NOVEMBER ELECTION USHERS IN CITY COUNCIL CHANGES

The Walnut Creek City Council has welcomed a new member with the election of Matt Francois to an open seat on the Council. Francois was administered the Oath of Office on December 4, along with newly re-elected Councilmember Cindy Silva.

The Council elected Silva to serve as the new Mayor as well, with Councilmember Loella Haskew taking over as Mayor Pro Tem. Councilmembers said thank you to retiring Councilmember Rich Carlston, who decided not to run for re-election this year. City Treasurer Ron Cassano was also elected to his post for another term in office.

SPOTLIGHT SHINES AGAIN ON WALNUT CREEK

As you set up your 2019 calendar, consider making time to join in the fun of the 2nd Saturday Spotlight. Each month, the City will shine a spotlight on a local non-profit, and community members will be invited to join for a morning tour, and gain insights into the work of the organization. The tour will continue through the surrounding neighborhoods, where community connections are made in Walnut Creek.

Stay tuned as 2nd Saturday Spotlight locations are announced later this month for January and February tours, and find out how you can be a part of this re-boot of a Walnut Creek tradition.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Most City offices will be closed for the winter holidays beginning on Monday, December 24, and reopening on Wednesday, January 2. City Hall public counters will be closed on December 21. Public safety services will continue to be available. For a comprehensive list of what is open or closed, visit the City’s website at walnut-creek.org.

Text to 911: Another way to reach us in an emergency

Call if you can, text if you can’t!

Walnut Creek Police Department’s Communications Center is now able to receive text messages to the 911 emergency system. While this is an important enhancement, it is critical to note that this should not be your first approach for reaching our dispatchers. A voice call to 911 in an emergency is always the best way to reach the Department. However, if you are in a situation where it is unsafe to speak, or if you cannot call because of a hearing or speech impairment, this is an important new tool.

To send a text message to our 911 team, enter the numbers 911 in the “To” field of a new text message. The body of the text should include the exact location of the emergency, and if you need police, fire or an ambulance to respond. Please do not send photos, videos or any other information unless prompted, and keep your texts short and simple.

It is also important to keep in mind that 911 is for true emergencies only. Many Bay Area law enforcement agencies are noticing an increase in the number of callers using the 911 system for a variety of customer service issues. Every time a 911 line is tied-up with a non-emergency call, a dispatcher’s attention is being diverted away from someone who may be calling with a life or death scenario. If you do call 911 by mistake, do not hang up; stay on the line and let the dispatcher know so that an officer is not dispatched to your location.

Take time to program other important non-emergency numbers into your phone. The Police Department non-emergency number is 925-935-6400, and the Police Records number is 925-943-5890.

Look up the next time you’re towards the Lesher Center for the Arts and experience the City’s newest public art project!

Get details inside on page 2 about this unique downtown mural.

Kristin Farr, West Coast Barn Quilt, 2018, acrylic paint on DiBond panels, 28x16 feet

www.walnut-creek.org
**WALNUT CREEK DEBUTS NEW MURAL**

The City of Walnut Creek is pleased to announce the completion of a major work of public art by Bay Area artist Kristin Farr. Prominently located on an exterior wall of the Lesher Center for the Arts, overlooking the plaza at the intersection of Locust Street and Civic Drive in downtown Walnut Creek, this vividly hued mural is titled West Coast Barn Quilt.

The mural was hand-painted on site by Farr using no masking tape or straight-edge tools. With Farr’s mural, the City of Walnut Creek is inaugurating a program to create murals on publicly visible walls throughout the downtown area. Farr’s mural will be displayed for up to five years before a new mural concept is solicited from artists.

**GET YOUR SKATE ON!**

**Walnut Creek On Ice** is back for its 14th year in Civic Park, sponsored by the Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau and Walnut Creek Downtown, the risk hosts a number of special events, as well as birthday parties and skating lessons.

For more, go to walnutockonice.com or call 925-935-7068.

**Holiday Events**

**BOUNDARY OAK GOLF COURSE**

For reservations or specific details for the following Boundary Oak events, please call 925-934-4775 x 20.

**Sip – Savor – Shop Fundraiser**

December 20, 6 – 9 pm

This year’s community fundraiser will benefit the Bay Area Crisis Nursery. The event includes live music, buffet dinner, local vendors for your last minute shopping needs, and ends with a live auction with proceeds going directly to the Bay Area Crisis Nursery. The cost is $50 per person. For more information, contact Mike Ash at 925-934-3600 X12.

**New Year’s Eve Strolling Dinner Party**

Monday, December 31

Watch the ball drop two times at Boundary Oak and ring in the New Year! Enjoy a fantastic buffet from 7-9pm and two DJ’s for dancing the night away. Cost is $75 per person plus tax and 20% gratuity includes wine, beer, and soft drinks. Cash bar for cocktails. For reservations, please call Rob at 925-934-4775 x 20.

**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ARTS**

**Winter Mini-Camp II**

January 2-4, Half and full-day options

Shadlands Art Center

Campers will participate in a range of arts experiences throughout the day including drawing, painting, dance, music, and more!

**Wake up and Dance**

January 12, 9:00-10:00am

Shadlands Auditorium

Wake Up and Dance with Community Arts and Diablo Ballet! We’ll be learning basic dance steps and creative movement from Diablo Ballet dancers. This event is open to families (children under 18 years). This event is free with a suggested donation of $20 per family. Donations benefit student scholarships through the Community Arts Foundation.

**Family Yoga**

February 2, 10:00am

Shadlands Auditorium

Dance, stretch, breath and play with your children in a special family yoga class with Ms. Lauren! Families are welcome to stick around after to play and eat lunch together in the backyard. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring yoga mats for each participant. $20 suggested donation per family or pay what you can.

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**Winter Highlights**

**Check cable listings or walnutcreektv.org for the full schedule**

For original programs, community events and more, visit the City’s YouTube channel.

**Winter Edition of Creek Currents**

**Veterans Day from the Lesher Center**

Filmed live on Veterans Day, November 11, 2018, with entertainment from the Walnut Creek Concert Band, featuring keynote speaker Navy Captain Jeffrey Miller.

**Battle of the Creek Parts 1 & 2**

Catch Las Lomas at Northgate for Girls Soccer, and Northgate at Las Lomas for Boys Basketball.

**Walnut Creek Concert Band Holiday Show from the Lesher Center**

Filmed live as the band ushers in the holiday season on November 27, 2018.

**Channel info**

Comcast Channel 28 (incorporated WC only), Rossmoor 26, Astoria Channel 29, and AT&T U-Verse Channel 99. Or, watch the channel online at walnutcreektv.org.

**Find us on Youtube**

Go to youtube.com/cityofwalnutcreek for original programs.

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**WALNUT CREEK CREATION EVENTS**

The Bubble Lady

February 9, 1pm & 3pm shows

Civic Park Assembly Hall

Parents and children alike will enjoy this fun, interactive, bubble-filled adventure accompanied by music, laughter and artistry. $10. Register for Class #10808 or #10810 online at WalnutCreekRec.org or call 925-943-5838.

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**BEDFORD GALLERY**

**Altered States**

January 13 – March 24, 2019

Opening Reception: Sunday, January 13, 3 – 5 pm

Wagner, Woodrock: Night Country, 2016, redwood burl and oil paint on polished steel

**BEDFORD GALLERY**

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**Here’s what’s happening...**
Winter 2018   In a Nutshell
Contra Costa County wants to know what you think about the Iron Horse Trail! The County is studying this 18-mile bicycle and pedestrian backbone that runs from Concord to Dublin, travelling right through the heart of Walnut Creek.

The goals of this study are to:
1. Improve trail safety;
2. Evaluate different forms of transportation allowed on the trail;
3. Improve access to the trail and its intersections with streets; and
4. Build a shared vision with the community to guide future decisions regarding trail infrastructure.

Visit www.county.us/HCSStudy to get involved and have your voice heard.

Recognizing that traditional approaches to ending homelessness only work for some individuals, a recent effort to target the most high-risk, hard-to-reach, chronically homeless people is paying off. The City of Walnut Creek is a partner in the program. The Coordinated Outreach Referral, Engagement (CORE) program addresses homeless individuals, youth, and families living outside who typically don’t access services, or don’t know how to access services. CORE uses a client-centered, “whatever it takes” approach to build rapport, engage consumers into services that aims to get them off the streets and stabilized.

Launched in 2017, CORE serves as one of three entry points into Contra Costa’s Coordinated Entry System bringing services and resources directly to individuals living outside. Utilizing evidence-based practices in their work, CORE teams employ a social case management model to progressively engage individuals and families sleeping on the streets, in vehicles, and in encampments. Each CORE team is comprised of two people trained in motivational interviewing, non-violent crisis intervention, CPR, and the administration of Narcan. Walnut Creek will continue to update residents on the CORE team efforts.

The need for affordable housing in Walnut Creek continues to be significant, and City Hall is not waiting for those in need to come find us. The City has undertaken a very active outreach and education campaign, and you’ll often see representatives from the Housing Division at community events. Information booths have been on hand at August’s First Wednesday, Oktoberfest, the Diablo Valley Farmers’ Market at Shadelands and the Louest Farmers’ Market. For more information about housing programs and policies, please visit the City’s website and search “housing.” One of the City Council’s priorities is to increase the availability and affordability of housing, and our outreach efforts will continue in 2019.

How to make your holidays green
Making sustainable choices when decorating, entertaining, and giving gifts to family and friends helps the environment and can save money during the holiday season. American household waste increases sharply between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Eve – as much as 25% per increase by some estimates. Here are some easy tips to make your holidays green:

Decorations
- Use LED light strings, such as ENERGY STAR brands that can use 70% less energy than traditional bulbs, or consider using few or no lights.
- Put indoor and outdoor decorative lights on a timer.
- Decorate with items that are reusable after the holiday season, or that can be composted.
- Think before you “fork.” Flashed holiday trees are treated and can’t be composted; they will go to the landfill.

Entertaining
- Give your table an elegant look by using reusable cloth napkins and tableware that can be washed. When using disposable items, make sure they can be recycled or composted.
- Encourage guests to bring containers to take home leftovers and reduce food waste.
- Compost any uneaten food in your green organics cart.
- Plan meals that have a low carbon footprint. Buy food that is local and in season. Recipes that replace beef, which has the highest carbon footprint per serving, with chicken or vegetables will have a lower carbon footprint.

Gifts
- Look for holiday cards made from recycled paper, and cards that can be stilled after being read. Or send electronic cards to help cut down on postage and transportation.
- Wrapping paper is often used once and then thrown away. Get creative with wrapping by re-using paper you already have from magazines or newspapers, cloth, or reusable bags or baskets. Gift bags, cloth ribbons, and bows can be saved and reused.
- Give gifts that are durable, recyclable, made of natural materials, or are energy efficient.
- Give the gift of an experience, like tickets to a show or a cooking class, to reduce waste and packaging.

Core by the Numbers
- 247 Unduplicated people served with 666 contacts made
- 90% Living in places not meant for habitation
- 67% Reported to having disabling conditions
- 21% Over the age of 60
- 15% Survivors of domestic violence
- 38% Homeless over 5 years
- 13% People placed in a shelter
- 52% Placed in the warming center

Bringing Affordable Housing Info on the Road

Mountain Shadow Film Society

Mountains Shadow Film Society

Applications are now being accepted for new members in the Mountain Shadow Film Society, the Walnut Creek non-profit entity that brings in the heat in award-winning foreign and independent films otherwise unavailable in our area. The Society launches its sixth season in January, with weekend evening screenings held four times each month in the Walnut Creek Library. The society has grown to more than 500 members; for information visit http://mountainshadow.org.

Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra at Lesher Center

Mark your calendars for Sunday, February 17, when internationally-acclaimed pianist Jeffrey La Due joins the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra as part of its production, “Let’s Dance.” He will perform Franz Liszt’s exhilarating Totentanz with the orchestra. The orchestra’s new conductor, Chad Goodman, has been hailed by Forbes as an “entrepreneur bringing innovation to classical music.” Throughout the program, he will engage the audience by sharing fascinating background information on the composers and their work. Find out more at ContraCostaChamberOrchestra.org.

Artwork gives bigBelly bins a new look
Among the dozens of successful projects completed during October’s Community Service Day was a facelift for many of the BigBelly solar compacting trash and recycling bins located downtown. Volunteers installed recycling-themed artwork on the bins.

The designs had been selected by Walnut Creek Downtown through a call for artists and a selection panel. In addition, Public Works staff replaced the front sticker on the bins with new recycling signs that make it easier to know what can go into the recycling bins.

HIGHLIGHTS OF YEAR ONE,
July 2017 – June 2018

• The CORE Team holds a seat on the Walnut Creek Homeless Taskforce to keep on top of homeless issues that arise in the City.
• CORE communicates with WP police dispatch on a daily basis and responds to calls involving homelessness. This frees up law enforcement to work on criminal issues the city may be experiencing.
• CORE meets monthly with Lieutenant County of the Walnut Creek PD to discuss hotspots and provide a coordinated approach to city issues.
• CORE works in collaboration with the Trinity Center to provide comprehensive case management services to people experiencing homelessness.
• CORE took part in a community forum to answer any questions the residents of the city may have had surrounding homelessness and the steps the city was taking to combat the issues.

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Winter shelter for homeless begins 2nd year at Walnut Creek Armory

A $100,000 City grant has enabled a winter shelter program to begin operating at the Walnut Creek Armory, where 25 Trinity Center members will have a warm place to sleep through March 29, 2019. The temporary shelter program does more than provide a place to sleep during the coldest months. Participants must apply and work in collaboration with Trinity Center staff towards a goal. Community support is also vital; volunteers provide much-needed supplies for the program, and plan to serve a holiday dinner to the shelter residents on Christmas Day. Republic Services is providing containers for members to store personal items overnight. The Walnut Creek Police Department will also have established, regular visits. Additional community support is always welcome. For questions or comments, contact Pam McGrath, Evening Program Manager, at pam@trinitycenterwcc.org.

8th Graders Visit Italy and Hungary

Walnut Creek Sister Cities International, open doors for local youth in ways they can never imagine. The Youth Ambassador Exchange program sends students to visit one of our sister cities: Noceto, in Italy, and Siofok, in Hungary. Last fall, 26 eighth graders and chaperones left for a ten-day adventure of a lifetime. They experienced day to day life in their assigned cities, soaking up the rich culture and sights, gaining travel experience and a sense of independence. The students brought back tales of their journey to the City Council, impressing members with the knowledge and stories. In April, ambassadors and families will host delegations of students from Noceto and Siofok, conveying the program’s motto of promoting peace through mutual respect, understanding and cooperation – one individual, one community at a time. This year’s Walnut Creek 7th graders interested in applying to be an ambassador for the 2019-2020 exchange must attend a meeting on January 6 at the Walnut Creek Library. For information, visit wcsci.org.

Parking Relief at Walnut Creek BART on the Way

The construction that has been a staple at the Walnut Creek BART station moves into a new phase soon, as the new South Garage will open in early 2019. The new South Garage is privately owned and operated, and will be exclusively for BART parking. Although the new South Garage is increasing parking capacity at the station overall, early next year, the north and east surface lots will be permanently closed. Approximately 600 daily fee parking spaces will be converted to monthly spaces in the new South Garage, those will not be replaced. Reservations for monthly spots are being taken now, and are expected to sell out quickly. For questions or comments, please contact SP+ parking at parkinginfo@webartparking.com or 510-928-2022.

Out with the Old, In with the New: Improved Parking Meters

City-operated parking meters are about to get an overhaul, as new, easier-to-use and read meters are coming in early January. Street meters in downtown Walnut Creek are City-operated meters, and the current equipment has met its useful lifespan. Customer feedback has told the City that they are hard to view in sunlight, and that they have limited capacity to work with newer technology.

Free Tax Preparation Assistance Available Soon

The 2019 tax season is just around the corner, and help with preparing your returns will also be readily available soon. Both AARP’s Tax-Aide and the United Way’s “Earn It, Keep It, Save It” (EKS) programs will be available starting in January. Both programs serve taxpayers of any age. EKS service is limited to those with incomes below $54,000. AARP membership is not required for Tax-Aide, and there are no income limits. Beginning January 7, get more information by calling 925-726-3199 for Tax-Aide, or calling 2-1-1 for “Earn It, Keep It, Save It.”

Lend a Hand … Behind the Wheel of a Van!

Walnut Creek Recreation’s Senior Transportation Program is looking for volunteers to help area seniors get where they need to go. From medical appointments to grocery shopping to events, the Senior Mini Bus provides more than 3,000 rides per year thanks to the volunteer driving team. More drivers and passenger assistants are needed for regular 4-hour weekday shifts. Substitutes are also needed for those wanting a more flexible commitment. Call 925-943-5852 if you can help.

What’s your Home Energy Score?

With Home Energy Score, you’ll learn if your home sips or guzzles energy, and you’ll receive a list of suggestions to make more energy efficient and comfortable! Receive a $250 REBATE toward a home Energy Score! Learn more at HomeScoreCA.org or call (866) 876-6008.
**Getting Around Downtown This Holiday Season**

**FIND PARKING SPOTS, BIKE PARKING, AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTES BELOW**

**WIFI available downtown**

WiFi is now available in the downtown corridor of the City. Find it at #WalnutCreek when searching for WiFi service in the areas bounded by Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Civic Drive, & Main and Locust Streets.

**Purple Poles = No Time Limits**

Two-hour time limits at nearby parking meters were removed to offer more long-term parking Downtown. Look for the purple parking meter poles, park once and walk to shop and dine.

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**CITY COUNCIL**

- Mayor Cindy Silva
- Mayor Pro Tem Loella Haskew
- Matt Francois
- Justin Wedel
- Kevin Wilk

For an appointment, call 925-256-3504

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

- Dan Buckshi, City Manager
- Fran Robustelli, Assistant City Manager
- Steve Mattas, City Attorney
- Suzie Martinez, City Clerk
- Ronald Cassano, City Treasurer

- Amy Cunningham, Director
  - Administrative Services
- Kevin Safine, Director
  - Police Department
- Tom Chaplin, Chief of Police

**Community & Economic Development**

- Sandra Meyer, Director

**Human Resources**

- Kelly Guertin, Manager

**Police Department**

- Tom Chaplin, Chief of Police

**Public Works**

- Heather Ballenger, Director

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**ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER**

The Nutshell Newsletter is published quarterly. For questions and comments, contact editor Betsy Burkhart, 925-943-5895 or burkhart@walnut-creek.org

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