

OXNARD NEWS IN BRIEF



EMERGENCY RESPONSE

City crews provide emergency response during February storm



A storm passed through Ventura County Feb. 16-20, bringing 40-60 mph winds and heavy rain. Oxnard received more than 5 inches of rainfall during the 24-hour period from Friday through Saturday when the storm was the most powerful.

City of Oxnard crews worked around the clock to ensure residents' safety through tasks that included:

- clearing damaged trees, branches and palm fronds
- draining water from flooded areas and neighborhoods
- providing sandbags for residents and businesses
- repairing traffic signals and providing traffic control
- filling potholes caused by heavy rainfall

SPECIAL CEREMONIES

Community celebrates upcoming enhancements for Southwinds Park



Mayor Flynn, Councilmembers Ramirez, MacDonald and Perello, City Manager Nyhoff and Police Chief Whitney pose with local children and community members, including Southwinds community activist Celeste Gamino

On Thursday, Feb. 16, 2017, children, parents and friends joined City of Oxnard officials and staff for a special groundbreaking ceremony in celebration of upcoming improvements at Southwinds Park, 455 W. Clara St. Click [here](#) to view the event photos. Stay tuned for the video of the ceremony.

The \$1.1 million enhancements are funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program. The improvements are anticipated to be complete in fall 2017 and include:

- replacing the existing play areas
- resurfacing the jogging path
- renovating the restrooms, exercise stations and barbecue areas
- replacing the existing baseball field with a new lawn area
- adding new fencing and bollards

"It's so important that people have open space," said Mayor Tim Flynn. "This is what allows people to breathe; this is what allows families to come together; and this is what allows people, after a hard day of work, to come together and just recreate and relax and say, 'Wow. Thank God we have this beautiful park right here in the middle of our neighborhood,'" Flynn continued.

The Southwinds Improvements Project was initiated in response to residents who voiced their concerns to the Oxnard City Council regarding quality of life issues in their neighborhood, specifically at their neighborhood park.

Quality of life is one of the City Council's four strategic priorities, and parks have a direct impact on quality of life. Oxnard residents, the city council and staff worked together to move forward with the project.

During the ceremony, City Manager Greg Nyhoff thanked the City Council, City staff and Southwinds community member Celeste Gamino who have been actively involved with the project. "I am so honored and proud to be your city manager, for all of you who have come together to make this a safer place for this community," said Nyhoff.

"I hope this is a beginning for south Oxnard for safety and empowerment for our community," said Celeste Gamino who went on to explain that she and two other community members began surveying other Southwinds residents to share their concerns with the City of Oxnard. As an immigrant from Mexico, Gamino said she wanted to give a voice to other immigrants who may be afraid to report park issues.

Recipients of Cowboys, Jones family grants announced



Four local organizations received a \$2,500 grant during the Feb. 7, 2017 City Council meeting, thanks to a generous \$10,000 donation by the Gene and Gerry Jones Foundation/Dallas Cowboys.

1. Acuna Gallery and Cultural Center (Café on A): This organization has provided world-class arts and cultural concerts, shows, forums, classes and entertainment to the greater Oxnard community. The organization has also helped 2,000 youth enroll in college. More than 200 active volunteers are involved with the organization to help support community service workshops and cultural events.
2. The Childrens Wall of Tears: This group holds an annual "Celebrating Childrens Day" that has resulted in hundreds of organizations distributing valuable resources to residents. The organization also has other programs that result in books, pillows and other items being distributed to children in need.

3. El Rio Fastpitch: This nonprofit softball league enhances the lives of girls ages 4-14 throughout Oxnard. The program creates a structured environment and an atmosphere of teamwork while emphasizing positive self-esteem, pride and community involvement.
4. The Oxnard Music Advocacy Group: This local group is dedicated to bringing quality music education to every child in the Oxnard School District.

The Jones family provides the generous donation for disbursement to a local nonprofit organization(s) as a token of appreciation to the community for welcoming the Dallas Cowboys, America's team, to Oxnard for the popular Cowboys summer training camp where tens of thousands of fans from Oxnard and around the nation flock to get a glimpse of the players in action.

Dr. Irene Pinkard honored during Black History Month ceremony



The Oxnard City Council honored Dr. Irene Pinkard at the Feb. 7 City Council meeting for her many achievements and contributions to the local community. Click [here](#) to view the video.

Upon accepting the proclamation, Pinkard explained that she works with many different people and organizations to serve the community. She was accompanied by Rev. Dr. Clyde W. Oden Jr. of Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church; Julia Dixon of Pinkard Youth Institute; Don Montgomery and Vincent Stewart of the Black American Political Association of California; as well as a host of other local organizations that came to support her including the NAACP Ventura County Chapter.

"We are here as a unit and I wanted everyone know that not just one person represents the black community," said Pinkard. "We all work tougher for our community, and everything we do helps every youngster in Ventura County. We may be working for the enrichment of African-American youth, but if we do anything for any youth, that helps every youth," she said.

Dr. Pinkard has resided in Ventura County for more than 20 years. An educator and leader, she holds the distinction of being the first African-American woman to be elected to the Oxnard City Council. She was also the first African-American woman to serve as vice president of administrative services/business in the state of California and at both Ventura and Oxnard colleges. Click [here](#) to read more about Dr. Pinkard's accomplishments.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Meet Up, Clean Up at Lemonwood Park Feb. 25, 2017

Community members and local organizations are encouraged to participate in the next Meet Up, Clean Up beautification event from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 25 at Lemonwood Park, 2055 San Mateo Place. Volunteers should meet at the park for registration at 8 a.m. Lunch will be provided. Call (805) 572-5907 to RSVP.

The Meet Up, Clean Up program is designed to bring together community members and local organizations who work alongside City staff to improve Oxnard's quality of life through monthly beautification projects. The program allows participants to forge a relationship with each other and with City of Oxnard staff while gaining a sense of pride in their public spaces.



Meet Up, Clean Up is spearheaded by the Recreation Division of the Cultural and Community Services Department, with support from neighborhood councils, local organizations and employees from several City departments.

Free tax preparation assistance at Wilson Senior Center and South Oxnard Senior Center

Volunteers with AARP Foundation Tax-Aide will be at both the Wilson Senior Center and the South Oxnard Senior Center to offer free, individualized tax preparation for low-to-moderate income taxpayers, including seniors 50 and older.

The service will be available at the Wilson Senior Center, 350 N. C St., from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Wednesday through April 12. The service is also available at the South Oxnard Senior Center, 200 E. Bard Rd., from 1-5:30 p.m. every Wednesday through April 12 and from 1-5:30 p.m. on Thursdays through April 13.

Appointments are required. Call (805) 385-8019 to reserve your spot. Click [here](#) to view a list of documents required for your appointment.

Save the date: Disaster preparedness training March 18, 2017

Take control of your safety by earning a certificate at the City's free Disaster Preparedness Training Academy from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, March 18 at the Oxnard Performing Arts and Convention Center, 800 Hobson Way. Click [here](#) to register today!



Take a series of workshops to receive training in first aid, fire suppression and extinguisher use, search and rescue as well as disaster preparedness. Certificates will be given to those who complete four workshops. The workshops will be offered in English and Spanish.

Participants will have the chance to learn about the tsunami threat along Oxnard's coast and review the evacuation plans that are currently being updated. Attendees can

also participate in an optional workshop to provide input on evacuation plans.

EVENTS

Join us at South Oxnard Branch Library for Black History Month activity Feb. 22

3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb 22, South Oxnard Branch Library, 4300 Saviers Rd.: Honor Black History Month by helping to create a friendship quilt celebrating the diversity of our community.

Community Concerts Association presents: The Kat Trio Feb. 22, 2017

Starting at 7:30 p.m., The Kat Trio will showcase unique Russian arrangements and transpositions of timeless melodies and feature classical works, well-known inspirational songs and even American pop standards, including Scott Joplin's rags.

The Kat Trio has a knack for combining a high level of classical musicianship with pure fun. Click [here](#) for tickets.



New West Symphony presents: The Four Seasons Feb. 24

Conductor Joshua Gersen and violinist Anne Akiko Meyers will perform the following masterpieces starting at 8 p.m.:

- Ravel: Le tombeau de Couperin
- Vivaldi: The Four Seasons for Violin & Orchestra, Opus 8, Nos. 1 - 4
- Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G Minor, K. 550

Click [here](#) for tickets.

Tickets on sale for "Comedy for a Cause" event at Levity Live Feb. 28, 2017

The Oxnard Police Department's DRAGG (Drag Racing Against Gangs and Graffiti) After School Automotive Program invites the community to head to Levity Live on Tuesday, Feb. 28 for a night of comedy, while supporting youth in our community through the DRAGG program.

The show will begin at 8 p.m. and features headliner Darren Carter. Click [here](#) to purchase \$20 tickets online. All proceeds will go directly to the program serving high school students within our community. Must be 21 or older to attend the performance.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the DRAGG program.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Oxnard Fire Department, local partners host behavioral health symposium



On Feb. 10, the Oxnard Fire Department partnered with the Oxnard Firefighters Foundation and the California Lutheran University Psychology Department to host a one-day symposium focused on Fire Service behavioral health issues.

The Oxnard Fire Department has partnered with Cal Lutheran University for the last two years to provide support to fire personnel through the university's

Community Counseling Services, which offers low-fee counseling services here in Oxnard.

More than 70 people attended the event, which was a great venue for fire service personnel to network with clinicians on how to tackle a diverse range of behavioral health issues facing first responders including PTSD, suicide and substance abuse.

The event featured nationally renowned speakers:

- Frank Leto, captain and deputy director of the counseling services unit of the Fire Department of the City of New York and 9/11 responder
- Dan DeGryse, battalion chief with the Chicago Fire Department and director of the Rosecrance Florian Program
- Suzy Gulliver, director and chief of the Warriors Institute and professor with Texas A&M University
- Marc Kruse, clinical psychologist with the Austin Fire Department

Behavioral health issues in the fire service have become a huge problem. In 2015 for the first time in this nation's history, firefighter suicides eclipsed firefighter Line of Duty Deaths. It is now estimated that 20 percent of all fire service personnel have post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). If left untreated, PTSD can lead to effects such as depression, substance abuse, divorce and suicide to name a few.