

City Hall News

From the desk of

Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing

October 9, 2008

- 1. Celebrate Safe Communities!** Saturday's Celebrate Safe Communities event, sponsored by the Fort Bragg Coalition for Gang Awareness and Prevention was a great success! Despite the forecast of rain, Coalition members forged ahead and were rewarded with sunny skies by the afternoon. More than 250 free hamburgers and 200 free hotdogs were served. Activity booths included pumpkin decorating, face painting, necklace making, sponge painting, a bounce house, soccer demonstrations, basketball games, street art, bean bag tosses, and a great mix of music was provided by DJ Ramos! All of the activity booths were busy for the entire three-hour event. Approximately 20 raffle prizes were given away including basketballs, birdhouses, gift certificates, hand-made pencil and pen sets, books, board games and even a bicycle! The Coalition is hopeful that this will be the start of an annual event in Fort Bragg. Many thanks to the Gang Coalition and a special thanks to Administrative Secretary Kira Magness at the Police Department for the tremendous amount of effort she put into organizing this wonderful community event.
- 2. City Hall Annex to Open on Friday, October 10th.** Just a reminder that the City's Finance Department and Community Development Department will be relocated to the temporary "City Hall Annex" at 333 North Franklin Street while construction activities are taking place at City Hall. During the construction period, City Hall will be closed to the public except by appointment. Residents, business owners, contractors, and visitors will be welcomed at the City Hall Annex and activities related to water/sewer billing, building and planning permits, encroachment permits, business licenses, etc. will be handled by staff at the City Hall Annex.
- 3. Bainbridge Park Tennis Courts.** For all tennis players out there who are wondering what's going on with the lights at the Bainbridge Park tennis courts—there is an electrical problem and the City's Public Works Department is soliciting proposals for the repairs. As soon as the work is complete, the courts will be lit again at night.
- 4. Bainbridge Park Restrooms.** The City Clerk opened bids for the Bainbridge Park Restroom project a couple of weeks ago and the bids all exceeded the amount of grant funds that are available for the project. The lowest bid came in at \$230,000 and we have only \$200,000 available for the project. Staff is looking at various options for reducing project costs and we are also searching for potential sources of additional funds prior to bringing a contract forward for Council action.
- 5. Census 2010.** The Census 2010 effort is underway. The census is a count of every person residing in the United States and the U.S. Constitution mandates that a complete count be conducted every ten years. Census 2010 will have only a short-form questionnaire which asks for very basic information and it will take just a few minutes to complete. It is very important that every resident be counted as billions of dollars in federal funds are awarded to states and communities based on census data. County CEO Tom Mitchell is taking the lead in organizing a Complete Count Committee to ensure that the Census 2010 counts are accurate in Mendocino County and its cities.

- 6. City's Investment in AIG Transferred.** The meltdown of Wall Street's financial establishments resulted in the need for a very hasty transfer of some Fort Bragg Redevelopment Agency assets that were invested with American International Group (AIG). The Redevelopment Agency has an approximately \$330,000 reserve fund that was established for the 2004 Tax Allocation Bonds. We were notified by the Trustee for the bonds that AIG's rating had been downgraded to a point where the bond covenants required the funds to be returned and reinvested. Unfortunately, the funds were earning 4.51% interest with AIG, a rate that cannot be matched in today's market. We have terminated our investment with AIG and reinvested the funds. Finance Director Pat Frost is checking with our Bond Counsel to determine whether a lower rate will result in a need for additional collateralization of the reserve.
- 7. Port-a-Potties at Glass Beach and Pudding Creek Beach.** The Community Development Department is working with State Parks to place handicapped accessible port-a-potties at Pudding Creek Beach and at the entrance to the Glass Beach headlands at MacKerricher State Park. The "deal" we're working on would have the City of Fort Bragg purchasing, permitting and installing the port-a-potties and State Parks will maintain them and have them pumped. We have found an excellent price on two used port-a-potties, so the cost to the City will be minimal. Eventually, the port-a-potties will be replaced by permanent facilities, but in the meantime they are direly needed in these locations.
- 8. Update: Pudding Creek Force Main.** Construction of the new sewer force main is complete from the Elm Street manhole to Pudding Creek Bridge. The contractors have a good start on the construction of the pipe from the north side of Pudding Creek Bridge to the sewer lift station. United States Fish and Wildlife Service staff visited the project site in late September and performed a survey for the tidewater goby. They also conducted a field review for the proposed future removal of the soon-to-be abandoned sewer force main that is buried under the streambed. The new sewer force main will be attached to the top of the pilings on the Pudding Creek Bridge.