

views

FALL 2005

PLANS, PROGRESS AND PEOPLE



YUCCA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Chad Mayes, Mayor

Paul Cook, Mayor Pro Tem

Bob Leone, Councilmember

Frank Luckino, Councilmember

Bill Neeb, Councilmember

Andy Takata, Town Manager



Town Council/Town Hall 369-7207

Parks & Recreation 369-7211

Code Compliance 369-6575

Animal Control 369-7207

Streets/Public Works 369-6579

Hi-Desert Nature Museum 369-7212

Building & Safety 365-0099



Hi-Desert Water District 365-8333

Yucca Valley Fire District 365-3335

Web Site www.yucca-valley.org



First Solar Energy Project

The Town recently completed its first solar energy project with the installation of 324 solar panels on the south facing roof of the Town Hall and Library building. The project included re-roofing the building and placement of the solar panels. The panels, covering an expanse of nearly 5,000 square feet, will collect and store energy to help meet the needs of the Community Center complex.

The project was partially funded through a \$250,000 Department of Energy grant. To meet the local matching funds requirement, the Town secured a \$120,000 low interest loan from the California Energy Commission and was awarded a \$137,000 Southern California Edison solar generation incentive grant. The Town's total general fund investment for the project is approximately \$20,000.

The 55 kW photovoltaic system will provide approximately one-third of the total



PERRY EATON & BOB DUNN

electrical demand for the Community Center, Library, Town Hall and Museum. The approximate one-third savings in energy expense will cover the cost of the initial investment in 12 to 14 years.

The solar panels, also called PV modules, are environmentally sealed collections of photovoltaic cells that convert sunlight to electricity. The system only operates when the sun is shining and the electrical utility system is operating. The electricity that is generated flows to the Southern California Edison system.

A kiosk with a computer monitor is being installed in the Library as part of the data

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Motorcycle Patrol Coming to YV

Yucca Valley's police force is about to add a new dimension – the Town's traffic officer will soon be seen patrolling on the department's new Honda ST1300 Police Model motorcycle. The new vehicle, consistent with the Sheriff's department standard type, is expected to be added to the fleet in the latter part of November.

Captain Jim Williams, Yucca Valley's chief of police, cited the successful use of motorcycle patrols in other contract cities when making the recommendation to the Town Council to add motorcycle enforcement in Yucca Valley. With the increased traffic flow in town, the motorcycle officer will have more maneuverability to improve the overall traffic safety in town.

Deputy Ray Camacho has been tabbed as the new traffic officer. His preparation for the assignment includes completion of the motorcycle training course at the Sheriff Department's training center in Glen Helen. After the motorcycle is delivered and outfitted with proper police equipment, Deputy Camacho will have the option of using it for traffic enforcement. No increase in patrol is planned at this time, just the inclusion of the motorcycle as an additional resource.

The anticipated annual cost for the motorcycle, including fuel, maintenance, insurance and replacement, is \$10,351. Funding is provided through the Town's contract for police services with the County of San Bernardino. Yucca Valley's law enforcement budget for fiscal year 2005-06 is \$2.4 million, approximately 30% of the Town's general fund budget.

SPOTLIGHT

Purchasing and Benefits Technician

Jeanne Knuckles



Jeanne Knuckles, the Town's 2004-05 Employee of the Year, works at Town Hall as the Purchasing and Benefits Technician. Her job entails processing payroll, monitoring employee benefits, and assisting with personnel matters. She has been employed at the Town of Yucca Valley since February, 2004.

Her professional background includes 25 years of accounting-related experience in the private and public sectors. She is currently pursuing an Associate of Arts degree in Business at Copper Mountain College. Jeanne's academic goal is to earn her Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration at the Palm Desert campus of California State University, San Bernardino.

At work, Jeanne believes in a positive attitude, teamwork and embracing change. "Attitude makes a big difference in every aspect of life," she says, adding that "new things don't scare me; change is usually for the

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Commercial Projects Update

As Yucca Valley continues to experience a surge in residential construction, the simultaneous commercial development will help to ensure sufficient funding to provide services for the increased local population. The enhanced commercial activity typically generates the additional tax revenue to meet the higher demand for public services.

A quick drive through town will show a healthy pace of commercial construction activity. Among the new additions is the Morrison/Heard Professional building nearing completion on the outer highway north between SR 247 and Airway Avenue.

Applebee's restaurant, on SR 62 near Hilton, is also planning a Fall completion. On the other side of the highway, the new Phelps auto dealership is hoping to be

open for business in early 2006.

Several other Yucca Valley projects are currently in various stages of planning. The Super Wal Mart is in the process of conducting a study of the environmental effects of their proposed project at SR62 and Avalon Avenue.

Home Depot is planning an early 2007 opening of their local store just east of the Super Wal Mart location. Plans are also in the works to remodel the old K-Mart building and create a mall of retail and medical offices. And completion of the new small animal hospital next to Fire Station 121 is expected to be in December of this year.

Although a conditional use permit has been approved for a new In-N-Out Burger, the Town's planning staff estimates a three-year wait because of the corporation's policy of processing their construction projects in cycles.

A 3-story, seventy unit motel is being planned for property on the south side of SR62 near Palm Avenue.

Swimming Pool Repair Project Slated

In the fall of 2004, the Town of Yucca Valley penned an agreement with the Morongo Unified School District whereby the Town would assume responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the Yucca Valley High School swimming pool. The district had indicated an inability to continue allocating funds to the pool.

The Town's recreation division uses the pool to conduct summer swim lessons, recreational programs and special events. Additionally, the pool is the home facility for the Hi-Desert Aquatics "Sandsharks" swim team.

In recent years, the deteriorating condition of the plaster inside the pool shell has been a concern to the Town and the County Department of Environmental Health. As a result, the Town Council has identified funding for a project to re-plaster and make other necessary repairs to the 40-year-old pool. Community Development Block Grant funds have been allocated by the Town (\$87,850) and the County of San Bernardino (\$42,000). The County will also provide

additional funding (\$87,500) through the HOME grant program.

The Town's engineering staff has worked with industry professionals to develop the specifications for the work. The project is anticipated to go to bid in November, and barring any unforeseen problems, should be completed in time for the beginning of the Sandsharks practice season in February, 2006.

Seniors Invited To Lunch

The County of San Bernardino has contracted with Family Service Association to take over the Nutrition for Seniors program, beginning in October 2005. The program serves nutritious lunches Monday through Friday to those ages 60 and over.

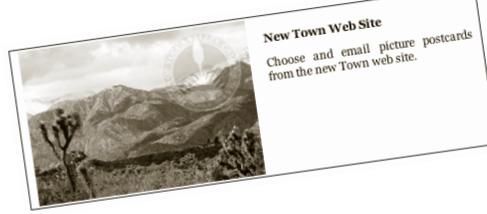
All seniors are welcome to have lunch and socialize with friends at the center, located in the Community Center complex. Lunches are served beginning at 12:00 noon, but attendees are advised to arrive a little bit earlier. The suggested donation for lunch is \$2.00. Guests under 60 are charged \$5.00.

Interested seniors are welcome to participate in the Senior Site Council meetings on the first Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m.

New Town Web Site Launched

Visitors to the Town of Yucca Valley's new web site will find several new features and ways to access up-to-date information about local services, projects and programs.

The Town's site was recently re-designed and expanded and now includes several new features, including an Action Center for quickly communicating issues such as potholes or barking dogs to the appropriate Town office. Residents can readily access minutes and



agendas of Council and Commission meetings, useful area and neighborhood maps, dozens of time-saving downloadable forms, and handy links to other organizations and agencies.

In addition to the many pages of local government information, the new web site is also a source for local weather forecasts and a calendar of upcoming Town and community events.

Announcements of current job openings, applications for renting facilities, and on-line registration for recreation and museum activities are all available on the site.

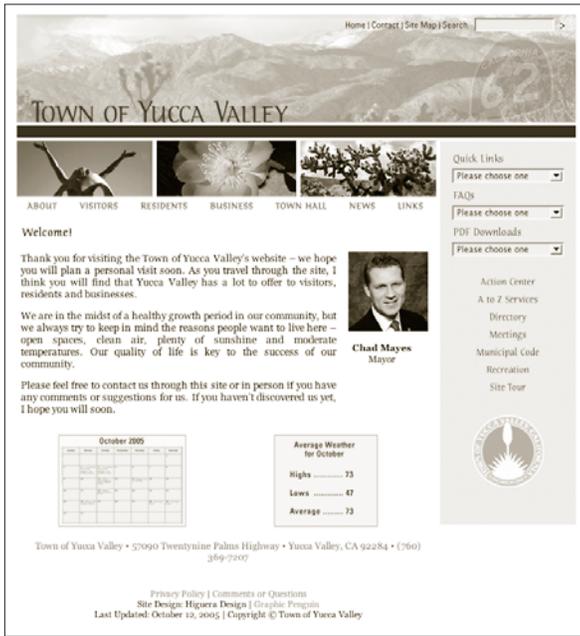
Visitors can also send e-postcards through the site, or choose and install Yucca Valley wallpaper for their computer desktop.

Future plans for the site include more interactive capabilities, such as on-line business registration.

Residents are encouraged to peruse the web site and to provide comments and suggestions to Town staff.

www.yucca-valley.org

www.townofyuccavalley.com



Town Hands Over Operations of Welcome Center

Now in its fourth year of operation, the Morongo Basin's California Welcome Center is under new management. The Town of Yucca Valley transferred operational responsibilities for the center to the Desert Regional Tourism Agency on July 1st of this year.

The Welcome Center is one of eleven such facilities networked throughout California to attract national and international visitors in cooperation with the State Division of Tourism. In 2002, the Town of Yucca Valley took the

lead in developing the center on behalf of stakeholder agencies throughout the Morongo Basin. In fiscal year 2004-05, an average of 2000 travelers visited the facility each month.

From the start, the Town Council's intention was to operate the center until a suitable successor agency was identified to assume responsibility on behalf of the stakeholder organizations. The Desert Regional Tourism Agency was spawned through the efforts of the Basin Wide Foundation.

The California Welcome Center, located at 56711 Twentynine Palms Highway, is open 7 days a week to provide travel assistance and travel information to residents and visitors.



Local Sales Tax Revenues Up

A lively local economy over the past year has improved the revenue picture for the Town of Yucca Valley. The Town realized more sales tax revenue in fiscal year 2004-2005 than originally projected. The estimated \$2.5 million budget estimate was exceeded by \$250,000 for the period ending June 30, 2005.

Of each taxable dollar spent by consumers in Yucca Valley, the Town receives one cent of the tax collected. The sales tax is a significant factor in providing funds for law enforcement, parks, animal control, planning and other local services. Sales tax for the current fiscal year is projected at \$2.9 million, or about 35% of the Town's \$8.4 million general fund budget.

Local History Exhibit

Want to become an instant expert on local history? The Hi-Desert Nature Museum is currently featuring a fascinating exhibit developed in concert with the Morongo Basin Historical Society. The "Morongo Basin: Taking the Past to the Future" exhibit vividly recounts the history of many of the basin's landmarks. Yucca Valley is represented with photos and text about the Water

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First Solar Energy Project

acquisition system. Residents and visitors can view the monitoring of the system during Library hours.

A second solar project, a new shade shelter at the Community Development/Public Works building that will support a 35 kW photovoltaic system, is being planned by the Town.

The Town Hall project was completed by Emcor Energy Services, with Hi-Desert Roofing hired as a subcontractor to replace the roof.

Spotlight: Continued from Page 2

Jeanne Knuckles

better." Her positive outlook has helped her learn new skills and meet special challenges during her tenure with the Town.

When not working or studying, Jeanne enjoys spending time with her boyfriend, dancing, reading, walking and singing. She often shares her singing talents at church and other functions.

In June, Jeanne was selected as the Town of Yucca Valley's Employee of the Year and was recognized as such by the Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce.

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Local History Exhibit

Canyon Coffee Co. building, Warren's Well, the historic schoolhouse building and the museum itself.

Longtime basin residents will enjoy seeing the east end landmarks such as the Twentynine Palms Inn, the Historic Plaza, the Old Schoolhouse Museum and Roughly Manor. Some of the other locations featured include the Institute of Mentalphysics, Pioneertown, Giant Rock, and the Big Morongo Canyon Barn.

The exhibit is featured through December 3rd. Video presentations accompany some of the displays and a visitor map of the featured locations is available. The museum, open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m., is located in the Community Center complex.

Public Meetings

THE TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY

Town Council
Second & Fourth Thursdays
6:00 PM Community Center

Planning Commission
First & Third Tuesdays
7:00 PM Community Center

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Commission
Second Tuesday
7:00 PM Community Center

Youth Commission
First & Third Mondays Oct – June
6:30 PM Community Center

Sports Council
Second Monday Mar/June/Sept/Dec
6:30 PM Community Center

Citizens Patrol
First Tuesday
6:00 PM Community Center

Public Arts Advisory Committee
Call for meeting date
369-7211 Community Center

www.townofyuccavalley.com
www.yucca-valley.org

New web site:



57090 Twentynine Palms Highway
Yucca Valley, CA 92284

