

June 2009

A monthly publication
provided for residents by
the City of West Covina



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Discover WestCovina

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF WEST COVINA

CITY OF WEST COVINA OFFERS

SWIM LESSONS

The City of West Covina is proud of its swimming programs and the vital role that safe swimming plays in good physical and mental health of all ages and skill levels.

This summer, well-trained recreation aquatic staff will teach more than 2,000 swim lessons to youth, teens and adults, contributing to the quality of life in West Covina.

Municipal Pool swim lesson registration begins May 27, with evening lessons beginning June 1 and morning lessons and open swim beginning June 15.

The public pool is also available to rent for private use. Come and enjoy the pool staffed by West Covina lifeguards for your next birthday party, luau or family event. For reservation details and availability or any aquatic program information, call the pool office at (626) 960-7266 or Cameron Community Center at (626) 919-6966. Information is also online at www.westcovina.org.



Spent Summer Enjoying West Covina Parks!

- SPACE TO PLAY AND LEARN • SPACE TO BE SAFE AND SECURE •
- SPACE TO CREATE AND IMAGINE •

The City of West Covina Community Services Department is committed to providing recreation facilities for use by youth, teens and adults. A well-trained, enthusiastic recreation staff has prepared a menu of summer programs that foster human development and encourage participants of all ages to create and imagine.

During this economic time, take a look at the West Covina Community Recreation Guide at www.westcovina.org/events/index.html for affordable summer programs and events. Don't miss out on all the fun!

Last year, more than 29,000 participants enjoyed the Cameron Community Center alone.

For more information on available recreation programs and facilities, call Cameron Community Center at (626) 919-6966, Shadow Oak Community Center at (626) 965-0328 or City Hall, Room 316, at (626) 939-8430.



West Covina Expands PICNIC PAVILION PROGRAM

In preparation for summer, the West Covina Community Services Department is expanding its Picnic Pavilion Rental Program from two to eight park sites. During this economic climate, families are staying closer to home, and West Covina parks are great, safe places to host outdoor events.

“Last year, we received calls from residents requesting to rent picnic pavilions at various park sites,” Recreation Supervisor Adrian Reynosa said. “So we expanded the program and made the rental process more accessible by accepting reservations at three locations: Cameron Community Center, (626) 919-6966; Shadow Oak Community Center, (626) 965-0328; and City Hall, Room 316, (626) 939-8430.”

Large pavilions rent for \$100 per event, and small pavilions rent for \$50 per event. For more information on reserving a picnic pavilion, call one of the three aforementioned phone numbers.

More information is available on Page 20 of the Community Recreation Guide at www.westcovina.org/events/index.html.



PICNIC PAVILIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT:

- Cameron Park
- Cortez Park
- Del Norte Park
- Friendship Park
- Orangetown Park
- Palmview Park
- Shadow Oak Park
- Galster Nature Park

July is Parks & Recreation Month!

Celebrate Parks & Recreation Month this July by visiting your neighborhood park or a community park you've never visited with family and friends.

Try a new recreation class, swim at the pool, visit a community center and meet the friendly staff, shoot some hoops at the gym, register for a day camp or take a leisurely walk surrounded by nature on one of the trails.

Don't be left out of all the fun! A recent public-opinion research study conducted by the California Park & Recreation Society revealed that 98 percent of California households visit a park once a year. Half of California households reported that someone in their household participated in a structured park program at least once in the past year.



“The Community Services Department joins the celebration this month as we recognize the diverse opportunities that are afforded to a community through the parks we offer, the people we serve and the programs that occur in community spaces,” Community Services Director Michele McNeill said.

For more information on recreation programs and facilities, call Cameron Community Center at (626) 919-6966,



Shadow Oak Community Center at (626) 965-0328 or City Hall, Room 316, at (626) 939-8430.

\$ CITY OF WEST COVINA Aggressively Pursues Grant Funding

The City of West Covina anticipates receiving more than \$950,000 for energy-efficient projects from the federal government's newly released American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). City staff has nearly completed the preliminary registration and research work required by the Department of Energy.

All public-use facilities operated by the City are being surveyed to identify obsolete and inefficient energy-use systems and equipment.

In order to maximize the ARRA grant funding available to the City of West Covina, major work areas with the highest potential for energy savings have been identified. Staff is now reviewing the attributes of the numerous contractors, vendors and manufacturers soliciting their services and products in order to determine the most cost-effective and efficient options for the City to pursue.

West Covina Sportsplex Project Honored with 11th Award!

IF 10 AWARDS AREN'T SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE OF THE GRANDEUR OF THE WEST COVINA SPORTSPLEX PROJECT, THE MOST RECENT – AN 11TH AWARD – IS DEFINITELY A TESTAMENT.

The West Covina commercial center and Sportsplex project has been bestowed the prestigious Award of Excellence by the California Redevelopment Association (CRA). The CRA is a statewide, nonprofit corporation representing more than 361 redevelopment agencies and more than 333 private firms that provides professional development in redevelopment, legislative advocacy, and a public forum for redevelopment law and activities.

Annually, the CRA recognizes top redevelopment projects from around the state. The Award of Excellence is awarded to a small number of projects or programs that demonstrate prime examples of exceptional redevelopment efforts. This year, West Covina's Commercial Center and Sportsplex was honored with the CRA's Award of Excellence in the Community Revitalization category.

The award recognizes the positive impacts the West Covina Commercial Center and Sportsplex has successfully brought to the community, turning a landfill into a landmark. For decades, the property was utilized as a neighborhood waste site, which over the years became the third largest landfill in the nation.

Through the leadership of the West Covina City Council, the dedication of city staff, partnerships with local, regional, state and federal agencies and community involvement, the City has converted one of the largest landfills into a thriving attraction in the City.

Today, the former landfill is home to a Big League Dreams Sports Park, a 43-acre commercial retail center anchored by

Through the leadership of the West Covina City Council, the City has converted one of the largest landfills into a thriving attraction.



Home Depot and Target and open-space natural habitat. Future plans include a 5.8-acre corporate center, an 18-hole championship golf course and multipurpose recreational trails.

Here are the 10 other awards the West Covina Sportsplex project has previously been honored with:

1. International Economic Development Council - Economic Development Award for New Media (Video on Landfill to Landmark) 2008
2. International Economic Development Council - Community Partnership Award 2008
3. National League of Cities Silver Award 2008
4. California Redevelopment Association - Award of Excellence for Community Revitalization 2008
5. Southern California Association of Governments Compass Blueprint - Achievement Award 2008
6. National Electrical Contractors Association - Electrical Excellence Award 2008
7. American Planning Association (California Chapter) - Hard Won Victories Award 2008
8. Real Estate & Construction Review - The Building of America Gold Award 2008
9. San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership - City Beautification Award 2008
10. California Park & Recreation Society - Award of Excellence 2008.

THE FORMER LANDFILL IS HOME TO A BIG LEAGUE DREAMS SPORTS PARK, A 43-ACRE COMMERCIAL RETAIL CENTER ANCHORED BY HOME DEPOT AND TARGET, AND OPEN SPACE NATURAL HABITAT. FUTURE PLANS INCLUDE A 5.8-ACRE CORPORATE CENTER, AN 18-HOLE CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF COURSE AND MULTIPURPOSE RECREATIONAL TRAILS.

DOCKSIDE GRILL

Same Name, New Experience

Although the restaurant name remains Dockside Grill, under its new management patrons are experiencing a whole new restaurant. In March, Damon's Management LLC purchased the business and assumed the lease.

Damon's Management LLC has more than 80 years of restaurant experience. The company owns the established Damon's Steak House in downtown Glendale, which is well-known for its uniquely themed Polynesian décor and its infamous mai tais.

As a result of the marketing efforts by the Community Development Commission, Damon's Management LLC was made aware of the business opportunity in the City and made an investment in the community by purchasing the restaurant.

Since taking ownership of Dockside Grill, Damon's Management LLC has made several improvements to the restaurant. One of the primary changes has been the addition of a lunch hour, with a whole new lunch menu that includes salads, burgers and sandwiches.

In addition, the dinner menu has been expanded to diversify dining options. Dockside patrons can now order delectable pastas, succulent steaks and scrumptious deserts.

For those familiar with Damon's famous mai tais, Dockside Grill will also serve them. Dockside Grill will also host live entertainment Thursday through Sunday evenings.

As community involvement is important to Damon's Management, Dockside Grill will also partner with community organizations for fund-raisers.

If you haven't already experienced the "new" Dockside Grill, you may want to stop in and try the new menu.

Dockside Grill is located at 3057 E. Garvey Ave. North in West Covina.

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW XXI STORE TO BEGIN THIS SUMMER

Forever 21, known for providing shoppers with the most current trends in fashion at great values, is opening one of its newer concepts at Westfield West Covina.

Existing mall tenant Forever 21 will close, and a XXI store will open. West Covina's XXI store will expand the current selection of merchandise to include apparel for children, juniors and men in addition to women's.

The XXI store will be located adjacent to the new Best Buy currently under construction at the mall and will occupy 29,720 square feet. Construction is anticipated to start this summer, and the store is expected to open in March 2010.



Another new store, Fresh & Easy, joined West Covina Heights, 2430 Azusa Ave., in February.

Employee Training Available for West Covina Businesses

The West Covina Chamber of Commerce is offering an Employment Training Panel program and invites West Covina businesses to take advantage.

The Employment Training Panel (ETP) is designed to assist businesses in training employees to help increase production and efficiency, making the business more competitive in the industry. The ETP program provides a range of training workshops, from custom training programs based on the specific needs of a business to general training sessions open to qualified businesses.

If your business qualifies, you can obtain free or low-cost employee training. For information on the ETP programs available and the qualifications required, call the West Covina Chamber at (626) 338-8496.



NEW PROGRAM SAVES OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES FOR AMBULANCE SERVICES FOR WEST COVINA RESIDENTS

The West Covina Fire Department introduces the Ambulance Subscription Program for West Covina residents beginning July 1. This is an official City of West Covina program.

The Ambulance Subscription Program is designed to provide West Covina residents protection from out-of-pocket expenses related to ambulance transportation services provided by the West Covina Fire Department.

Did you know that one ambulance transport could cost in excess of \$1,200? Additionally, most insurance companies do not cover the entire cost of ambulance services. As a member of the Ambulance Subscription Program, you and your entire household pay nothing, even if you do not have insurance.

As a subscriber of this program for less than 14 cents a day, your household will be protected from ambulance transportation fees for services provided by the West Covina Fire Department. If you have insurance, it will be billed for you, and any amount paid will be accepted as full payment with no further obligation from you.

As a program member, all legal residents of your household are covered and pay nothing for emergency ambulance

transportation services provided by West Covina Fire Department and have unlimited usage throughout the duration of the subscription.

For only \$48 per year, the household coverage protects legal residents of your household from any out-of-pocket expenses associated with the City of West Covina's ambulance transportation services.

If you are interested in subscribing to this program or would like more information, visit www.westcovina.org. Beginning July 1, you can get an application at any of these locations:

- Any West Covina fire station
- West Covina Senior Center
- Cameron Community Center
- West Covina City Hall Finance Department, 1444 W. Garvey Ave., Room 308.

For more information, call (626) 939-8447.



Don't Get Burned This Fourth of July

Everybody loves the Fourth of July. After all, what's not to like? Hot weather, swimming, the smell of hot dogs on the grill and, of course, fireworks.

But wait – fireworks are illegal in West Covina and have been for many years. Yet every year, the fire department responds to numerous emergency calls related to fireworks. "Safe and sane" fireworks are illegal in West Covina, and fireworks purchased out of the country are not only illegal but also unsafe.

A recent report prepared by the Consumer Product Safety Commission revealed that nearly 10,000 individuals per year are injured seriously enough to warrant a trip to the hospital. Of these injuries, one-third was caused by fireworks that are considered illegal in this country.

Although these numbers are high, they represent a 75 percent decrease in the injury rate because of the outlaw of all fireworks in some cities. Many cities now opt to provide residents with a professional fireworks display, as West Covina does. This allows residents to experience the fun of fireworks without the danger.

But if your Fourth of July travels take you to a city that allows fireworks, there are some things the fire department would like you to keep in mind:

- Always read and follow the directions.
- Have an adult present at all times.
- Use outdoors only.
- Never experiment or make your own fireworks.
- Light only one firework at a time.
- Never relight a "dud."
- Always have water handy to thoroughly soak spent fireworks.
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people.
- Never give fireworks to small children.
- Stay away from illegal fireworks.

The fire department wants everyone to have a great, safe Fourth of July. Remember that all fireworks are illegal in West Covina. Firefighters and police officers will patrol the streets to ensure that everyone remains safe and enjoys the holiday responsibly. For more information, call West Covina Fire Department Administration at (626) 338-8800.

ENJOY FREE OUTDOOR ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LAKES

The recently formed Greater West Covina Business Association (GWCBA) was created to showcase and connect businesses. The organization provides exposure and advertising opportunities with the primary focus being destination marketing and a business resource center.

The GWCBA will host free outdoor events this summer at The Lakes Entertainment Center, 1200 Lakes Drive:

- June 4 – L.A. Acoustic (Latin jazz)
- June 11 – The Reel Band (R&B, Latin)
- June 18 – Kool Breeze (Top 40, jazz)
- June 25 – Rhythm Devoted (R&B, disco)
- July 2 – Hush (R&B, disco)
- July 9 – Person to Person (R&B, old school)
- July 16 – The Company Band (Top 40, disco, Latin, R&B)
- July 23 – Bumptown (Top 40, oldies)
- July 30 – Intentions (smooth jazz, R&B, oldies)
- Aug. 6 – The Manny Band (classic rock, oldies, Latin)
- Aug. 13 – Yankee Azteca (rock en espanol, classic rock)
- Aug. 20 – Impact (Top 40, R&B, Latin)
- Aug. 27 – Rudy Salas & Allstars (oldies, R&B)
- Sept. 3 – Latin Health and Education Fair featuring Sangria (old school Latin and oldies)



For more information, call (818) 489-0041 or e-mail glawson@greaterwestcovina.com.



Bruins Cheerleaders Take First Place

Congratulations to the West Covina Bruins Cheer Squad for winning first place in the Youth Nationals! The cheerleading squad consists of Devina Armas, Taylor Andrews, Joanna Castaneda, Myla Correa, Tatiana Flamenco, Desiree Garcia, Amber Jansen, Esmeralda Largaespada, Joleeza Lopez, Brianna Martinez, Jessica Martinez, Alicia Navarro, Mariah Olivas, Nuvia Velasco and Giselle Velez.

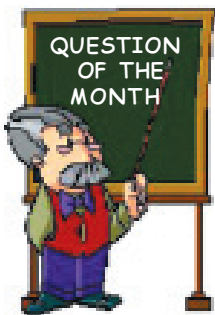


South Hills High School Percussion Ensemble Wins in Southern California Competition

Congratulations to the South Hills High School Percussion Ensemble for winning the gold medal in the Pacific Southwest Division for the third year in a row! South Hills competed against some of the best high-school percussion groups in Southern California. Way to go, South Hills!

HOME IMPROVEMENT LOAN PROGRAMS

The City of West Covina offers homeowners two Home Improvement Loan Programs. The first is a no-interest loan for low-income applicants who qualify. The second is called the Housing Preservation Program, with a 5 percent interest rate for moderate-income applicants who qualify. For more information or to apply, call Housing Program Coordinator Barbara Banks at (626) 939-8432.



DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW IDEAS OR CITY SERVICES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE COVERED MORE IN DISCOVER WEST COVINA?

E-mail your comments to: discoverwestcovina@westcovina.org
or mail to: West Covina City Hall,
City Manager's Office, Attn: PIO Sue Williams,
1444 W. Garvey Ave., P.O. Box 1440,
West Covina, CA 91793

West Covina Police Officer Honored as 'Woman of the Year'

West Covina Police Cpl. Irene Meza was recently honored as "Woman of the Year" for the 57th Assembly District.

In total, 10 women in this Assembly district were honored as Women of Achievement, but Meza was selected as the "First Place 2009 Woman of the Year."

Having received past commendations from the District Attorney's Office for domestic violence investigations, Meza earned this top honor for her tenacious commitment to delivering justice to crime victims and for her achievements during her public safety career.

On March 16, Meza went to Sacramento to participate in a special presentation coinciding with Women's History Month.

"It was 100 years ago when a female became the first nationally recognized policewoman with the powers to arrest, and I am grateful to all the trailblazers that came before me," Meza said. "I am very honored to receive this recognition and would like to emphasize that so much more is accomplished when men and women work in unison, like they do here in West Covina, toward the common goal of providing safety to our community."



West Covina Police Chief Frank Wills with award winner Cpl. Irene Meza.

Congratulations, Irene Meza!

WEST COVINA RESIDENT HONORED AT DOROTHY CHANDLER PAVILION

Longtime West Covina resident John Hughes was honored May 20 at the 44th Annual Older Americans Recognition Day held at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles.

Hughes has been active in the West Covina community for many years. He is a member of the West Covina Senior Citizens Commission and acts in an advisory capacity to the West Covina City Council on matters pertaining to the senior population in West Covina. In addition, Hughes is a member of the West Covina Elks Lodge, chairman of the West Covina Muscular Dystrophy Association Volunteer Committee and a supporter of the West Covina Rose Float Foundation.

For the past 19 years, Hughes has actively supported the Muscular Dystrophy Association by partnering with the City of West Covina at the annual Independence Day Celebration, with all proceeds benefiting the MDA. Hughes has expanded the event to include a dinner dance, a silent auction and a golf tournament. Under his leadership and tireless volunteer hours, more than \$1 million has been raised for the MDA!

Through his efforts, the entire community comes together to support this cause, and Hughes expects nothing in return for his labor of love. As Hughes often says, "Everybody knows somebody that they can help."

Congratulations, John Hughes – you make West Covina proud!

SENATOR HONORS WEST COVINA RESIDENT

Congratulations to West Covina resident Olivia James and six other local women whose community work and leadership have improved the quality of life for people of the 24th Senate District.

James was recognized as "Woman of the Year 2009" for her political work registering and educating voters throughout Los Angeles County.

James has been a community activist all her life, but since retiring from her job as a special education teacher 18 years ago, she's really stepped up her political activity. She is also a political action chair with the NAACP and is involved with the League of Women



Voters and the California Women's Conference.

"We are concerned about the world we live in and what we will leave for our children and grandchildren," James said. "We want to make sure that we elect people who are interested in the same things we are interested in: education and making sure that every person gets the best education possible."

In honor of their 50th wedding anniversary, James and her husband set up a scholarship for a needy student attending her alma mater, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.

WEST COVINA POLICE OBTAIN GRANT TO COMBAT COMPUTER- BASED CRIMES

The West Covina Police Department recently obtained a \$2,000 grant from Target Corporation, which has two retail locations in West Covina.

This private grant is for equipment to be used by specially trained police detectives to aid in the investigation of computer-based crimes, including crimes that affect the business community.

The City of West Covina and the West Covina Police Department greatly value civic partners, such as Target, that are committed to working cooperatively to improve public safety.

Street Improvements Have Begun

Last month, work began on the City of West Covina's Residential Street Rehabilitation Project. This project impacts approximately 5.6 miles of West Covina streets, consisting of 35 segments, located throughout the city. Work will include the repair of damaged curbs, gutters and sidewalks. The project will also include installation of new wheelchair ramps.

Funding for the project has been obtained from State Proposition 42 (Congestion Relief Fund) and Community Development Block Grants. It is anticipated that the work will be completed by July.

For a map and list of locations, visit www.westcovina.org. For more information, call the City West Covina Engineering Division, Dave Nichols, at (626) 939-8425.



WEST COVINA CITY COUNCIL

Mayor: Roger Hernández
Mayor Pro Tem: Shelley Sanderson
Councilmember: Steve Herfert
Councilmember: Sherri Lane
Councilmember: Mike Touhey

How Street Sweeping Can Be Improved in Your Neighborhood

Street sweeping plays an important role in keeping West Covina neighborhoods looking beautiful. Sweeping city streets keeps them clean from debris and prevents pollutants from entering the storm drain and eventually ending up in the river basin that washes out to the ocean. If cars are not removed, the sweepers cannot remove excess trash and debris that accumulates behind parked vehicles.



The City of West Covina sweeps all residential streets twice a month. However, if residents do not remove parked cars off the streets, the debris cannot be removed, resulting in accumulation of litter that piles up along the curbsides. This prevents the street sweepers from doing a thorough job, a valuable city service funded by tax dollars.

In an effort to improve the ability of the street sweepers to properly clean residential streets, many residents have requested that parking be prohibited on street sweeping days. By requesting this, they have seen marked improvement with the streets in their neighborhoods. Their streets are cleaner, more debris is removed and standing water – where mosquitoes breed – is eliminated.

To have your street be considered for “No Parking on Street Sweeping Days”, call City of West Covina Civil Engineering Associate Miguel Hernandez at (626) 939-8731. You can also submit a written request by e-mail to Miguel.Hernandez@westcovina.org or by postal mail to the following address: City of West Covina, Public Works Department, Attn: Miguel Hernandez, 1444 W. Garvey Ave., West Covina, CA 91790.

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