

More recreational fun added to the City's lineup

Everybody knows the line from the movie that goes, "If you build it, they will come." It turns out that it's true.

The "Field of Dreams" for one group of recreationalists is the City's new Disc Golf Course built in Fahrens Park.

And not too far away, Rudolph Joseph Merino Park is active with kids, dog walkers and



This trio regularly plays the new Disc Golf Course located in Fahrens Park.

a bunch of other folks out to have fun.

The Disc Golf Course wasn't even officially open and the golfers were out testing the course.

The game of Disc Golf is conceptually the same as traditional golf. The object is to complete each hole with the fewest number of strokes.

But baskets are used to catch the discs, and the disc is tossed, not struck with a club.

There are plans for a second course to be built nearby.

Merino Park was named after the late Councilmember who served from 1946 until 1957.

Mr. Merino was a strong advocate for the City Charter who never missed a meeting in his 11 years on the Council.

He is credited with helping get the swimming pool at McNamara Park, improving the zoo at Applegate Park and building streets and sidewalks in South



This trio of climbers has some fun on the playground of Rudolph Joseph Merino Park in northwest Merced.

Merced.

The eight-acre neighborhood park has a ball field with dugouts, a basketball court, walking paths, picnic and barbeque areas, a restroom and playground equipment that includes a climbing wall.

Merino Park is located on the corner of Pacific and El Redondo drives.

The Disc Golf Course is located in Fahrens Park on Buena Vista Drive, just across from San Francisco Street.

Keep it a happy and joyous season by practicing holiday safety

'Tis the season to be jolly, so it's best to avoid holiday folly. To keep it a joyous time, remember to practice holiday safety:

WHILE SHOPPING:

It's just asking for trouble if presents are left out in plain view. Always lock the car and put the gifts in the trunk, or hide them under something. When you get home take everything out of the car.

Don't take all your credit cards with you and don't flash the cash.

Make sure you park your vehicle in a well-lit parking lot. Be aware of your surroundings, and stay in well-lit areas.

AT HOME:

Schedule deliveries when you are home, or make arrangements for a friend or neighbor to accept your packages. Packages

left at the front door are inviting a thief.

Crush boxes of expensive items so you're not advertising the presents people received.

Please donate to the annual Firefighters and Kops for Kids Toy Drive barrels. Toys are needed for kids up to age 12. To donate money or volunteer, call 385-6942.

WHEN LEAVING HOME:

Don't drink and drive! Always have a designated driver if you are consuming alcohol. Always watch out for drivers who are driving after drinking! They can be killers.

If you leave town for the holidays ask a trusted friend or neighbor if they can check your house daily and pick up any mail or newspapers. Be sure to tell them how long

you will be gone and how to contact you.

CHRISTMAS TREES:

If you have a live tree, make sure it is fresh. Saw off the bottom half inch and put it in a stand that holds water. Make sure it is well-watered.

Never use candles on a Christmas tree or other live greenery. Use only approved electric light strands. Turn off the lights before you go to bed.

Have your chimney inspected annually. Don't burn wrapping paper in the fireplace and only light fires on approved days.

Dispose of your live tree in the green refuse can. Cut the tree into pieces if necessary to fit it into the refuse container. The City no longer picks up trees that are placed in the gutters.

Merced City Council

Mayor Ellie Wooten
Mayor Pro Tem Joe Cortez
Council members:
John Carlisle
Michele Gabriault-Acosta
Noah Lor
Jim Sanders
Bill Spriggs

Council meetings

The Council meets on the first and third Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers in the Civic Center. The agenda is posted online at www.CityofMerced.org.

Contacting us

The City of Merced Web site, www.CityofMerced.org, contains City Council information, the Municipal Code and General Plan and other information. To contact the Newsletter, e-mail newsletter@cityofmerced.org, call the Public Information Office at 385-6232 or write:

Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th St.
Merced CA 95340

The Civic Center is open Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m., except holidays.

Call us

City Council	385-6834
City Manager	385-6834
City Attorney	385-6868
City Clerk	385-6866
Airport	385-6873
Code Enforcement.....	385-6855
Finance	385-4718
Inspection Services	385-6861
Personnel	385-6839
Planning Department.....	385-6858
Public Works (7:30-4:30) ...	385-6800
After hours	385-6905
Recreation/Parks	385-6855

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911

Fire Department.....	385-6891
Police Department.....	385-6912

Don't drink and drive!

Gordon Gray named Employee of the Year

Public Works Manager Gordon Gray has been named Employee of the Year for the City of Merced.

Gray was selected for the honor by his coworkers. A City employee since 1986, Gray is in charge of park, tree and street maintenance.

He has overseen the development of numerous parks in the City, including Stephan Gray and Merino Parks, and the Disc Golf Course that just opened.

Gray was cited as being the "go to guy" in the Public Works Department.



Great Lakes plans to start Merced service in January

Great Lakes Airlines has said it plans to begin flights in Merced next month.

Great Lakes was awarded the Essential Air Service contract by the U.S. Department of Transportation in October.

In the interim, Merced will continue to receive air service from US Airways.

Based in Cheyenne, Wyo., Great Lakes will offer three non-stop flights to McCarran Las Vegas International Airport, with the possibility of adding flights.

Holiday closures

City offices will be closed on Christmas, Tuesday, Dec. 25 and New Years, Tuesday, Jan. 1. There will be no refuse collection on those days.

The regular Tuesday collection will take place on Wednesday, and the rest of the week's refuse collection will be delayed by one day.

Two Charter amendments are approved

Merced voters approved two amendments to the City Charter on Nov. 6.

Voters agreed to an amendment imposing campaign contribution limits in the City Council and Mayoral elections and another that updates the Charter.

An amendment to give the council a raise to \$600 a month and tie future increases to the pay of general

law cities failed.

Under the Charter amendment, individual donors would be capped at \$500 campaign contributions and an entity would have a \$2,000 limit.

The other amendment would change wording in the Charter to be gender neutral, allow for Council meetings outside of the Civic Center and delete sections that con-

signs of gang activity.

The workshops are presented by Merced Police Department officers with extensive experience in dealing with gangs.

A featured speaker is a mother who lost a son to a street gang, and now he is serving prison time.

Workshops are at 7 p.m. and babysitting and refreshments are provided. Upcoming workshops are:

Dec. 12, Cruickshank Middle School, 601 Cormorant Dr.

Jan. 9, Ada Givens School, 2900 Green St.

Jan. 16, Gracey School, 945 West Ave.

Workshops aim to help parents recognize the signs of gangs

Are blue shoelaces a fashion statement? Is your child just a big fan of the color red?

A series of gang awareness workshops will be held at schools throughout the City to help parents learn whether their child is involved with criminal street gangs.

The sessions are intended to give parents and the public information on gangs, the threat they pose to the community and how to steer children away from gangs.

Photos of gang apparel, tattoos, colors, and graffiti are displayed to show the

City big rig parking lot open for truckers

The City of Merced has opened a commercial truck parking lot at the Merced Municipal Airport.

The 23 parking spaces

are in a partially fenced, lighted lot with regular police patrol. The lot is located on Riggs Avenue, just off of West Avenue.

tradict the state Constitution.

That amendment also would raise the bid threshold on Public Works projects from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

If a project would cost more than \$50,000 the City must go out to bid on it. The \$5,000 limit was first set in 1948.

The Charter amendments are due to take effect early next year.