

Inside City Hall

Beyond the headlines

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GANG SUMMIT REGISTRATION OVER 400:

With 280 registered on-line and more than half of the 300 scholarships allocated, registration for the Dec. 6 Gang Summit stands at more than 400. The City of Visalia and Tulare County team up to present a Gang Summit titled “Step Up to Solutions”, which will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Visalia Convention Center. Keynote speaker will be Paul Seave, recently appointed by Gov. Schwarzenegger as the State’s Director over Gang and Youth Violence Policy. Co-sponsors include the Cities of Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, Porterville, Tulare and Woodlake, the Tulare County Office of Education, Chambers of Commerce, and Associations of Churches. Tickets are \$25 per person, and are available on-line at www.stepuptc.com. Click on the “Register Today” link to go to the online registration form. Deadline to register is Nov. 30.



BUILDING PERMITS THIRD-HIGHEST IN CITY’S HISTORY: With a little more than a month left in 2007, Visalia should issue around 950 new-home permits this year compared to 1,135 last year. While numbers are expected to continue to drop, City Manager Steve Salomon paints a brighter picture. Last year, Visalia issued building permits totaling \$436 million in new construction and additions. This year, Salomon estimates the city should reach \$381 million or more, making it overall the third-highest year in the city’s history. Strength in commercial construction is partially offsetting the fall in new-home permits. Commercial construction so far this year amounts to \$73 million, just shy of last year’s \$79.9 million in the category. But with two months to go and two major retailers expected to come to the counter for their building permits, Salomon expects a record year for commercial.



CITY COACH SEES HIGHEST RIDERSHIP INCREASE EVER: Visalia City Coach experienced its highest ridership ever in October—over 136,000 riders. This translated to an increase of 12% over October, 2006. “As always, we encourage all City residents to use alternative forms of transportation whenever possible; such as walking, biking, carpooling and, of course, riding the bus,” said Transit Manager Monty Cox. “The City sponsors several incentives to encourage alternative transportation and we can help Visalia become less congested, cleaner air and less dependent on foreign oil by doing so.”

*Inside City Hall is a publication of the City of Visalia.
For more information, visit the City’s website at www.ci.visalia.ca.us, email nloliva@ci.visalia.ca.us or call 713-4535*

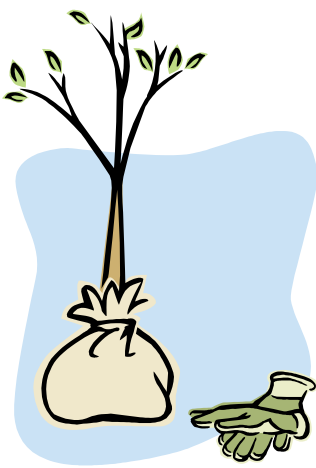
NORTH VISALIA NEW HOME TO CVS PHARMACY:

In another mark of economic development in north Visalia, the CVS Pharmacy proposed 24-hour store with drive-through service on North Dinuba Boulevard received unanimous approval from the Visalia Planning Commission. The store joins the ranks of about two dozen retail pharmacies in Visalia, only two of which are located north of Houston Avenue -- a Walgreens store at Dinuba and Houston, and a Longs Drugs at Houston and Ben Maddox Way -- to serve a growing number of residents from a recent housing boom. Visalia's first CVS store is planned for the southwest corner of Dinuba Boulevard and Ferguson Avenue, in front of the Food-4-Less store that opened earlier this year. In addition to prescription drugs and health and beauty products, this CVS store may host a "minute clinic" staffed by a practitioner who can perform basic health services and write some prescriptions.



100 ATTEND CULTURAL ARTS PLAN FORUMS: Over 100 individuals from education, business and the arts community attended a series of forums to share opinions about Visalia's arts, cultural, and heritage activities. The forums were led by Cultural Arts Plan Consultant Arthur Greenberg, director of AMS Planning and Research Corporation. The ideas and opinions shared at the forums will help create a better understanding of community interests and will feed directly into crafting a document addressing what the public wants, he said. Greenberg said a draft of the plan is due in December.

ALTERNATE FUEL FLEET GROWS BY 7: Four 35-foot low floor compressed natural gas fixed route buses will be added to the City transit bus fleet, for a total of 17 fixed route buses, and five Dial-a-ride buses. City Council approved purchase of the buses from Orion Bus Industries for \$1,739,172. In addition, City Council approved the purchase of three 29-foot compressed natural gas Trolleys from Specialty vehicles for a total of \$524,157, and bringing the fleet to 25 out of 42 transit vehicles.



PLANT A TREE—CELEBRATE LIFE: A new "Celebration of Life" tree planting program in partnership with the Visalia Parks and Recreation Foundation was unanimously approved by City Council. The program will create a public planting opportunity along the City's waterway trail system and serve as a fund-raising opportunity for the Foundation. It will allow individuals to commemorate important events in their lives—births, marriages, anniversaries, and a memorial. The sites are Packwood Creek, between County Center and Woodland, north of Cameron Avenue and the new southside Police substation, and along Mill Creek in the east downtown between Burke and Ben Maddox. The cost will be between \$250 to \$300 per tree to cover the cost of a 15-gallon tree with irrigation, and cover design costs, ongoing maintenance, watering, pruning, and replacement. Plantings would take place twice a year, timed to Arbor Day and Make a Difference Day, and would involve groupings of 50 to 100 trees at a time.

PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS POSTED ON PRINT MEDIA WEBSITE: The City of Visalia has teamed up with the Visalia Times-Delta to provide weekly updates on city public works projects involving major city roadways on its website (www.visaliatimesdelta.com). Update information will also be provided on the City of Visalia's website and in this newsletter. For the week of Nov. 26, the following Public Works/Development projects are being conducted and may interrupt major routes of transportation within the City of Visalia:

- **Sidewalk and electrical reconstruction at the northwest corner of Locust and Acequia.** Days and hours of work being done: Work began Tuesday, Nov. 13, 7 a.m. – 4 p.m. Date of expected comple-

tion: Friday, Dec. 7th. Why work is being done: Building remodel and upgrade. Responsible Contractor Contract: Joe Leal, Longview Development Co., 804-7421.

- **At the request of Southern California Gas Co., the installation of high-pressure gas main along Floral Street, from Race Avenue to School Avenue, and along School Avenue, from West Street to Floral Street.** Days and hours of work being done: Work is scheduled to begin Tuesday, Nov. 20, from 7am - 4 pm, Monday through Friday. Date of expected completion: Work is expected to continuing for 3 weeks until Dec. 7. Responsible Contractor/Contact: ARB Construction, Ed Ayala 949-254-0529.

- **New elementary school construction on Pinkham Street at Laura Avenue.** Days and hours of work being done: Work ongoing Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Date of expected completion: Dec. 23. Why work is being done: Street construction and widening. Responsible Contractor/Contact: Oral Micham Construction, Dane Northcut 564-5010.

For more information on Public Works projects, call the Public Works Customer Service Line at 713-4428.

- **At the request of Southern California Edison, the installation of a new conduit to an underground vault at northwest corner of Doe Avenue and Shirk Street.** Days and hours of work being done: Begins Tuesday, Nov. 27, from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.. Date of expected completion: Dec. 14. Why work is being done: Install new SCE conduit to an underground vault. Responsible Contractor/Contact: Don Bailey, H.P. Comm. Inc. 909-630-2210

BATTERY RECYCLING PROGRAM JUMP STARTS: A city-wide household battery recycle program sponsored by the Visalia Environmental Committee, the City of Visalia and the Consolidated Waste Management Authority (CWMA) is now underway. This program is designed to help individuals recycle the dry cell batteries from cell phones, laptop computers, flashlights, cameras, watches, hearing aids, toys, two way radios, electric tools, clocks, and electronic devices. Participating stores will be provided a collection container to be placed alongside other recycling collection or by existing battery purchase locations. Participating stores will display a flyer listing the locations of all sponsored drop-off locations and informational brochures on how to recycle other household hazardous waste items.

NEW SENIOR HOUSING UNIT COMING TO VISALIA: A 42-unit senior housing development is on tap along Tulare Avenue between Ben Maddox Way and Edison Avenue. HUD gave notification of approval to co-sponsors Visalia Senior Housing and Christian Church Homes of Northern California to receive a HUD 202 Capital Advance amounting to nearly \$5,694,000 for the construction of this project, along with a Project Rental Assistance contract and budget authority amounting to \$970,000. Together these programs ensure residents don't have to pay more than 30 percent of their income on rent and utilities. This project includes 42 one-bedroom apartments, plus one manager's residence, which will provide affordable, accessible, safe and service-enriched housing for very low-income seniors 62 years of age or older in the Visalia region. The building will incorporate sustainable design features for maximum energy efficiency, a courtyard configuration to promote outdoor enjoyment, and adaptability features to encourage long term tenancy for the aging population. In addition to the HUD monies, the City of Visalia has contributed \$2,500,000 to the project, much of which was earmarked for site acquisition. The co-sponsors will use both the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program and bond financing to raise the remaining \$3,300,000 in order to see this project through to completion. Construction is likely to begin in Spring, 2009.

KEEP HOLIDAYS FIRE-FREE: Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires and Visalia Fire Department along with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is urging the public to keep safety in mind when preparing holiday meals. Cooking fires are more likely to happen on Thanksgiving than any other day of the year. In 2005, cooking fires were involved in roughly 1,300 re-



ported home structure fires nationwide on Thanksgiving – that's almost three times the daily average. Studies show cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and home fire injuries. Here are some tips for safer cooking throughout the year:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food.
- If you must leave the home for even a short period of time, turn off the stove or oven.
- If you are simmering, baking, boiling or roasting food, check it regularly and remain in the home while food is cooking. Use a timer to remind you that the stove or oven is on.



- Stay alert. Don't cook if you are sleepy, have been drinking alcohol or have taken medicine that makes you drowsy.
- Keep things that burn – pot holders, oven mitts, paper or plastic - off your stovetop.
- Don't store things that can burn in an oven, microwave, or toaster oven.
- Clean food and grease off burners, stovetops and ovens.
- Wear clothing with sleeves that are short, close fitting, or tightly rolled up.
- Keep kids away from cooking areas by enforcing a "kid-free zone" of 3

feet around the stove.

- Use the stove's back burners whenever possible, and turn pot handles inward to reduce the risk that pots with hot contents will be knocked over.
- Never hold a small child while cooking.

If barbequing, make sure you are not under a covered patio or porch or anything else flammable.

And ALWAYS have a working smoke detector in all sleeping rooms. The Visalia Fire Department is here to help make your Holidays safe and successful. For more information, call 713-4266.