

*August 10, 2007
Palo Alto, CA*

FRANK'S WEEKLY MEMO

New City Website Generates Public Interest and Feedback

Over the last week, many members of the public have explored our new website and weighed in with their impressions. Some like the sleek new look while others like the move towards classifying information into “themepods” such as Living, Visiting and the Environment. Many are pleased that we retained the department listing for those familiar with locating information that way. Others find the phone directory to be helpful. As with any change, whether to a new website or way of doing things, we also have received some constructive feedback. As a result, we are reviewing our search application’s methodology and functionality to help ensure that users obtain the results they expect when searching for common terms. From the staff side, we are still working on indexing all of the many documents, pages, news features, etc., that were a part of sifting through outdated webpages and converting relevant information into the new content management database system to enhance search results. We are continuing to make updates to the site on a daily basis as City departments provide their feedback and alert us to missing content. In the near term, we are focusing on the following enhancements:

- Refining search capability
- Increasing interactive functions, including more online forms
- Continuing to update the site to fix incorrect or missing content
- System tuning

Our new City website is a “living” site that will evolve over time as we better leverage its capabilities, enhance its existing features, add new content, and refine our information categorization. This is an exciting change for the City and we look forward to continuing to “grow” our new site.

Pearson Arastradero Preserve Wild Land Fires

Palo Alto Open Space Rangers responded to a vegetation fire on Saturday, August 4, 2007, at Alpine and Arastradero Roads around 1:30 p.m. Captain Randie Revilla of Palo Alto Fire Engine 8 reported at least three columns of smoke in the area of Pearson Arastradero Preserve. Another call shortly after reported an additional fire at 9 Arastradero Road, near the west side of the Preserve. Upon reaching Gate B, Rangers observed a column of smoke



Designates an item related to one of the City Council’s “Top 4” Priorities.

within the preserve. Engine 8 spotted three foot flames in heavy brush along the Juan Bautista de Anza Trail in the preserve approximately 1 mile west of the main preserve parking lot.

In all, there were four fire sites within a radius of less than a mile. Near the Portola Pastures driveway off Arastradero Road, San Mateo County Sheriff's deputies apprehended an arson suspect at gunpoint. The Calfire investigator indicated all four fires were likely arson, and that a viable suspect had been apprehended.

Officers and agencies responding to the incident included: Palo Alto Engine 8; Calfire Helitac 106; Air Attack 500; Air Tanker 80; Air Tanker 81; Woodside Fire; Menlo Engine 4; San Mateo County water tender; AMR ambulance; San Mateo County Sheriff; and Santa Clara County Sheriff.

Library Hires Assistant Director

Palo Alto City Library Director Diane Jennings announced that Cornelia van Aken has been hired as the City's first Assistant Library Director. Ms. van Aken will manage all activities in the public services division, including reference, circulation and volunteer services, as well as have responsibility for library facilities. The position was created from a vacant management position as part of a department restructuring plan designed to strengthen library operations. Jennings says, "One of the first priorities of the Assistant Library Director will be to oversee the implementation of some of the recommendations in the recently completed audit of library operations".

Ms. van Aken has been with the San Jose Public Library since 1995. She has managed one of its most heavily used branches and ran the library system's youth services program. Ms. van Aken has extensive experience with facility planning, community outreach, and staff development and training. Previously, she worked as a reference librarian for the San Francisco Public Library and as a school librarian in San Mateo County and southern California.

Ms. van Aken has a BA in English literature from California State University, Northridge, and a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from San Jose State University. She will start work in Palo Alto on September 4.





Photovoltaic Installation at the Municipal Service Center

On July 9, 2007, Public Works Engineering began construction on a \$2.6 million photovoltaic (solar) project that will install solar panels and equipment at three sites: the Municipal Service Center (MSC), Baylands Interpretive Center, and Cubberley Community Center. The first site, now under construction, is at the MSC on East Bayshore Road off Highway 101. Solar trackers that follow the sun are being installed in front of the MSC and carports with solar-panel roofing have been installed in the employee parking lot. Later this summer, photovoltaic systems will be installed at the Cubberley Community Center and at the Baylands Interpretive Center. The three sites together will generate enough energy annually to power 75 houses. These installations will generate the first green energy that is actually generated within the city and will be available to the public as part of the Palo Alto Green Energy Program. For more information on the project, please contact Karen Bengard at (650) 329-2151.

Palo Alto Lifeguards take 2nd Place in Northern California Lifeguard Games

City of Palo Alto Lifeguards participated in the 2007 Northern California Lifeguard Games hosted by the City of Pleasanton. The competitors represented Palo Alto in six team and individuals events including Swim relay, CPR, Active Victim Rescue, and Spinal Injury Management.

In addition to an overall 2nd place team finish of 27 participating organizations, Palo Alto took home the gold in the team Rescue Relay. Rob Reynolds and Michael Nguyen placed first and second, respectively, in Submerged Victim Rescue. Michelle Reynolds took 5th of 54 female participants in Submerged Victim Rescue while Petra Barton, a first year lifeguard, placed 6th in Active Victim Rescue.

The lifeguards teach swim lessons and hone their skills every day of summer under the direction of Assistant Pool Manager and Coach Oscar Sanchez.



To see your Palo Alto lifeguards in their element this summer, visit them at Rinconada and Gunn High School Pools. Call the Recreation Division Aquatics hotline (650)463-4914 for hours and information.

Mitchell Park Sculpture Project

The City of Palo Alto Public Art Commission is commissioning a piece of outdoor sculpture to be sited at Mitchell Park. The community will vote to select the artwork. The maquettes (models) will be on display at the Palo Alto Art Center meeting room from August 28 to September 5, and photographs of these maquettes will be on display at the Palo Alto Civic Center, 1st floor lobby bulletin board (near Council Chambers) from August 3 to September 5, for the community to cast their ballots.

The ballots will be counted and the selected artwork announced at a special meeting of the Public Art Commission on September 6, 7 p.m., Mitchell Park Community Center. For more information call (650) 329-2227.

A Twilight Concert to Remember

Tuesday, August 7, was a Twilight Concert to remember. Beautiful Bol Park was packed with approximately 2000 audience members who experienced the tranquil and beautiful vocal stylings and piano work of Vienna Teng. Vienna has enjoyed international success after quitting her job as a software engineer in Silicon Valley to pursue her dream of being a musician. In the two years since she left her job, she sold over 60,000 albums on an independent label and has appeared on the David Letterman show and National Public Radio (NPR). Austin Willacy was the brilliant as the warm-up act with his guitar and vocal work. The serenity of the park matched the wonderful music which was enjoyed by all!

