



THE FLASH City of Talent

An update from City Administration, Planning, Public Works and Police Departments

The Flash, which occupies the following two pages, is a publication of the City of Talent and is editorially separate from the rest of the Talent News and Review. All content and editorial choices contained in the rest of the paper are the sole responsibility of the TNR and are not in any way associated with the City of Talent. -JG

Tree Adoptions in Talent

Plant Oregon, and Together for Talent plant trees for city residents.

At the 2008 Harvest Festival the Together for Talent Committee signed up residents interested in receiving donated trees from Plant Oregon. The trees of various sizes and varieties will be planted in yards in the City limits March 8th. In a coordinated effort with Plant Oregon, and the Together For Talent Committee volunteers will be visiting these homes the week prior to confirm the location of the trees. This is the second year the committee has approached Plant Oregon owners Dan and Dave Bish, the company offered both free trees and planting services and planted 20 trees in the city in November 2007. One of the committee's goals is to continue planting trees in the City. The committee has added this greening effort to other committee goals that are ongoing every year and include litter reduction that is highlighted with the city's annual Green Up and Clean Up day each May. Committee members and Dan Bish hope to work with the city in the future to plant more trees in the city rights of way. For more information contact Sharon Anderson at 535-9055 or Cheryl Nicolay at 535-1566.

URBAN RENEWAL NEWS Urban Renewal Budget Committee Openings

There are openings on the Budget Committee for the Talent Urban Renewal Agency. The Committee meets once a year, in April or May, to review and approve the budget. The commitment is three years and is an excellent way to learn more about urban renewal and its projects. This is an Agency-appointed committee.

For more information or to apply, contact Executive Director Marla Cates, 535-6170, ura.talent@charterinternet.com.

Grants for Commercial and Historic Buildings

The Agency's Rehab/Façade Improvement Grant Program provides grants for exterior rehabilitation of commercial and historic properties in the downtown urban renewal area. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$10,000 per tax lot, and help property owner's design, plan and complete exterior visual improvements for their buildings. Historic properties on the City's Local Landmark List are eligible for up to \$15,000 per tax lot for restoration work or historic maintenance. Previous projects receiving grants include Inti Restaurant, Talent Bible Chapel, Bangkok's Benny, Seiber's Corner, and the Talent Community Center.

North Talent Avenue Design Plans:

The preliminary design plans for the North Talent Avenue improvement

project are available for viewing at Talent Urban Renewal Agency office (102 Home Street) or Talent City Hall. The project is planned for Summer 2009. Improvements will extend from Colver Road to LaPree Street and focus on providing sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides of the street under a grant from the State of Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian program. There are also plans to add pockets of on-street parking and landscape, add additional lighting to what currently exists, make road repairs, and place a few utility wires underground where it is reasonable to do so.

For further information, contact Marla Cates, Executive Director, 535-6170.

Committee Openings

The City Budget Committee will start its work in May and one more citizen is needed to have a full representation of the citizens. The Budget Committee reviews and recommends the City budget to the City Council. State law requires that the Committee be comprised of the Mayor and 6 City Councilors and a matching number of citizens. Contact the city managers office for more information 535-1566.

The City's Planning Commission currently has two openings. The Planning Commission meets regularly on the 4th Thursdays of the month. There are also openings on the Planning Advisory board. Contact the planning department for more information at 535-7401.

There is currently one opening on the Architectural Review and one advisory committee opening. This committee is a great introduction to municipal government. It meets for a couple of hours each month (on the 3rd Tuesday in the evening) and gets to review plans for compliance with design standards. It is also in the business of debating and developing new or revised design standards. Contact the planning department for more information 535-7401.

The City continues to look for citizen volunteers to serve on the Centennial Celebration Planning Committee. The birthday celebration will be throughout 2010 and people with an interest in planning a series of events to take place over the year are encouraged to apply.

The Together for Talent Committee continues to look for citizen volunteers to serve that have an interest in promoting sustainability, honoring the City's agricultural heritage, promoting gardening and tree planting; reduction of litter and generally improving the appearance and livability of the City.

If you are interested in any of these committees please contact City Hall 535-1566 and submit an application.

COP TALK

By Chief Mike Moran

Fraud is likely the most prevalent crime in America. It seems impossible to keep up with the latest scams. However, it is encouraging to know that locally there is an organization committed to protecting us from the many kinds of fraud.

SOFFAST is the Southern Oregon Financial Fraud and Security Team. It is a cooperative organization of law enforcement, banking industry, the

District Attorney and other agencies that have joined forces to share information and work together to prevent fraud and prosecute those who commit it.

There is now a fantastic website that has excellent information on protecting yourself from fraud and keeping up with the latest information on the topic. It is www.soffast.org.

Here is just a sample of some of the info on the site. This is the most comprehensive list of ID theft prevention I have seen.

There is always a potential of your personal information getting into the hands of criminals without your doing. Sometimes a business is burglarized and records containing your personal information may be stolen, or an employee in a business illegally discloses your information. Although these are possible, most of the time identity thieves get their information directly from the victim. The following is a list of things you should do to make it nearly impossible for your information to fall into the wrong hands.

According to the Federal Trade Commission in 2003 Oregon was listed as the 7th highest state experiencing identity theft. The number of these crimes is rapidly growing in our area.

Identity thieves can do several things to steal your identity. An ID thief may find your bank account information and create fake checks with a computer using your bank account number, but another name. They will create fake identification cards throw different states using your name and information but their photographs. The thief may also apply for credit cards, or credit applications for goods/services using your name and information.

- Be careful of who you give your personal information to. Unless you initiate the phone call, don't ever give your personal information to anyone over the phone. Most banks will not e-mail you so don't reply to e-mails from banks asking about your account number, PIN, etc. Scams involving e-mails and phone calls are typically referred to as "phishing."

- Don't carry your social security card on you. Leave it at home in a secure location or in a safe deposit box.

- Don't leave personal information in your vehicle. Cars are easy to break into and retrieve whatever you leave.

- Don't throw away mail, bank account statements, voided checks, mortgage information, tax information, credit card receipts or anything that could contain your name, address, phone number, social security number, etc. Purchase a good home shredder and shred all of these types of documents. The cost of a shredder is much cheaper than the potential cost of being a victim of identity theft.

- Make sure your mail is delivered to either a post office box or a locking community mailbox. Don't accept mail in a rural style mailbox. Don't put outgoing mail in a mailbox either, putting the red flag up, is literally a "red flag" for identity thieves to know you have something in there.

- Don't use passwords like you social security number, mother's maiden name, city you were born in, or any other information that is easily obtained. Always use a password that is difficult to guess and preferably a combination of letters and numbers.

- Keep your wallet or purse close to

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you at all times.

- If you order new checks don't have them mailed to you if you don't have a locking mailbox. Instead, pick them up at the bank.

- Make sure you order your credit report occasionally and check it carefully for any problems. You are entitled to one free credit report per year at www.annualcreditreport.com. If you see any discrepancies report them immediately.

- Don't put your phone number or driver's license number on your checks.

- Don't throw away credit card receipts. If you eat at a restaurant and use a credit/debit card make sure the credit slip only shows that last four numbers of your card number. If the entire card number is displayed, scratch out everything but the last four numbers.

Check out the SOFFAST website and see who the members are. They are a committed group of people working to protect you.

CALLING ALL ARTISTS

For the third year in a row, the Harvest Festival Committee has decided to put out the call to artists. This year there will be a prize. The prize is \$50.00, worth of gift certificates to various local Talent businesses and restaurants. As well as give the artist an opportunity to show off their creativity. Imagine your artwork on the front of this year's Harvest Festival Tote Bag and Event Poster. One lucky artist will be selected in June to have his or her artwork represented. The theme is "Harvest". Artwork only please, do not include any words or dates, but you may sign it. The desired size of paper or canvas of your painting or drawing would be a maximum size of

12" x 17" and a minimum size of 8-1/2"x11". Each entry will need to be accompanied by a signed Entry Form. Forms are available online at www.cityoftalent.org, on the homepage. Forms are also available at the front counter at City Hall, 110 East Main St, Talent, and can be completed when submitting your artwork. Contact Cheryl at 535-1566 or Cheryl@cityoftalent.org for more details on your submission. Deadline is May 29th. GOOD LUCK!

PLANNING DEPARTMENT NEWS

Planning Staff Changes:

The Cities planning department has made recent changes to its staffing. Two part time people are currently staffing the office. If you haven't already heard, the City's Planning Director position has been filled by Mark Knox, Mark has lived in the Rogue Valley for 16 years with his wife Nora and their two daughters, Madison and Olivia. Mark was a City Planner with the City of Ashland for the first 13 years and has since been a Land Use Planning Consultant. The City's previous Planning Director, John Adam, accepted a position with the City of Medford. Kathy Hackstock, long time Planning Assistant's, office hours are Tuesday – Wednesday 8:30a.m to 12:30 p.m. and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Mark's office hours are Monday – Friday from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Please feel free to contact Planning at 535-7401 or via e-mail at mark@cityoftalent.org

Volunteers Needed:

Spring is quickly approaching and the City is looking to fill some vacancies on both the Planning Commission and Architectural Review Committee. Except during the holidays, the Planning Commission meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Center and the Architectural Review Committee meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall. Civic participation can be very rewarding and educational. Please contact Mark Knox at 535-7401 or Cheryl Nicolay at 535-1566 for assistance in answering any specific questions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Utility Bill Payment Options

All Water Utility Customers have the opportunity to enroll in an "Equal Payment Plan" for the payment of monthly water utility bills. This has been a popular program for some, and allows them to equalize their monthly payments for water usage over a 12 month period rather than having to deal with higher water bills during the warmer months of the year and lower bills in late fall and winter months.

To participate in the program a water customer signs an agreement with the City that they will make equal monthly payments based on their annual consumption. The criteria for qualifying for this program is as follows: 1) You will need to have one year of payment history with the City (i.e. you have been a city water customer for at least a year); 2) Sign up for the program in March; 3) You agree to pay the calculated monthly payment on time each month.

The actual monthly payment is based on your water usage history. Looking at the previous year of usage assists in setting the monthly payment at an amount that would, over the course of a year, cover the highs and lows of the bills.

By signing up in March you will be able to build up a credit balance so that when the larger bills occur during the summer months there will be money there to cover that. Each year at this time the City reviews each one of the "Equal Payment Plan" accounts and adjusts the monthly payment to reflect the previous year usage as well as any balances on the account. A new agreement is signed between the customer and the City confirming the commitment to continue in the program. If the monthly payments are not made then the City will terminate the agreement and place the customer back on a regular billing that requires full payment each month. Please call Amanda at City Hall 535-1566 for more information about this program.

SUMMER RECREATION PROGRAMS

This year's summer campaign is appropriately tagged, "ALL FOR FUN AND FUN FOR ALL". True to the slogan, the new and improved 2009 version promises to be loaded with fun activities, classes and events for all ages. We're keeping what you liked about the past program and adding some new things that we think you will enjoy. The program guide will be released early this spring in time for you to plan us into your busy activity calendar. Watch for it in the Talent News and Review and coming soon online at www.cityoftalent.org. Brian McKinnis has returned for another year as the program coordinator. He is always open to input on ways to improve the existing program and to hear from people in the community with ideas on possible new summer programs or from those with the desire to share their skills by teaching a class. Tell us what you want, or share your talents with others by being part of the fun. It's all about fun and it's all about Talent Parks and Recreation offering something for everyone. Get involved.

Together, we are Talent. Got Talent?

Contact Brian via email at brian@cityoftalent.org or by phone at (541) 535-1566.

LET'S GET IT STARTED WITH TANGO!

Beginning April 2



Kicking off our summer recreation program this year will be Argentine Tango classes for Absolute beginners. This class for beginners will focus on the fundamental concepts of lead/follow, timing, rhythm and basic patterns for social style tango the way it's danced in Argentina. Students should wear comfortable clothing and shoes. Your instructors, Jesse and Heather Biesanz began learning the Argentine Tango 10 years ago. They have been lucky enough to take classes from some of the best teachers from the US and Argentina. They enjoy sharing their love of Argentine Tango with new people.

The class begins April 2nd and will meet at 6:00 pm Thursdays. Classes will be held at the Talent Community Center located at 206 E. Main Street. This Absolute Beginners class is \$30/month and NO PARTNERS NECESSARY!

Beginning in May, they will add Beyond Beginners classes – Walk-ins for this class will be welcome!

Registration for this class is available at the City of Talent weekdays from 8:30 – 5:00 or by emailing brian@cityoftalent.org.

Neighbor to Neighbor Project

Would you like your yard to look good but just aren't physically able to do it? We have some volunteers ready to help you with your spring yard clean up. Call Sharon at 535-9055 for information. Neighbor-to-Neighbor is a project of the City of Talent Together for Talent Committee.