



Discover WestCovina

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF WEST COVINA

December 2008

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



WWW.WESTCOVINA.ORG



Westfield West Covina: Preparing for Construction and the Holidays

As residents, mall patrons and commuters have noticed, Westfield West Covina is expanding.

Westfield LLC has commenced Phase II of its mall development project to renovate and update Westfield West Covina, including a remodel of the former Macy's building. As part of Phase II, Best Buy will open a new 45,000-square-foot store on the north side of the center.

In October 2007, Westfield completed Phase I of the development, opening an expanded Macy's store in the former Robinsons-May space.

Westfield broke ground on Phase II in September with the demolition of the former Macy's building and has started construction of a new road along the freeway, which is anticipated to be completed before the Thanksgiving holiday. Westfield anticipates a grand opening for Phase II, which includes the opening of the new Best Buy store, in August.

Although construction will continue during the holiday season, Westfield West Covina is committed to providing



shoppers the exceptional service and holiday experience they have become accustomed to at the center. Westfield will host a series of holiday events, including Holiday Gift Market, a gift wrapping charity event, holiday performances by local schools, and photos with Santa and his elves.

To help kick off the season, Westfield West Covina is holding a **GIFT CARD DRAWING** in which five lucky winners will each receive a Westfield gift card valued at \$100.

To enter, visit the Westfield West Covina Shopping Concierge booth on the lower level adjacent to JC Penny anytime between Monday, Dec. 1 and Sunday, Dec. 7. You simply need to mention this article, "Westfield West Covina Development," and complete an entry form.

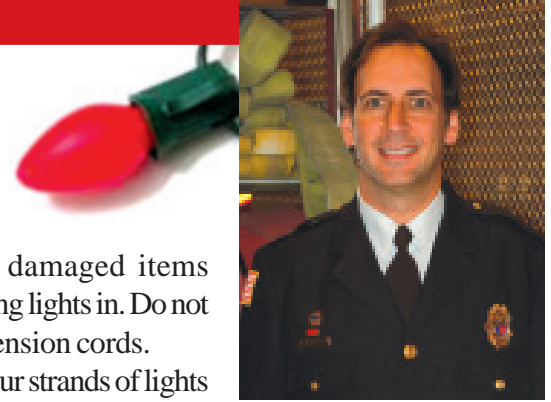
Westfield West Covina will notify the five winners on Monday, Dec. 8.

For further information about this and all Westfield West Covina holiday events, call a shopping concierge at (626) 960-1881 or log onto www.westfield.com.



WEST COVINA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Holiday Safety Reminders



Holiday Decorating

* Use caution with holiday decorations, and whenever possible, choose those made with flame-resistant, flame-retardant or non-combustible materials.

* Keep candles away from decorations and other combustible materials, and do not use candles to decorate Christmas trees.

* Purchase only lights and electrical decorations bearing the name of an independent testing lab, and follow the manufacturer's instructions for installation and maintenance.

* Carefully inspect new and previously used light strings,

and replace damaged items before plugging lights in. Do not overload extension cords.

* Check your strands of lights to determine the number of strands that may be connected.

Connect no more than three strands of push-in bulbs and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.

* Always unplug lights before replacing light bulbs or fuses.

* Don't mount lights in any way that can damage the cord's wire insulation. For example, it is safer to use clips, not nails.

* Keep children and pets away from light strings and electrical decorations.

* Turn off all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

Chief Paul Segalla

The City of West Covina
Community Services Department
Presents

WINTERFEST

Saturday, December 6, 2008
1:00p.m. to 6:00p.m.
at
West Covina Civic Center Courtyard
1444 W. Garvey Ave.
West Covina, CA 91793

The event includes arts & crafts, food booths, photos with Santa and 58 tons of snow. Ride the 80ft. sled run and play in 2 snow areas, \$5.00 wristband required for sled run.

For more information please call the West Covina Community Services Department at (626) 939-8430

Holiday Entertaining

* Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S. When cooking for holiday visitors, remember to keep an eye on the range.

* If you smoke, smoke outside.

* Wherever you smoke, provide plenty of large, deep, sturdy ashtrays, and check them frequently. Cigarette butts can smolder in the trash and cause a fire, so completely douse cigarette butts with water before discarding.

* After a party, always check on, between and under upholstery and cushions and inside trash cans for cigarette butts that may be smoldering.

* Keep matches and lighters up high, out of sight and reach of children – preferably in a locked cabinet. When smokers visit your home, ask them to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.

* Test your smoke alarms, and let guests know what your fire escape plan is.

COUNTYWIDE WATER SUPPLY ALERT!

The County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution declaring a Countywide Water Supply and Conservation Alert, which urges county residents, businesses, water purveyors and cities to intensify water conservation efforts to achieve a 15 to 20 percent reduction in overall water demand. Cities are being urged to communicate the need for extraordinary water conservation.

Water supplies in Southern California have been significantly depleted because of dry weather conditions, lower-than-normal snowmelt runoff, depleted storage in the state's major reservoirs, an eight-year drought in the Colorado River Watershed and recent court decisions affecting water exports from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta.

As a result, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger proclaimed the first statewide drought in 16 years, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California issued a Water Supply Alert.

The West Covina City Council is asking everyone to do their part to help cut down on water demands and conserve water.

Free Concerts for Holiday Season

The new West Covina Symphony is bringing the gift of music to our community! Under the direction of Dr. Sylvia Lee Mann, the symphony has scheduled the following performances in December:



- **Wednesday, Dec. 10** at 6 p.m. City of West Covina Holiday Tree Lighting, The Lakes Entertainment Center, 1200 Lakes Drive

- **Sunday, Dec. 14** at 3 p.m. "A Magical Holiday Gift of Music," West Covina United Methodist Church, 718 S. Azusa Ave.

- **Tuesday, Dec. 23** at 10 a.m. Holiday Luncheon performance, West Covina Senior Center, 2501 E. Cortez St.

Visit www.westcovinasymphony.com, or call (626) 771-0462 for more information.

The City of West Covina ~ Community Services Department

Tree Lighting Ceremony

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

The Lakes
1200 Lakes Drive
West Covina, CA 91791

Entertainment

Refreshments

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Photos with Santa & Ms. Claus



For more information please call (626) 939-8430

Do You Know What's Been Happening in the City of West Covina

City of West Covina Honors Veterans

On Veterans Day, Nov. 11, West Covina's mayor and city council honored veterans with a ceremony in the Civic Center Courtyard.

Master of Ceremonies Police Chief Frank Willis introduced the West Covina High School ROTC for the color guard ceremony, and the West Covina High School Band played the national anthem. The guest speaker was George Ogden, an active member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and a newspaper reporter for the West Covina Examiner.

Attendees included members of all branches of the military, including resident Bill Berger, who has lived in West Covina since 1932. Berger served as a pilot in the U.S. Marines during



Longtime West Covina resident Bill Berger with Fire Chief Paul Segalla

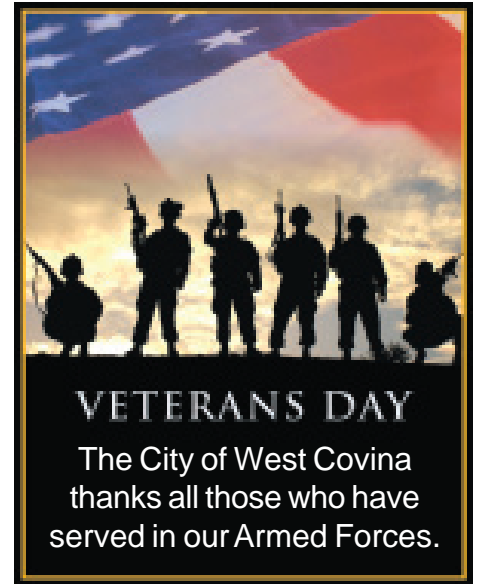
World War II.

When asked why he felt Veterans Day was so important, he responded, "It is most important that we defend our country and our freedoms, and to honor the veterans who do that for everyone."

When asked why he chose to live in West Covina as long as he has, Berger

replied, "My family were farmers for over 20 years here, and I have so many friends here."

Berger fondly recalled how there were only eight students when he attended elementary school.



DONATE TO BLUE STAR BANNER PROGRAM HONORING MILITARY PERSONNEL

In May 2007, the West Covina City Council approved the Blue Star Street Banner Program to recognize West Covina residents serving in the Armed Forces.

In order to qualify for a street banner, the individual to be honored must currently be a West Covina resident or have been a West Covina resident at the time they entered the military.

To date, the City has installed more than 100 banners, with requests for 80 additional banners. The cost to install these additional 80 banners is approximately \$14,000, of which

\$12,000 was approved by the City Council in the FY 2008-2009 budget.

In an effort to raise additional funds to purchase the 80 banners requested, the City Council approved establishing a "Blue Star Fund" that will accept donations from businesses, residents or Blue Star families to help offset the costs of the banners.

The City has also received requests from families who would like their banners once the City removes them, whether it be at the end of the program, when the family member is discharged or other reason. Removal of the banners

occurs yearly.

Current funding will allow for the purchase of 68 banners. Additional banners that are awaiting installation or are requested during the remainder of the year will be purchased from funds donated to the Blue Star Street Banner Fund.

The City Council approved gifting these banners when they are removed to give to the respective families free of charge. However, the City will accept donations from families for these banners to assist in the continuation of the program.

For more information, call the City Manager's Office at (626) 939-8401.



Revisions to **CITY CODES**

On Nov. 4, West Covina Municipal Code sections 15-85 and 15-94 were revised and amended. These codes deal with loud and unnecessary noise.

In the past few years, the City of West Covina has experienced an increase in calls from residents for service regarding party and noise complaints. Just this past year alone (2007), the city responded to more than 7,275 disturbance calls, 1,355 of which were related to party complaints.

• **Section 15-85: Loud, unnecessary noises.** It is unlawful for any person within any residential zone of the city to willfully make or continue or cause to be made or continue any loud, unnecessary or unusual noise that unreasonably disturbs the peace and quiet of a neighborhood or persons within 50 feet of the offender(s) property line.

• **Section 15-95: Radios, television sets and similar devices.** Between the hours of 10 p.m. on one day and 7 a.m. of the following day, it shall be unlawful for any person(s) within any residential zone of the city to use or operate any radio receiving set, musical instrument, phonograph, television set, or other machine device for the producing or reproducing of sound or device by which voice, music or any other sound is amplified, in such a manner as to create a disturbance that is plainly audible at a distance of 50 feet from the property line of the offender(s).

Previously, responding officers would advise the disturbing party of the complaint, issue a first response warning and leave. The reporting party, who usually remained anonymous, watched



the officers arrive and leave the scene, only to be disturbed again later. This led to a second call for service from a very frustrated reporting party who may have assumed nothing was done to fix the problem.

The revised and amended municipal codes would allow officers to issue an administrative citation for violation of these sections. The administrative citation should decrease the amount of times the officers have to return to such calls.

The new municipal codes would allow officers to respond to a loud disturbance

or party call and issue a \$100 administrative citation on the very first visit. Upon a second response, a \$200 citation can be issued, and any response thereafter, a \$500 citation can be issued. The number of responses determines the amount of the fine in a 12-month period.

These types of calls require a minimum of two officers per response, which utilizes a great amount of manpower. The goal of the new procedure is to reduce the volume of calls regarding noise complaints and remove the burden for residents to file a complaint in order for any enforcement action to take place. This procedure allows more accountability for habitual offenders while freeing up more time for officers to handle higher-priority calls.

West Covina City Staff is Fully Trained for Emergencies

On the morning of Nov. 13, a major earthquake hit West Covina – you didn't feel it? You would have if you had registered for the Great Southern California Shake Out exercise.

On that morning, the City of West Covina and 5 million Californians were practicing their response to a simulated 7.8-magnitude earthquake on the southern San Andreas Fault. From "Stop, Cover, and Hold On" drills for the schools to full activation of Emergency Operations Centers, all sorts of public and private agencies were practicing their skills.

Here in West Covina, any large-scale disaster would necessitate coordinating response efforts through one central site. City staff members – many with no day-to-day emergency assignment – come together at the City's Emergency Operations Center to handle the

myriad of requests from residents and surrounding agencies.

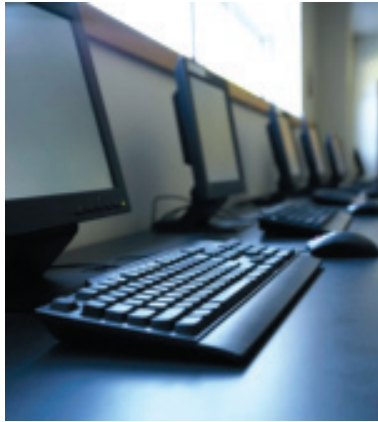
The Nov. 13 exercise allowed the City of West Covina to practice coordinated response with surrounding cities and community partners. The City meets on a regular basis with local groups, including Citrus Valley Health Partners and local school districts, to ensure everyone is ready to work together in an emergency. Disaster exercises like this one allow everyone to test those alliances under demanding conditions, such as a communications system overload or failure.

Just as it is important for the City to plan and prepare, it is also important for all residents to have a disaster plan. For more information, log onto www.shakeout.org or call the West Covina Fire Department at (626) 228-8800.

New Software Aids West Covina Police Department in Combating Graffiti

The West Covina Police Department recently purchased Graffiti Tracker software technology to enhance its ability to arrest and successfully prosecute graffiti criminals.

This technology will give police valuable graffiti information and intelligence in a nearly real-time format that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It will greatly enhance their ability to



track gang members and tagging crews who vandalize West Covina.

Graffiti Tracker is a sophisticated yet user-friendly Web-based program that helps police track gangs and tagging crews. This technology provides clear and concise graffiti analysis, trends, data collection and detailed graffiti intelligence reports.

The key to this effort is the use of specialized GPS digital cameras to photograph graffiti. It is then placed in a database, where it is analyzed and

recorded in graffiti mapping software and satellite imaging to show each location in West Covina vandalized by graffiti.

A representative from Superior, the City's graffiti repair contractor, will take pictures of graffiti before it is painted over. The digital GPS cameras record the date, time, exact location and the damage. Superior

downloads these pictures into Graffiti Tracker each day. Graffiti Tracker's professional staff analyzes every image.

Obtaining the cooperation of Superior was an important element in making this technology work for the City of West Covina. Representatives from Superior deserve to be commended for their willingness to add this function to their workload at no additional cost to the City. The West Covina Police Department has noted that Superior continues to do a good job for the City

of West Covina.

The cost of this technology was just more than \$29,000 and was paid for from grant funds. After the first year, there will be ongoing annual costs that the department will try to incorporate into its budget without requesting any additional appropriations from the General Fund.

Graffiti data is organized in such a manner that professional packets are produced for the District Attorney's Office to assist with prosecution.

Graffiti Tracker was brought online in October. Its effectiveness was clearly shown only a few days later. On Oct. 12, intelligence data from Graffiti Tracker led to the arrest of a 15-year-old who confessed to his crime. It was the juvenile's second arrest in October, the first on Oct. 2. Because this was his second arrest, the juvenile can now be prosecuted for felony vandalism.

This is relatively new technology that provides another weapon in West Covina's "zero tolerance" approach to graffiti prevention and enforcement.

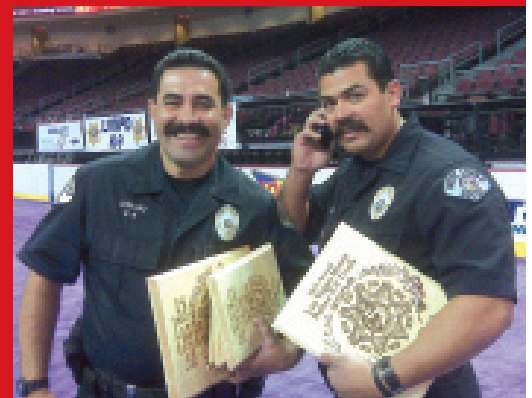
WEST COVINA POLICE K-9 UNIT WINS IN ANNUAL COMPETITION

K-9 officers Joe Serrano and Pete Gallardo, along with their K-9 partners, Rambo and Quarto, competed in the 18th annual Las Vegas Police K-9 trials Oct. 17 to 19. A total of 28 K-9 teams competed from four states.

The West Covina Police Department, represented by Serrano and Gallardo, won Second Overall Top Agency.

Serrano also won Second Overall Top Dog, Second-Place Handler Protection, Fifth-Place Tactical Obedience and Fifth-Place Agility.

Congratulations to West Covina's K-9 units!



to Help Make It A Great Place To Live, Work & Play?

Still Without a Passport?

U.S. passport application acceptance services are available at the West Covina City Clerk's Office, Third Floor, Room 317, at City Hall.

Passport application acceptance hours are as follows: Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and closed Friday through Sunday.

Here is what you need to bring:

- Original proof of U.S. citizenship
- Valid proof of identity
- Two recent color passport-size photographs
- Passport application (DO NOT SIGN)
- Fees (payable by check or money order ONLY)

Applicants under age 16 have additional requirements.

For detailed passport application information, go to the City Clerk's Office, call the City of West Covina passport information line at (626) 939-8744, visit the City of West Covina Web site at www.westcovina.org or visit the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs Web site at www.travel.state.gov.

The West Covina City Clerk's Office has been designated by the U.S. Department of State as a Passport Application Acceptance Facility since 2003.



In the last mailed-out edition of Discover West Covina, we asked residents to let us know what city services they appreciate the most. We received these responses:

"The official newsletter of West Covina that all residents receive is the one service I appreciate very much. Through this letter, we are made aware of the very important issues, goals, programs and accomplishments of our city. This

type of transparency and accountability is most welcome. Congratulations." – Dr. Vicente Zapata

"Kudos to the Graffiti Removal Program. Just one year ago, the northern portion of West Covina was experiencing major graffiti attacks, especially the defacing of both residential and business block walls up and down Vincent Avenue, traffic signal boxes, walls off freeway access ramps, and generally almost any vertical surface. Thanks to the graffiti hotline, and their quick response, this portion of the city is no longer an eyesore." – Roberta Goldberg



Christmas Tree Recycling

FREE PICKUP

WHO:

Single-family residences

WHEN: Dec. 26 to Jan. 9

on your normal trash day

WHERE: Curbside, next to your trash containers

WHAT:

- Natural trees only
- Remove all lights, tinsel, ornaments, stands, etc.
- Flocked trees are accepted



CUT OUT THIS ORNAMENT AND HANG IT ON YOUR TREE TO REMIND YOU TO RECYCLE

Calendar of Upcoming Events

SATURDAY, DEC. 6 - WINTERFEST, 1 to 6 p.m., West Covina Civic Center Courtyard. Experience winter as it was meant to be in 58 tons of snow! The annual event includes arts and crafts, food booths, photos with Santa and snow. Ride the 80-foot sled run and play in two snow areas. \$5 wristband required for unlimited sled run; snow play areas are free.

SUNDAY, DEC. 7 - ELKS LODGE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY to benefit muscular dystrophy. 2 p.m., 841 W. Merced Ave.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 10 - TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY, 6 to 8 p.m., The Lakes Entertainment Center, 1200 Lakes Drive. Join the City of West Covina in ushering in the holiday season! Free entertainment featuring the West Covina Symphony Orchestra, refreshments and photos with Santa.

SUNDAY, DEC. 14 - ELKS LODGE CHRISTMAS TREE LANE, 3 p.m., 841 W. Merced Ave.

SATURDAY, DEC. 20 - BREAKFAST WITH SANTA, 9 to 11 a.m., Cameron Community Center, 1305 E. Cameron Ave. For ages 3 to 12. Cost: \$8.

MONDAY, JAN. 19 - 10TH ANNUAL MLK BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION, 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., The Lakes Entertainment Center, 1200 Lakes Drive. The San Gabriel Valley Branch of the NAACP and the City of West Covina have joined together to celebrate and honor the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the Lakes Entertainment Center. A formal program will be provided from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., followed by outdoor activities from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. Enjoy entertainment, food, arts and crafts, multicultural dance groups, choral and jazz music, and children's games.

For more information on these programs, call Community Services, (626) 939-8430.

**CHECK OUT THE CITY'S WEB SITE, WWW.WESTCOVINA.ORG,
FOR THE LATEST "COMMUNITY RECREATION GUIDE"
AND THE LATEST SENIOR CITIZENS' "VOICE" NEWSLETTER**

HAVE ANY NEW IDEAS FOR "DISCOVER WEST COVINA?"

**E-MAIL US: 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
CITY COUNCIL**

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

At the time of this newsletter printing, the new Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem had not been appointed.

City of West Covina
1444 W. Garvey Ave.
P.O. Box 1440
West Covina, CA 91793

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