

Newsletter name TBA

The newsletter is not called CityofMerced.org, we just took the opportunity to promote the City's Web site. The winning newsletter name and the contest winner will be announced in a future issue because of the large number of entries received.

We appreciate all of the entries. We also want to thank everyone who sent in other ideas for the newsletter. Please keep in touch at: Newsletter, 678 W. 18th St. Merced; e-mail newsletter@cityofmerced.org or call 385-6232.

Community forum looks at violence

Street violence that resulted in the shooting deaths of two teens prompted a special meeting of the City Council last month.

Neighborhood leaders, along with cultural, business, ethnic and educational leaders, were asked for their ideas on the causes and potential solutions to the problems.

It was stressed that any solution must come from within the community for it to be effective.

Comments from community leaders were compiled and distributed to the participants.

A second group will take information gathered 10 years ago, compare it to the new comments and see what programs have worked the best.

The next step will be a series of community outreach sessions to hear what people in different neighborhoods have to say about violence in the community and their suggested solutions.

He's cute, but not too cuddly

Orphaned mountain lion is placed at the Applegate Zoo

The Applegate Zoo has a new addition – a mountain lion cub estimated to be about 12 weeks old.

The cub was placed at the zoo by the California Department of Fish and Game after being abandoned by his mother. Wardens suspect the mother and two cubs were attacked, possibly by a large dog. One cub was found dead nearby and the zoo's cub had several broken ribs as a result of the attack.

"His appetite is really voracious," said Zookeeper Donna McDowell. The mountain lion drinks a bottle of special formula every three hours and started eating meat in July.

The cub did not tolerate the hot Valley weather this summer and is being kept



Zookeeper Donna McDowell carefully holds the cub.

in an air-conditioned setting while he adjusts. However, the public can view him from 2 to 2:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday in the zoo's Quarantine Room until temperatures cool down this fall.

Mountain lions, or *Felis concolor*, range throughout the Western United States, and at one time they were found from Canada to Chile. They are also called pumas, cougars or panthers.

Mountain lions are the largest of the small cats. Males are 3- to 6-feet long while females range up to 5-feet long. Males weigh between 147 and 227 pounds, while females weigh from 79 pounds to 132 pounds. Cubs weigh 8 to 15 ounces at birth. They can live for 20 years.

Federal grant results in 9 more firefighters

The City of Merced will receive \$900,000 in a one-time federal grant that will add nine firefighter positions to the Merced Fire Department staff.

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response, SAFER, grant was awarded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The grant pays a total of \$100,000 per firefighter over the four-year life of the grant. The grants are intended to make firefighting operations safer and more effective.

The City agreed to fully fund the positions for at least one additional year under the terms of the agreement. The City's match funding for the grant will be approximately \$2 million over a five-year period.

This year the department was also authorized to add 13 firefighters from Measure C monies, a ½ cent local general sales tax. The nine additional positions from SAFER funding will bring the total number of firefighters in the department to 79.

With the additional staff, the department will be able to staff three firefighters on all equipment rolling to an emergency call. In prior years, some of the department's fire equipment responded with only a crew of two.

"This grant means that even though we have been doing an excellent job now, we can do a much better job," Fire Chief Ken Mitten said. "The additional staffing will mean increased efficiency and safety for the citizens and the firefighters themselves."

Hot summer temps led to 'Cooling Centers'

This summer the temperatures soared and thermometers stayed on scorching. The typical night cooling experienced in the Central Valley never materialized.

The National Weather Service issued heat advisories warning people that the extreme temperatures could lead to health problems. The City of Merced responded to the danger and opened up a "Cooling Center" in July.

Forty people took advantage of the air conditioned building that was opened up from noon to 9 p.m. The City is prepared to open up the "Cooling Centers" again if more heat advisories are issued for the region.

The City Council

Mayor Ellie Wooten
Mayor Pro Tem Joe Cortez
Councilmember Michele Gabriault-Acosta
Councilmember Rick Osorio
Councilmember Carl Pollard
Councilmember Jim Sanders
Councilmember Bill Spriggs

Contacting us

The City of Merced wants the site www.cityofmerced.org to be a one-stop source for information on the City. It contains City Council agendas and minutes, the Municipal Code, the General Plan, news releases from the City, department listings, e-mail addresses and information on local officials. We also want to hear from people in person or on the phone.

Merced Civic Center
678 W. 18th St.
Merced CA 95340
Open Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.,
except holidays

City Council.....	385-6834
City Manager.....	385-6834
City Attorney.....	385-6868
Code Enforcement	385-6855
Finance	385-4718
Personnel	385-6839
Planning Department	385-6858
Public Works	385-6800
Recreation/Parks.....	385-6855

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 911

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

Names are needed for new City parks

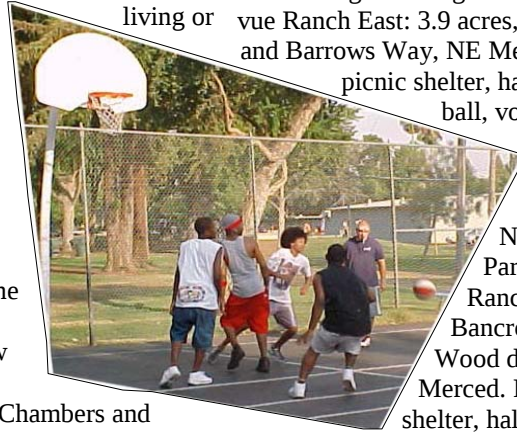
There are eight new parks and facilities under development throughout the City that need names.

The criteria used in selecting a park name is: geographical location (neighborhood, significant areas, etc.); natural features; a person, deceased, with historical or cultural significance; a person or group, living or deceased, with features identified with the land or facility.

A committee of two Council members and the Recreation and Parks Commission will review the names at 5:30 p.m. Sept. 25 in the Council Chambers and forward nominees to the City Council.

Names are needed for: (The names assigned are for identification purposes only):

- Sandcastle Neighborhood Park: 7 acres, Blux Avenue and Albert Drive, SE Merced. Youth soccer field.
- Compass Pointe Neighborhood Park: 8 acres, Pacific and El Redondo drives, NW Merced.
- Moraga Neighborhood Park: 8 acres, east of McKee Road and south of Yosemite Avenue, NE Merced.
- Merced Community Dog Park: 7 acres, R Street and Yosemite Avenue, NE Merced. Bikeway staging area, bocce ball court, small and large dog area.



- Applegate Community Park Zoo Educational Building: At Applegate Park Zoo, R and 25th streets, Central Merced. A one-room pre-fab for nature-based educational talks.

- Village 15 Neighborhood Park, Bellevue Ranch East: 3.9 acres, Mandeville Way and Barrows Way, NE Merced. Play area, picnic shelter, half-court basketball, volleyball court, play fields and walkways.
- Village 14 Neighborhood Park, Bellevue Ranch East: 3 acres, Bancroft and Arrow Wood drives, NE Merced. Play area, picnic shelter, half-court basketball, volleyball court, play fields and walkways.

- Village 7 Neighborhood Park, Bellevue Ranch East: 3.5 acres, Revelle Drive and Bixby Way, NE Merced. Play area, picnic shelter, half-court basketball, volleyball court, play fields and walkways.

All names must be submitted in writing to the Director of Parks and Community Services, 678 W. 18th St., Merced, CA 95340 by 5 p.m. Sept. 22. E-mails and voice mails are not acceptable. Include a brief explanation of how the name is consistent with the criteria or the person's contribution to the City. Applications and information can be found at the Parks and Community Services Department or by calling 385-6855.

Online survey seeks the public's opinion

A detailed survey of City services has gone online giving residents a chance to grade municipal operations.

Participants not only rate services, they are asked for suggestions on how to improve how the City works. The data collected will be used by the City Manager and department heads to monitor day-to-day operations, correct any problems and improve the overall quality of services.

National Data Online is conducting the survey at no charge to the City. The surveys are anonymous and designed to allow a person to answer the survey only once so that the data is balanced. The survey can be taken in English, Spanish and Hmong.

The Community Survey section will allow participants to comment on the overall direction of the City, City services and qual-

ity of life issues. There are individual sections on the operations of the Public Works Department, the Parks and Community Services Department, the Police Department and Fire Department. The survey site also has an electronic CrimeTip section where residents can anonymously provide information for the police.

The police hope the crime stoppers section of the Web site will encourage people to supply officers with information about crimes that have been committed, potential gang activity and crime hot spots.

Along with a review of the Fire Department operations, there is a separate section for business owners to conduct a fire inspection before department staff tours a facility.

The survey is available at www.cityofmerced.org.