



Views

Richmond Heights Neighborhood Council

Visit us at www.richmond-heights.org Jovanka Beckles, President • P.O. Box 5253 • Richmond, CA 94805

quick-takes

YouthWorks Update

The current total in cash and pledges for the 5th Annual Summer Youth Employment Program is \$592,000. Only \$8,000 short of the \$600,000 fundraising goal.

Chevron has supported the program every summer for the last four summers with an annual contribution of \$75,000. This year they increased that donation to \$100,000.

The Kaiser Foundation has also been a consistent supporter of the program, traditionally providing \$1,000 to \$2,000 for the past four summers. This year they increased their support to \$5,000. Combined with the \$3,000 pledge from the Kaiser Optical Lab, Kaiser Permanente will donate a total of \$8,000 to this year's program.

It should also be mentioned that the Contra Costa County Community Services Block Grant Fund has increased their annual support from \$40,000 to \$50,000 this year.

The current challenge for the program is to find worksites that can provide 120 hours of meaningful, career path work experience for the youth enrolled in the program. Currently, YouthWORKS has secured worksites for approximately 200 of the 600 youth in the pipeline and is asking all supporters to assist them in finding additional opportunities.

Continues on page 2

Building a Community Through Neighborhood Councils

By Jovanka Beckles

I love my neighborhood. I moved here from Alameda four years ago and realized immediately that I had come to a community that believes in being involved. Involvement is what makes a great community. So many of us are involved in one way or another in our neighborhood: Nick Despota does a great job on our website; Owen Martin does a great job on our newsletter; Gina Swirsding does a great job of providing labels, getting information out door to door; Janette Russey has done a great job in taking responsibility of our finances; Nicole Valentino has just taken on the role of Secretary; Rock Brown has represented our neighborhood well throughout the city; Lynn and Genevieve volunteer monthly to fold and label our newsletter, and the list goes on.

Then, there are those of you who are involved in keeping an eye on a neighbors' house as they are away, or call in suspicious characters.

I went online and found one definition of neighborhood council. It states: neighborhood councils are governmental or non-governmental bodies composed of local people who handle neighborhood problems. That is what we do as neighbors, and it is exactly what we do during our neighborhood council meetings; we "handle neighborhood problems."

Since joining the listserv, I have read many different topics regarding the many issues or problems that exist in our neighborhood. The listserv serves a wonderful purpose in getting information out. I believe that when we show up to our neighborhood council meetings, face to face, and address those issues, it has the potential to bring about the kind of cohesiveness and power that can bring about the positive changes we desire. Neighborhood councils, through monthly meetings, are designed to truly empower and guide the futures of their neighborhoods.

That is my wish and hope for our neighborhood; that we would have meetings each month that is well attended, so that we may meet our neighbors, but most importantly that we may build a unified effort to empower our neighborhoods. Empowered and unified neighborhoods are threatening to troublemakers. Empowered and unified neighbors feel at ease in reporting gunshots despite the belief that someone else may have called them it. Empowered and unified neighbors are a force to be reckoned with.

I'm proud to know that I live in a neighborhood where my neighbors take action to rectify wrongs that have occurred in their presence. How do I know this? I learn about these actions by reading posts on our listserv. Showing up to our council meetings becomes yet another way to disseminate information and build community.

Continues on page 5

next meeting

See back page for agenda

quick-takes

continued from previous page

Lady Windemere's Fan

Runs May 9, July 4 2009 at Masquers Playhouse.

This Victorian romance sparkles with Wilde's trademark comedy of manners, and witty dialogue all the while tugging at our heartstrings. Lady Windemere, shattered by the suspicion of her husband's infidelity, contemplates affairs of the heart as her rival illustrates the difference between true morality and its mere appearance. A classic masterpiece, studded with humorous quips and clever paradoxes.

Reservations at 510/232-4031 or <http://www.masquers.org>.

Thoroughly Modern Millie

Runs: June 19 to July 19, 2009 at the CCC Community Theatre.

A big city, frisky flappers, and one plucky young lady. Our heroine is a small town girl seeking love and success in New York City. Millie sings and tap dances her way in and out of danger (and romance), as the supporting cast shows us exactly what the Roaring Twenties were all about!

Reservations at 510/524-9132 or <http://www.ccct.org>.

Pump Boys and Dinettes

Runs: June 12 to July 11, 2009 at the Pinole Community Players.

The Pinole Community Players will bring back their 1999 hit with the original cast.

A gas station with four guys and across Highway 57 is a roadside eatery called the DOUBLE CUPP DINER. This is a country musical tribute to life by the roadside.

Reservations at 510/724-3669 or <http://www.pinoleplayers.org>.

West Nile Virus Found in West County

By Tom Lochner West County Times May 1, 2009

"West Nile virus has been found in groups of mosquitoes tested recently in West Contra Costa as well as at several spots along the northern tier of the county", the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District reports.

In the month of April Mosquitoes testing positive were trapped in Crockett, Pinole, Martinez, and Pittsburg.

Since trapping the season's first West Nile positive group of mosquitoes in Martinez on March 27, district officials have found 11 virus positive groups in the county in Crockett, Martinez, Pittsburg Pinole and Bay Point spokeswoman Deborah Bass said.

"Most people bitten by a West Nile positive mosquito will not get sick", Bass said. About 20 percent get West Nile fever, which causes mild to severe flu like symptoms such as fever, headache, body ache and, in some cases, temporary paralysis and even death. Seniors and people with compromised immune systems are most susceptible.

"There are no known human cases of West Nile infection so far this year in Contra Costa or the rest of California", Bass said. "Since West Nile virus arrived in the county in 2004, 27 people have been documented with the disease, and two have died", she said.

The district sets about 80 traps a week as part of its countywide surveillance program. It also maintains five flocks of chickens that it regularly blood tests for the virus, in or near Hercules, Martinez, Walnut Creek, Oakley and Knightsen.

West Nile virus is fundamentally a disease among birds, but it also can affect humans, horses and other animals.

"The mosquito season started about nine weeks earlier than usual this year because of extended warm weather spells in winter", Bass said. Warm weather also accelerates mosquitoes' life cycles, meaning more of them are bred in a shorter period than normally. It also accelerates the ability of the virus to replicate itself in the insects' salivary glands, she said.

To protect against mosquito bites, the district recommends that people use repellents containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. To prevent proliferation of mosquitoes, the district recommends draining standing water that may support mosquito breeding habitats. A list of other recommendations is available on the district's Web site at www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us/

Reach Tom Lochner at 510-262-2760 or tlochner@bayareanewsgroup.com

Emergency Services Manager Award

This week, Emergency Services Manager Kathy Gerk received a letter of recognition from the International Association of Emergency Managers. Out of 4,000 emergency managers nationwide, Kathy was one of 776 that maintained her credentials as a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM). This is not an easy feat, as one must continue a program of professional development for five successive years. The letter stated, "As a CEM, Kathryn Gerk demonstrated a high level of competence and ethical fitness for emergency management. Your organization is to be commended for having a professional of this caliber on staff."

Congratulations to Kathy Gerk as she continues to serve Richmond.

contacts



You'll find many more phone numbers, as well as e-mail links for public services at our website, www.richmond-heights.org

Emergency 911

Crime in progress, medical

To report suspicious activity

Richmond Police 233-1214

Unincorporated area 925/646-2441

Anonymous tips 232-TIPS

Community Police Officer

Officer Tim Gard 621-1212 ex 7099

e-mail tgard@richmondpd.net

General security concerns, other police services

RP Watch Commander 620-6643

Michelle Milam 620-6538

Neighborhood Council issues

Jovanka Beckles 813-7008

Report blight and graffiti

Richmond Graffiti 231-3010

Volunteer to remove 231-3031

CalTrans 925/926-6112

Report abatement issues

Auto on Private land 621-1278

Auto on Public land 620-6644

Alma Munguia 621-1279

Pot Hole Repair 231-3011

As always we are looking for community events for the newsletter. If you know of an event coming up, let us know at five weeks before the beginning of the month of the event. E-mail owenlmartin@earthlink.net with your articles. Contributions and articles are most welcome. This is your newsletter.

Special Election for Treasurer

Due to personal issues Janette would like another to take her place.

Calls for service to the Richmond Police

Calls made to the Richmond Police become Statistics provided to us each month by Crime analysis of RPD, whose support and assistance we continue to appreciate.

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| Suspicious person | 27 |
| Suspicious vehicle | 18 |
| Abandoned auto | 5 |
| Recovered stolen vehicle | 4 |
| Vehicle tampering | none |
| Disturbance | 31 |
| 911 Disconnect | 9 |
| Dogs | none |
| Dumping | 1 |
| Stolen vehicle | 3 |
| 3/16 7XX McLaughlin | |
| 3/26 4XX Carlston | |
| 4/12 49XX Macdonald | |
| Hit/Run property damage | |
| 3/26 54XX Solano | |
| Burglary from residence | |
| 3/20 22XX Key | |
| 4/02 6XX Kern | |
| 4/05 56XX Esmond | |
| 4/07 56XX Sierra | |
| 4/09 4XX Key | |
| 4/13 6XX Key | |
| 4/15 53XX Esmond | |
| Burglary from auto | |
| 4/07 4XX Mount | |
| 4/13 4XX Dimm | |
| Hold up alarm | |
| 3/20 48XX Macdonald | |
| 4/12 123XX San Pablo | |
| Robbery | |
| 3/16 Macdonald / San Pablo | |
| 3/29 52XX Esmond | |
| Shots fired | |
| 3/31 Esmond / Kern | |
| 4/06 McBryde / Ventura | |
| Shooting of a person | |
| 4/10 52XX Esmond | |
| Arson | |
| 3/29 Esmond / San Pablo | |

Petty theft/stolen property

| | |
|------|-----------------|
| 3/22 | Barrett / Key |
| 3/28 | 49XX Macdonald |
| 4/01 | 6XX Humboldt |
| 4/09 | 128XX San Pablo |
| 4/10 | 6XX Kern |
| 4/13 | Barrett / Mount |
| 4/14 | 57XX Solano |

Grand theft

| | |
|------|-----------------|
| 3/18 | 53XX Poinsett |
| 3/25 | 6XX Ventura |
| 3/25 | 50XX Garvin |
| 3/29 | 125XX San Pablo |

Battery

| | |
|------|-----------------------|
| 3/19 | Macdonald / San Pablo |
| 3/19 | 128XX San Pablo |
| 3/21 | 45XX Barrett |
| 3/29 | 126XX San Pablo |
| 4/06 | 127XX San Pablo |
| 4/08 | 7XX Amador |
| 4/10 | 12XX Amador |
| 4/12 | 128XX San Pablo |
| 4/12 | 49XX Macdonald |
| 4/14 | 1 80 / San Pablo |

Brandishing a deadly weapon

| | |
|------|--------------------|
| 4/11 | Solano / San Pablo |
|------|--------------------|

Person w/ gun

| | |
|------|----------------|
| 4/01 | McBryde / Kern |
| 4/08 | 49XX Macdonald |

Assault w/ deadly weapon

| | |
|------|---------------------|
| 4/06 | Barrett / San Pablo |
|------|---------------------|

Calls related to juveniles

| | |
|------|-------------------|
| 3/23 | 7XX Humboldt |
| 3/25 | Mount / Humboldt |
| 3/26 | 51XX McBryde |
| 3/28 | 10XX Ventura |
| 4/06 | Esmond / Kern |
| 4/06 | Esmond / Yuba |
| 4/06 | Garvin / Humboldt |

Vandalism

| | |
|------|---------------------|
| 3/16 | McBryde / San Pablo |
| 3/18 | 7XX Yuba |
| 4/06 | 6XX Ventura |
| 4/07 | 4XX Key |

Richmond May Dump Foam Food Containers

By Katherine Tam West County Times May 1, 2009

City officials are getting close to passing a new law that would ban these takeout containers and require switching to biodegradable ones or containers suitable for compost. Paper and products made of plant based materials such as sugar cane would be acceptable. Restaurants, coffee shops and other businesses, including national chains that serve food and drink in plastic foam boxes and cups would be affected.

Plastic foam containers, commonly though incorrectly referred to as "Styrofoam," are popular among eateries because they keep food hot and are relatively cheap. "Plastic foam is wasteful because it takes hundreds of years to decompose. It's so light that it blows out of landfills and breaks into tiny pieces that end up in storm drains and waterways where marine life confuse it with food and eat it." said the city's storm water manager Lynne Scarpa.

Officials will spend three months collecting merchants' feedback on the proposed ban before the City Council regroups for a vote.

Businesses would pay more under the ban. A biodegradable box costs an average of 41 cents, compared with a plastic foam box at 11 cents, according to a city report. A paper box averages 30 cents and a plastic box averages 38 cents. The price difference for other containers is slimmer. For example, a biodegradable cup is 10 cents, compared with a paper cup at 7 cents, a plastic cup at 5 cents and a plastic foam cup at 4 cents.

"With the increased cost in business, as far as rising food costs, in this economy where people are eating out less, our restaurants are already struggling to keep doors open," Johnnie Downs, legislative director of the Sacramento based California Restaurant Association said.

The West Contra Costa Integrated Waste Management Authority is working on a green waste processing program that may take a combination of yard waste and food waste. It is taking longer than expected to get permits, and they may not be secured until next year.

If the city passes the ban, Richmond would join others with similar bans, including Hercules, Pittsburg, Berkeley and Oakland.

The draft ordinance would temporarily exempt eateries that show "undue hardship," a term that hasn't been defined. Officials would rely on public complaints to enforce the law. Violators would be fined; the amounts haven't been set. Other cities give a warning on the first offense, up to \$100 on the second offense and heftier fines for subsequent violations.

The council disagreed on how quickly to move ahead with a law.

Reach Katherine Tam at 510-262-2787 or ktam@bayareanewsgroup.com.

Vehicle Theft is Down

By Police Chief Chris Magnus

Compared to last year at this same time vehicle theft is down 31%. One of the big reasons why is the Police department's use of License Plate Readers (LPRs). Over a number of months, the department has been testing various LPRs designed by different companies. We have been strategically deploying officers in different geographic sectors of the community in vehicles with License Plate Readers that link to a database of stolen vehicles from throughout the state that is updated on a daily basis.

The results are pretty amazing. For example, in the month of April officers stopped 5 stolen vehicles that were occupied, leading to arrests in each case. On a daily basis, officers are recovering 4 to 5 unoccupied stolen vehicles. It's pretty clear the criminals are getting the message. Auto thefts were down last year and they are way down this year because the thieves know they will get caught in Richmond. In many cases, we are also taking drugs and guns off of the individuals we arrest in these stolen vehicles, which is an added bonus.

The use of LPRs is one more example of implementing cutting edge technology in a carefully planned and well thought out manner. Lt. Sappal, Lt. Pickett, Sgt. Silva, and Det. Tong have all played a major role in this project. Thanks to the City Council for approving the funding for the LPRs and helping us fight crime in this innovative way.

Building a Community Through Neighborhood Councils

By Jovanka Beckles Continued from page 1

So, why attend neighborhood council meetings?

1. They build community by allowing us to meet each other.
2. They provide us with valuable information that affect us.
3. They give us power through unity.

Starting next month, I would like to implement a “share your ideas for community building” on our agenda. I do not have all of the answers to make our neighborhood even better, but together we can inspire, encourage and share ways with all of us.

When Nicole and I moved here, we knew it was important to get involved and stay involved in our neighborhood, so we started attending the monthly meetings. I encourage you to get involved and stay involved in your neighborhood council, and together we will continue to improve our neighborhood. Let us take one hour and a half on the first Monday of the month to come out to our neighborhood council meeting and let us build community, one neighborhood council meeting at a time. Neighborhood councils are not the only way to build community, but they sure do help.

Open Space and Private Property

Several Richmond neighborhood councils recently passed resolutions expressing support for the preservation of open space along the Richmond shoreline. The land use question arises as one of many prompted by our city's General Plan process.

While many residents support the preservation of open space in undeveloped areas, members of our neighborhood want to understand if such resolutions might be used to justify infringement on private property rights or alter the current zoning of properties in these areas. If so, in what way?

Resolution for Open Space

During our May meeting there was a vote to have Jovanka write a resolution and bring it to our June meeting. She has written a draft copy. It can be found on our web site at <http://www.richmond-heights.org/openspace.htm>. We will continue to discuss voting on a resolution to be sent to the City Council about open space along the 32 mile Richmond shoreline.

Radio Stations for an Emergency

FM: 88.5 KQED, 92.3 KSJO, 100.1 KZST AM: 680 KNBR, 740 KCBS, 810 KGO

RICHMOND NEIGHBORHOOD COORDINATING COUNCIL
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Richmond, CA 94808

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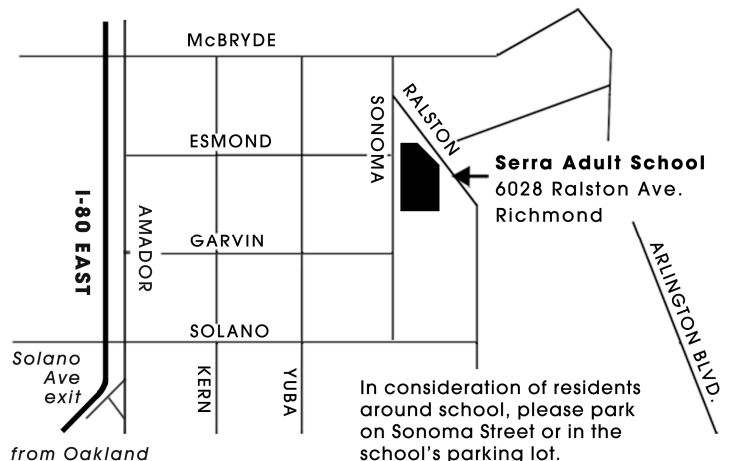
Private Land Being Called Open Space

Josh Genser is our neighbor and owns property between Parchester Village and the bay. What will become of his property and others like his if the shoreline is designated Open Space and not allowed to be developed.

Citizens for East Shore Parks will also send a spokesperson to our June meeting.

Special Election for Treasurer

Due to personal issues Janette would like another to take her place.



Monday, June 1st, 7 PM
Serra Adult School
6028 Ralston Avenue