

Inside City Hall

Beyond the headlines

Volume 24

Sept. 16, 2008

ACEQUIA TWO-WAY CONVERSION PROJECT SET TO BEGIN: Construction is set to start at the end of this month for the conversion of Acequia Avenue, from one-way to two-way traffic flow between Conyer and Bridge Streets. Monday, the City Council awarded construction of this project to Cruco Construction Group Inc., at a cost of \$550,466. The project, generally located along Acequia Avenue between Conyer and Santa Fe Streets, includes the installation of a new signal at Willis Street, and the modification of existing signals at West, Locust, and Court Streets. It also includes a slurry seal, upgrades to existing curb returns, and striping for bike lanes and parking space T-markers. The existing curb will be painted at some locations to identify no-parking areas. Status reports will be given throughout the project, which is set to continue through December, including the actual date that traffic will be converted from one-way to two-way traffic. Every effort will be made to minimize impacts to traffic during the holiday season. "Inside City Hall" will provide additional status updates throughout the duration of the project. For more information, contact Rebecca Keenan at the City's Engineering Department at 713-4541 or by email at rkeenan@ci.visalia.ca.us.

23 TO PARTICIPATE IN CITY'S FIRST

'CITIZENS IN THE KNOW': When the clock strikes 5:30 p.m. on Oct. 1, 23 Visalia residents will become the city's first group to launch "Citizens in the Know." The six-week program, developed by city staff over the last several months, is designed to educate and help citizens understand the workings of their city government. Participants meet with key city leaders, ask them questions and get the answers they want to know. "Citizens In the Know" provides citizens with a first-hand look at the work of Visalia city government—how it is planned, the infrastructure that is used, and the City Council's vision of the future. Twenty-three applied, and all met the eligibility requirements of being at least 18 years of age, a resident of Visalia, and willing to commit to attending all of the sessions. They are: Paul Fry; Rey Montero; Olivia Velasquez; Renee Prescott; Stephanie Bartsch; Maria Helm; Maile Melkonian; Chris Crawford; Brian Newton; Richard S. Leigh; Fred Weber; Judi Pirstill; Stan Bennett; Christi Shipman; Micah Escobedo; Slade Childers; Kevin McCusker; Rafael Alonso Jr.; Stan Beal; Kim Gunter; Michelle M. Cox; Danielle Evenson; and Bob Grieb.



OVAL PARK CONCERT SERIES: The Lincoln Oval Park will be live with music every Friday in October, except Halloween, from 6 to 9 p.m. This Free Concert is for the whole family! Booths and other activities will be available. Come join us in celebrating the heritage and tradition of the Lincoln Oval Park. For more information, contact John Bradley at 713-4585.

PARKS AND RECREATION FOUNDATION SEEKS PRESIDENT/CEO:

The Board of Directors of the Visalia Parks and Recreation Foundation is currently accepting applications from qualified individuals for the position of President/CEO of the Foundation. This position is a part-time, independent contractor position, and will be responsible for all the day-to-day activities of the Foundation. Applications should be directed to Alex Peltzer, Chair of the Board of Directors, Visalia Parks and Recreation Foundation, P.O. Box 1032, Visalia, CA 93279. An application, consisting of a letter of interest describing the candidate's qualifications for the position, and a complete curriculum vitae or resume, must be received by the Foundation no later than Friday, Sept. 19. For more information, call 713-4599.

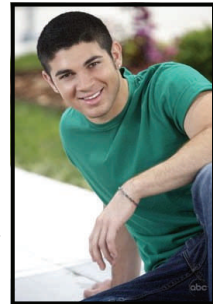


BLOCK PARTY OFFERS HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE TO HALLOWEEN

NIGHT: Visalia Parks & Recreation offers a healthy alternative on Halloween Night. Together with Visalia First Assembly of God Church, "The Block Party/Concert" will be held from 6 to 10 p.m. Friday, Oct. 31, at the Oaks Baseball Stadium. National Christian Hip Hop favorite "Grits" will be accompanied by local favorite "Saylah" in providing wholesome entertainment. This is a "must attend" event for the whole family. Vendor booths and concessions will be available. Tickets are available now at Gorillatix.com or at the Anthony Community Center, 345 N. Jacob St., in Visalia. For more information, contact Ramsey Ochoa at 713-4508.

HE'S 'JUST GETTING STARTED' AFTER HUNDREDS TURN OUT FOR CITYWIDE CELEBRATION FOR STAN CARRIZOSA:

Stan's fans turned out in droves to see Visalia's own, winner of "High School Musical: Get In the Picture." The estimated 850+ in attendance were lucky enough to hear Stan perform a song to his mother from a never-before seen episode of "High School Musical." In addition, clips aired from previous episodes as well as highlights and never-before-seen behind-the-scenes footage of the finale. Prior to the celebration, the Visalia City Council presented a resolution to the El Diamante High School senior. At the same time, the doors of the Visalia Convention Center opened for a celebration sponsored by the City of Visalia Parks & Recreation Special Events Program, and geared to families and children who want to meet the show's winner. Drew Sorensen, former principal of El Diamante and area administrator for Visalia Unified School District, served as Master of Ceremonies. Carrizosa stayed the entire 2 hours to sign autographs and pose for photos. Visalia Rotary Club's donation paid for the purchase of 2,000 Haagen-Dazs ice cream bars.



SHRED IT AND FORGET IT ON SEPT. 20: The City, in cooperation with Tucoemas Federal Credit Union, Valley Home Loans, Channel 47 and the Better Business Bureau, will host a free shredding event from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 20, at 1830 S. Mooney Blvd. Up to five boxes of documents will be shredded for free by Shred-It, with a \$3 per box shredding fee for additional boxes. Donations will go to the El Diamante High School Key Club. Last year, 42 tons of material was shredded and recycled. Organizers stress the importance of properly shredding important documents to protect against identity theft. For more information, call Vickie at 256-6331.

FREE COMMERCIAL SOLID WASTE/RECYCLING ASSESSMENT

AVAILABLE FOR CITY BUSINESSES: Free solid waste assessments are now available to the city's commercial/industrial and institutional customers. In addition, multi-family commercial customers with commercial services provided by the City also are encouraged to participate in the program. Commercial recycling may lower the cost of doing business by reducing expenses on solid waste

services by up to 60 percent. Participation in the program includes a walk-through tour of the business or facility to identify recycling processes and practices. Most assessments take less than one hour to complete. For more information, contact the Natural Resources and Conservation Division at 713-4532.

26 BUS SHELTERS AGLOW WITH SOLAR LIGHTING: The City of Visalia recently installed 26 new bus shelters with solar lighting through a grant from the Federal Transit Administration. These shelters include many features to make the bus riding experience more enjoyable, including a decorative tile roof, metal mesh-style sides and benches that eliminate graffiti and glass which was often broken and costly to replace, and the solar lighting that creates a safer environment and saves the City electrical expense. The Transit Division obtained additional Safety and Security grant funds to install 30 more shelters and 10 stand alone solar lights for those dark bus stops that don't have room for a shelter.

FAIRVIEW BLOCK PARTY A SUCCESS: An estimated 400 people attended the City of



Visalia Parks and Recreation Department's Block Party at Fairview Park. The focus of the event was to give residents an opportunity to review resources that are available from City of Visalia departments, community organizations and businesses. Participants included: City of Visalia Police Department-Neighborhood Watch, Police Activities League, Fire Department, Water Conservation, Public Works, Community Development, Parks and Recreation, LOOP bus, Verizon, Cookie Lee, Tulare County Tobacco

Prevention & Lead Poisoning Prevention, Synchrony of Visalia, Proteus, CSET and PTA of Fairview Elementary. Water was donated by Food 4 Less and multiple agencies donated prizes for raffle drawings. For more information, contact John Bradley at 713-4585.

RECREATION PARK UPDATE: "The Recreation Park Stadium project is progressing well and is within budget," Special Projects Manager Phyllis Coring reported at the Sept. 15 City Council meeting. The revitalization project has several construction phases. The first began at the beginning of the year and included demolition/over-excavation and the current construction of the two story building with grass seating berm. Between now and the opening of the 2009 baseball season, concession equipment, signage, utility connections and other final improvements will be completed. In addition, the new dugouts will be completed prior to the new season. They'll be constructed into the potential grandstand berm in a manner that will allow new grandstands to be built around the dugouts at a later time if the Council chooses.



POLICE OFFER TIPS FOR SAFER, COOLER NIGHTS: With the weather cooling down enough for us to open our doors or windows at night to cool the house, the Visalia Police Department reminds residents the need to evaluate safety and security concerns associated with leaving doors and windows unsecured during the night. They recommend these simple safety guidelines.

- If you plan on leaving a door open at night, install a security screen with a deadbolt lock on each door.
- If you like to leave your windows open to take advantage of the cooler night air, place window locks on each window. These locks can be installed so that the window can be opened just enough to allow the cool air into the house but not open enough so that a person can enter the house.

- If you open the sliding door to a patio, install a similar type of lock on that door as you have installed on the windows.
 - If you have an alarm system currently installed, please use it at night. If you do not have an alarm system, consider installing one.
 - If you are unsure about what type of locks are available for your doors or windows, please visit your local hardware store. They have a large supply of many different types of locks available.
 - Insure house numbers are visible from the street. This will assist police, fire and medical aid respond to your house quickly.
 - Bushes, shrubs and trees should be kept trimmed to insure an unobstructed view of driveways, doors, windows and gates, anywhere a person could hide.
 - Secure all windows and doors of vehicles in the driveway and garage.
 - If you have outside lighting use it. You may want to consider the use of timers and motion detectors.
 - If you leave a spare key for family, don't leave it where a criminal can easily find it.
 - Make sure that all entry doors into the house have peep holes.
- Complete a home inventory and photograph all valuables. Keep a copy of this inventory in a safe and secure location.

DUMP ON US ON OCT. 4: The City of Visalia will hold a “Dump-On-Us” event from 7 to 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 4, at The Sound of His Voice Church, 525 S. Atwood. These events are limited to City of Visalia residents, and proof of residency is required. Take advantage of free disposal of these hard-to-dispose-of items: Air conditioning/heating units; bamboo; cactus; cell phones; computers; monitors and televisions; dryers; fencing materials; furniture; mattresses; palm fronds; printer toner cartridges; scrap metal; small appliances; tires (limit of 4, with rims removed); washers; and yucca trees. Commercial waste is not accepted, and only one visit and one small truck and/or small trailer per household per event. Information: 713-4500.

TV VIEWERS GEAR UP FOR CONVERSION TO ALL-DIGITAL TELEVISION: After Feb. 17, 2009, full-power television stations will broadcast in digital only. Digital broadcasting allows stations to offer improved picture and sound quality and is more efficient than analog. A digital television (a TV with an internal digital tuner) will allow you to continue to watch free over-the-air programming after February, 17, 2009. If you have an analog television, you will need a digital to analog converter box to continue to watch broadcast television on that set. A converter box will also enable you to see any additional multicast programming that your local stations are offering. To help consumers with the DTV transition, the Government established the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program. Every U.S. household is eligible to receive up to two coupons, worth \$40 each, toward the purchase of eligible digital-to-analog converter boxes. The coupons may only be used for eligible converter boxes sold at participating consumer electronic retailers, and the coupons must be used at the time of purchase. A one-time cost of \$40 to \$70 each is estimated for the digital-to-analog converter boxes. For information on the coupon program, visit www.dtv2009.gov.