



CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

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AUGUST 5, 2015

The *City Manager's Report* from City of Benicia City Manager Brad Kilger is published twice monthly highlighting the activities of the departments of our full-service city. Previous editions are available on the City of Benicia [City Manager's page](#). For additional information on any items in this report, please see [Contact List](#) at the end of this report.

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**CITIZENS' GOVERNMENT ACADEMY:** The City of Benicia is inviting residents to participate in its next Citizens' Government Academy. The goal of the nine session Academy is to provide residents with the information, resources and tools to become more knowledgeable community members, to provide an increased understanding of the organizational structure and operations of the various city departments that impact the quality of life in Benicia, and to develop a positive relationship with City officials/staff, ultimately creating a stronger community.

Each session will focus on a specific element of city government, providing information on various departments, offering department tours, and encouraging participant interaction with city staff. Most sessions will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 PM. beginning **September 16** and will end on November 17 with a graduation ceremony during the City Council meeting. The session on Budget and Finance will be held on Thursday, October 1, and a Saturday session will be held to tour the City's Corporation Yard, Water and Wastewater Treatment plants.

**WE WANT**



**YOU!**

Registration is free and available to all residents of the City of Benicia over 16 years of age. Class size is limited and registration must be made by **September 15**. A registration form may be found on the [Library's website](#), at City Hall, and at the Library. For more information, contact Library Director Diane Smikahl at [dsmikahl@ci.benicia.ca.us](mailto:dsmikahl@ci.benicia.ca.us) or 707.746.4343.

– Library

**FIRE DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATES IN MUTUAL AID:** As predicted, the 2015 fire season

is turning out to be very active in Benicia as well as throughout the state. Being a small fire department, Benicia must rely on mutual aid from surrounding fire departments for most working fires. Mutual aid is a system where emergency responder agencies have pre-existing plans to assist each other in times of



need. Within Solano County, Benicia Firefighters regularly provided assistance to, and receive assistance from, surrounding agencies. The same system is established for major incidents throughout the state.

Recently, Benicia Firefighters have been providing assistance at some of the major fires burning across Northern California. On Tuesday, July 28, a Benicia engine was dispatched



*Benicia's Brush 12 visible on the ridge during air drop*

as part of a local government strike team to the Wragg fire burning in near Lake Berryessa. They worked hard for four days to reinforce containment lines before being redeployed to the Rocky Fire in Lake County.

On Thursday July 30, The Benicia Fire Department sent a

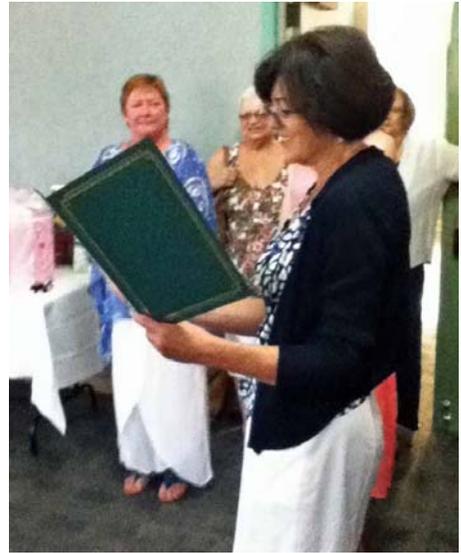
Fire-Line Paramedic to the Rocky Fire. Fire-Line Paramedics respond as a single resource assigned to provide emergency medical care at the incident. Firefighters deployed on these mutual aid assignments can expect to be deployed for up to two weeks. On a side note, when Firefighters are deployed to these major incident, the city gets fully reimbursed financially from the State of California Office of Emergency Services. – *Fire Department*

## PERSONNEL NEWS:

**Another Yosick Retires:** After 32 years at the City of Benicia, Toni Yosick retired on July 28 following a reception at the Library. Toni started working in the City Manager's Office on in 1983 and transferred to the Library in 2000, retiring as the Administrative Secretary to the Director.

Not only do folks in the City of Benicia organization think of each other as family, but in Toni's case, another city employee actually did become family. After being hired on the same day, Toni met her husband, Patrick, while he was taking her fingerprints and shooting the photo for her employee I.D. card.

Toni and Pat have two adult children, Sarah and Heather. Toni plans to spend the first days of retirement finalizing plans for their daughter Heather's wedding. When Toni and Pat are not traveling, she plans to spend time in her backyard gardening. – *Library*



*Mayor Patterson reads a proclamation thanking Toni Yosick for her service to the City of Benicia.*

**Promotion:** Suzanne Thorsen has been promoted to the position of Senior Planner in the Community Development Department.



Suzanne joined the City of Benicia almost two years ago as an Associate Planner and has over 10 years of experience as a planner. Suzanne has her Undergrad degree in Environmental Planning, with a Minor in Policy and Ethics and a Masters in Urban Planning/Physical Planning.

Suzanne brings a wealth of experience to her new role, including experience with grants, downtown plans, historic preservation, sustainability and long-range planning.

She has also developed sustainable development policies, renewable energy ordinances for wind and solar, greener business programs funded by the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant Program, commercial design guidelines and residential guidelines. – *Community Development Director*

**City of Benicia Job Opportunities:** The Human Resources Department is accepting applications for the following positions:

- [Recreation Leader](#), part-time, closing **August 10**
- [Department Aide](#), part-time, closing **August 11**
- [Library Technician I/II](#), full-time, closing **August 28**
- [Building Inspector I/II](#), full-time
- [Police Officer - Lateral \(Currently Working\)](#), full-time, open continuously
- [Police Officer - Academy / Non-Lateral](#), full-time, open continuously

To apply, the application and supplemental forms can be filed online at: <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/benicia/default.cfm>. City of Benicia employment applications may also be obtained from and must be returned to the Human Resources Department at 250 East L Street, Benicia.



These job opportunities are open to any current City of Benicia employees (full or part time) as well as the general public. If you know of someone who may be interested in applying, please let them know. - *Human Resources*

**CALL FOR CENTENARIANS:** If you or someone you know is 100 years old or older, you are invited to the annual special ceremony held in your honor.

"Centenarians are beacons of life and vitality in our community," says Solano County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Erin Hannigan. "Be it their positive attitude, faith or simply genetics, they are living examples of how to age with dignity and grace, and their contributions are worthy of celebration."

This year marks the ninth year the Board of Supervisors, in conjunction with the Senior Coalition of Solano County, will pay tribute to Solano County centenarians.

To date, the Board has honored 104 centenarians, the oldest of them, Marie West, who reached super-centenarian status in January 2011. Super-centenarians are 110 years or older and occur at a rate of about 1 in 7 million people – with an estimated 60-70 super-centenarians in the United States.



The Senior Coalition hopes to hear from all centenarians as part of the ongoing project to capture the stories of Solano County's oldest residents as a way to bring attention to the issues facing the senior population.

"We understand that not every centenarian wants to participate in the gala event, but we want to capture their stories and acknowledge how they've touched our community," said Rochelle Sherlock, consultant to the Senior Coalition.

The Centenarian Day reception will be held at the Board of Supervisors meeting on **Tuesday, September 22** at 1:00 PM at 675 Texas Street in Fairfield.

If you know of a centenarian, contact Roselle Tamoro at 707.784.8269 or [ratamoro@solanocounty.com](mailto:ratamoro@solanocounty.com). Names are requested even if the centenarian is unable to attend the ceremony. – *City Manager's Office*

**RELAY FOR LIFE IN BENICIA:** The annual Benicia Relay for Life event to raise funds for the American Cancer Society is **Friday, August 21** at 6:00 PM - **Saturday, August 22** at noon at the Benicia High School football field.



Of the 23 teams registered so far, three are City of Benicia teams; Benicia Police Department, City of Benicia, and Benicia Fire Department. In addition, Deputy City Clerk Kate Gibbs' team, Smitten Flowers will be participating along with many staff members on the Soroptimists' team.

Several City employees have personally been affected by cancer and find this to be a fun and thoughtful way to raise funds towards the fight against this dreaded disease. Participating staff encourage you to show your support by joining a team or forming one of your own, making a donation, or coming out to cheer them on. [Click here](#) for more information. – *City Attorney's Office*

**BENICIA FILM FESTIVAL IS COMING:** The Benicia Arts and Culture Commission's Film Festival Committee will be holding its second annual Benicia Film Festival on Labor Day Weekend, **September 4-6**. The committee received over 100 entries from around the world. Approximately 35 films will be shown over the 3-day weekend.

On Friday, September 4, the Festival opens with a Gala at the historic Commanding Officer's Quarters in the Benicia Arsenal. The evening will consist of appetizers, wine and the showing of approximately 13 short films. Several film makers will be present to discuss the making of their films. There will also be live music and a chance to view the historic Commanding Officer's Quarters.

On Saturday, September 5, the Festival will move to the Hayley Horn Auditorium at Benicia High School for an all-day film fest with approximately 14 films with a break for lunch and dinner so attendees can discover beautiful historic downtown Benicia and its wonderful shops and restaurants.

On Sunday, September 6, the Festival takes place at the Majestic Theatre on First Street. This theater has not been open to the public for several years and the committee is very excited to have the festival take place at the theatre. There will be approximately 6 films shown that afternoon. Film makers will also be in attendance to discuss the making of their films.

Ticket prices are \$30 for Friday, \$25 for Saturday and Sunday. A weekend pass is \$60 and there is a special Festival Package which includes a weekend pass, Festival limited edition T-shirts and a DVD of the film Wind, Water, Land from a local film maker who documented a piece of public art that was given to the City of Benicia in March of this year. For further information and to purchase tickets go to [www.beniciafilmfestival.com](http://www.beniciafilmfestival.com). – *Library*



**FUN AT THE SENIOR CENTER:** On Wednesday, July 22, the Benicia Fire Department



served at the monthly lunch at the Benicia Senior Center. Seniors had fun talking to our Firefighters at the luncheon that was catered by Kinder's BBQ. The highlight of the event was a raffle with Firefighters delivering prizes and hugs to our seniors. A great time was had by all!

There is no fee to join Benicia Senior Center. A luncheon catered by a local restaurant is scheduled most months. The August event will be on **Friday, August 21** at noon. It will be a free Ice Cream Social in honor of National Senior Citizens Day. This event will recognize contributions Benicia seniors make in our community.



Thanks to Parks & Community Services staff for putting on these senior luncheons. More information on senior activities can be found in the Benicia Activities Guide mailed three times per year to each Benicia residence or online [here](#). – *Parks & Community Services*



**T**RAINING SET FOR BERT: On **Monday September 14**, the Benicia Emergency Response Team ([BERT](#)), in conjunction with the Benicia Fire Department, will begin BERT Basic Training Class #30. The sessions are 3 hours each from 6:30 - 9:30 PM on Mondays from September 14 - October 19, and a Skills Day and Graduation on Saturday, October 24.



The sessions include: Disaster Preparedness, Fire Safety, Disaster Medical Operations, Light Search and Rescue Operations, CERT Organization, Disaster Psychology, and Terrorism and CERT.

Class size is limited to 30 students. Anyone interested in attending this next BERT class is encouraged to contact the Benicia Fire Department during regular business hours at 707.746.4275. – *Fire Department*

**J**UNIOR BASEBALL CAMP: This year marks the 5<sup>th</sup> year the City of Benicia has run the Junior Baseball Camp. 49 kids participate between the ages of 4 and 9. They learned the fundamentals of baseball in a fun environment.

The camp was a progressive camp starting with throwing the first day, defense the second day, hitting the third day, ending with a game on the fourth day. The camp is run by former and current Benicia High school baseball and softball players. – *Parks & Community Services*



**M**OVIE NIGHT UNDER THE STARS: The Parks & Community Services Department hosted their second outdoor movie night on Friday, July 24. Several hundred people attended the event on a beautiful summer evening in City Park and enjoyed Walt Disney's



“Big Hero 6”. Parks & Community Services staff provided the audio/visual, popcorn, and a great time for all!

Mark your calendars for the last outdoor movie of the summer on **Friday, August 14**. Paddington (PG) will be showing at dusk at the Gazebo in City Park. – *Parks & Community Services*.

**E**CO-AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED: Benicia first Eco-Awards winners were announced at a recent ceremony at City Hall. Community residents, businesses, and non-profits who have gone above and beyond to reduce energy, water, and waste were nominated. One resident and one business was selected in each category, plus one community-based organization as an overall winner. The winners received a \$100 gift certificate to First Street Café and a recycled glass trophy designed by Lindsay Art Glass of Benicia. Awards were given out at the July 21 City Council meeting.

Constance Beutel, resident and energy champion, won for her home upgrades. Also recognized were John & Mary Lou McVeigh. Their home is a complete eco-system producing very little trash.



*Constance Beutel with Mayor Patterson*

Resident water champions, Steve & Marty Young, participated in the Benicia Home Efficiency Program and installed a grey-water system.



*Connie Walker of Ponder Environmental*

Business Champions for recycling and trash reduction, Ruszel Woodworks accepted the award for their company’s diversion from the landfill of almost all by-products of production.

Ponder Environmental Services, Inc., won as energy reduction champion. The company utilized the Business Resource Incentive Program ([BRIP](#)) and invested \$40,000 to install a 36kW solar system.

Benicia Community Gardens accepted the award for best community based organization. They were recognized for their

efforts to teach composting, water conservation, permaculture, greywater systems, and “farm to table”.

Pedrotti Ace Hardware won as water saving business champion for accepting vouchers for efficient toilets, sprinkler heads, and irrigation timers and stocking water-saving parts and grey water kits.

The program was sponsored by the Green Umbrella group, a coalition of Benicia organizations and individuals dedicated to working together with a focus on environmentalism and sustainability. The group’s work is funded by a grant from the Community Sustainability Commission (CSC) with support from Arts Benicia. Awards were sponsored by Marin Clean Energy, WattzOn, and Republic Services. – *Community Development*



*Elena Karoulina of Benicia Community Garden*

**SOLTRANS CELEBRATES THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA):**

On July 26, SolTrans celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The public is encouraged to join in remembering that day and the positive impact it has had on the lives of so many Americans.



“This is an important milestone.” said Mandi Renshaw, SolTrans Program Analyst. “ADA rights are civil rights and we want to help remind the public of that as well as to reaffirm our support. In fact, SolTrans has implemented several programs, consistent with the spirit of the ADA, that are focused on improving the quality of life for seniors and people with disabilities. In 2013 we partnered with Solano Transit Authority and other Solano County Transit Operators to launch a new Countywide In-Person ADA Eligibility Program. In 2014 we created our “Ride for \$0.25” program which reduced fares by over 70% on our local fixed routes for people showing their ADA Paratransit ID card. In 2015, we created our “Ride for \$0.50” program which lowered fares by 80% for those same riders on our Solano Express routes 78, 80s, 80 and 85. We are proud of these programs along with our Paratransit program, Solano County InterCity and SolTrans Local Taxi Scrip Programs and our Regional Transit Connection (RTC) Discount Card Program which significantly increases access to the community. In addition to all our discounts we also provide Travel Training Ambassadors who will assist anyone with learning how to ride our transit system.”

Over the last 25 years, accessibility of public transit vehicles has improved markedly going from 50 to 99.8 percent according to the 2014 APTA Fact Book. SolTrans has improved bus service accessibility with low floor buses, wheelchair ramps and lifts, dedicated bus seats and space for people with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs or scooters, automatic bus stop announcements through our new Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) system (which is helpful to those with visual impairments), as well as facilities accommodations for people with disabilities. The fact that public transportation provides freedom, independence and access to the community for millions of Americans with disabilities is definitely something to celebrate.

Solano County Transit (SolTrans) has been the public transportation provider for south Solano County since July 2011. SolTrans provides local and regional fixed routes, complementary paratransit, dial-a-ride service, and subsidized taxi programs. The agency is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that is governed by a six-member Board of Directors, composed of two representatives from the cities of Benicia and Vallejo, Solano County’s representative on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), and a representative from the Solano Transportation Authority. Find more information at [www.soltransride.com](http://www.soltransride.com). – *City Manager’s Office*

**E**XPLORING A CAREER IN PUBLIC SERVICE: Have you thought about a career in the fire service or law enforcement? There's a way you can explore these careers before making life choices.



The Junior Firefighter Program is for young people, ages 15-18 and is part of the Boy Scouts of America Explorer Program. The Explorers are given the opportunity to become a part of the Benicia Fire Department and work with on-duty crews in daily activities. Applications are available at the Benicia Fire Department Station #11, 150 Military West or [click here](#).

The Benicia Police Department Explorer Program is a non-paid, law enforcement organization whose main purpose is to give young adults ages 14-20 a chance to begin training themselves for a career in the field of Law Enforcement. For more information, contact Sergeant Laughter, Explorer Advisor, at 707.746.4333 ext 106. Applications are available at the Benicia Police Department, 250 East L Street, or [click here](#).



Both programs provide great opportunities to volunteer and serve the community, while enhancing character. – *City Manager's Office*

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CONTACT INFORMATION

The *City Manager's Report* from City of Benicia City Manager Brad Kilger is published twice monthly. Email your questions or comments to edev@ci.benicia.ca.us. For additional information on any of the items in this report, please contact one of the following departments:

[City Manager/Human Resources/I.T./City Clerk](#): 707.746.4200

[City Attorney](#): 707.746.4216

[Community Development](#): 707.746.4280

[Economic Development](#): 707.746.4202

[Finance Department](#): 707.746.4225

[Fire Department](#): 707.746.4275

[Library](#): 707.746.4343

[Parks & Community Services](#): 707.746.4285

[Police Department](#): 707.746.4265

[Public Works](#): 707.746.4240