



IN A

# Nutshell

No. 146

Official community newsletter of the City of Walnut Creek

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010

## Robust voter turnout boosts schools, Measure I

**W**alnut Creek voters turned out in a big way to support schools and Broadway Plaza's bid to bring Neiman Marcus to Walnut Creek.

An impressive 55 percent of registered Walnut Creek voters participated in the Nov. 3 special election. By comparison, only 21 percent of registered San Ramon voters cast ballots in that city's mayoral race; countywide, the turnout was 39 percent.

Rossmoor voter participation was particularly strong, with nearly 73 percent voting.

Measure I, which asked voters to approve construction of a two-story anchor retail store such as Neiman Marcus at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Main Street, garnered 71.4 percent approval.

Parcel taxes for the Walnut Creek School District and Acalanes Union High School District sailed past the required two-thirds approval, with 75.73 percent and 74.50 percent support respectively.

## Faster, greener parking in 2010

**A** new parking system being installed in the City's three Public Parking garages in 2010 will save time, money, and even the environment.



Here's how the new system works:

When you drive into the garage, you receive a parking token. The token is a reusable plastic coin embedded with a

**PARKING, see back page**



Barbara Elliott, left and Dana Eder, right, take part in the "\$500 Exercise," the second step in getting community input in preparation for the 2010-12 budget. Participants used a computerized "Virtual Bank Account" to allocate a symbolic \$500 among the City goals and subgoals they felt were most important.

## Community weighs in on goals

**O**ur Council and staff continue to explore how to balance the needs and desires of those who live and work in Walnut Creek with the reality of a projected \$20 million — or 14 percent — City budget shortfall for 2010-12.



### BUDGET 2010-12 Balancing for the Future

Input gathered during Step One of the "Community Conversation on Balancing for the Future" process, held last fall, will be used by staff during the first part of the New Year to evaluate how well specific programs meet goals defined by the Council and community.

These goals are: A Safe Community; Culture, Recreation and Learning Opportunities; Economic Vitality; Effective Transportation and Mobility Options; Stewardship of the Natural and Built Environment; and Strong Neighborhoods and a Sense of

Community.

In addition to defining the goals, community

members weighed in, during December, on whether some goals were more important than others by allocating a symbolic \$500 among the goals and their respective sub-goals.

That weighting will help prioritize programs and services in preparation for the 2010-12 budget balancing that lies ahead.

Council and staff are committed to working in partnership with our community to meet the economic challenges we all face. We will provide budget updates as we work through this process over the next few months.

To receive e-mail notices when new information is available, email us at [community@walnut-creek.org](mailto:community@walnut-creek.org).

# Calendar

## January

**1**  
*New Year's Day*  
City offices are closed

**18**  
*Martin Luther King Day*  
(See *What's Happening*)  
City offices are closed

**26**  
*State of the City address*  
(See *What's Happening*)

## February

**15**  
*Presidents' Day holiday*  
City offices are closed

## City Meeting Calendar

**City Council**  
Jan. 19; Feb. 2, 16  
7 p.m.  
City Council chamber  
City Hall, 1666 N. Main St.

**Planning Commission**  
Jan. 14, 28; Feb. 11, 25  
7 p.m.  
City Council chamber

**Arts Commission**  
Jan. 19 (note day change)  
4:30 p.m.  
3rd flr. meeting room  
City Hall

**Transportation Commission**  
Jan. 21, Feb. 18  
7 p.m.  
City Council chamber

**Design Review Commission**  
Jan. 20; Feb. 3, 17  
7 p.m.  
City Council chamber

**Park, Rec & Open Space Commission**  
Jan. 5, Feb. 2  
7 p.m.  
City Council chamber

**City Council meetings are televised live on Comcast**  
**TV**  
**Channel 28 (incorporated WC only), on Astound Channel 29, and on AT&T U-Verse Channel 99. Meetings are streamed live and are available on demand on the City website, [www.walnut-creek.org](http://www.walnut-creek.org).**

## Every picture tells a story in new WC history book

A new pictorial history of Walnut Creek is on sale now through the Walnut Creek Historical Society and Barnes & Noble on Main Street.

*Walnut Creek: An Illustrated History* features more than 260 images depicting life in Walnut Creek over the last 160 years as it transitioned from a quiet country crossroads to one of the premiere cities in California.

City public information officer Brad Rovanpera, who retired in August 2009, wrote the book, which includes recently discovered vintage photographs, such as portraits of early pioneers Antonio Botelho and John Larkey.

Proceeds from the sale of the book benefit the Walnut Creek Historical Society. For details on how to purchase the book through the Historical Society, call (925) 935-7871.



**Author Brad Rovanpera signs copies of "Walnut Creek: An Illustrated History" at Barnes & Noble. The book is also available through the Walnut Creek Historical Society, and was created in a partnership between the Historical Society and the City.**

## What's Happening

**Mayor to give State of the City address**  
Mayor Sue Rainey will speak at the Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce's annual *State of the City* luncheon on Tuesday, Jan. 26, 11:30 a.m., at the Clubhouse at Boundary Oak. To reserve a seat, visit [www.walnut-creek.com](http://www.walnut-creek.com) or call (925) 934-2007.

**Recycle that tree!**  
Allied Waste Services will collect Christmas trees the week of Jan. 11-15. Simply leave your clean, unflocked tree at the curb on your regular trash collection day. Remove ornaments, other trimming, and stands. Call (925) 603-1144.



**Martin Luther King Day observance**  
Spiritual author and teacher Marianne Williamson and the Rev. Phil Lawson will speak at the Martin Luther King Day Observance sponsored by the Social Justice Alliance of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County, in cooperation with the City of Walnut Creek. The free event will begin at noon Monday, Jan. 18 in the Civic Park Community Center Assembly Hall. Call (925) 933-6030.

**Free tax preparation**  
Free tax preparation services for those who earned less than \$52,000 in 2009, with special focus on senior citizens, are being offered at three Walnut Creek locations beginning in early February.

Services are provided by AARP Tax-Aide, and sponsored by the Family Economic Security Partnership and the Earn It! Keep It! Save It! Contra Costa campaign.

Dates and times vary. Call for an appointment and a list of documents to bring. Locations are:

- Civic Park Community Center, 1375 Civic Dr. Call (925) 943-5851.
- St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1924 Trinity Ave. Call (925) 979-5013.
- Grace Presbyterian Church, 2100 Tice Valley Blvd. Call (925) 405-6278.

**How much are your treasures worth?**  
Bring your family heirlooms and favorite flea market finds to be professionally evaluated at the annual "Appraisal Event," Sunday, Feb. 28, from 1 - 6 p.m. at the Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Dr. Proceeds benefit the educational gardens and programs at the Gardens. Call (925) 947-1678 or go to [www.gardenshf.org](http://www.gardenshf.org).

**Walnut Festival Association crabfeed**  
Here's a delicious way to help the Walnut Festival Association achieve its goal of supporting the community — come to their winter Crabfeed on Saturday, Jan. 16 at Heather Farm Community Center's Lakeside Room. Social hour begins at 6:30 p.m., followed by a crab dinner at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$40. Email [walnutfestival@sbcglobal.net](mailto:walnutfestival@sbcglobal.net) or call (925) 935-6766.

**Commercial real estate career day for girls**  
Young women in grades 9-12 are invited to a fun, interactive "crash course" on the many career opportunities in the commercial real estate industry, from urban planning to real estate law. The free workshop will be Saturday, Feb. 20 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at City Hall, and is hosted by Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW). One high-school senior will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. Go to [eastbaycrewcareers.com](http://eastbaycrewcareers.com), or call Teresa Goodwin, (925) 413-6896.



## Celebrating the performing arts

The 31<sup>st</sup> annual Shellie Awards will take place Jan. 16 on the Hofmann Theatre stage at the Leshner Center for the Arts. The public is invited to join in this gala celebration to honor outstanding achievement in performing arts in Central Contra Costa County. Thirteen regional theatre companies participate in the black-tie event.



A distinctive, hand-painted Shellie Award

Patterned after Broadway's Tony awards, this year's Shellies will feature production numbers from each of the nominated musicals along with scenes from each of the nominated plays. Ken Bergmann will conduct the Shellie Awards Orchestra and the MC's for the evening are Jeff Collister, Jerry Motta, Kerri Shawn and Michael White. Throughout the evening the audience will be entertained with live and "remote" video broadcasts from backstage and other areas throughout the Center.

Leshner Center Manager Scott Denison launched the awards in 1979.

"This is an evening to honor the nominees, as well as the winners," says Denison.

Ticket can be purchased by visiting [www.lesherartscenter.org](http://www.lesherartscenter.org) or call (925) 943-SHOW.

## "Bg" the place to be

There is still time to see the Bedford Gallery's *Objects of Virtue* exhibition, dubbed a "Top Ticket" by Diablo Magazine for its rich display of fired clay objects.



With 142 pieces by 72 artists, the exhibition explores the role of pottery in all facets of life, from utilitarian plates, bowls and cups used for everyday meals to special pieces used during times of celebration. *Objects of Virtue* continues through Jan. 31.

On Thursday, Jan. 28, come to the Bedford from 6-8 p.m. for the hippest

## New WCTV showcases community

Walnut Creek residents can now enjoy even more original television programming focused on the local community, thanks to the launch of WCTV.

The City assumed responsibility for Walnut Creek's government access channel from Comcast on Oct. 29 and began producing programming under the name WCTV. Agreements with the cable companies serving Walnut Creek provide dedicated funds for these activities that cannot be used for any other purpose.

"Producing our government access channel gives us another way to engage the community. People can know what's going on in Walnut Creek just by turning on their television," said City Manager Gary Pokorny.

"In these tough budget times, sharing information with the community is even more important, and these special funds exist to help us do just that."

In addition to continued live coverage of City Council and Planning Commission meetings, WCTV features City programs and coverage of special events, such as Civic Arts Education class productions, the Holiday Tree Lighting and Walnut Creek On Ice. Local weather and traffic updates are available at specific times throughout the day, and a "WCTV Guide" is available on the City website.

Upcoming programs include a look at the new Walnut Creek Library under construction, volunteer opportunities within the City, and Leshner Center for the Arts events, as well as "How To" segments on everything from taking out a building permit to properly pruning trees.



WCTV producers Matt Bolender and Liz Payne edit a segment on Walnut Creek history.

Community nonprofits are encouraged to submit public service announcements and programming for airing on the channel.

WCTV is available on Comcast Channel 28, Astound Channel 29, and on AT&T U-verse Channel 99 under the menu option "Walnut Creek Television."

WCTV is not available to Comcast viewers in unincorporated Walnut Creek, nor in Rossmoor, as these areas have separate franchise agreements. However, streaming video of City Council and Planning Commission meetings is available on the City's website, [www.walnut-creek.org](http://www.walnut-creek.org). In addition, the City is partnering with Rossmoor to deliver prerecorded coverage of City Council meetings and select special programs.

For further information, visit [www.walnutcreektv.org](http://www.walnutcreektv.org).

— Liz Payne  
WCTV

Happy Hour in Walnut Creek. *Culture + Cocktails* lets people mix and mingle surrounded by interesting art. Admission is \$7 and includes a drink ticket; open to those 21 and older.

The Bedford Galley is on the first floor of the Leshner Center for the Arts. It is

open from noon – 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday, plus 6 – 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, as well as other evenings when there are performances at the Center.

General admission is \$5; \$3 for teens 13-17; children 12 and under are free. Call (925) 295-1423 or [www.bedfordgallery.org](http://www.bedfordgallery.org).

## City Update

### New mayor chosen

The City Council on Dec. 3 selected Sue Rainey to serve as mayor for the next year.

Rainey first joined the City Council in 1997 when she was appointed to complete the term of Ron Beagley after his death. She was elected to a four-year term in 1998 and has been on the Council since then. This is her third term as mayor.

Councilwoman Cindy Silva was named mayor pro tem. Silva won election to the City Council in 2006, and previously served on the Planning Commission.

### Commission vacancies

Applications are being accepted for 3-year terms on the Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Commission and the Design Review Commission. PROS Commissioners must live in incorporated Walnut Creek. The Design Review opening is for a landscape architect and does not require city residency.

Applications will be available beginning Jan. 7 on the City's website, and must be submitted to the City Clerk's office by 5 p.m. Wed., Jan. 27.

Applications are also available at the City Clerk's office, 1666 N. Main St., 3rd floor; by calling (925) 943-5818; or by email request to [olds@walnut-creek.org](mailto:olds@walnut-creek.org).

### 2010 Citizens Institute

The popular Walnut Creek Citizens Institute returns in February. The Institute highlights City programs and services through tours, interactive exercises and presentations by City Council, department heads and other staff.

Sessions begin with a Saturday morning bus tour of the city on Feb. 13, followed by six Wednesday evening sessions Feb. 17 - March 24. The last class features the morning "Neighborhood Showcase" bus tour led by Institute members, followed by a graduation celebration on Saturday, March 27.

Everyone who lives or works in Walnut Creek, including unincorporated Walnut Creek, is welcome to be part of this community program.

Space is limited, and there is a \$20 program fee. Email [community@walnut-creek.org](mailto:community@walnut-creek.org) or call (925) 256-3505.



Photos by Liz Payne

### Salutes and smiles at Veterans Day ceremony

A standing room only crowd turned out to recognize those who serve our country at the first-ever Veterans Day ceremony co-sponsored by Walnut Creek and Lafayette at the Veterans Memorial Building in Lafayette. Veterans ranged from those who served in WWII to those newly home from Iraq and Afghanistan. In the top photo, honoree Thomas Catalano, who served in the Army in WWII, salutes during the Presentation of the Colors. At right, honoree Virginia Holcombe talks with a well-wisher after the ceremony. Virginia and Kenneth Holcombe met and married while serving in the Navy during WWII. WCTV coverage from the event is available on demand on the City's website, [www.walnut-creek.org](http://www.walnut-creek.org).



### New library's Technology Center finds its angel

A donor has stepped forward to fund the Technology Center in the new Walnut Creek Library.

Plans for the Technology Center were put on hold last summer after the City Council cut \$500,000 from the library as part of its overall effort to maintain a balanced City budget despite the economic downturn. Also impacted were computers and furnishings for the library's Business Center, furnishings for a conference room, and the Opening Day Collection.

The Walnut Creek Library Foundation strengthened its efforts to fill the gap and fund the areas that were cut. The

anonymous donor's generous contribution means the Technology Center will be able to fulfill its mission of offering classes and programs when the library opens later this year.

The Library Foundation is strongly committed to ensuring that the new library can meet the community's needs, and hopes that the community will help fulfill this goal by making a contribution.

The Foundation is also working with the library and City to maintain the programs, services and collections for both of the Walnut Creek libraries. To learn more, go to [www.wclibrary.org](http://www.wclibrary.org).

### Free workshop for those facing foreclosure

Free help for persons facing foreclosure is available Saturday, Feb. 27 from 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the Civic Park Community Center, 1375 Civic Dr.

Learn about your options and legal rights from non-profit attorneys and HUD-certified housing counseling agencies. Information includes available

government programs, the foreclosure process, tenants' rights, refinance issues, foreclosure rescue scams and more.

Bring your loan documents to meet with a lender or housing counselor.

For information about the workshop, contact Housing Specialist Margot Ernst at (925) 943-5899 ext. 2208.





Photo by Dick DuBey

CERT team members Paula Costa, left, and Dee Logan staff the Planning section during the Nov. 7 drill at Larkey Park.

## Sign up for 2010 CERT team training

2009 was a banner year for Walnut Creek's Community Emergency Response Team program. CERT volunteers held two drills based at Larkey Park, involving a combined total of more than 200 people who practiced searching homes, setting up a medical treatment area, and sending messages with radios between search teams and the City's Emergency Operations Center.

CERT graduates are sworn in as Disaster Service Workers for the City, and are able to make a difference while staying safe in the critical hours following a major disaster.

The next CERT training will be Tuesdays, Feb. 2 - March 9, from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Preregistration is required, and space is limited. There is a \$20 program fee payable the first day of class. To register, call (925) 256-3556 or email [cert@walnut-creek.org](mailto:cert@walnut-creek.org).

## Smoke alarms for seniors

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District is offering free smoke detectors to Walnut Creek homeowners who are 60 years or older, or physically challenged. Recipients must be without a working smoke detector, or have an existing smoke detector that is more than 10 years old. (Note: This program does not apply to Rossmoor residents.) Call (925) 941-3327 for more information.



**33 YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE** — Walter Stern, center, receives thanks from Police Chief Joel Bryden in recognition of his longtime contributions as a volunteer, as Captain Craig Zamolo, left, applauds. Walter started volunteering in 1976! To learn more about Volunteers in Police Services, go to [walnutcreekpd.com](http://walnutcreekpd.com) or call (925) 943-5879.

## WCPD Lieutenant charity's 'guitar hero'

Walnut Creek Police Lieutenant Steve Skinner was determined to win an Epiphone EJ-200 Acoustic Guitar signed by Ann and Nancy Wilson of the rock band "Heart" being auctioned by eBay.

Lt. Skinner has been a devoted fan of the band for many years. He was even more motivated when he learned that the proceeds of the sale would benefit the charity "Guitars Not Guns," which provides guitars and lessons to needy youngsters. The auction opened at \$99 on Oct. 1, and on Oct. 11, Lt. Skinner placed what would become the winning bid for \$2,891.55.

"Guitars Not Guns" was founded by longtime foster parents Ray and Louise Nelson. It was through their experience with foster kids that Ray decided to provide foster kids with guitars and guitar lessons. He began asking friends and strangers for their used guitars to pass along to children in need.

This act of kindness became his passion and as a result, there are chapters across the United States and Canada that provide guitars and lessons from qualified teachers to deserving young people. No child is turned away for lack of funds.



Lt. Steve Skinner, far right, with members of the local 'Guitars Not Guns' chapter including President Barbara Gorin at the Red House Recording Studio.

Supporters hope to divert as many children as possible from the self-destructive behaviors of drugs, alcohol, and crime connected to gang activity.

Members of "Guitars Not Guns" presented Lt. Skinner with the signed guitar and certificate of authenticity on Oct. 20 at the Red House Recording Studio in Walnut Creek. Lt. Skinner was thrilled to support such a great charity and his favorite band all at the same time.

To learn more about "Guitars Not Guns," go to [www.guitarsnotguns.org](http://www.guitarsnotguns.org).

— Amy Ballock  
Crime Prevention Coordinator, WCPD

## New addition to top-quality WC medical facilities

Walnut Creek is becoming a “medical Mecca.” In addition to the award-winning John Muir Medical Center and Kaiser Permanente–Walnut Creek, there is a new “kid” on the block.

Children’s Specialty Care - Walnut Creek (a branch of Children’s Hospital of the East Bay), located in the Shadelands business park, provides comprehensive subspecialty care just for kids, including outpatient same-day surgery and diagnostic imaging. To help kids prepare, Children’s has the county’s first Child Life specialist to provide developmentally appropriate education and preparation to reduce fears.

The center’s artwork and murals derived from author/illustrator Eric Carle’s classic children’s books help make for a warm, child-friendly environment.

John Muir Medical Center recently made headlines when U.S. News & World Report’s list of “America’s Top 50 Best Hospitals” ranked John Muir–Walnut Creek 39th in Orthopedics and 49th in Digestive Disorders.

In addition, John Muir received the “Triple Gold Recognition–2009” Award for sustained performance. Only 12 other hospitals have received this, including John Muir Medical Center–Concord.

Kaiser Permanente–Walnut Creek (KPWC) is also winning kudos. It received the 2009 Silver Performance Award from the American Heart Association, and was ranked 98.8 in the hospital quality measures report published by the Joint Commission, a not-for-profit organization that accredits more than 17,000 health care organizations. This places KPWC in the top quartile of hospitals in the nation.

KPWC’s 32,000 square-foot Emergency Department is the largest in Contra Costa County with 52 private treatment rooms, featuring advanced cardiac monitoring and digital imaging equipment.

These establishments along with Walnut Creek’s myriad medical clinics create a hub of top health care services to meet our community’s needs right in our own backyard.

— Pankti Clerk  
Economic Development



The Heather Farm Community Center’s lakeside patio ready for a wedding.

## ‘Think local’ for your next special event!

Looking for that special place to hold a memorable wedding reception, family reunion, or fundraiser? What about meeting space for your upcoming office holiday party, that milestone birthday, or work retreat? The City of Walnut Creek has just the place for you!

Heather Farm Community Center, Civic Park Community Center and Shadelands Arts Center are all available for private use. Let our events staff help you find the perfect place for your event.

Heather Farm Community Center sits in the middle of beautiful Heather Farm Park. The Lakeside Room has banquet seating for up to 200, a kitchen, dry bar, and a large outdoor patio, while the Club Room is great for small meetings.

Civic Park Community Center is nestled among oak and redwood trees and features immediate access to the downtown. This center has several rooms available for rental; the largest accommodates 250 people, and the smallest up to 65. A large, lovely gazebo is available for rent at Civic Park.

People looking for a beautiful and reasonably priced facility have the perfect spot at the Shadelands Art Center. With a full catering kitchen, round table seating for 300-350, specialized lighting, beautiful wood flooring, and complete audio-visual services, the Shadelands Art Center is conveniently located on Ygnacio Valley Road at Wiget Lane. Other spaces are also available for smaller parties or for break-outs and silent auction displays.

To schedule a tour of the facilities, call: (925) 256-3575 (Heather Farm and Civic Park Community Centers) or (925) 943-5846 (Shadelands Art Center).

— Adrienne Lee Bird  
Arts, Recreation & Community Services



The classic gazebo at Civic Park.



Shadelands Arts Center auditorium transformed for Viva Arts! celebration.

## Interactive business license forms online

Business license applications can now be filled out online. Applications still require original signatures, so must be printed out, signed, and submitted by mail or in person.

Find applications on the City’s Business license website at [www.walnut-creek.org/services/business/licenseapp.asp](http://www.walnut-creek.org/services/business/licenseapp.asp). Questions? Call (925) 943-5821.



## 'Green' ground squirrel control

Birders and other fans of "Watchable Wildlife" sites have noticed the installation of new raptor perches at two Open Space areas. The first phase of the project included 12 perches on North Lime Ridge along the Ygnacio Canal Trail and the pastures around Borges Ranch in Shell Ridge.

The perches were installed by the county Department of Agriculture through a Fish and Wildlife Committee grant

as a safer alternative to using bait to reduce over-population of ground squirrels and other pest species in the area. In the near future, the bait that many people use to control squirrel populations will be labeled as a "caution" pesticide and will be restricted in its distribution.

An added benefit for the Open Space visitors is these areas will become even better habitat and more accessible wildlife observation areas.

— Nancy Dollard  
Open Space Supervising Ranger

## Ygnacio Valley goes green

Thanks to a partnership between PG&E and the City, 126 streetlights along Ygnacio Valley Road have been replaced with light-emitting diodes (LEDs). As a result, lighting levels are improved, but energy use is down, saving the City nearly \$10,000 a year.

## Want to reduce utility bills?

The City has funding available for home energy efficiency upgrades. For eligible borrowers, the loans will be long-term, deferred loans, at 3 percent simple interest annually. Contact Pat Corum at (925) 335-1115.

## Spare the air this winter

Think twice before burning wood in the fireplace. Burning wood emits harmful toxins and fine particles in the air that can worsen breathing problems and lead to heart and lung disease and early death. When the Air Quality Management District calls a winter Spare the Air Alert, wood burning is illegal until the alert is lifted. Go to: [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org).



Dr. Richard Larkey, left, and Nick Cimino at the Nov. 11 installation of a storyboard panel explaining the history of Larkey Park. Photo by Dan Cather

## Dedicated citizens bring history to park

Visitors to Larkey Park can now know its history, thanks to the efforts of private citizens Nick and Robin Cimino and Dr. and Mrs. Richard Larkey, who paid for a storyboard panel to be installed at the park. The four worked in partnership with

the Walnut Creek Historical Society and City staff for some 18 months before celebrating the installation on Nov. 11.

Dr. Larkey is the great-grandson of John Larkey, who settled in the area in 1857. Part of his 830-acre ranch became Larkey Park.

## New eLockers offer secure bicycle storage

Need a secure, dry place to store your bicycle downtown? Check out the eLockers in front of City Hall, 1666 N. Main Street.

Four electronically controlled bicycle lockers were installed Nov. 10. Each locker has an electronic BikeLink card reader; a user swipes the BikeLink card in the reader to open the locker. Once the locker is shut, it will only unlock with the same card used when the bike was parked. The hourly use fee is automatically deducted from the card; in Walnut Creek, the hourly fee is 5 cents.

BikeLink cards are purchased online at [www.bikelink.org](http://www.bikelink.org).

The eLockers at City Hall are part of Walnut Creek's effort to support alternative modes of transportation. They are made possible through a partnership with 511 Contra Costa, the local commute alternatives program, and funded by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority's half-cent sales tax for transportation improvement projects and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

Because eLockers offer secure storage, they have proven popular, according to 511 Contra Costa. Each eLocker serves seven times the users as conventional bike lockers.

While the eLockers at City Hall are the first to be installed by a Central Contra Costa city, they are part of a growing BikeLink system that extends from Seattle to Los Angeles.

In Contra Costa, there are eLockers at the AAA building in Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill BART, Hercules Park and Ride Lot, Richmond City Hall, Richmond BART, El Cerrito City Hall, El Cerrito Community Center, and El Cerrito BART. For eLocker locations, go to [www.bikelink.org](http://www.bikelink.org).

## Draft Bicycle Plan available

The initial draft of the Walnut Creek Bicycle Plan is available for public review and comment. For an electronic copy of the plan, contact Senior Planner Jeremy Lochirco at (925) 943-5899 ext. 2251 or [Lochirco@walnut-creek.org](mailto:Lochirco@walnut-creek.org).



# Parking

## From page one

microchip to track parking time and any validations. Take the token with you after parking your car and ask participating stores and restaurants to validate it using a handheld validation unit.

When you return to the parking garage, drop the token in a pay station and pay the parking fee. Then use the token to open the exit gate.

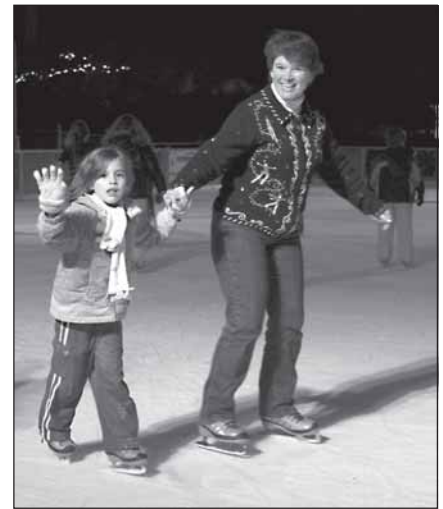
You can skip the token altogether by using a credit card when you enter and exit the garage. There is no validation with this payment method.

Since the system will be fully automated, the garages will be open 24 hours a day.

The new system will significantly reduce the City's operating costs, saving more than \$1 million over the next 10 years.

And, by replacing paper parking tickets and validation stamps with reusable tokens, the new system is eco-friendly.

Installation will begin at the City parking garage on Broadway in February, and will be done one garage at a time over a period of 3-4 months. The other City garages are next to the Leshner Center for the Arts and above the Lark Creek Café, both on Locust Street.



## Winter wonder in Walnut Creek

Those longing for a touch of winter magic found it in Civic Park, from the swoosh of skates on ice to the merry sight of the Walnut Creek Concert Band being led by a conductor with reindeer horns. No matter that it drizzled during the Nov. 27 Holiday Tree lighting — folks like those at right simply bundled up, brought their battery-lit candle, and basked in the glow of community spirit. The Ice Rink is open through Jan. 18, so grab your favorite skating partner and let the fun continue! For rink hours, go to [www.iceskatewalnutcreek.com](http://www.iceskatewalnutcreek.com).



**CITY COUNCIL**  
**Sue Rainey, Mayor\***  
**Cindy Silva, Mayor pro tem**  
**Kish Rajan**  
**Bob Simmons**  
**Gary Skrel**

\* For appointment: Call 256-3504

### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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IN A **Nutshell**

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**Editor:**  
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**Please call 943-5895**  
**Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

*For past issues, go online at [www.walnut-creek.org](http://www.walnut-creek.org)*



1666 North Main Street  
 Walnut Creek, CA 94596

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