

IN A Nutshell



No. 172

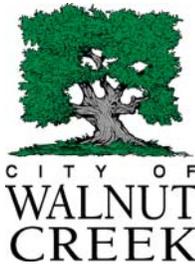
Newsletter of the City of Walnut Creek

WINTER 2015-16



NEW WEBSITE. The City launched its new website in early November, with the goal of making it easy for people to find the information they want as quickly as possible. The site adapts to mobile and tablet platforms, features a more robust search engine and special branding for divisions such as the Police Department and Recreation. Check it out! www.walnut-creek.org.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES. Most City facilities, except for public safety, will be closed Dec. 23 through Jan. 3, reopening Monday, Jan. 4 at 8 a.m. A detailed list will be posted by Dec. 14 on the City's website, www.walnut-creek.org.



Thumbs up for Community Service Day

Thank you to the 1,300 volunteers who turned out for the 2015 Community Service Day on Saturday, Oct. 10, including these Boy Scouts with *Creek Currents* host Ruby Lopez. The Scouts helped spread mulch in front of the Clarke Swim Center. The City will save more than 2 million gallons of water a year as the result of volunteers covering old grass lawn areas with mulch in four parks. In total, there were 49 Community Service Day projects to choose from, from cleaning children's library books covers to sprucing up the campuses of 11 public schools. The 2016 Community Service Day will be Oct. 8!

Winter nights homeless shelter to open

The Walnut Creek National Guard Armory at 1800 Carmel Drive, adjacent to Civic Park East, will become an overnight shelter for 30 pre-screened Trinity Center members from Dec. 12 to March 12. Trinity Center is a Walnut Creek-based nonprofit that serves the homeless and working poor.

City Council unanimously agreed to enter into a licensing agreement with the State Military Department for use of the armory; while Trinity Center will manage the shelter and cover all operating costs, the State Military Department required that the City, as a

governmental body, hold the license.

Shelter occupants will check in at the Trinity Center at 5:30 p.m. before being transported by van to the Armory each evening; in the morning, the van will return them to the Trinity Center. There are no "in and out" privileges.

An ad hoc advisory committee will work together to address neighborhood concerns and provide feedback to the City on shelter operations. The committee includes one resident living near the Trinity Center, three representing the neighborhood near the Armory, and four Trinity Center representatives.



MARATHON ALERT. The Walnut Creek Half Marathon starts at 7 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 12 at Civic Park, and will make a loop from Treat Boulevard to Ygnacio Valley Road, returning to Civic Park. Traffic may be impacted between 7 and 10 a.m. Visit www.runwalnutcreek.com for details.

www.walnut-creek.org

Winter highlights

(check cable listings for showtimes)

This winter on 'Creek Currents'

Join hosts Ruby Lopez and Brendan Moran as they receive valuable tips on how to stay safe during the expected El Nino rains.

Holiday music with the Walnut Creek Concert Band

The Walnut Creek Concert Band's holiday concert is always a treat! Filmed live on Dec. 1 at the Leshner Center, the concert will be aired on WCTV throughout the holiday season.

Action for Beauty awards luncheon

Which iconic buildings received this year's Action for Beauty awards? Which popular restaurant received the 'Makeover of the Year' award? Learn the answers, and hear from Steve Oliver of the astonishing Oliver Ranch.

Public Meetings

City Council and all Commission meetings are televised live and available on demand.

Channel info

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



Youth Ambassadors, from left, Jack Daley, Laurent Yu, Kyle Wong, Laura Boyle and Rylie Lawrence.

Sign of friendship

Walnut Creek Sister Cities International joined the City on October 28 in dedicating a signpost in Civic Park recognizing the Sister Cities program and sister cities Noceto, Italy and Siófok, Hungary.

The goal of the Sister Cities program is to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding and cooperation ... one individual, one community at a time, so it was fitting that the new sign be adjacent to Beniamino Bufano's Hand of Peace statue.

There to help celebrate the occasion were five Walnut Creek teens who participated in the Sister Cities' Youth Ambassador Exchange, or YAE!!

The program sends Walnut Creek 8th grade students to a sister city where they stay with a family for 10 days; later in the same school year, the student of the host family comes to Walnut Creek for 10 days.

To learn more about the Sister Cities program and YAE!!, go to www.wc-sister-cities.org.

Here's what's happening

NOTE: Many holiday events are listed in the special "Home for the Holidays" section in the middle of this Nutshell.

Holiday Toy Drive

Spread the magic of the season by donating new, unwrapped toys for underprivileged children. Bring the toys to the donation bins in the lobby of City Hall, 1666 N. Main Street before Dec. 17. The Walnut Creek Police Department will deliver the toys to the Marines' Toys for Tots program for distribution. For more information, call Lauren Gehring, 925-943-5890.



for the classes. The proceeds will benefit Art, Recreation, and Movement programs to restore and empower individuals who have been sexually exploited through human trafficking. Email Lise@ARMofCare.net to register. Bring your own mat.

Viva Arts! Fund raiser

The Friends of Civic Arts Education Foundation hosts the 10th annual Viva Arts gala on Friday, Feb. 19 at the Shadelands Arts Center. The Friends Foundation raises money for Civic Arts Education scholarships, equipment and programming. For more information, about the gala, as well as the Civic Arts Education Foundation, go to www.friendsartsed.org.

Model Railroad Holiday Shows

The Diablo Valley Lines model railroad will thrill kids of all ages during the special Thanksgiving Weekend holiday shows: Friday, Nov. 27, 2 to 10 p.m., and Saturday, Nov. 28 and Sunday, Nov. 29, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The railroad is operated by the Walnut Creek Model Railroad Society. 2751 Buena Vista Avenue. Call 925-937-1888 or visit www.wcmrs.org.

Helping those hurt by human trafficking

ARM of Care hosts Pilates for a Purpose on Saturday, Dec. 12 at Sports Basement, 1881 Ygnacio Valley Road. Two Pilates classes will be held at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., with snacks to follow. Donations will be accepted



Swingin' in the Season

The Diablo Women's Chorale (in photo, above) presents "Christmas Swings" on 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5 at Saint Matthew Lutheran Church, 399 Wiget Lane. Advance tickets are \$16 for adults, \$10 Student, and \$20 for Premium seating. Go to www.DiabloWomensChorale.org, or call 800-838-3006.



Photo/Ben Krantz Studio

RAISING A PADDLE FOR THE ARTS

The "On Broadway" gala celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Leshner Center for the Arts raised a record \$350,000 in support of Diablo Regional Arts Association's mission to bring artistic excellence to the East Bay and to make the arts accessible to children of all income levels. Above, some of the 570 celebrants raise their auction paddles.

Film society adds screening for 2016

Thanks to enthusiastic community support, Mountain Shadow Film Society is expanding membership opportunities to view the best in foreign and independent filmmaking right here in Walnut Creek.

The non-profit organization launched in 2014, presenting monthly screenings in the Walnut Creek library's Oak View Room. The film society capped membership in 2015 at 260 to accommodate capacity crowds at two screenings each month. A third screening has been added for the 2016 series.

Annual membership dues are \$120 and guarantee a seat. A limited number of \$12 general admission tickets are usually



available on a first-come basis. Each show includes a feature film, preceded by an award-winning short, with optional post-screening discussion. The film selections include both foreign and U.S. independent films in a variety of genres (dramatic narrative, documentary and comedy). These are critically acclaimed films that are typically available in San Francisco, or the Oakland-Berkeley area, but are generally not shown in Central Contra Costa commercial theaters.

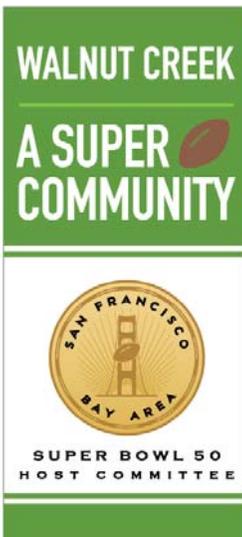
To learn more, go to <http://mountainshadow.org> or contact director John Bennison at jb@mountainshadow.org or 925-787-6965.

Touchdown! Walnut Creek selected to be a Super Community

The Super Bowl is coming to the San Francisco Bay Area in February, and Walnut Creek has joined over 50 cities throughout the Bay Area as a designated Super Community.

The City's Arts, Recreation & Community Services Department has teamed up with Walnut Creek Downtown and the Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce to celebrate our community leading up to the big game.

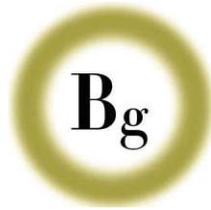
Be on the lookout for special events and save the date for a Super Community themed "First Wednesday" street festival event downtown on February 3.



Winston Tseng, International Superheroes, 2009, silkscreened wood skateboards

Bedford Gallery news

My Hero!
Contemporary
Art and
Superhero Action
Jan. 17 – March 20



Experience the escapades of iconic superheroes with this pumped-up collection of international artworks in a variety of media. *My Hero!* celebrates and re-envision the possibilities that exist when one has a magic cape, lasso, or some superhuman power that changes everything.

The opening reception is Sunday, Jan. 17 from 3-5 p.m. Grab a front row seat for the Wearable Art Show and catch our runway of unique interpretations of the superhero concept or depiction of one's personal avatar. Interested in participating? Submit an image and description of your costume idea to gallerinfo@bedfordgallery.org.

For hours and admission prices, go to www.bedfordgallery.org.

Rent the Bedford!

Host an event in the spacious gallery where guests will have the opportunity to view engaging artwork while mixing and mingling. Located in the Leshner Center for the Arts, the gallery's 3,500 square feet make it the largest community-based visual arts facility in the region. Visit www.bedfordgallery.org/rentals or email gallerinfo@bedfordgallery.org.

The Art of the Brick®
On display through Dec. 20

It's not too late to catch New York artist Nathan Sawaya's awe-inspiring sculptures using thousands of LEGO® bricks.

Friendship families for international students

The International Education Center at Diablo Valley College is looking for Friendship Families to invite three Tunisian students to participate in a local event once a month.

The students are recipients of scholarships through the Thomas Jefferson Scholarship Program, Tunisia, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State.

The goal of the program is for participants to develop a broad and nuanced understanding of U.S. values and become prepared to contribute to the economic growth and development of Tunisia.

Persons interested in the Friendship Family program can email iec@dvc.edu or call 925-676-4600 ext. 108.

Free tax preparation

Free tax preparation for the 2016 tax season is available starting February 2016 from AARP's Tax-Aide and United Way's Earn It, Keep It, Save It (EKS) programs. All tax preparers are trained and certified by the IRS. Both programs serve taxpayers of any age.

Beginning Jan. 4, for information or to make an appointment, please call: 925-943-5851 for the Walnut Creek Senior Club site; 925-405-6278 for the Walnut Creek Grace Presbyterian Church site; 925-979-5013 for the Walnut Creek St. Paul's Episcopal Church site. For information on EKS sites call 2-1-1 or visit www.earnitkeepitsaveit.org.

Authors Gala at the Walnut Creek Library

The 2016 Authors Gala at the Walnut Creek Library will take place on Saturday, April 16. This event is always a sell-out!

The 2016 gala takes on a nautical theme, with a "Bon Voyage Reception" followed by a catered "Dinner on the Promenade." Featured authors will be on hand to autograph their books.

Last year's gala raised more the \$100,000 to fund library programs and resources. Tickets will go on sale in January. Check the library foundation's website, www.wclibrary.org/gala for updates.



Get a healthy start to 2016 by joining the Walnut Creek Seniors' Club.

Fun and friendship at WC Seniors' Club

2016 Senior Membership Drive

Starting November 2015

Join the Walnut Creek Senior Club for just \$12 a year, and enjoy monthly drop-in activities, special events, senior services and volunteer opportunities. Call 925-943-5851 or come to the Civic Park Community Center between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

The Seniors' Club is a non-profit organization with an Advisory Board and elected officers. Its monthly newsletter keeps members current on special events, classes, service and travel opportunities. Call 925-943-5851 for a complimentary copy. Learn more at www.walnut-creek.org/adults-50.

Crab Feed and Dance

Saturday, Jan. 9

Civic Park Community Center

All-you-can-eat crab, pasta, salad, French bread and dessert! Plus dancing to the music of Wayne Fettig. Join us for a delicious fund-raising dinner benefiting the Walnut Creek Seniors' Club. Tickets are \$45 per person until Dec. 31, and \$50 per person beginning Jan. 1. The bar opens at 5:30 p.m.; dinner will be served at 7 p.m.

Senior Valentine's Tea

11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 12

Civic Park Community Center

Don your hats and gloves and join us for a lovely midday cup of tea and entertainment. Traditional scones, tea sandwiches, biscuits, cakes, Devonshire cream and jam are just a sampling of the tasty morsels being served. Tickets are \$10 and must be purchased in advance; tickets will not be available at the door. Call 925-943-5851.



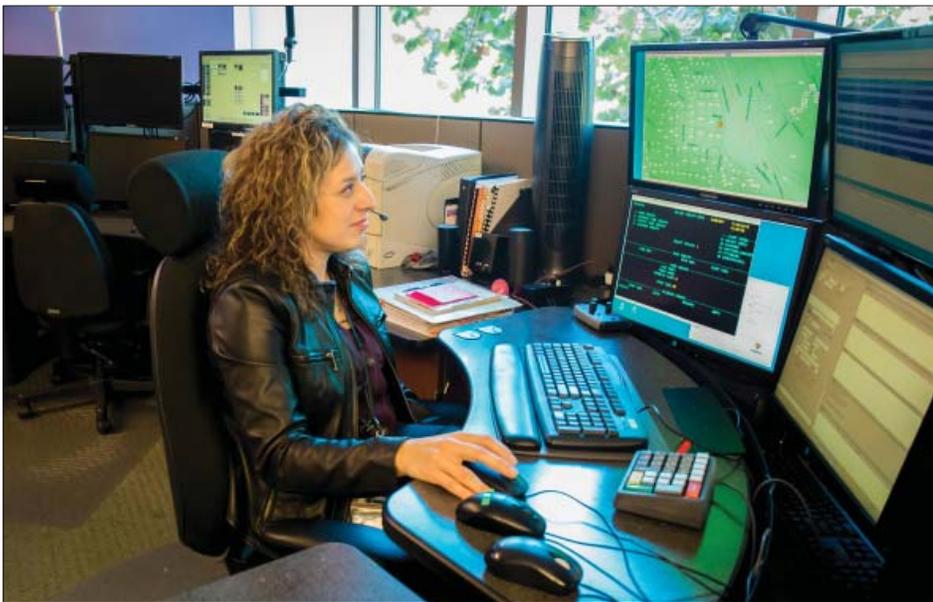
Dances are popular Seniors' Club activities.

Weekday lunches at C.C. Cafe

The C.C. Café is a lunch program for adults 60 years of age and older, offering nutritionally balanced meals without added salt. The Café promotes social interaction and companionship among seniors in a friendly atmosphere. No membership applies and there are no income level restrictions. A \$2 suggested donation is appreciated. (There is a \$5 fee for those under 60.) The Walnut Creek C.C. Café is at Civic Park Community Center.

Lunch reservations are required. Call the Walnut Creek CC Café at 925-290-7310 one day prior between 10 a.m. and noon. Meals are served Monday-Thursday at 12 noon; on Friday, meals are served at 11:30 a.m.

The C.C. Cafes are part of Meals on Wheels and Senior Outreach Services. Learn more at www.mowsos.org.



Walnut Creek Police Dispatchers play a vital role in keeping the community safe.

Walnut Creek Police Dispatchers exceed national 911 response standards

A recent visit from the State 911 office confirmed the outstanding work Walnut Creek Police Dispatchers do every day, exceeding national standards for answering 911 calls.

Ninety percent of all 911 calls should be answered in fewer than 10 seconds, according to the National Emergency Number Association. State 911 reports showed that Walnut Creek Dispatchers handily beat that standard, answering 98.1 percent of 911 calls in fewer than 10 seconds.

That record is even more impressive considering that incoming phone calls to Dispatch continue to increase each year. Dispatch answered 58,606 calls between

January and September 2014; that number increased to 62,709 phone calls for the same period in 2015.

(Note: Not all of those calls are reporting a crime; about half required responses by officers.)

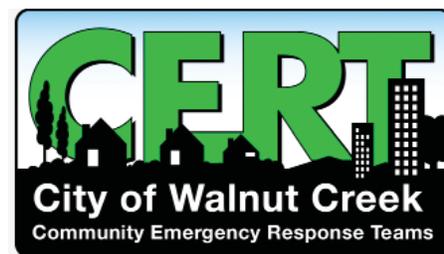
In addition, Dispatchers have made close to 19,000 outgoing phone calls so far this year to assist officers on the street, contact other agencies and assist citizens.

The WCPD Dispatch center is the hub of communication for the Police Department. Each day, our Dispatchers quickly and efficiently process large volumes of information via phone, radio, email, and computer systems, keeping our officers and citizens safe in the process.

Emergency Response Team training coming up

Be ready to make a difference by training to be part of Walnut Creek's disaster response team! Registration is under way for CERT basic training, to be held Tuesday evenings, April 12 through May 24, with the final drill on Saturday, May 28. The training will take place at Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation, 2890 Mitchell Dr.

CERT teaches everyday people how to safely and effectively respond to the needs of the community in the critical hours following a disaster. CERT graduates are sworn in as volunteer Disaster Service Workers for the City of Walnut Creek. Training topics include disaster preparedness, how to shut off utilities and



use a fire extinguisher, light search and rescue techniques, disaster First Aid, care of displaced pets, and how to manage a team using the Incident Command System.

There is a \$25 class fee. Registration information is available at www.walnut-creek.org/cert or by calling the CERT registration line, 256-3556.

Safety matters: Preparing for El Nino

Weather officials are predicting heavy rains this winter due to a powerful El Nino weather system. Take action now to be prepared for the possibility of heavy rainfall and flooding.



Get prepared

Build an emergency supply kit that you can grab in case you must evacuate your home if flooding occurs, and get to higher ground. Avoid low-lying areas that are prone to flooding. For a checklist of suggested emergency supplies to keep at home, in your car, and at work, go to www.walnut-creek.org/preparedness.

On the road

Avoid driving through flood waters or on flooded roads. If you come to a flooded road, turn around. If your vehicle stalls or has been flooded, evacuate immediately and get to higher ground.

Sandbag stations

Sand and sandbags are available free of charge at the following locations (Residents need to bring their own shovels):

- Lancaster Road across from Orchard Lane
- Heather Farm Community Center parking lot (north end)
- Larkey Park parking lot
- Howe Homestead Park parking lot
- Rudgear Park parking lot

Stay informed

Sign up to receive free Walnut Creek alerts through text and email at local.nixle.com/register.

Monitor the City's website and social media platforms for weather-related alerts, evacuation instructions, sandbag locations, and open shelters. Learn more at www.walnut-creek.org/socialmedia.

How to report flooding

To report flooding weekdays, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., call 925-943-5854. After hours, call Police Dispatch at 925-935-6400.

City selects partner for aquatics at Heather Farm Park

The City Council has selected architecture and engineering firm Harley Ellis Devereaux (HED) as its preferred partner for a future aquatics facility in Heather Farm Park.

The current Clarke Swim Center, which draws an estimated 350,000 swimmers each year, is more than 40 years old and does not meet current health or competitive swimming standards. The City, while committed to continuing aquatics at Heather Farm Park, does not have the financial resources to underwrite the project in its entirety.

Among the goals of the Council in seeking a partner are that a new facility would accommodate a balanced menu of aquatics programs; that the City and community partners would share in the capital costs of a new facility; and that, once built, the facility would be operated and maintained by HED or a third party, and the City's operating costs would be reduced or eliminated.

The next step is for HED to work with the City to develop a scope of work that would include financing, design, construction, operations and maintenance of a new aquatics facility. In addition to bringing a scope of work back to the City Council for approval, HED will also outline a process for engaging the three swim programs currently based at Clarke Swim Center – the Aquabears, Aquanuts and Masters swim program – as well as the community at large in guiding the future of aquatics at Heather Farm Park.

If the project moves forward, construction would begin no earlier than Fall 2017. The City will continue to own and operate the Larkey Swim Center, which is currently under renovation and will reopen in Spring 2017.

Working with worms

Learn to compost with worms at a hands-on workshop sponsored by RecycleSmart on Saturday, Dec. 5 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Heather Farm Community Center. Participants will build a bin to take home along with worms. Pre-registration is required, and space is limited to 20 households. Cost is \$20 per household. Go to www.recyclesmart.org or call 925-906-1801.



On hand for the announcement of solar projects coming to Walnut Creek were, from left, City Manager Ken Nordhoff, Public Works Manager Mike Vickers, Public Works Operations Manager Gwen Ho-Sing-Loy, City Engineer Steve Waymire and Public Works Director Heather Ballenger.

Solar-covered parking to save City millions

Carparks with photovoltaic roofs are coming to Heather Farm Park and Boundary Oak Golf Course.

In addition to providing shaded parking, these carparks represent millions of dollars in energy savings for the City, as well as significant greenhouse gas reductions, all at no upfront cost.

Here's how: Walnut Creek is one of 19 public agencies comprising the Regional Renewable Energy Procurement Project (R-REP), the largest local government procurement of solar energy in the nation. Using economies of scale and shared technical advisers, R-REP brings renewable energy projects into reach.

Rebates available for drought tolerant landscaping

While rain is expected this year from El Nino, it may not end the drought so conserving water is still important. Winter is a good time to consider converting your lawn to drought tolerant landscaping by taking advantage of rebates and the upcoming rain to help get your new plants started.

The State Department of Water Resources is now offering an additional rebate of up to \$2000 (\$2/square foot) for single-family residential lawns that are converted to drought tolerant landscaping. This state rebate can be used in addition to rebates offered by local water utilities. Funds may run out quickly so apply soon.



In Walnut Creek's case, vendor SunEdison will install, operate and maintain the solar power systems, and the City will purchase the systems' generated energy. The solar projects are expected to save the City about \$3.8 million over 20 years. Construction will begin in the first quarter of 2016.

Learn more about the rebate, eligibility, and requirements online at www.saveourwaterrebates.com.

Walnut Creek residents are served by two different water utilities: East Bay Municipal Utility District and Contra Costa Water District. Both offer their own rebates to convert lawns to drought tolerant landscaping.

For utility rebates, visit your water utility's website:

For Contra Costa Water District, go to www.ccwater.com/conserv.

For East Bay Municipal Utility District, go to www.ebmud.com/water-and-drought.

2016 to bring next phase of clubhouse improvements

The second phase of improvements to the Boundary Oak Golf Course Clubhouse are scheduled to begin January 4. This phase will include mechanical, electrical, and plumbing infrastructure improvements including fire safety, as well as kitchen upgrades. The projects are expected to be completed by April 30.

The Clubhouse improvements are part of a three-year, \$3.5 million plan and are funded by user fees generated through the Golf Course Enterprise Fund.

The golf course will remain open for business during the scheduled improvements to the Clubhouse.

For more information or to book an event at the Clubhouse, contact Boundary Oak at 925-934-4775 or www.playboundaryoak.com

Residents invited to apply for commission openings in 2016

Come January 2016, applications will be available for City Commission vacancies and for a City representative on the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District Board.

Applications will be accepted for the Park, Recreation and Open Space Commission; Planning Commission; and Transportation Commission.

In addition, applications will be accepted for a Walnut Creek representative on the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District Board.

Applicants for all positions must live in incorporated Walnut Creek and be registered voters. Appointments will be made for a term of four years.

Applications will be available in early January on the City's website at www.walnut-creek.org; at the City Clerk's office, 1666 N. Main Street, third floor; by phone 925-943-5818; and via e-mail at smartinez@walnut-creek.org.

For additional information, please contact Suzie Martinez, City Clerk, at 925-943-5819.



A rendering of the proposed Trellis project in the Tice Valley.

Council to consider plan for 53 new homes

A proposal to build up to 53 single-family homes on 5.28 acres next to the Tice Valley Gymnasium and neighborhood park will come before the City Council on Dec. 15.

The site was most recently home to the Jewish Community Center. The Jewish Community Federation closed the JCC in 2011, citing financial issues, and entered

into an option-to-buy agreement with Pulte Homes in 2012. Development plans for the site have evolved significantly; an earlier iteration, prior to Pulte Homes' involvement, sought to build more than 100 condominiums in 4-story buildings.

Details about the Trellis project are available at www.walnut-creek.org/developmentprojects.

CIP looks 10 years into the future

If you want to know what infrastructure the City plans to repair, replace or enhance over the next 10 years, look no further than the Capital Investment Program (CIP) going before the City Council on Dec. 1.

The CIP is a planning tool used to prioritize capital projects – roads, buildings, parks and other amenities – over five two-year budget cycles. It is updated every two years, and divided into three categories: asset management projects, such as road and building maintenance; transportation projects; and, discretionary projects such as park improvements.

Are these projects fully funded?

No – in fact, the CIP identifies significant long-term shortfalls: \$34 million over the next 10 years for asset management (taking care of roads, buildings, etc.) and another \$10 million shortfall for transportation-related projects.

Asset management projects

Roadway maintenance continues to be the City's largest single capital need. It will take \$4.5 million per year to keep

Walnut Creek's roads in their existing condition, yet only \$2.4 million in funding has been identified. Gas taxes (which are in decline) and the half-cent transportation sales tax are the biggest sources of funding for roadway maintenance.

Transportation related projects

Based on recommendations from the City's Transportation Commission, pedestrian improvements and bike lanes top the list for 2016-18. All of the 2016-18 projects are funded by Traffic Impact Fees paid for by developers.

Discretionary projects

In late October, the Council reviewed a draft CIP and directed staff to add a Civic Park Master Plan to the first two-year cycle. With hundreds of new residents moving to downtown Walnut Creek, it's time to take a look at the future of Civic Park, Council members said.

Fencing around the cement pond at Heather Farm Park, community gardens, and renovations at Northgate Park are also on the 2016-18 CIP. All of these projects are paid for by In-Lieu Parkland Dedication fees paid for by developers.



Walk Walnut Creek: Art & History Live Here

Strollers pass under one of more than 60 signs that popped up around Walnut Creek this month highlighting downtown heritage sites. Signs for 30 public art sites have also been placed around downtown. To find out more about a site or piece of art, visitors simply dial the phone number on the sign (covered up at time of this photo in anticipation of a Nov. 20 launch date), enter the specific site number, and listen to a recording replete with details about the site or artwork. "Walk Walnut Creek: Art & History Live Here" was a joint project of the Walnut Creek Historical Society, the Bedford Gallery and the City of Walnut Creek, and was paid for through a combination of private fund-raising, public art funds and downtown enhancement funds.

Learn more at www.walnut-creek.org/WalkWC.

2016 Citizens Institute registration under way

Registration for the 2016 Walnut Creek Citizens Institute is under way. Anyone with an interest in Walnut Creek government and the community is invited to sign up. Space is limited to encourage discussion, involvement and interaction.

Citizen Institute participants learn first-hand how their City works through tours, interactive exercises and presentations by key staff and City Council members. Since its inception in 2000, more than 550

residents have been part of the Institute. Alumni stay involved with the city, serving on committees and commissions and volunteering for special events or ongoing programs.

Classes will be Wednesdays, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., Feb. 24 through April 6, with graduation on Saturday, April 9. There is a \$25 fee.

Information about the class topics, along with a link to sign up, is on the City website at walnut-creek.org/institute.



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Cindy Silva
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* Term ends December 1, 2015

For appointment, call 925-256-3504

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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The Nutshell Newsletter is published quarterly. For questions and comments, contact editor Gayle Vassar, 925-943-5895 or vassar@walnut-creek.org

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HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

DOWNTOWN WALNUT CREEK

JINGLE BELL ROCK!

5-8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 2

The First Wednesdays Street Festival takes on a holiday flair with “Jingle Bell Rock.” Dance the night away (or at least from 5 to 8 p.m.) with live music on Cypress St. between Locust and Main. Enjoy food trucks, beer and wine, family-friendly activities – plus free parking in City garages Wednesdays starting at 5 p.m. For more information, visit www.walnutcreekdowntown.com or call 925-933-6778.

HOLIDAY PARADE OF LIGHTS, RETAILER OPEN HOUSE AND TREE LIGHTING

6-9 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3

It's back! The Parade of Lights returns to newly reopened Broadway Plaza St. on Thursday, December 3 at 7 p.m. When the parade ends, Santa Claus will light the center's Promenade Christmas Tree and make it snow! This fun evening includes a Retailer Open House from 6 to 9 p.m.

WALNUT CREEK ON ICE

Through January 18 at Civic Park

Civic Park becomes a Winter Wonderland with the return of Walnut Creek on Ice. Learn to skate at the Ice Skating Academy, schedule a special birthday party, or just enjoy special skate time. A family of four can skate for \$30. For more information visit www.iceskatewalnutcreek.com or call 925-935-7699.

PHOTOS WITH SANTA

November 27 through December 24

Santa is ready for his close-up at Broadway Plaza during most shopping center hours with the exception of breaks. All children visiting Santa will receive a free gift.



Spirits – of all kinds – soar at Center REP's beloved rendition of “A Christmas Carol,” coming December 10-20 at the Leshner Center for the Arts.

DOROTHY SAID IT BEST – THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME. As we wind our way through the final weeks of 2015, there is much to appreciate right here in Walnut Creek. Take a peaceful hike in the open space, lace up those skates at Walnut Creek on Ice, or treat yourself to a holiday tea at the historic Shadelands Ranch Museum or the Gardens at Heather Farm.

Over the next three pages, you'll find a wide array of events and activities to enjoy this holiday season, both downtown and around town, plus an Insider's Guide to Holiday Parking.

As a starter, here are three things guaranteed to make spirits bright:

- ❄️ Hundreds of new parking spaces at Broadway Plaza near Macy's beginning Nov. 20 (with hundreds more to come by May)
- ❄️ The return of Broadway Plaza's Holiday Parade of Lights on December 3
- ❄️ Extended evening hours on the Free Downtown Trolley through December



WALNUT CREEK

FIRST WEDNESDAYS

STREET FEST

5-8 PM CYPRESS STREET

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, OUTDOOR EATS, ART & MUCH MORE!

WALNUT CREEK FIRST WEDNESDAYS

walnut creek
MAGAZINE

WALNUT CREEK
downtown

VISIT WALNUTCREEKDOWNTOWN.COM FOR MORE INFO!

LESHER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The Lesher Center for the Arts offers holiday performances for every age and interest. Here are a few suggestions! For the full array, visit www.lesherartscenter.org or stop by the Box Office, 1601 Civic Drive.

WALNUT CREEK CONCERT BAND HOLIDAY CONCERT
Tuesday, Dec. 1, 7:30 p.m.

Featuring a new Holiday Program and a special gift to the Walnut Creek Community, the West Coast Premiere of James Beckel's Concerto for Trombone with the composer as soloist.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL PRESENTED BY CENTER REPERTORY COMPANY
December 10 – 20

Brimming with music and dance, love and laughter, spectacular special effects and scary ghosts, it's no wonder the critics have called it "THE Christmas Carol to see in the Bay Area." Join the thousands who make this theatrical event a part of their annual holiday traditions.

TAKE THE TROLLEY AND LEAVE TRAFFIC BEHIND



Thanks to funding provided by Broadway Plaza, Walnut Creek's Free Ride Trolley offers extended evening hours from the day after Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve.

The Trolley (also known as County Connection Route 4) will be available until 10 p.m. Nov. 27 through Dec. 12, and also Dec. 26 through Dec. 31.

From Dec. 14 through Dec. 23, trolley hours extend to 11 p.m. (Note: Extended hours are not offered on Sundays; the last trolley leaves Walnut Creek BART at 6:20 p.m. Sundays)

The Free Trolley loops between Walnut Creek BART and Broadway Plaza, traveling along Locust and North Main Street. For a detailed route map, visit countyconnection.com/schedule/4.

THE BIGGEST GIFT PRESENTED BY FANTASY FORUM ACTORS ENSEMBLE
Multiple performances, December 17 – 20

Did you send your letter to Santa? Then why has he not received it? No letters – no Christmas. Join the fun and laughter as Tucker the elf and the toys set out to save Christmas. Fantasy Forum is the perfect venue for introducing young children to the fun and magic of live theater.

TRADITIONS NEW AND OLD PRESENTED BY THE CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY
Tuesday, Dec. 22 and Wednesday, Dec. 23, 7:30 p.m.

Watch the classic film "The Snowman" on the big screen as the California Symphony and Pacific Boychoir perform the soundtrack live! Holiday classics such as selections from Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite" and "Sleigh Ride," and an audience Christmas carol sing-along will round out the concert.

BIG FAT YEAR END KISS OFF COMEDY SHOW XXIII PRESENTED BY WORST OF DURST
Saturday, December 26, 8 p.m.

Will Durst and company poke fun at major news stories of 2015 using standup comedy, improv, and loosely written sketches.

Tickets available at lesherartscenter.org or 925-943-7469.



Fantasy Forum's "The Biggest Gift" at the Lesher Center for the Arts is a holiday treat for all ages.

CIVIC ARTS EDUCATION PERFORMANCES

WINTER BALLET GALA
Friday, Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 12, 2 p.m.
Del Valle Theatre, 1963 Tice Valley Boulevard

Enjoy performances by advanced Civic Arts ballet students and professional dancers. The program offers an array of music and dance that embraces the celebrations of all people and many countries, along with a performance of "The Nutcracker." Tickets: \$16.75 General Admission, \$12 (groups 10 or more). Call 925-943-SHOW

JAZZ BAND AND FLOCK OF FLUTES
Sunday, Dec. 13, 2 p.m.
Civic Arts Auditorium, 111 North Wiget Lane

Catch some of Civic Arts Education's finest musicians at the Annual Holiday Concert by the Jazz Band and Flock of Flutes. The Jazz Band, directed by Max Pricco, will play everything from a medley of holiday favorites to contemporary jazz arrangements from composers like Dizzy Gillespie, Burt Bacharach, John Lennon and Paul McCartney. The concert kicks off with the fabulous Flock of Flutes, the East Bay's premiere flute choir, directed by Monica Williams. Tickets: \$10 at the door.

FREE PARKING IN ALL CITY GARAGES

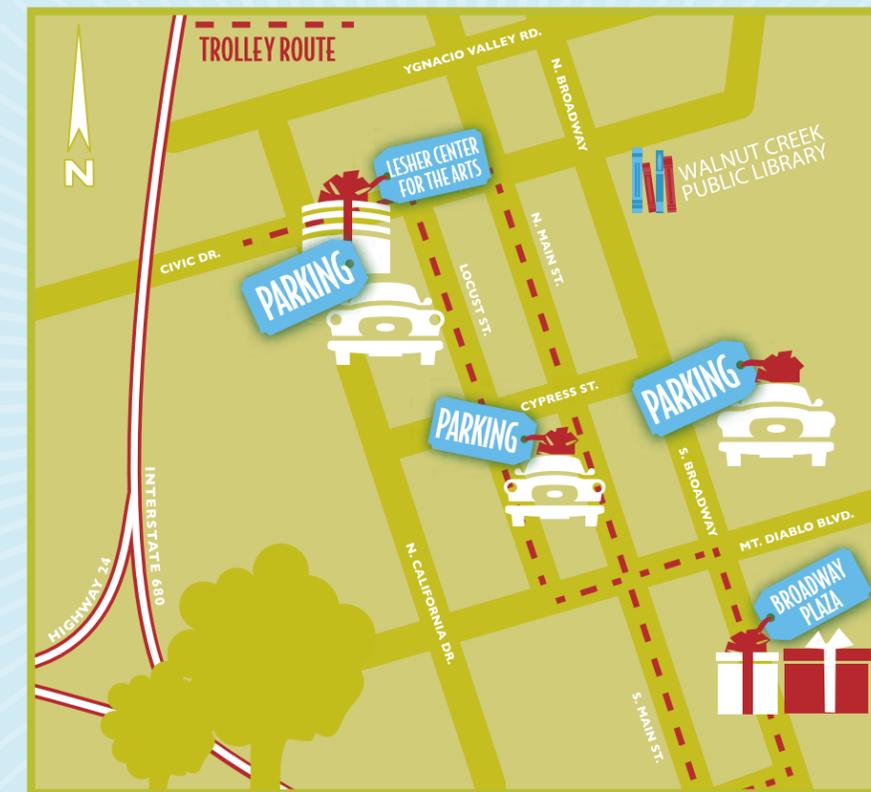
Wednesdays after 5pm

FIRST HOUR IS ALWAYS FREE

7 days a week in all city garages

50¢-\$1 every additional hour

No time limits!



LOCUST STREET GARAGE
1625 Locust St., Adjacent to the Dean Lesher/Regional Center for the Arts

SOUTH LOCUST GARAGE
1350 Locust St., Between Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Cypress St.

BROADWAY GARAGE
1390 Broadway, One Block South of the Public Library

PLUS! SOUTH SECTION OF BROADWAY PLAZA GARAGE REOPENS NOV. 26
Hundreds of additional free spaces!

AROUND WALNUT CREEK

ARTISTS MARKET

Shadelands Art Center, 111 North Wiget Lane, Saturday, Dec. 5 & Sunday, Dec. 7 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Come to the Artists Market and choose from affordable, handcrafted art for everyone on your list! The sale will feature 100 artists affiliated with Civic Arts Education, as well as a Friday night reception, entertainment and events throughout the weekend. Browse beautiful ceramics, photography and painting, jewelry, glass, textiles and more. Proceeds benefit local artists and programs at Civic Arts Education.

TEDDY BEAR TEA

The Gardens at Heather Farm
1540 Marchbanks Drive
Saturday, Dec. 5 and Sunday, Dec. 6
11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. seatings

A magical holiday event awaits children and adults alike at the 20th annual Teddy Bear Tea at The Gardens at Heather Farm. Guests will enjoy a variety of teatime savories and sandwiches, plenty of sweet treats, story time and a take-home souvenir photo. Adults can check a few things off their shopping lists at the holiday gift boutique. \$20 for children, \$25 for adults. Register at gardenshf.org or call 925-947-1678.

HOLIDAYS AT SHADELANDS THREE-COURSE TEA LUNCHEON, HOLIDAY FAIRE

Nov. 28 through Dec. 13
11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. seatings

The holidays come to the historic Shadelands Ranch Museum, 2660 Ygnacio Valley Road, with a three-course tea luncheon. Cost is \$35. Advance reservations are required. Call 925-935-7871.

WILDLIFE OF WINTER

Lindsay Wildlife Experience
1931 First Avenue
12 noon, Saturday, Dec. 5

Get up close to winter wildlife, from an arctic fox to a snowy owl, during the December edition of the monthly "Live.



Meet an arctic fox at the Lindsay Wildlife Experience

Wild. Animals!" program. The noon show is open to the general public on a first come, first serve basis; there is also a 10 a.m. members-only show (pre-registration required). Call 925-935-1978 or visit www.lindsaywildlife.org.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Boundary Oak Clubhouse
3800 Valley Vista Road
Sunday, Dec. 13, 10 a.m. to noon

Every year, Santa swings by Boundary Oak from the North Pole, delighting children of all ages. Enjoy a fabulous breakfast buffet and get those last minute requests in to Santa. Call 925-934-4775 ext. 20 or go to www.playboundaryoak.com

SENIOR HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Tuesday, Dec. 15, 11 a.m.
The Clubhouse at Boundary Oak
3800 Valley Vista Road

Join us for a delicious lunch, complete with holiday entertainment and dancing, and share the magic of the holiday season! Tickets are \$30 for Walnut Creek Senior Club members, \$35 for non-members, and are available at the Civic Park Community Center. Call 925-943-5851.

NEW YEAR'S EVE STROLLING DINNER PARTY

Boundary Oak Clubhouse
Thursday, Dec. 31, 6 p.m. – 12:30 a.m.

Watch the ball drop 2 times at the Clubhouse at Boundary Oak and ring in the New Year! Numerous culinary delights and an evening of dancing await you and your friends. Our most popular event will sell out, so please reserve your table early. Call 925-934-4775 ext. 20 or visit www.playboundaryoak.com

DECEMBER ACTIVITIES

PARENT & CHILD (AGES 6-17) COOKING CLASS:

Peruvian Chocolate Christmas Torte
Saturday, Dec. 12, 10 a.m. to noon

Build a delicious chocolate torte in layers with your child and be as creative as you like! Shape the torte like a star, and/or decorate it as you wish. Please register under the child's name. The class will be in the kitchen at Civic Park Community Center. \$55 for the class covers parent and child; \$25 for an additional sibling. There is a \$20 supply fee due at class. To register, go to www.WalnutCreekRec.org or call 925-943-5858. Class number is 29932.

DECEMBER BIRD WALK

Shell Ridge Open Space
Sat, Dec. 12, 9 to 11 a.m.

Join Ranger Dan Bylin on a walk through the grasslands above Borges Ranch in search of wintering sparrows and raptors. You may even catch a glimpse of our resident golden eagle! Meet at the Ranger Station at the Old Borges Ranch parking lot, 1035 Castle Rock Road.

WINTER BREAK CAMPS WITH WALNUT CREEK RECREATION

December 28 – 31

Stay busy this Winter Break with exciting new camps from Walnut Creek Recreation for kids ages 4-10. Camps include Jedi Engineering Using Lego, Jedi Master Engineering Using Lego and Crazy Chemistry Camp. All take place at Heather Farm Community Center from December 28-31. Learn more and register at www.WalnutCreekRec.org.

FAMILY SWIMMING AT THE CLARKE SWIM CENTER

The Clarke Swim Center at Heather Farm Park is open from noon to 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays for both recreational and lap swimming.



Walnut Creek on Ice is open through January 18 at Civic Park