

City celebrates yet another successful Snoopy House

The 51st annual Snoopy House display ended with another successful year of bringing holiday cheer and joy to Costa Mesa residents and beyond.

The event, which ran from Dec. 14 through Dec. 23, drew about 8,000 total visitors to the display, which sits on the front lawn of City Hall. The provided hot apple cider and took 2,000 photos of children and families posing with Santa Claus.

There were eight performances by Newport-Mesa school groups and 12 non-profit youth groups sold treats raising \$3,000. And this year, a new facility called Brad's Bungalow was added to the display (pictured above) that allowed children to color and write letters to Santa Clause. The bungalow was informally named after longtime city employee Brad Long, who passed away near the Thanksgiving holiday and who was a huge Snoopy House fan. A total of 2,500 letters were written to St. Nick in the bungalow.

Snoopy house would not be possible without the hard work of the city's facilities and maintenance workers as well as the planning and dedication of Dan Baker, Jennifer Christ and McKenna Ewing from the City Manager's office. Special thanks to the four volunteer Santa Claus helpers who pitched in, which included Council Member John Stephens and city employees Andy Godinez, Tony Doderro and Dan Baker.

Costa Mesa residents can fill up sandbags at Fire Station No. 4

With inclement weather expected the City of Costa Mesa will provide residents with sand bags at Fire Station No. 4, located at 2300 Placentia Avenue.

It is a self-service location, and the number of sandbags is limited to 15 sandbags per household.

Maintenance Services staff will also be patrolling potential flooding spots to make sure catch basins are clear of debris and operational.

For more information on sandbags [click here](#).

Costa Mesa takes legal action against sober living operators and property owner

On Tuesday Jan. 2, the City of Costa Mesa filed legal action in Orange County Superior Court against the owner and operators of three large sober living homes operating in violation of the city's ordinances.

"We have enacted the strongest ordinances in the state to regulate sober living homes," Mayor Sandy Genis said. "We filed this legal action to compel compliance with our ordinances and to protect the residential character of our neighborhoods for the benefit of all Costa Mesa residents."

In the legal action, the city is asking the court for a preliminary and permanent injunction and nuisance abatement against the sober living operators, Morningside Recovery, LLC, True Recovery, Inc., the Discovery House, LLC. The complaint states that the operators failed to obtain a conditional use permit and didn't even apply for one.

The owner of the homes, Barry Saywitz Properties One, LP, Barry Saywitz Properties Two, LP and Barry Saywitz as an individual are also named in the complaint. The properties at issue are 1798 Pomona Ave., 2558 Orange Ave. and 2964 Peppertree Lane.

The Pomona Avenue property is being used as a group home consisting of 14-16 recovery beds. The Orange Avenue property is a group home consisting of four, two-story condominiums that house people recovering from alcohol and/or drug addiction, and the Peppertree Lane property is four two-story condominiums that also operates as a group home for people recovering from alcohol and/or drug addiction.

For more information on sober living issues in Costa Mesa and to learn more about the city's sober living ordinances click [here](#).

The city is requesting applications for Community Development Block Grants for

Fiscal Year 2018-2019

Notice is hereby given that the City of Costa Mesa anticipates receiving approximately \$900,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Fiscal Year 2018-2019.

The primary objective of the CDBG Program is “the development of viable urban communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low- and moderate-income.”

The scope of CDBG-eligible activities established by HUD ranges from public works improvements to housing rehabilitation and social service programs that primarily benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

Funding for social service programs is limited to 15% of the City’s total allocation for a given year. An estimated \$135,000 may be available for public service grant funding. At this time, the City is accepting applications from interested, tax-exempt nonprofit organizations that provide CDBG-eligible services that benefit low- and moderate-income Costa Mesa residents.

Organizations that want to apply for funding for a particular program may view the application and related instructions on the City’s website – www.costamesaca.gov (follow the “City Hall/City Departments” links to Development Services – Housing and Community Development – Links).

The actual application can be obtained by contacting Mike Linares at mike.linares@costamesaca.gov.

Applications will be available beginning December 18, 2017. **Applications must be submitted to the City of Costa Mesa Housing and Community Development by 3 PM, Thursday, January**

18, 2018. Late applications will not be accepted.

Questions regarding this notice should be directed to Mike Linares, CDBG/HOME Coordinator, at mike.linares@costamesaca.gov.

Interim finance director Steve Dunivent departs after four years with city

After four years with the City of Costa Mesa, Interim Finance Director Steve Dunivent is set to retire at the end of December.

“I love working with Steve Dunivent,” City Manager Tom Hatch said. “He approaches issues as a strong professional but with a unique way of calming any discussions. He will be missed.”

Dunivent began his career in 2013 during a transitional phase, which was expected to last for four months and lasted four years.

During that time, he helped achieve several key milestones, including securing a AA-plus bond rating from Standard & Poors for the Lions Park Projects bond sales, a five-year financial plan and several awards for the city’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Review.

Originally from Wisconsin, Dunivent grew up in Illinois where he received his bachelor’s degree in accounting before beginning his finance career in California. He spent 35 years

with the County or Orange before retiring as Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

“My biggest accomplishment is the ability to be trusted by my boss or my bosses and having a positive influence on the people I work with.” Dunivent said. Part of his accomplishments stem from his influences from his family, people from the Bible and pastors.

“My mantra is what would Steve do or say, before I do whatever I do, and it has made me a better person,” Finance Executive Secretary Kathy Ulrich said.

Dunivent has left an indelible mark on the City of Costa Mesa. His colleagues at City Hall agree that he leads with humility and works with relentless drive and in result has provided a great service to the city.

Once retired Dunivent plans to dedicate his attention towards two personal projects and catch up on some reading.

“It’s time,” Dunivent said.

Presidio Square gets update by Public Services staff

Public Services Maintenance staff completed improvements to Presidio Square.

The goal of this project is to deter vehicle traffic from entering the wrong way or parking in the no parking, red curb area.

The delineation will better define the driving lane and

increase safety for pedestrian traffic walking to Davis Elementary School and TeWinkle Park as Presidio Square is used predominantly as a drop off area by school busses and parents for the surrounding schools.

City launches new website to make Costa Mesa's budget more user friendly

The City of Costa Mesa has launched a new interactive website called Open Budget Costa Mesa that will provide residents and city staff with financial data that is easily accessible and understandable.

[Click here to access Open Budget Costa Mesa.](#)

Rather than wading through hundreds of pages of scanned legal and financial documents, residents and city staff can now see financial data contextualized in charts, graphs, and visualizations that are attractive, navigable, and easy to understand. The information is available at various levels of detail and updated monthly.

"We are happy to provide the residents of Costa Mesa with this on-line tool that will make our city budget more user friendly," Mayor Sandy Genis said. "Residents can now create their own charts, graphs and spreadsheets to pursue their own budget research and interests and do it during a set time frame."

[Click here for a video tutorial on how to use this new tool.](#)

To launch the new site, the City of Costa Mesa's Finance and

Information Technology department's partnered with Socrata, the leader in making existing government data discoverable, usable, and actionable for public servants and the people they serve.

New JWA tracking site added to city webpage

The city of Costa Mesa has now added a John Wayne Airport flight tracking system to the Airport Noise and Concerns page on the city's main website.

That page can be seen here.

By viewing the flight tracker, website viewers can track arriving and departing flights by airline, altitude, destination and more.

[Click here to see the tracking system.](#)

City officials will continue to monitor issues regarding aircraft noise and increasing traffic reported by residents and will continue to be engaged at the regional level to advocate for protecting Costa Mesa.

City staff looking for a new

Land Management System

On Nov. 22 the city released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a new Land Management System software program.

The city's Land Management System rests at the core of all data related to building permits, entitlements, code enforcement cases and general plan zoning, and specific plan amendment applications and more.

The Land Management System is used every day to enter, retrieve, or update thousands of records. The city's current system is old and in need of replacement, so a project management consulting team has been retained to guide the city through the selection of a new system.

To ensure its broadest use and functionality, a stakeholder group spanning all city departments conducted workshops with the project management consultants to develop a project scope to meet the disparate needs of multiple city departments.

The RFP is open until Jan. 3, 2018. Staff provided a longer window than normal for applicants to respond due to the holiday season. Release of the RFP represents a major step forward in the update of this critical information system. Goals for the new software system include greater connectivity, enhanced analytical abilities, and easier data entry and retrieval.

This process will continue to require time and attention throughout the city, however, the update is critical and will allow city staff to better serve the public through speed, efficiencies and advanced technologies, and the city will have the flexibility to add increased functionality in the future. Stay tuned for more updates in this exciting process.

I-405 Improvement Project creates interactive map

OCTA launched a fully interactive, mobile-friendly resource for the I-405 Improvement Project.

[Click here to view this map.](#)

Users can click on a location to see when construction is anticipated to start and find details on any current pre-construction activities planned in the area. The newly launched map currently features preliminary construction activities that are happening now.

When construction officially commences in early 2018, users can explore the project area in real time, view both planned improvements and current construction activities for each bridge, as well as, updated closure and detour information.

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Residents respond with kindness and lots of

donations for Marine families Toy Drive

Gifts are flooding in for the 1/5 Marines Toy drive. Volunteers have collected well over four boxes full with plenty of time still left to contribute.

The city of Costa Mesa and the Costa Mesa Military Affairs Team are currently seeking donations of new, unwrapped toys for the children of the city's adopted 1st Battalion 5th Marine Regiment.

The collected toys will be given to the children at the Marine unit's annual Christmas Carnival held at Camp Pendleton.

Donations can be dropped off at City Hall in the foot locker located in the first floor lobby until Friday, Dec. 8, 2017.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Communications Officer Ann Barrett presented with City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Tom Hatch named Communications Officer Ann Barrett as the recipient of his monthly Leadership Award at the employee Meet and Greet Thursday Dec. 7 at City Hall.

"Ann is known for her exemplary work ethic, commitment to service and professionalism as well as her dedication to the development of new communication officer trainees," City

Manager Hatch said. "She is viewed as a leader within the Telecommunications Unit and her co-workers rely on her knowledge and experience daily."

Barrett began her career with the City of Costa Mesa in February of 2010, when she was hired as a communications officer. Prior to that she had worked the year before as a part time communications officer for the city of Downey.

But her experience in the field goes back even further. She originally began her career as a dispatcher in 1981 with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. She worked there for eight years and in 1989 left that job to raise her children.

During her seven years with the city, she has diligently applied herself to expanding her knowledge with the aim of providing the highest level of service to the public safety profession and the community. Regardless of the task assigned, Barrett approaches it with a very positive attitude.

In August of 2013, Barrett earned the title of communications training officer. This position is critical to the training of new employees.

Her experience in dispatch also helped police officers and detectives recently to solve what at first seemed like a call from an assault victim, but it was later discovered that the alleged victim had instead been involved in a homicide.

In addition to honoring Barrett, City Manager Hatch congratulated several new employees or newly promoted employees as well as four employees who are retiring. He also had a special recognition for outgoing Interim Finance Director Steve Dunivent, who is leaving the city at the end of December.

The new employees include Ellen Medalle, a new human resources analyst and from Economic and Development Services new hires include Ryan Bohr, building inspector, Courtney Harvey office

specialist II, Sheila Larson, building technician, Kim Martinez intern and Aaron Thompson combination building inspector.

In the Parks & Community Services Department the new hires include Caitlin Knight recreation leader II, Amanda Mansfield recreation leader III, George Mosqueda recreation leader III and Vanessa Romero instructor guard.

Police Department new hires include Sarah Davila, crime scene specialist, Danielle Whitehead police records technician and Oscar Nichols police aide and in the Public Services Department Elliot Huang assistant engineer was welcomed.

The newly promoted employees are Ameerah Ghaznavi management aide in the City Manager's Office, Jon Neal who has been promoted to assistant fire marshall, longtime employee Mike Tucker who moved from Code Enforcement to Parks and Community Services as a new management analyst and Catherine Pimentel, who was promoted as a new community service specialist for the Police Department.

Those honored for their retirements included Fire Captain Lenny Goodsir, who started his career in 1985 as a fire prevention intern, Ronald Penley who spent 28 years with the city as an equipment mechanic, Jody Gonzalez a police training assistant who started with Costa Mesa in 1987 and Liz Wright, a senior records technician who began her Costa Mesa career in 2004.

And finally, City Manager Hatch thanked Steve Dunivent for his four years of dedicated service to Costa Mesa. Dunivent took on the role of interim finance director in 2013 after retiring from the County of Orange, where he had a distinguished 30-year career.