

# IN A Nutshell



No. 194

Newsletter of the City of Walnut Creek

SUMMER 2021

## COVID-19 cases fall, vaccinations rise

Walnut Creek residents have answered the call from health experts urging people to get the COVID-19 vaccine when it became available. Our City vaccination rates are among the highest in Contra Costa County, with more than two-thirds of our population fully vaccinated. Now that the vaccine is available widely for anyone aged 12 and older, the County Health Department is trying to make it even easier to find a place to get the shots. County-operated clinics no longer require appointments. If you prefer to make an appointment, it is easy to do by calling 1-833-829-2626, or hopping online at [cchealth.org](http://cchealth.org). The Tice Valley Gym vaccination clinic will be closing later this summer, but many other nearby options remain. From June 29 – July 3, vaccinations will be offered at Las Lomas High School as well. Students under the age of 18 need parental permission. The mobile clinic will return to administer the second doses at a later date.

## City Hall reopens

If you want to access City services in person, you can soon visit City Hall once again. After closing many City facilities at the beginning of the shelter at home order, most services that could be performed online moved to a digital format. Sometimes, though, an in person visit might be easier. When you return to City Hall, you'll notice a few changes. Most services will be by appointment. You will be able to make an appointment online or by visiting one of the kiosks new in our lobby. We will have a staff member in the lobby to help direct you to the right location, and hand sanitizer stations have been added throughout our buildings. While we will welcome seeing our residents in City Hall again, please know that many of our services will continue to be available online. Visit [walnut-creek.org](http://walnut-creek.org) for all the details. Also in the works is the reopening of the Leshner Center for the Arts. Center REPeritory Company, the City's resident professional theater company, will return with the family favorite A Christmas Carol in December. Indoor performances by groups such as Diablo Ballet, California Symphony, Fantasy Forum Actors Ensemble, Snuin Ballet and more are expected to return this fall. Look for tickets going on sale later this summer.



## WHAT'S AHEAD FOR DOWNTOWN WALNUT CREEK?



There hasn't been much to celebrate over the past year; one bright spot has been the growing trend of restaurants offering outdoor dining. The City streamlined the permitting process for restaurants that previously did not have outdoor tables to use parking lots, parking spaces and other properties to add outdoor capacity. With pandemic restrictions easing, and indoor dining resuming, the City has heard from many residents who don't want the expanded outdoor dining to go away. The City Council recently discussed "Downtown Next," a developing vision for our downtown corridor to keep some of the enhancements that grew out of creative responses to COVID-19. In addition to adding more outdoor dining options, residents have said some street closures, perhaps seasonally or on weekends only, would be worth considering to make downtown more walkable. The City Council will continue the discussion in the fall about how to shape the future for downtown Walnut Creek.

## MURALS BRING COLOR, BEAUTY TO DOWNTOWN

Visit the Duncan Arcade corridor and other spots to see many of our new murals. Here's Floral Bounty, 2020, paint on drywall, 9' x 13' 9". Image courtesy of Velia De Iuliis.







## HIGHLIGHTS

Check cable listings or [walnutcreektv.org](http://walnutcreektv.org) for the full schedule of shows.

For original programming, community events and more, visit the City's YouTube channel at [YouTube.com/CityofWalnutCreek](https://www.youtube.com/CityofWalnutCreek).

## Memorial Day Ceremony

Our annual tradition returns, with special music from the Walnut Creek Concert Band under the direction of Harvey Benstein. Catch prior years' commemorations as well on our YouTube channel.



## Messages from the Mayor

Mayor Kevin Wilk gives a community update each month. Find out the latest news and information for Walnut Creek residents by checking out the Mayor's Report.

## High School Graduations

Unable to attend the graduation of a family member or friend because of pandemic limitations? Walnut Creek TV has you covered, with broadcasts of the graduation ceremonies for Las Lomas and Northgate High schools.

## High School Football

With attendance restricted for football games, watch Las Lomas games on Walnut Creek TV or online to see how the Knights fared this season.

## Public Meetings

Catch recent City Council meetings, as well as those of our many commissions, including the Design Review, Arts, Transportation, and Parks, Recreation and Open Space Commissions. Our public meetings are also broadcast live on YouTube, Walnut Creek TV and Zoom.

# Here's what's happening ..... LESHER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

**BACKSTAGE TOURS** General Manager Scott Denison will lead you through all three theatres and backstage spaces and address all your questions about what goes on behind the curtain! Learn about the equipment and staff that make the magic happen on and off the stage, as well as the upgrades and additions to ensure safety for the performers and audiences. Book your 90-minute tour at [lesherartscenter.org](http://lesherartscenter.org). Private, group tours available by calling (925) 295-1400.



## Young REP Theatre Workshop

There is still an opportunity to audition for this year's Young REP summer program, but time is running short. The program is proud to be celebrating its 48th year and offers a morning program, as well as afternoon workshops in Musical Theatre and Acting Performance. Please call (925) 295-1400 to schedule an audition or visit [youngrep.org](http://youngrep.org). Open to students in middle school to early college.

## Performances & Events

We are busily making plans for welcoming patrons back into our theatres! We anticipate outdoor events on our new Rudney Plaza returning in June. Indoor events from groups such as Diablo Ballet, Center REP, California Symphony, Fantasy Forum Actors Ensemble, Smuin Ballet, and more are expected to return this fall with limited capacity. Visit [lesherartscenter.org](http://lesherartscenter.org) for the latest information and to join our email list.

## SENIOR TRAVEL RETURNS

Visit [walnutcreekrec.org](http://walnutcreekrec.org) for the latest local and international travel opportunities for adults 50+. New events are added regularly!

## Guided Walk & Lunch - Golden Gate Park, Botanical Gardens & More

Wednesday June 23rd, 8:45am - 4:15pm

Escorted tour by Craig Smith. See what treasures are in our own backyard. Your guided tour will start with a visit to the beautiful Japanese Tea Garden, then continue with amazing sights such as the Shakespeare Garden, Rainbow Falls and the magnificent Buffalos. Mid-day you will enjoy a delicious, hosted lunch at The Park Chalet before continuing to explore the Dutch Windmill and Garden. Tour ends with a walk through the Botanical Gardens and their display of greenery consisting of more than 75,000 varieties of global flora. Cost includes all transportation, escorted tour, additional



sanitizing on bus, lunch, gratuity, and parking. Level 1 Easy Walking.

Walnut Creek Senior Club Member Fee: \$135 | NonMember Fee: \$150

For specific questions about the trip, call the Senior Care Coordinator at (925) 943-5852. To register, call (925) 295-1490 to pay over the phone and reference course #33266 or pay online at [cityofwalnutcreek.perfectmind.com](http://cityofwalnutcreek.perfectmind.com) for course #33266.

## BEDFORD GALLERY



**Nemo Gould, Impala, 2007, electric sander, band saw, projector, vacuum cleaners, meat grinder, motorcycle clutch lever, antlers, garlic press, conduit cover, 23 x 9 x 21 inches.**

### Reclaimed: The Art of Recology

July 1 - October 17, 2021

In collaboration with the Recology Artist in Residence (AIR) Program, Bedford Gallery presents an eclectic survey of artists who have had the opportunity to participate in the program. Operating with the belief that art plays a unique role in educating and inspiring the public, Recology—San Francisco's recycling and composting company—provides professional artists and university students with access to discarded materials via coveted scavenging privileges, a stipend, and studio

space at the San Francisco Transfer Station and Recycling Center. This unique exhibition of work created from unwanted materials encourages us to see our "trash" in a new light and reflect on our consumption practices in a time of heightened concern and awareness for the future of our planet. More information: [bedfordgallery.org/recology](http://bedfordgallery.org/recology).

### Public Art Walking Tours are Back!

Saturdays:

June 19, July 17, August 21, September 18  
11 am - 12 pm Adults \$5, 18 years or younger are free, cash only. Includes admission to Bedford Gallery.

Dust off your walking shoes because public art walking tours have returned! Explore world-class artwork in downtown Walnut Creek on these family-friendly, one hour, docent-led tours. Our docents are trained by public art specialists and offer information and insight appropriate for all ages. Tours meet in front of the Leshner Center for the Arts on Rudney Plaza. Please wear comfortable shoes and sunscreen. Masks and social distancing requirements will be observed. More information: [bedfordgallery.org/walkingtours](http://bedfordgallery.org/walkingtours).



**Fountain Head by Seyed Alavi, 2012**



**Treadmill by Josh Keyes, 2006**

## WALNUT CREEK RECREATION & CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ARTS

### Summer Camp Registration is open now

Unleash your child's creativity this summer! Youth ages 3-18 can explore artmaking, sports, music, cooking, dance, STEM & more in our Arts + Rec summer programming including our

popular day camps. Summer camp registration is now open! Reserve your spot for a safe and fun summer with Arts & Recreation at [walnut-creek.org/summercamp](http://walnut-creek.org/summercamp).



### Summer Arts Exchange – Digital Arts Workshop

July 26 - August 5

Monday - Thursday (5– 6:30 p.m.)

Center for Community Arts is excited to partner with Kita City, Japan for a high school summer art and culture exchange in digital media! This is a two-week program designed and taught by professional digital media teaching artists. This program is a hybrid studio/virtual model. Students will join virtually from Kita City, Japan and local students will attend in person at Shadelands Art Center. For more info, visit [communityarts.org](http://communityarts.org).

### Events for Families

#### Super Summer Scavenger Hunt

Fri June 4th - Sun June 6th | Rudgear Park

Follow the clues to hunt for all your favorite superheroes in Rudgear Park. You may even find the Fantastic Four hiding in

the fields! Once you reach your final step, take a selfie, and email it by 6/9 to [ArtsRecEvents@walnut-creek.org](mailto:ArtsRecEvents@walnut-creek.org) to be entered into a raffle. Scavenger hunt should take approximately 30 minutes and is geared to families with children aged 8 & younger. Cost: \$10 per family. Register at [cityofwalnutcreek.perfectmind.com](http://cityofwalnutcreek.perfectmind.com) for course #33251.

#### Furs, Scales & Tails - A Family Show

Sat June 19th | 10am | Civic Park

Featuring 16 different animals for you to enjoy, Tracy Hill's 40-minute animal show is entertaining, educational, fun, AND funny. After the show participants will enjoy petting the animals and getting to ask questions. Spaces for families will be socially distanced in the park area for safety. Cost: \$10 per person, 1 & under is free. Register at [cityofwalnutcreek.perfectmind.com](http://cityofwalnutcreek.perfectmind.com) for course #33295.





## Sustainability Action Plan

Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action will be among the City Council's priority focuses for the next two years. The Council pledged to remain a leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and achieving other sustainability goals by completing the update of the City's Sustainability Action Plan, establishing a funding program, adopting a climate action emergency resolution, and implementing the plan. Other efforts in this area will include alternative transportation, open space protection, and disaster resiliency.

The new Sustainability Action Plan will set climate change and sustainability goals for the next decade. The focus now is on setting new greenhouse gas reduction goals. The results of community outreach efforts will be shared with the City Council this summer; the council will also hear options for goals and strategies. In March, the City Council approved several broad trends and factors to consider that might influence the success of a strategy, such as post-pandemic challenges and opportunities. The Council approved a set of criteria to evaluate the strategies, including cost, ease of implementation, and additional benefits, such as improving air quality or creating jobs. Later this summer the drafting of the plan for public review and Council consideration will begin.

Learn more about the Sustainability Action Plan and sign up for our e-newsletter at [walnut-creek.org/SAP](http://walnut-creek.org/SAP).

### Help Save Water

Residents and businesses can help save water, save money, and save energy this summer by taking action. The East Bay Municipal Utility District has declared a Stage 1 drought and is encouraging everyone to help achieve a 10 percent water conservation goal. Saving water by taking shorter showers or washing a full load of laundry can also help to save energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There are many programs to help you conserve water:

- Visit [CleanerContraCosta.org](http://CleanerContraCosta.org) to explore actions you can take at home, rebates, and sign up for a free account.
- Visit the Incentives section of [www.walnut-creek.org/eco](http://www.walnut-creek.org/eco) to find water conservation rebates for homes and businesses.



## FOUR LEGGED WORKFORCE

If you see goats munching in the Acalanes or Sugarloaf Open Space areas, you may not know they are put there with a job to do. The City's Open Space division uses goats in some of our higher fire safety risk areas. In Acalanes, for example, the thick vegetation on a hillside leading up to a residential area poses a significant threat, but having goats graze on about ten acres nearby helps the City actually exceed weed abatement requirements for the area. Using goats to clear the vegetation is environmentally friendly and safer, particularly in hard to navigate areas.

## NEW ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS AT BROADWAY GARAGE

Five new electric vehicle charging stations serving 9 additional parking spots are now available in the City's Broadway garage, bringing the total number of stations to 7. These new EV charging stations are available to the public and will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, the City's largest source of emissions. Charging is currently free to drivers. This project was funded by the Downtown Parking Fund through the City's Capital Investment Program and includes rebates from MCE and PG&E's EV Charge Network program. PG&E's program also covered many of the infrastructure upgrade costs.





# community arts foundation

arts for all

## Community Arts Foundation Opportunity

Walnut Creek's Community Arts Foundation has provided more than 1,000 scholarships to children, teens and adults who might not otherwise enjoy the benefits of creative arts programming. The Foundation is currently seeking new Board members. A background in fundraising or non-profit work is a plus, but not required. Most important is an eagerness to work collaboratively to achieve the Foundation's mission of "arts for all." Board members help raise funds for the scholarship programs, and bring arts awareness, advocacy and accessibility to our region. Interested people can contact [cafoundation@walnut-creek.org](mailto:cafoundation@walnut-creek.org). You can find out more about the Foundation at its website, [commartsfoundation.org](http://commartsfoundation.org).

## 8th Grade Youth Ambassador Exchange Program Openings



Walnut Creek Sister Cities is now recruiting incoming 8th grade students who live in Walnut Creek to participate in this year's Youth Ambassador Exchange program. Since 2012, the program has sent more than 150 Walnut Creek students to one of Walnut Creek's two sister cities -- Noceto, Italy, and Siofok, Hungary -- for a one-week exchange. In turn, the international students visit their Walnut Creek exchange families a few months later. For more information, email Annie Zeiph at [anniezeiph@gmail.com](mailto:anniezeiph@gmail.com). Visit [WCSCI.org](http://WCSCI.org) to see photos and read stories of prior Sister City exchange trips.

# WALNUT CREEK arts around August

A month-long celebration in Downtown Walnut Creek of the performing, visual, cultural and culinary arts.

## EVENTS

**First Wednesdays**

Street Faire

**PAINT the downTOWN**

Plein Air Art Festival



**Moveable Feast**

Tasty Culinary Experience

**Sounds on the Plaza(s)**

Concerts @ Broadway Plaza & the Leshar

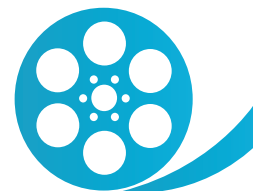


Painted Pianos  
Downtown Stages  
Family Chalk Art Days  
Public Art Walking Tours  
Art & History Treasure Hunts  
Live Concert Previews  
Storefront Galleries



**Movies under the Stars**

Family & Independent Films



**Family Theatre Sundays**

Fantasy Fun for All Ages

*more to come*

## PRESENTERS



Bedford Gallery



Center for Community Arts



Community Arts Foundation



Walnut Creek Historical Society



Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce/Convention & Visitors Bureau



Valley Art Gallery

All events subject to public health guidelines.

[WalnutCreekDowntown.com/ArtsaroundAugust](http://WalnutCreekDowntown.com/ArtsaroundAugust)

# Summer Bike Challenge

Looking for some free summertime activities that are fun for the whole family? Check out 511 Contra Costa's Summer Bike Challenge.

Through August, riders of all ages will be encouraged to explore Walnut Creek on two wheels. Visit the 511 Contra Costa website and download the Walnut Creek gameboard.

As you make your way to each of the destinations, you'll become eligible for a variety of fun prizes. Try to clear off your gameboard by August 31 and you'll qualify for the grand prize of a new iPad. Visit [511ContraCosta.org](http://511ContraCosta.org) for details.



How to play:  
**BIKE!** to as many squares as you can June 1 - Aug 31. Collect prizes along the way!



iPad Grand Prize  
**FREE** Fun All Summer

Brought to you by **511 CONTRA COSTA**

with funding from **CONTRA COSTA transportation authority**

**Bay Area**  
Adoptive  
Bicycle  
Program  
Bicycle  
Program

## # Slow Down Walnut Creek

While the early phases of the pandemic saw traffic wind down to just a trickle, one thing did not go away: speeding cars! In fact, our Traffic Enforcement Team has seen an increase in speeding along City streets, and many of our residents have called in to report seeing traffic fly by them. The Police Department and our Traffic Engineering teams will be jointly rolling out a new campaign this month - **#Slow Down Walnut Creek**. Rather than simply writing tickets, we will be working to educate our residents about the need to slow down and observe traffic safety rules. We'll work with our high schools as well to ensure our younger drivers get the message. In the meantime, make sure you're modeling good behavior on the roadways as we return to a "new normal" for traffic, and recognizing that we hope to keep some of the outdoor dining locations operating for the time being. Let's make it safe - **#Slow Down Walnut Creek**.

## Parking Enforcement Returns

The pandemic prompted a parking meter "holiday" in Walnut Creek, with enforcement at City operated meters with the purple poles put on hold. As we have moved into less restrictive County tiers, there are more cars on the road, and the demand for parking has returned. Business owners and residents are asking the City to encourage more turnover in parking spaces, which means a return to charging at the longer range purple pole meters. The purple pole spaces are still very affordable; just \$1 per hour, with a maximum of up to ten hours. And you can go touchless with the new meters; download the Park Mobile App and go contact-free.





# YOUTH LEADERSHIP COMMISSION APPLICATIONS OPEN IN JUNE

**Special to the Nutshell:**  
by Hadil Djadri, Chair of the  
Youth Leadership Commission

**W**ALNUT CREEK'S YOUTH Leadership Commission is comprised of fifteen highly motivated high school students who provide a youth perspective to the City Council on a variety of issues, and lead policy and service projects that benefit the community. Being on the Commission is a valuable experience. Along with developing soft skills such as time management, public speaking, problem solving, and teamwork, Commissioners also gain perspective from listening to their fellow members.

Commissioners attend bi-monthly meetings, participate in City events, and frequently attend and speak at City Council meetings. Even in unprecedented times, the Commissioners convened in the "Zoom World," stayed connected to the Walnut Creek City Council and community and made progress on chosen projects. Five Commissioners led a community clean-up at Borges Ranch in April. With twenty people helping, the trails were in good hands! Volunteers filled six large trash bags.

Another project with a visible impact was conducted with the help of the Bedford Gallery, Public Arts staff, and Arts Commissioner Glynnis Cowdery. The group led a wayfinding sign project, with a goal of helping community members locate our five new murals in the Duncan Arcade alley. Commissioners chose eleven youth artists to work on the project, with each artist completing a letter of the words "Duncan Arcade." Themes were assigned to each letter, such as public arts, parks or downtown. Artists worked both digitally and on paper. Designer Henry Cowdery helped turn the ideas into reality, and you can see the signage now in downtown Walnut Creek. Thank you to all the youth artists involved: Indie Lee, Meghan Sim, Chloe Anderson, Tony Liu, Ally McKay, Katrina Lerner, Naomi Moss, Emma Pan,



Francesca Romero, Jonah Mateo, Saturn Howe, and Commissioner Rebecca Joseph.

Commissioners stay connected using Instagram, using their social media outreach expertise to engage their peers. This year, they used social media as a tool for raising awareness on issues such as climate change, racial inequity, COVID-19's impact on teens, and how to be more involved in local government. Check out @wcyouthcommission on Instagram.

The Youth Leadership Commission works hard, but always builds in time for

teambuilding and networking. If this sounds like something your teen might be interested in, now is the time to apply. Applicants must be incoming 9th to 12th graders who live in Walnut Creek. The Commission is looking for people who demonstrate leadership, commitment to community service, and the ability to work well with others. Applicants will be interviewed by the other Commissioners and City Staff. Applications will be due before school begins in the fall, with interviews taking place in September. Visit the Commission website at [walnut-creek.org/youthcommission](http://walnut-creek.org/youthcommission) for details.



# Summer Sounds return to stage outside Leshar Center for the Arts

July marks the return of the popular outdoor summer concert series "Summer Sounds," with four different performances taking over the new Rudney Plaza Thursday evenings in July from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. The lineup includes:

- **July 1** Anthony Paule Soul Orchestra
- **July 8** Chris Cain
- **July 15** Broadway star Taylor Iman Jones
- **July 22** Tom Rigney and Flambeau

All concerts are free, but to secure a table, tickets are required. Make your reservation beginning June 16 by visiting the Leshar Center for the Arts website, or call 943-SHOW.



## Downtown Stages and Storefront Galleries arrive in Walnut Creek

As more people begin to return to normal activities, downtown Walnut Creek is coming alive. What better way to celebrate than with a series of street performances throughout the year. Walnut Creek Downtown has launched its "Downtown Stages" program through the end of 2021, giving space to local musicians, dancers, and other entertainers to welcome people back. Weekends and Thursday and Friday evenings, you'll see a wide range of entertainment popping up at four different locations:

- **Cypress Mini Plaza on North Main Street**
- **Water Light Plaza on Locust Street**
- **Plaza Escuela on Locust Street**
- **Civic Plaza on Civic Drive**

Find out when the entertainment takes place by visiting [walnutcreekdowntown.com](http://walnutcreekdowntown.com), as well as how to find out if you can become one of the Downtown Stage performers!

Walnut Creek Downtown is partnering with Valley Art Gallery to bring you a variety of art pieces staged in a series of Storefront Galleries located downtown as well. Be on the lookout for art on display from Valley Art Gallery artists throughout the year. Current galleries can be seen at 1000 South Main near the former Neiman Marcus store, Locust south of Cypress, and North Main between The Red Box and Cream.



 **CITY OF WALNUT CREEK**  
1666 North Main Street  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

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ECRWSS

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925-943-5800  
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### CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Kevin Wilk  
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Cindy Darling  
Loella Haskew  
Cindy Silva  
For an appointment, call 925-256-3504

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### ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The Nutshell Newsletter is published quarterly. For questions and comments, contact editor Betsy Burkhart, 925-943-5895 or [burkhart@walnut-creek.org](mailto:burkhart@walnut-creek.org)

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