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Colorful New Playgrounds

WHO CAN FORGET THE FEELING of zipping down a slide, swinging to the clouds or taking in the view from the top of a jungle gym? Thanks to a \$2 million project to spruce up city playgrounds, new generations of Pasadena kids are enjoying the same exhilaration.



New play equipment at Victory Park

With the final bolt tightened on the play structure at Robinson Park in February, the city is wrapping up a six-month project to replace the aging equipment at nine city parks. Little ones are already climbing all over the new play areas at Brookside, Eaton Blanche, Hamilton, Singer, Sunnyslope, Victory, Villa and Washington parks. With the goal of capturing the interest and imaginations of our parks' youngest visitors, the new equipment features a colorful variety of climbers, slides, bridges, towers and ramps, with unique features at each site. New landscaping, decorative walls, bridges, walkways, benches and paving were added as a bonus. Another seven parks, including Allendale, Brenner, Grant, Jefferson, La Pintoresca, McDonald and San Rafael, received upgrades to make sure all play equipment meets current safety standards.

Why the changes? Playgrounds are important! Neighborhood parks are the perfect place for kids to breathe fresh air, get a little exercise, build their strength and skills and meet new playmates. They're even more important for kids who don't have a sprawling backyard; parks provide wide-open places to play right around the corner.

With accessibility in mind, the recent upgrades have also ensured that children of all abilities can join in the fun. Thanks to ramps, railings and more, all of the new equipment is accessible to children with disabilities and their caregivers. Above all, safety and durability were the goals; when used the right way, the new equipment will let Pasadena families enjoy a day at the park – worry-free – for years to come.

For a list of city parks, go to www.cityofpasadena.net/publicworks/PNR/parks.asp or call 744-4321.

Have a Little Fun at the Library

The kids don't get to have all the fun! Grownups can find plenty of enjoyment at Pasadena's public libraries in a variety of ways.

For one, you can sign on as a volunteer at any branch, helping with book collections and special programs, staffing The Store at Central, teaching computer classes and more. Through a new project, you can also lead architectural tours of Central Library, telling visitors about everything from the library's founding in 1882 to the sculptor who designed the children's wing fireplace. Call 744-7076 to sign up.

Or brush up on your computer skills, learn to use the Internet and more at free classes held at Pasadena Public Library. Classes are taught in English and Spanish. For more information, visit www.cityofpasadena.net/library/PubTraining.htm for dates and times.

Help Support Recreation for All

ARA BEZJIAN LOVES HIS WEEKLY ART CLASS, where he shares thoughts ranging from his independence and what he would do if he were governor.

He's just one of the many satisfied customers of the city's Adaptive Recreation program, specially designed for residents of all ages with disabilities. The program offers Pioneer and Interact groups for adults and teens, weekly art classes, monthly dances and special events, therapeutic horseback riding, training for the Pasadena Special Olympics and much more.



Ara Bezjian works on his picture of a skyscraper in the adaptive recreation art and poetry program.

How can you help? We're looking for additional funding to provide an improv program at Victory Park and an art show at the Coffee Gallery in Altadena. (Donations are tax- deductible through the Pasadena Recreation and Parks Foundation). We also need volunteers to share skills and talents, and ideas for future programs. To pitch in, email jackiescott@cityofpasadena.net or call 744-7257.



City Crews Collect Recycling, Too

FEBRUARY 2 IS THE DATE single family residents begin having their curbside recycling collected by the city's own crews, who also collect refuse and yard waste. This move means improved response times because residents will only need one number to call for service changes or questions.

With the switch, there won't be any extra costs or changes to the type or number of recyclable materials that the city collects; acceptable items are listed on the lid of the recycling container and in the 2003-2004 Annual Trash Schedule and Recycling Information brochure that was mailed to all single-family residents in mid-December.

The brochure also tells residents what to do with household hazardous waste and bulky items. If you lost your copy, a limited supply is available by calling the number below.

The Public Works Department emphasizes that all three containers – refuse, yard waste and recycling – can only be filled to capacity so that lids close completely. This keeps pests away and trash from flying, and the Pasadena Municipal Code requires it!

For more information on the City's refuse and recycling program call 744-4087 or go to www.cityofpasadena.net/publicworks.



2004 State of the City Event: “A Culture of Creativity”

PASADENA MAYOR BILL BOGAARD WILL PRESENT his State of the City address Thursday, Jan. 15, at 7 p.m. at Art Center College of Design’s new south campus, 950 S. Raymond Ave. Vice Mayor Sid Tyler will serve as master of ceremonies for the event, which has the theme “A Culture of Creativity.”

The First AME Youth/Young Adult Choir will provide opening entertainment followed by the posting of the colors by the Blair High School JROTC. A short video will highlight the accomplishments of the past year in Pasadena, followed by the mayor’s address.

Bogaard will provide updates and future plans for issues ranging from the economy to affordable housing.

“The annual State of the City event is a Pasadena tradition, a progress report that helps the entire community assess where we have been and where we are going,” said Bogaard.

Representatives from city departments will be on hand alongside representatives from non-profit organizations with which the city partners in the areas of arts, culture and learning to show examples of their programs and answer questions before and after the address.

Artwork and designs by Art Center College of Design students over the past several years will be displayed and graphic representations of the south campus, including art studios and design shops, will be featured.

Refreshments will be provided by Doña Rosa Bakery. Spanish translation and assistive listening devices will be available. Handicapped parking will be available at the south campus building; all other parking will be available at the U.S. Postal facility at 870 S. Raymond Ave. and at Jacobs Engineering at the corner of Arroyo Parkway and Glenarm Street (enter on Glenarm). Signs will help direct drivers to parking areas and police explorers will direct people from parking lots to the south campus.

Metro Gold Line riders should get off at the Fillmore Station, walk half a block west to Raymond Avenue and south to the Art Center south campus.

The State of the City event is free and open to the public. The program will be televised live on 55 KPAS, the city’s cable television channel, and will be available on the Internet at mms://www.pasadena56.tv:8180 for users with broadband capability.

For more information call (626) 744-4311.



City Hall Will Close in June

FIVE MONTHS AND COUNTING! From June 1 to 14, offices at Pasadena City Hall will move into interim locations. Municipal Services, currently in room 121 at City Hall, will relocate to a temporary office building across the street from City Hall. Most other offices and employees will move to 117 E. Colorado Blvd. in Old Pasadena (the northwest corner of Colorado Boulevard and Arroyo Parkway). Telephone numbers will not change.



Photo courtesy of Pasadena Public Library

This photograph, taken in 1926, shows the basement, first-floor foundations and tower under construction at Pasadena City Hall.

City Hall will be closed until June 2007 for a restoration and seismic retrofit. The building's historic exterior will remain intact and will be restored to its original 1927 condition. Much focus has been placed on the retrofit but little has been placed on the restoration: All ironwork and plaster surfaces will be repaired and repainted; paint will be stripped; cast stone elements will be preserved; copper trim, gutters, downspouts, roofs and cupolas will be repaired; tile in corridors will be repaired or replaced; doors and windows will be refinished; and exterior light fixtures will be repaired and cleaned. In addition, while the building's historic interior spaces will be restored, office areas will be reconfigured. City Hall will be brought up to current building codes, including life safety, disabled access, air conditioning, heating, plumbing and electrical; and communications systems, including broadcasting of City Council meetings, will be modernized.

Our faithful information booth volunteers will relocate to the interim City Hall so you'll be able to maneuver through the building with ease. In case you forget the location once the move takes place, there will be plenty of signage and directories at and near City Hall. And, of course, our customer service operator is always on hand during normal business hours at 744-4000 to answer your questions.

Since its completion on Dec. 27, 1927, Pasadena City Hall has remained one of the most distinctive public buildings in the United States and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The cost for building Pasadena City Hall was \$1.3 million and was funded by a bond issue. For the final design, the San Francisco architectural firm of Bakewell and Brown turned to the style of 16th century Italian architect Andrea Palladio, who, like the California mission-building padres, had studied and admired the Roman architect Vitruvius. Palladio represented the simple, serene, classical style of the early Renaissance in contrast to the Gothic style of medieval times and the rococo style of the later Renaissance.

The budget for the retrofit and restoration is about \$93 million and is funded from a variety of sources. Your purchase of commemorative post cards, t-shirts, tote bags and other items in room 121 helps fund the restoration of the barrel-vaulted ceiling in City Hall's grand entrance on Garfield Avenue.

In coming months, there will be tours and other events to give Pasadena residents a final opportunity to visit the building before it closes for three years. Look for more information in upcoming issues of *Pasadena In Focus* and local newspapers.

The City Hall Restoration Oversight Committee, comprised of community leaders and experts in the fields of seismology, architecture and historic preservation, meets the second Wednesday of every month at 4 p.m. in the Management Conference Room (323) at City Hall and meetings are open to the public.

For more information, visit www.cityofpasadena.net and click on City Hall Project or call 744-7073.



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Danger In a Flash

HEAVY STORMS CAUSE FLASH FLOODS IN PASADENA NEARLY EVERY YEAR, damaging homes and everything inside. Follow these safety tips from the Pasadena Fire Department to cut your risk of serious injury and property loss.

- Store emergency building supplies, like plywood and bricks, in a dry area.
- Keep a seven-day supply of water (one gallon per person, per day) in closed, clean containers.
- Keep fuel in your cars; power outages might shut down gas pumps.
- Clear debris and overgrowth from any drainage channels.
- Never try to drive or walk through moving water.
- Don't use any food – even canned – that has come in contact with flood waters.
- Keep your disaster kit updated.
- Stay away from downed power lines and broken gas lines; call the utility company right away to report them.
- Keep a battery-operated radio on-hand (tuned to AM news) for vital information in case power is lost.
- Know where to find sandbags and sand.

For more information, email lderderian@cityofpasadena.net or call 744-7276.



Keeping Our Restaurants Squeaky Clean

PASADENA HAS SOME OF THE BEST RESTAURANTS in Los Angeles County. And thanks to the Pasadena Public Health Department, some of the cleanest!

Unlike most cities, which rely on the county health department, Pasadena has its own crew of full-time health inspectors who keep our city's eateries in top shape. When you walk into a Pasadena restaurant, you can be sure it's been inspected frequently for an exhaustive list of violations.

You also have more information before you even walk through the door. Instead of giving restaurants simple A, B or C grades, Pasadena has a pass/fail system. Here, restaurant owners are required to post a certificate in an easy-to-see spot, stating that the restaurant was inspected on a particular date and that it was found to be in compliance with state health and safety codes. Look for the new signs in all Pasadena restaurants within the next few months. If a restaurant gets poor inspection results, it's shut down – simple as that. You can request a copy of the most recent report from the owner or manager, who is legally required to provide it.

Why not give letter grades? The county's grade system offers only a snapshot of the situation at the time a grade is posted. The condition of a restaurant may change, giving patrons a false sense of security until the restaurant receives another inspection a few months down the line.

Pasadena restaurants that exceed certain minimum health requirements will be given special recognition with a plaque or certificate at the end of each year. Ask your favorite restaurants whether they have enrolled in the special recognition program given by the Public Health Department.

With help from our inspectors, Pasadena's restaurants have done a great job protecting the health of residents and visitors. Bon appetit!

For more information call 744-6004.



Pasadena's Cultural Plan

IN 2004 THE CITY OF PASADENA will embark on the process of developing Pasadena's first comprehensive cultural plan. A series of town hall meetings and special workshops will help identify the community's priorities for supporting arts and culture over the next 10 years. The plan will become a component of Pasadena's general plan in 2005 and will support planning for the entire city, including economic and business development, education, recreation, public works and health care.

Because Pasadena is a complex, culturally rich and diverse city, community participation from all sectors will be essential to reflect long- and short-term priorities. Representatives from education, science and technology, tourism, social services, real estate development, health care and environmental industries will work side-by-side with arts organizations, residents and others to develop the plan.

In addition, the plan will tap the full economic development potential of cultural organizations, strengthen resources for artists and cultural organizations, fully integrate the arts into education and lifelong learning and enhance community access to cultural resources.

Plan on attending a town hall meeting Thursday, Feb. 19, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Gold Room at Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., to learn more about the development of the Cultural Plan and how you can help. For more information, visit www.cityofpasadena.net/planning/arts/nexus.asp or call 744-7062.



Canadian Gardener Converts to California Style



PWP CUSTOMER FRANCES GOMBKOTO is so committed to water conservation that she yanked out her lawn and gave away her lawnmower. "All we did was water and mow," she laughed, describing her little patch of grass. "We didn't need it!"

Inspired by PWP's California-Friendly Landscape Workshops, Gombkoto recently redid her entire yard, adding bright flowers, climbing vines and towering trees that thrive on little to no water. The free workshops cover everything from basic landscape design to plant identification, efficient watering and fertilization.

A lifelong green thumb and native of Canada, Gombkoto said she had trouble adjusting to California's dry climate. "In Canada, you didn't need planting mix, and the rain took care of irrigation," she said. "I spent a lot of money on plants until I learned tips from PWP's classes on growing in this climate. I was buying the wrong kinds, planting them too close together...Now I'm doing it right!"

"I never miss one of PWP's programs... They're always very informative and every time I learn something new." – PWP customer Frances Gombkoto

And her yard is proof. Behind her house near Victory Park there are eight varieties of bougainvillea, colorful creeping lantana, rosemary, rockrose, lavender, red fountain grass and potato vines climbing along the patio. She planted California native western redbud trees, earning rebates through PWP's Cool Trees Program, and discovered that usually temperamental camellias don't need much water when they're mature. She cut back dramatically on watering and uses the compost bin she picked up from PWP to create water-trapping mulch for her flowerbeds. Her water bills, as a result, are much lower.

"I never miss one of PWP's programs," said Gombkoto, who swears by her newfound knowledge. "They're always very informative and every time I learn something new. I believe in water-saving, and I wish everybody would."

PWP's 2004 water-saving garden series kicks off Feb. 7 and 11 and March 6 and 16 with classes held at Eaton Canyon Nature Center on Saturdays and at La Casita del Arroyo on Wednesdays. Classes continue through September. Call PWP's AnswerLine at 744-6970 for details and to reserve a spot.



Faster Water Testing

PASADENA WATER AND POWER'S WATER QUALITY LAB used to wait up to a month for water test results, paying a premium and carefully shipping samples to a contract laboratory in Tustin. But with new state certification, the lab has fired up a state-of-the-art gas chromatograph/mass spectrometer (GC/MS) for same-day results, giving us much tighter control over water quality.

To keep your drinking water safe, the lab regularly checks for more than 170 contaminants to make sure Pasadena's water continually meets state and federal standards. This includes testing for inorganic and organic chemicals, chlorine and chloramine residuals, minerals and bacteria. Testing is done daily, with samples drawn from wells and reservoirs throughout the city.

With its new certification, the lab can now use its \$100,000 GC/MS to test for chemicals from industrial processes, petroleum production, gas stations and urban runoff. The tabletop machine, which separates chemical mixtures and identifies components at a molecular level, is one of the most accurate tools available.

The GC/MS will save \$66,000 a year by eliminating the need for some outside testing, meaning the new machine will pay for itself within two years. But best of all, the technology will speed up the early detection and correction of any problems. Let's drink to that!



Cleaning Up Our Water Wells

DURING THE 1940s AND 1950s, when Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) was the site for testing some of the first rockets, the Army used seepage pits to dispose of chemical waste. NASA shut down seepage pits when it took over the 176-acre site in 1958 and started sending waste for proper disposal; but perchlorate and other volatile organic compounds are still on-site and in surrounding groundwater. Because of the contamination, PWP shut down nearby wells some time ago.

During a public meeting co-hosted by the PWP and NASA, you can learn about NASA's plans to clean up these contaminants using state-of-the-art technologies. The meeting is set for Wednesday, Jan. 28, at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium at John Muir High School, 1905 N. Lincoln Ave.

You can view NASA's groundwater clean-up plans at Pasadena Central Library or online at www.PWPweb.com, where you'll also find a full report on Pasadena's water quality (click on Your Water for both); or call the PWP AnswerLine at 744-6970.



Seismic Study On Tap for City Reservoirs

PWP'S WATER SYSTEM HAS 16 RESERVOIRS that can store up to 110 million gallons of treated water – enough to serve all of Pasadena for about four and a half days. But what if we're hit with a devastating earthquake?

As part of PWP's 18-year, \$234 million Water System Master Plan launched last April, PWP is hiring seismic experts to study these storage facilities. They will examine 10 of our reservoirs, built between 1888 and 1958, to determine their compliance with current earthquake codes. They'll also provide leakage testing, structural analysis, geotechnical reports and general engineering, recommending and watching over needed improvements.

At the same time, they'll determine whether PWP should increase the capacity of the Annandale, Eagle Rock and Lida reservoirs, and/or build a new 3.5-million-gallon reservoir on the east side of town. All of this will help preserve our supply during disasters, shortages and future growth, keeping the water flowing throughout Pasadena.

The master plan calls for improvements to pipelines, wells and reservoirs citywide to bring our water delivery system into top shape.



Etcetera... Etcetera



The next 12-week Citizen Police Academy will begin in February. If you have Thursdays free from 6 to 9:30 p.m. and want to learn more about police communications, street crime enforcement, field investigations and more, call 744-4551 for an application.



Adventure treks? Writers' camp? Plan some fun for your kids at the Summer Opportunities Fair Saturday, Feb. 7, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Westridge School, 324 Madeline Dr. www.westridge.org/community/sof.html or 799-1153.



Treat your kids to the classic "Peter and the Wolf" during The Pasadena Symphony's free Musical Circus for children under 10 Saturday, Feb. 14, 8:30 to 10 a.m. at Pasadena Civic Auditorium. www.pasadenasympphony.org or 793-7172.




Get the the low-income tax credits you deserve! Get free help from Feb. 17 to Apr. 15 at Jackie Robinson Center (744-7300) or Villa-Parke Community Center (744-6530). Appointments are required.





Pasadena's 22nd Annual Black History Parade will wind its way down Fair Oaks Avenue starting at Ventura Avenue at 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 21, ending with a family festival at Robinson Park from noon to 4 p.m. 744-7330.





If a barking dog is driving you batty, call the Pasadena Humane Society at 792-7151 or 792-1016, ext. 126. An officer will contact the owner directly and refer tough cases to city code enforcement officers.

 **Does the thought of the Pasadena city budget make your head spin?** Find a simple review at www.cityofpasadena.net/finance/budget.asp (click on Budget in Brief) or call 744-4301.

 **A gala dinner dance** Thursday, April 1, 6 p.m. at Westin Hotel, 191 N. Los Robles Ave., will help raise money for the Pasadena Police Activities League (PAL) for local youths. 191 N. Los Robles Ave. (818) 784-5560.

 **A phone survey and spring community forum** will kick off the update of the green space, recreation and conservation element of Pasadena's General Plan. Participate and give us your input! Look for more information in the next edition of *Pasadena In Focus*. 744-3758.

 **Smile – you're on red-light camera!** Run red lights at the intersections of Lake and Union or Marengo and Union and you'll have your picture taken and receive a \$341 fine, plus the Department of Motor Vehicles will be notified. 744-4194.

 **The Arroyo Singers need sopranos and altos.** Repertoire ranges from medieval chants to folk music. Rehearsals are Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. 798-5855.

Note: All dates and times listed in *Pasadena In Focus* are as of the publication date. Please call the numbers listed to confirm information. All phone numbers are in the (626) area code unless otherwise noted.



Noticias En Breve

Nuevos y Pintorescos Lugares de Recreación

El próximo mes se completará un proyecto que reemplazó los antiguos equipos de recreación en nueve parques municipales, lo que demoró seis meses y costó \$2 millones. Los pequeños podrán escalar un sinfín de juegos en los parques Brookside, Eaton Blanche, Hamilton, Singer, Sunnyslope, Victory, Villa y Washington.

El nuevo equipo incluye pintorescos laberintos, resbaladeros, torres y otros juegos con características novedosas. Otros siete parques que incluyen Allendale, Brenner, Grant, Jefferson, La Pintoresca, McDonald y San Rafael, han sido actualizados con el fin de asegurarse de que todos los juegos cumplan con los requisitos de seguridad. Además, se agregaron instalaciones como murallas decorativas, jardines, puentes, bancos, senderos y rampas pavimentadas.

Personal Municipal de Encarga de sus Deshechos

A partir del próximo mes, deberá llamar sólo a un teléfono – 744-4087 – para solicitar más recipientes de basura o de reciclaje, cambiar su tipo de servicio de recolección de basura, pedir que le recojan artículos grandes, etc. Estamos ahorrándonos al intermediario para proveerle un mejor servicio. (Servicio de reciclaje se le proporcionará a residencias particulares y a edificios pequeños de cuatro departamentos o menos.)

No habrá recargos ni cambios por el tipo ni cantidad de artículos de reciclaje que recojamos. Para mayores detalles, lea la tapa de su recipiente de reciclaje o el folleto sobre Información y

Programa de Reciclaje Anual 2003-2004 que se le envió por correo a todas las residencias particulares el mes pasado. El folleto también explica qué hacer con materiales de deshecho voluminosos o peligrosos. (Si no guardó su ejemplar, pase por la oficina localizada en el 233 W. Mountain St.)

La ley exige que usted no coloque productos contaminantes en sus recipientes de basura, además de sólo llenarlos hasta donde se pueda cerrar completamente la tapa.

Limpiando Suciedad Acumulada Durante Décadas

En las décadas de los años 1940 y 1950 cuando el 'Jet Propulsion Laboratory' (JPL) era un lugar de experimento para armamentos, el ejército de Estados Unidos utilizó pozos de filtración para eliminar desechos químicos. Cuando la NASA se puso a cargo del sitio de 176 acres en 1958, clausuró los pozos de filtración y comenzó a enviar los desechos a otros sitios para su disposición. Productos tales como perclorato y otros compuestos orgánicos volátiles quedan aún tanto en el sitio original como en el agua subterránea, por lo que debido a la contaminación, PWP tuvo que clausurar casi todos los pozos hace algún tiempo.

Durante una reunión comunitaria co-auspiciada por Pasadena Water & Power y NASA, puede usted enterarse sobre los planes que tiene NASA para eliminar estos contaminantes utilizando tecnologías ultra modernas. Habrá traducción al español disponible durante la reunión, que se celebrará el Miércoles 28 de Enero a las 7:30 p.m. en el auditorio del John Muir High School, 1905 Lincoln Ave. Para mayor información, llame a la Línea de Informaciones de PWP al 744-6970.

Etcétera

Obtenga los créditos impositivos que le corresponden! Se ofrecerá asesoría gratuita entre el 17 de Febrero y el 15 de Abril en el Centro Comunitario Villa Parke (744-6530) y en el Centro Jackie Robinson (744-7300). Necesita concertar una cita.



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Published by the
City of Pasadena Public Affairs Office
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