including “Entire Production.”

The 2011-12 season will be just as remarkable, promised Center REPeritory Company’s Artistic Director Michael Butler.

CENTER REP, see back page



Virginia Lamberty walks her dog along the recently completed Creek Walk in Civic Park East. An official Grand Opening Celebration will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 21.

Creek Walk protects, enchants and educates

What could be more inviting during the warm days of summer than a cool shaded creek bank? The Creek Walk at Civic Park East officially opens May 21, just in time for summer strolls. The public is invited to the 10 a.m. grand opening.

The Creek Walk at Civic Park East was designed to protect and attract wildlife while welcoming human beings. An existing asphalt pathway was realigned to

allow more room for native plantings and to restore the riparian creek bank.

Benches and tables invite passersby to sit a while, and colorful interpretive signs tell the story of creek life from the days of the Miwok Indians to the present.

The City worked with Lesley Hunt of the Friends of the Creeks groups to receive a Fish and Wildlife Grant from Contra Costa County to purchase native trees, shrubs and flowers for the project

Save the date! Community Service Day on Oct. 1

In celebration of the Year of the Volunteer, Walnut Creek will hold its first Community Service Day on Saturday, Oct. 1.

The goal is to build a stronger community through volunteerism. The day matches volunteers with projects that can be accomplished during a four-hour timespan. Non-profits and government agencies (including public schools) that



serve Walnut Creek are invited to submit project proposals for consideration. For details, go to www.walnut-creek.org/service.

Summer highlights

(check cable listings for showtimes or go to walnutcreektv.org)

Gray Matter: Challenges of an Aging Society

A Live! from the Library program about the challenges faced by an aging society, and how middle-aged adults can meet the needs of their children while helping their aging parents.

Northgate High spring concert

Enjoy the annual Band and Orchestra Spring Concert by Northgate High's talented young musicians.

Joint Genome Institute: The Deal with Carbon

Tune into this panel discussion from leading scientists on the most mysterious and unseen players in the carbon equation: microbes.

Public Meetings

City Council, Planning and Design Review meetings are televised live and available on demand.

Channel information

Walnut Creek TV is on Comcast Channel 28 (incorporated WC only), Rossmoor 26, Astound Channel 29, and AT&T U-Verse Channel 99. For streaming video and programs on demand, www.walnutcreektv.org.

Here's what's happening

U.S. Department of Defense commander to be Memorial Day keynote speaker – May 30

Commander Renee Richardson, USN, an intelligence officer assigned to the World War II Division of the U.S. Department of Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel office will be the keynote speaker at the City's Memorial Day ceremony. The ceremony begins at 10 a.m. Monday, May 30 at Civic Park.



Commander Renee Richardson

The morning ceremony is just one of several events being held from May 27 through May 30 to remember veterans. For more information, go to www.walnut-creek.org or call City Clerk Patrice Olds, 925-943-5819.

Gardens at Heather Farm benefit — June 3

"Wine & Roses," a benefit event in support of the Gardens at Heather Farm, will be Friday, June 3 from 6 to 9 p.m, and include a Champagne garden stroll, wine tasting, hors d'oeuvres, live jazz and an auction. \$45 per person. Advance reservations are required. 925-947-1678 or www.gardenshf.org.

Art & Wine Festival — June 4 & 5

The Walnut Creek Chamber Art & Wine Festival celebrates its 30th Anniversary with a Mardi Gras theme on Saturday, June 4, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday, June 5, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Heather Farm Park. Enjoy live entertainment, arts and crafts booths, award-winning wines and microbrews, fabulous food and an expanded children's area. Visit www.walnut-creek.com, or call 925-934-2007.



Antiques show — June 12

The Walnut Creek Historical Society holds its Antiques and Collectibles Show and Sale on Sunday, June 12 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Shadelands Ranch, 2660 Ygnacio Valley Road. Dealers will offer a fascinating variety of collectibles and antiques for sale. A professional antique appraiser will give verbal evaluations on personal items. Call 925-935-7871 or go to www.walnutcreekhistory.info.

Sculpture in the Garden — June 17 to July 16

Explore the unique Ruth Bancroft Garden while viewing artwork by Bay Area artists. Mingle with the artists at a preview party Friday, June 17 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Tickets are \$75 and must be



The Chevron Family Theater Festival returns to the Leshner Center for the Arts on Saturday, July 30, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nonstop entertainment and family activities on stage and outside. Go to www.lesherartscenter.org or call 925-943-SHOW.

purchased in advance. Exhibit continues through July 16. 1552 Bancroft Road. Call 925-944-9352 or visit www.ruthbancroftgarden.org.

Zumba for CERT! – June 18

Help Walnut Creek's Community Emergency Response Team program raise money for emergency supplies and get a workout at the same time at a special fund-raising Zumba class. Led by



instructor Janice Litvin, the class will be held from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, June 18 at the Shadelands Arts Center, 111 N. Wiget Lane. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. \$16. Register online at www.ZumbaContraCosta.com or pay at the door.

Spring Wine Walk – June 22

Stroll through downtown Walnut Creek from 6 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, June 22 sipping wine and listening to live music played by local musicians. Tickets are \$30 in advance, \$35 day of the event. Go to www.walnutcreekdowntown.com or call 925-933-6778.

Fourth of July concert

The Walnut Creek Concert Band will give a free Fourth of July concert beginning at 6 p.m. July 4 at the Civic Park gazebo. Bring a picnic supper and a blanket to sit on, and celebrate a musical Independence Day.



Summer Jazz series — July 7, 14, and 21

Enjoy live jazz on Thursday evenings in July at Broadway Plaza in the Stanford's Restaurant parking lot. Featured musicians are Chieli Minucci (July 7), Jeff Kashiwa (July 14) and Brenda Russell (July 21). All concerts are free, and will be from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Curator's Corner



Carrie J. Lederer Bedford Gallery curator



Happy summer, Walnut Creek

Bedford Gallery's season theme *our history, our land*, continues with our current exhibit *Land Of Magic: Artists Explore Make Believe*, a whimsical exhibition where artists leave conventional reality behind to create alternate universes using a wide range of media from painting and printmaking to photography.

Tours are available for school classes and adult groups—call 925-295-1423. This engaging show is through June 12.

Wondrous landscapes

Outlandish: Contemporary Depictions of Nature, opening July 6, is a national juried exhibition that investigates landscape from all vantage points and all media.

In conjunction with the juried show, I invited 10 established artists to participate in *Outlandish Invitational* on view in the Bedford's Alcove Gallery. The Invitational includes Vaughn Bell's humorous and enchanting *Personal Biosphere*, a plexiglass house-shaped structure suspended from the ceiling, allowing you to put your head up into the landscape where you will be immersed in the rich color, texture and smell of nature. Jenn Shifflet's *In the Midst*, an ethereal and organic painting that transports you to a land that is most definitely outlandish!

A public reception for both on July 7 from 6 to 8 p.m. features the Wonderarium's Mobile Plant Ambassador in a terrarium-building workshop.



Esther Pearl Watson
Exploring Field



Jenn Shifflet
In the Midst

Mystery novel selected for 2011 'Walnut Creek Reads'

A long-hidden affair between an American soldier and an English nurse.

A mysterious death in the trenches of WWI France.

The importance of maps to battlefield strategy.

The long-term psychological effects of war.

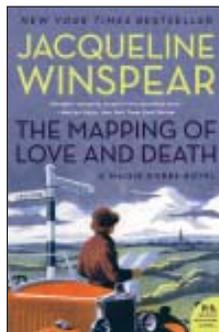
The call of duty to family.

This year's One City, One Book selection – *The Mapping of Love and Death* by Jacqueline

Winspear – has something for every reader.

The seventh in Winspear's New York Times bestselling Maisie Dobbs mystery series, *The Mapping of Love and Death* takes place in 1932 London and finds psychologist and investigator Maisie Dobbs embroiled in two investigations: The mysterious WWI battlefield death of an American cartographer who was the son of an English expatriate, and the search for the young nurse who was the cartographer's friend and confidant.

Book lovers and occasional readers are invited to read the book this summer and then participate in various citywide celebratory events this fall.



A special visit and presentation by Winspear on Monday, Sept. 12 will kick off the fall events.

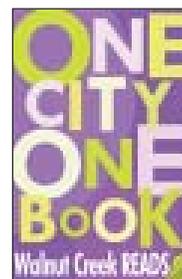
Winspear has written seven other Maisie Dobbs mysteries. The first, *Maisie Dobbs*, was published in 2003 and named a "best" by the New York Times and Publishers Weekly and nominated for an Edgar Award from the Mystery Writers of America. Winspear recently published the eighth in the series, *A Lesson in Secrets*.

Other community events planned for the fall include a lecture on wartime cartography, a travel program on Maisie Dobbs's London, a special "Night at the Pub," and three community book discussions.

More information is available on the Walnut Creek Reads website, www.WalnutCreekReads.org, or at the local public libraries.

Copies of the book are available at the public libraries, Rossmoor library, or local bookstores.

Now in its sixth year, One City, One Book: Walnut Creek Reads is presented by the Contra Costa County Library, the American Association of University Women, Walnut Creek Library Foundation, Walnut Creek and Ygnacio Valley Friends of the Library groups, the Rossmoor Library and the City.



Pancake breakfasts: great food, great deal!

Enjoy the best community pancake breakfast in town on Sunday, June 5 and August 7 at the Civic Park Community Center, 1375 Civic Dr.

This all-volunteer organized event is sponsored by the Walnut Creek Senior Club and enjoyed by all ages.

Get a hearty breakfast of all-you-can-eat pancakes, plus sausage, orange juice, coffee and milk for just \$2.25; children under 12 are \$1.25.

Doors open at 9 a.m. and breakfast is served until 11:45 a.m.

All proceeds directly benefit the Walnut Creek Senior Club. No reservations required! Questions? 925-943-5851.

Host families sought for DVC students

The International Education Center at Diablo Valley College is looking for local families to host international students on a temporary basis while they improve their English skills.

All types of families are welcome - single adults, couples or families with or without children. Short-and long-term placements are available. All students already speak a good level of English. Host families receive a monthly stipend of \$750 per student, and must provide a private bedroom and two meals per day for the student.

Contact Fia Parker at 925-876-0080 or fparker@dvc.edu.

Cool facts & figures

All 9,500 traffic-related signs in Walnut Creek are checked at nighttime once a year for reflectivity



57 of the 69 buildings the City maintains are more than 35 years old



Street signs in incorporated Walnut Creek are colored green. A white street sign means the street is in the county



At 102 acres, Heather Farm is almost half as large as the rest of the parks combined



Streets in the downtown area are swept three times a week



The City takes care of 213 miles of streets and 1.6 million feet of curb and gutters

City at Work: The role of Public Services

Public Services is a bit like the man behind the curtain in the Wizard of Oz. The Wizard gets the attention, but it's the man (or woman) behind the curtain who makes everything work.

Public Services employees do everything from keeping parks green to keeping streets clean. They work in three divisions – Maintenance, Engineering or Parks and Open Space – to protect and support the City's infrastructure and natural resources.

If you've played on a local sports field, hiked in the Open Space, been helped by a police officer driving a vehicle, or managed to get through a wet winter without flooding because the storm drains are clear, thank Public Services.

And that's just the short list. This special section of the Nutshell is dedicated to telling the story of Public Services, the community's partner in keeping the City running smoothly.

Maintenance at a glance

Building Maintenance

Building Maintenance takes care of 69 structures — some big (City Hall, Tice Valley gymnasium), some historic (Shadelands Museum, Borges Ranch), and some vital to public comfort (the restrooms at City parks, for instance). As the buildings age, maintenance becomes more critical.

Equipment/Fleet Maintenance

Five staff members take care of the City's 175 vehicles (including 72 that belong to the Police Department), and 150 pieces of equipment such as trailers and mowers.

SPECIAL NOTE! Walnut Creek's fleet maintenance group is the only group to receive no findings this year when the Grand Jury took a look at how Contra Costa cities take care of municipal vehicles.



Signals and Streetlights

The signal and streetlight division maintains lights at the City's 96 signalized intersections, the master computer at each intersection, and the 16 video cameras that make it possible to manage traffic along Treat and Ygnacio Valley Road by watching traffic flow in real time and adjusting signals as needed. They are on call 24/7 to keep the lights working. The team also maintains the 1,500 streetlights owned by Walnut Creek (NOTE: Most streetlights – some 4,600 – in Walnut Creek are owned and maintained by PG&E).

COMING SOON Walnut Creek was in the forefront of installing LED traffic signals. Now, the lights are reaching the end of their useful life. Instead of waiting for bulbs to die, creating traffic problems, Public Services will systematically replace the LED lights section by section.

Signs, Lines and Meters

The City makes most of its signs at its sign shop on Lawrence Way. Signs play an essential role in traffic safety, and the sign shop takes great care to design signs that are easy to read, and to fix damaged signs quickly.



Men at work: Performing maintenance on a police car, above; painting yellow lanes with thermoplastic.

Parking meters are constantly evolving. While many of the meters are the traditional mechanical type, they are in the process of being switched out to digital meters and pay stations. Public Services installs, maintains and empties the meters. The "lines" in "signs, lines and meters" refers to the traffic markings on the ground – the team uses thermoplastic (plastic heated to a liquid) to paint everything from traffic lanes to curbs.

SPECIAL NOTE! One staff member invented a machine that lets someone paint the top and side of a curb at the same time, saving considerable staff time.



Street Maintenance & Clean Water Crew

Walnut Creek's 213 miles of streets are ranked 35th out of 109 Bay Area jurisdictions. The Street Maintenance division is responsible for keeping streets and sidewalks in good repairs.

While most of us know street maintenance is important to eliminate potholes and other such nuisances, how many of us think of street sweeping in terms of environmental protection?

The Clean Water Crew is responsible for maintaining 18 miles of ditches, 100 miles of storm drains, and more than 3,000 catch basins. They also respond to spills and any illegal dumping of materials into storm drains or creeks. By street sweeping more than 12,000 curb miles a year, the Clean Water Crew keeps debris from going from street to storm drain to the waterways and Bay.

Summer means roadwork — Key projects

Engineering will be overseeing several key projects this summer as part of its Capital Investment Program.

Treat Boulevard from Bancroft to just beyond Arkell Drive will get a new overlay, as will the public portion of Rossmoor Parkway, Riviera Avenue, and a section of South Main Street south of Creekside Drive.

A short stretch of Newell east of South Main will get its own sidewalk along with a fresh overlay and traffic signal improvements.

The Newell/California intersection will see some signal changes as well, intended to make it easier for drivers to enter the downtown from the Parkmead area.

And those cones that City crews put out twice a day at the Ygnacio Valley/Walnut Boulevard/Homestead Avenue intersections to discourage cars from using the neighborhoods as a shortcut? They are being replaced by new standard and electronic signs and revised signal timing.

The signs will alert drivers headed westbound on Ygnacio Valley Road that the left-turn signal cycles will be extremely short weekdays from 6:30 to 9 a.m., making it all but impossible for more than one car to turn during a cycle.

In addition, an electronic “Left Turn Only” sign on Homestead Avenue will be set to prevent right turns onto Ygnacio Valley between 4 and 6:30 p.m.

Parks & Open Space

Many cities roll parks into their recreation department. In Walnut Creek, the Parks and Open Space Division is part of Public Services.

The Parks crew maintains 22 parks that cover a total of 249 acres. They take care of sports fields, playgrounds and the landscaping in City parks.

They even make sure the manmade pond at Heather Farm Park is stocked with fish for urban anglers – all state fishing regulations apply, of course.

Ever notice the plants and flowers in the medians along main thoroughfares? Those are maintained by parks workers as well.

And our downtown doesn’t stay clean on its own. Before the first door opens for business, the downtown parks crew has swept streets and sidewalks, watered plants and made sure public fountains are working properly. Keeping the downtown clean is a good investment, as the sales tax dollars generated downtown are an essential funding source for vital services.

Open Space

Walnut Creek has 2,704 acres of open space, more per capita than any other city in California except Palo Alto. The City has four Open Space areas, each with its own unique feel – Shell Ridge (home to historic Borges Ranch), Acalanes Ridge, Lime Ridge and Sugarloaf. Rangers live on site at Borges Ranch, Sugarloaf and Howe Homestead. Open Space staff are the stewards of the open space; they also create programs that showcase the natural beauty.

Graffiti removal

Graffiti removal comes under this division’s purview as well. Funny thing about graffiti – it’s very existence seems to breed more. Removing graffiti promptly keeps the overall incidence down.



On the job: Putting ladybugs in planting areas to eat aphids; fixing a sign at North Main Street; getting ready to pour a concrete curb.



Engineering

Engineering has several key components.

Think you need a stop sign, residential parking permit, or other traffic controls in your neighborhood? Then Traffic Engineering is the division for you.

Not sure if your home is in a flood plain? Current Engineering is the place to go to find out.

Capital Investment Program engineers work on the City’s public projects, such as roads and playgrounds, while Current Engineering makes sure that the infrastructure for private development projects is done correctly.



SPECIAL NOTE! Those fund-raising car washes can create environmental hazards when the water runs into the street or parking lot. If you are holding a charity car wash, call the Clean Water program at 313-2360 for a free car wash kit.

Going green!

Public Services coordinates the City’s sustainability efforts. These range from upgrading lighting in City buildings and garages to working with the Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority on key initiatives such as food-scrap recycling. Public Services staff is coordinating the City’s Climate Action Plan.

COMING UP: Look for solar panels to be installed on top of City Hall, paid for through grant funding.



Who to call for ...

Graffiti
943-5854

Open Space
943-5854

Park maintenance
943-5854

Pothole reporting
943-5854

Sidewalk issues
943-5854

Traffic signal outage reporting
943-5854 (M-F, 7-4)
943-5844 (after 4)

Tree removal permits
943-5854

All other calls
943-5899

News & notes from the libraries

Happy birthday to the Walnut Creek Library! Two special events are planned to help celebrate.

Adults are invited to come at 7 p.m. Saturday, July 16 for "Real Stories – Life's A Trip," an evening of colorful and engaging storytelling by local personalities.

Enjoy the library after-hours with light snacks and international beverages from Wine Thieves. The program is presented by "Real Stories" producer Kay DeMartini and the Walnut Creek Library Foundation.

Tickets go on sale June 8. Call 925-935-5395 or visit www.wclibrary.org.

Kids ages 4 and up, along with their families, are invited to come Monday, July 18, to the library's "One-Year Birthday Celebration" featuring the Fratello puppeteers.

The event, funded by the Friends of the Walnut Creek Library and the Library Foundation, will be from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. in the Oak View Room. Space is limited. Call 925-977-3340.

There are many fun things happening at the libraries this summer. Visit www.wclibrary.org to learn more.

By the numbers

Walnut Creek's two libraries are being used in record numbers, according to the Contra Costa County Library.

■ There are 1,608 average visits per day to both libraries combined;

■ More Walnut Creek residents have library cards; 46,257 up from 42,712;

WCPD officers receive county, state awards

Two Walnut Creek Police Officers received awards based on their contributions to public safety.

Officer Bryan Duncan was honored by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) at the annual Law Enforcement Recognition Awards in Sacramento on March 26. Officer Duncan arrested 69 people for DUI in 2010, the second largest number in Walnut Creek PD history.



Librarian Jana De Brauwere helps teens Marissa Prospero, Daniella Rojas and Breann Lewis at the Walnut Creek Library.

■ In the last 6 months of 2010, 427,208 items were checked out from both libraries; and

■ The new Walnut Creek Library has the highest circulation in the county!

Over the past year, the libraries have partnered with organizations such as Center REP, Nolo Press, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Bedford Gallery, Tony LaRussa's Animal Rescue Foundation and Contra Costa Master Gardeners to offer programs for all ages.

Thanks to the Walnut Creek Library Foundation, the Walnut Creek Library offers the Foundation Center Collection and Database for nonprofits and other grantseekers.

Award for library project team

The Walnut Creek Library has been named the 2011 Sapphire Partnered Project of the Year by the International Partnering Institute. The award recognizes the library project team, including City architect Chris Erdle and Assistant City Manager Lorie Tinfow, West Bay Builders, Gilbane Building Company and Group 4 Architects for creating the culture of teamwork and collaboration that contributed to the library project's success.

Officer David Rangel received the Contra Costa County Juvenile Justice Commission 2010 Juvenile Justice Award on May 14 in recognition of his continued leadership and guidance with the police department's new Cadet program.

Police Cadets are young people ages 16-22 who are interested in careers in law enforcement. Cadets volunteer with the police, learning while they contribute.

Avoid phone scams

By Alicia Williams
Crime Prevention Coordinator

Several different types of scams are being perpetrated via telephone.



Never give any personal information over the phone, even if the caller appears to have insider information such as account or credit card numbers. If it's your bank calling, they will never ask you to verify that type of information. After all, they already have it! If you have any doubts, hang up and call the number on the back of your credit card or on your statement.

Do not be a victim of any type of lottery scam. If you didn't enter to win, chances are you didn't. If somebody asks you to send them money first, don't do it. If you win the lottery, it's a lot more complicated than a telephone call and they won't ask you to send money using Western Union or another wire service. The same goes for letters or emails saying that you have received some type of inheritance.

Be aware of the "family member in distress" scam. The scam starts with a young-sounding person calling and saying "Grandma/Grandpa, it's me!" The person receiving the call will say a grandchild's name, and the scam is on. Using just a name, the con artist proceeds to say that he is being held in a jail outside of the United States, and he needs you to wire money quickly without telling his parents. Don't do it! If a stranger tells you that one of your family members is in jail, hang up and try calling them at home.

There are several websites devoted to posting information about scams. Try www.snopes.com and www.hoax-slayer.com. Or go to the FBI website, <http://www.fbi.gov/scams-safety>.

If you would like more information on scams and how to avoid them, contact Crime Prevention Coordinator Alicia Williams, 925-943-5885.



Diablo Valley Rotary Club member Tim Meek, front, works on a trail restoration project as part of Earth Day activities.

Volunteers sought for Open Space

Our Open Space needs you! Volunteers are sought to help Open Space staff with a wide variety of tasks.

A trail crew is being formed to help with trail repair and maintenance. This group will meet once or twice a month to remove hazards, repair erosion, rework trail surfaces and generally make our trails better, safer and more enjoyable.

Heritage volunteers will be stationed at Borges Ranch and provide educational and public relations information to ranch visitors. Site volunteers will work side by side with Open Space staff to help maintain and improve Open Space sites. Trail patrol volunteers will patrol the trails providing information and assistance to trail users.

Learn about these opportunities at one of these orientation meetings: Tuesday, June 21 at 2 and 7 p.m. or Saturday, June 25 at 10 a.m. at Howe Homestead, 2950 Walnut Boulevard.

Call Supervising Ranger Nancy Dollard at 925-943-5899 ext. 2135 or email dollard@walnut-creek.org to reserve your place.



2011 is the Year of the Volunteer in Walnut Creek. Learn about volunteer opportunities at www.walnut-creek.org/volunteer. Watch inspirational videos about volunteerism in Walnut Creek on YouTube.com/cityofwalnutcreek.

Summer activities abound in Open Space

By Nancy Dawson Dollard
Supervising Open Space Range

Summer in the Open Space kicks off with Heritage Day at Borges Ranch on Saturday, June 11, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Silent movies, crafts demonstrations, storytelling, dancing and music will take you back in time. Food will be available for purchase or bring your picnic basket. Catch the bus at Northgate High School. Bus fare is \$5 per family.

Two new programs debut this summer. *The Truth about Chicken Little* explores the important role that chickens have played in human history. This program will be held at Borges Ranch on Saturday, July 9, 10 to 11 a.m.



On Sunday, July 17, meet us at 9 a.m. under the windmill at Borges Ranch for *Wild California, A Walk Back in Time*, a two-hour hike in Shell Ridge Open Space. Come on a journey through a California that many don't realize ever existed, when wolves, grizzly bears and jaguars roamed the Bay Area.

The Ancient Ways family program at Sugarloaf Open Space returns on Aug. 13 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Try your skill at tossing the Atlatl and throwing the rabbitstick, the American Indian boomerang that doesn't come back, or make simple crafts from natural materials.

Make your own Atlatl! Ranger Bruce will be holding Atlatl classes on July 23 and 30 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Reservations

Safely dispose of medical sharps at City Hall

Free disposal of used medical sharps is available 24/7, thanks to a program of Allied Waste Services, the Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority and the City of Walnut Creek. Look for the green container in the lobby of City Hall, 1666 N. Main Street. Be sure to use an authorized sharps container.

Improperly discarded needles and other sharps pose serious health risks. Discarded needles may expose waste



Come to Heritage Days at Borges Ranch (above) or learn to make your own Atlatl (below) — just two of the options this summer in the Open Space.



are required; cost is \$20 for materials, and participants must be at least 16.

Howe Homestead was the home of James Pomeroy Howe, a retired reporter for the Associated Press. A Howe History Tour is scheduled for Sunday, Aug. 14 at 1 p.m. Harvesting Howe Honey with Ranger Art Janke will be Sunday, Aug. 21 at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Reservations are required for the honey program.

Contact the Open Space office at 925-943-5899 ext. 2135 or email dollard@walnut-creek.org to make reservations, get more information or request a copy of the Open Space trail map. Happy Trails!

service workers to needle stick injuries and infection when containers break open inside garbage trucks or needles are mistakenly sent to recycling facilities. Janitors and housekeepers also risk injury if loose sharps poke through plastic garbage bags.

Used needles can transmit serious diseases, such as hepatitis.

For information on a sharps mail-back program, call 925-906-1801.

Center REP

From page one

“The real excitement for me, and I think for our audiences, is the breadth of themes and ideas, styles and periods,” said Butler. “We look for work that can be visually astonishing, emotionally engaging and intellectually involving.”

The season offers eight productions and takes advantage of all three theaters in the Leshner Center for the Arts.

Mainstage programming includes two musicals, *Smokey Joe’s Café* and *Xanadu*; the romance *Arms and the Man* by George Bernard Shaw; the popular Neil Simon comedy *Rumors*; the holiday favorite *A Christmas Carol*; and Herbert Siguenza’s one-man show *A Weekend with Pablo Picasso*.

The Off Center series, started two years ago to present new and unusual works to



Scott Denison, left, General Manager for the Leshner Center for the Arts and Center REP’s Managing Director, with Artistic Director Michael Butler and two of REP’s 12 awards.

its audience, will include a West Coast premiere and a Tony Award winning musical

A variety of subscription packages, ranging from \$136 to \$493, is available. Call 925-943-SHOW or go to www.lesherartscenter.org.

Renewal

From page one

The concrete batch plant will be disassembled and shipped overseas for reassembly and reuse.

Like Sprouts, the fitness club and chicken restaurant are targeting a Spring 2012 opening.

Construction is humming along on the new Dirito Brothers Volkswagen Dealership near the northeast corner of North Main Street and Central road. The dealership is triple the size of the existing Dirito Brothers at Carlback and Main, and will feature a large showroom and a 20-bay service center. It expects to open this fall.

On the residential side, 65 townhomes at Oak Road and El Paseo Circle are being built by KB Homes. Six will be sold at below-market rate (see details, below).

A quarterly report with information about all projects currently in the development process is at www.walnut-creek.org/current_projects

Shopping local is an investment in our community

Did you know that 27 percent of the City’s general fund comes from sales tax? That’s money that can be used to pay for everything from police officers to park maintenance.

Walnut Creek gets 1 cent for each

dollar of taxable sales that take place within City limits. That might not seem like a lot, but it adds up.

“Shop Local” is more than a slogan — with every dollar you spend in Walnut Creek, you invest in your community.

Below-market-rate homes offered

The Walden Park project has six below-market rate units available. Applications will be accepted May 21 through June 12 at the Walden Park sales office, 88 El Paseo Circle, Walnut Creek. Call 925-979-9824 for an application.



CITY COUNCIL
Cindy Silva, Mayor*
Bob Simmons, Mayor pro tem
Kish Rajan
Gary Skrel
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IN A **Nutshell**

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We welcome your comments and questions
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