

This is the weekly report for the week ending December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

1. **Meeting Notes**

The first meeting following the New Year will be the swearing in ceremony on January 8<sup>th</sup> 2013. The first full business meeting of the City Council is scheduled for January 15<sup>th</sup> 2013.

2. **City Office Closure**

As has been the case during the past two years, as a cost saving measure and with the cooperation of our bargaining units, the City offices will be closed during the holiday week in December, beginning December 24<sup>th</sup>, with offices reopening on January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The Police and Fire Departments will remain open, and the Recreation, Paratransit, Public Works, and Housing Authority departments will have partial services. The main branch of the Library will be open at reduced hours, and the branch libraries will be closed. (See further details on the schedule for the Library, Recreation, and Paratransit services in items 7 and 8 of this weekly report.)

3. **Charitable Contribution Campaign by Richmond Employees**

As you may recall, in recent years, the City of Richmond employees have participated in a fundraising campaign to contribute to local charities through voluntary payroll deductions. This campaign is organized by Theresa Austin, the Executive Secretary in the City of Richmond Finance Department, with assistance by other departmental representatives.

This year's campaign effort at the City of Richmond was once again an outstanding success. City staff has pledged **\$48,078.60** through payroll deductions in 2013 for 300 agencies including Bay Area Black United Fund, Community Health Charities, Friends of Disabled Children, Friends of Richmond Library, Richmond/EI Cerrito Firefighters Toy Program, Richmond PAL, Richmond Public Library Foundation, Richmond Youth Academy, Richmond Police Explorers, United Way, and Local Independent Charities.

The amount pledged this year was an increase of \$3,269.60 from last year's total contributions of \$44,809.00.

I appreciate the continued generosity and commitment of City of Richmond employees, and I appreciate the work by Theresa Austin to organize this effort.

#### 4. Via Verdi Project Update

As you may recall, El Portal Drive has been closed to through traffic in the vicinity of I-80 as part of the Via Verde sinkhole repair. This past Friday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, El Portal Drive was reopened to traffic as a partial-width road opening, with one travel lane in each direction. The north side of El Portal Drive will remain closed until the remaining project tasks are completed, including utility installation, Via Verdi roadway reconstruction, removal of the temporary bypass road, and restoration of the Rolling Hills Memorial Park property.



**El Portal Drive Rainbow:** A rainbow is visible from El Portal Drive at the time of the road opening, confirming this was an auspicious time to reopen El Portal Drive to through traffic.



**El Portal Drive Road Opening:** El Portal Drive is open to through traffic.

## 5. Recycle Your Holiday Tree

Please recycle your natural holiday tree through one of Richmond Sanitary Services' opportunities:

- Cut your tree to fit in your green waste cart and set the cart out on any of your regular green waste collection days.
- Take your tree to the Golden Bear Transfer Station, located at 1 Parr Blvd, Richmond. Hours: Monday - Friday 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Saturday and Sunday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Contact: (510) 970-7260.
  - Proof of residency in service area is required
  - There will be a disposal charge of \$8.00 for non-recyclable trees or no proof of residency
- If you are unable to place your tree in the green cart or take it to the transfer station, please call Richmond Sanitary Service customer service office at (510) 262-7100 to arrange for pickup at no additional charge.



## 6. New Business in Richmond – GreenWorksUs, Inc.

GreenWorksUs Inc. is relocating a division of their business to Richmond from San Ramon. GreenWorks closed escrow in November on the purchase of a 26,568 sq. ft. building at 4301 Lakeside Drive (the former West County Times building).

GreenWorks is a manufacturer of walk-in bathtubs. The company is projecting 200 employees at this facility for light assembly, a call center, sales, and warehousing. City staff is working with GreenWorks to plan a job fair the second week of January 2013. Details of the job fair are forthcoming once they are

finalized. The company is looking to hire in-home sales representatives, call center representatives, installers, and warehouse workers.

7. **Richmond Public Library Holiday Hours (Monday, December 24, 2012 through Wednesday, January 2, 2013)**

The Richmond Public Library’s main branch will be open the following hours during the December holidays:

<b>Mon.</b>	<b>Dec. 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>1:00 PM to 5:00 PM</b>
<b>Tues.</b>	<b>Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> (Christmas)</b>	<b><i>Closed for the holiday</i></b>
<b>Wed.</b>	<b>Dec. 26<sup>th</sup></b>	12:00 PM to 7:00 PM
<b>Thu.</b>	<b>Dec. 27<sup>th</sup></b>	10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
<b>Fri.</b>	<b>Dec. 28<sup>th</sup></b>	1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
<b>Sat.</b>	<b>Dec. 29<sup>th</sup></b>	1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
<b>Sun.</b>	<b>Dec. 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b><i>Closed</i></b>
<b>Mon.</b>	<b>Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> (New Year’s Eve)</b>	1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
<b>Tues.</b>	<b>Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 (New Year’s Day)</b>	<b><i>Closed for the holiday</i></b>
<b>Wed.</b>	<b>Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	12:00 PM to 7:00 PM

The main library’s normal hours will resume Thursday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013. Both the Bayview Branch and the West Side Branch will be closed from Friday, December 21, 2012, through Tuesday, January 1, 2013, and will reopen for normal hours on Wednesday, January 2, 2013.

8. **Recreation Highlights**

**15<sup>th</sup> Annual Senior Winter Ball**

The Commission on Aging held its 15<sup>th</sup> annual Senior Winter Ball on Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium. With another full house of 500 participants, the seniors enjoyed the Junius Courtney Big Band, an elegant dinner and line dancing. Thank you to the Recreation staff and to all the volunteers who helped during the evening, including the Pinole Interact Club, who escorted the seniors to their tables and served meals, and to the Richmond Police Explorers and their advisors, who escorted seniors from their vehicles to the event.



### Annex Sewing Circle

The Richmond Annex Sewing Circle program is supplying the Annex Advisory Board (Board) with quilts, baby clothes and scarves. These items, along with gently used coats, are being collected by the Board to donate to the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program.



### Annex Senior Center Holiday Party

The Annex Senior Center held its annual holiday luncheon with over 60 seniors in attendance. The Kensington Senior Center Serenaders were asked to join the festivities and they hosted a sing-a-long with the guests. In addition to the potluck, there was a holiday craft fair and bazaar as well as a 50/50 drawing. A visit from Santa for all those on his good list was a nice surprise. The seniors had a great time.



### Massage and Acupressure

Michael Matz and his assistant provided free chair massage and acupressure to staff and volunteers at the Senior Center on Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. Currently a trial program for staff, the Senior Center is looking to integrate the service with the Blood Pressure Screening services performed the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month.

### Senior Zumba

The participants of the Zumba class held at the Senior Center will be sang Christmas carols at the Senior Center during lunchtime on Wednesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>.

### Recreation Department Holiday Observance Schedule

#### *Community Centers:*

In observance of the holiday season, all Recreation Department facilities will be closed on the following dates:

- December 25, 2012
  - December 31, 2012
  - January 1, 2013
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- The Richmond Recreation Complex (3230 Macdonald Avenue) Fitness Center and Gymnasium only will be open as follows:
    - December 24, 2012 & December 26 – 28, 2012 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM
  - Richmond Plunge (1 East Avenue) will be open as follows:
    - December 24, 2012 & December 26 – 28, 2012 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM

- Shields-Reid Community Center (1410 Kelsey Street) will be open for Weigh of Life classes only as follows:

December 26, 2012 & December 28, 2012  
9:45 AM to 11:15 AM & 5:45 PM to 7:15 PM

- Nevin Community Center (598 Nevin Avenue) will be open for Weigh of Life classes only as follows:

December 29, 2012 from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM

The Recreation Department Administrative Offices and all other facilities will be closed from December 24, 2012 to January 1, 2013.

All Recreation Department facilities will resume normal programming on January 2, 2013.

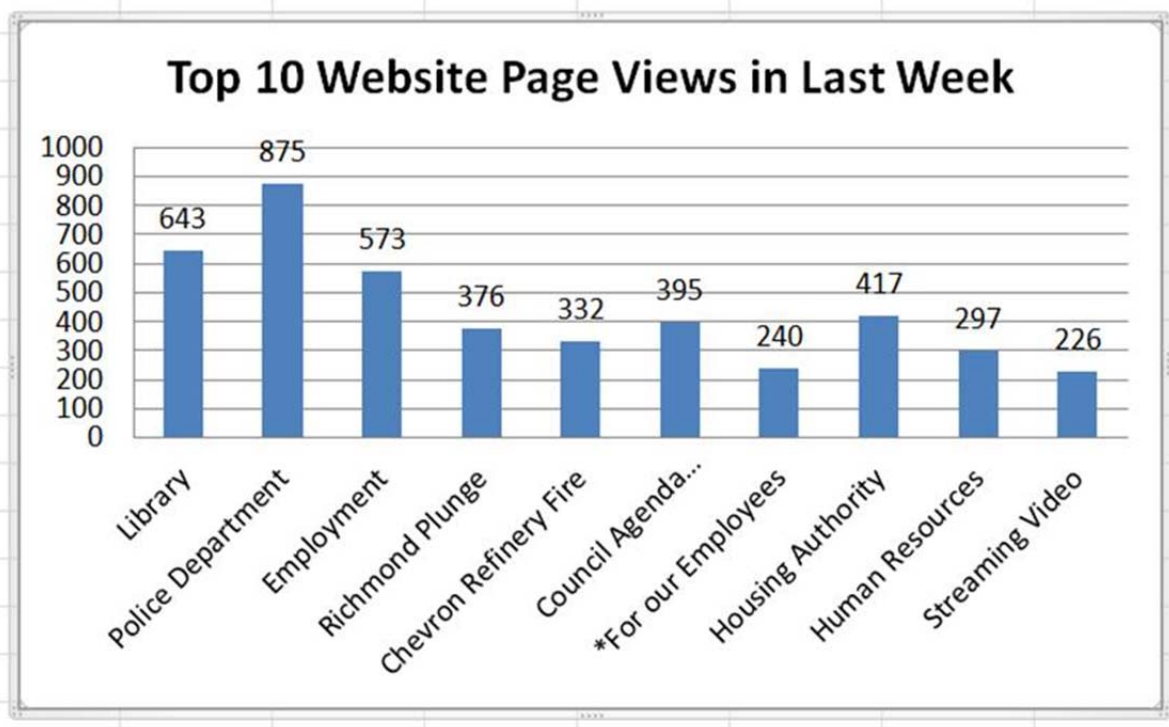
*Paratransit:*

Regular Paratransit services will be available until 5:00 PM on Friday, December 21, 2012, and will resume on Wednesday, January 2, 2013.

Between December 21st and January 2nd, the Taxi Scrip Program, another transportation service offered through the Paratransit Division, will be available 24 hours per day, as usual. Taxi Scrip tickets must be purchased in the Cashier's Office in City Hall at 450 Civic Center Plaza on the 2nd floor no later than Friday, December 21st by 3:00 PM.

Please call 510-307-8026 to schedule services or if you have any questions.

## 9. Website Fun Facts



## 10. Office of Neighborhood Safety – One Young Man’s Experience in the Fellowship Program

An important component of the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) street outreach strategy is the Operation Peacemaker Fellowship program (the Fellowship). The Fellowship is a transformative mentoring intervention designed for those most likely to be involved in gun violence. This intervention works to transform the attitudes and behaviors that have given rise to the selected individual’s involvement in gun violence. The Fellowship is representative of those individuals who are most resistant to change and/or are chronically unresponsive to the traditional range of services offered or available in the Richmond community.

The City recently received a letter from an ONS Fellowship participant describing his experiences with ONS and the Fellowship. I have included below a transcript of the letter in its entirety, as I think it describes very well the impacts of this important ONS program (the references to DeVone and other individuals are to the ONS director and his staff of Neighborhood Change Agents):



Dear City of Richmond,

*When I first started with the ONS I had no clue as of what it was they wanted me to do. I was done with high school and just wanted to make money. I was in the streets after I dropped out of the union because I wasn't going to pass the drug screening. On my way home one day I was on the phone with a friend and he was talking to another friend of ours mother. She knew a guy who was starting up some type of program. I remember being recruited by the ONS from these meetings over lunch with DeVone and two of my other friends. We would have discussions about the City of Richmond and the violence. We never spoke about anyone's business or anything that was too personal; only about how the murder rate was too high.*

*Anyway, I joined the ONS as an intern and got serious about college from the conversations with DeVone, Diane, and Joe. They would just elaborate about their school experiences and how they made it, or didn't make it through. That inspired me to want to do more with my life and get a career started. Before I joined the ONS I had no vision to complete college, but then ONS introduced me to the Omega family (Street Soldiers), it was then that I really started to take school more serious.*

*During this process I still had issues I needed to work out, like putting myself in dangerous environments, and the bad decisions I was still making. I got in trouble, and the ONS was there in my corner to say good words on my behalf to the judge, and has been here for me since I've been home. That let me know that they truly cared about my future and well-being. The Neighborhood Change Agents have played a big role in my journey by giving me pep talks about their history, of the struggles they had to overcome as men and women. They pointed me to a bunch of resources I needed, like Richmond Works where I got help with my resume, and another lady with the County who helped me to get basic Adult Health Coverage. ONS helped me take care of some tickets to get my license back; paid school and book fees off; provided rides to places when I needed them and some good advice here and there. Additionally, I've been on a few trips with the ONS and met some important people. I went to Los Angeles, San Diego, Texas, Sacramento, and Florida. On those trips I had such great times because I'm in a new environment exploring around new towns. We get to eat at some different restaurants I never heard of, nor been to that serve great food. I always get to meet some interesting people who play important roles in that city like, Mayors, City Manager's, Executive Directors, Company Presidents, and more which has been so inspirational. Moreover, the Neighborhood Change Agents really worked with me and rode my back until I picked up my slack. I have much respect for Mrs. Gatewood and Ms. Dias for always checking in on me, and putting me in positions to find a job. On that note, I was hired at a local Boys & Girls Club, all from simply volunteering.*

*It was the ONS' idea that I find something that I'm interested in, so I can enjoy it and get some type of experience in it. The ONS gave me a stipend for the actual hours I volunteered. I really needed the money, so it was a big help. I volunteered for a month and a half, and was then later hired after my successful interview with the club. This job came at a perfect time for me because the school semester began also. I'm currently working and going to school. It's not easy, but it's what I like to do and I'm going to keep doing it until I can graduate to better things. Working with these kids at the club has been a fun challenge. It's fun because I get to run different activities with the kids and do lots of fun things. I also get to help them with their homework. The people I work with are nice, and help me when I need it. Ever since I've been working with the kids it has pushed me to be more responsible. It's helping me with my leadership skills, and how to work with teammates again. I still have lots to learn about my position, but comparing myself now to what I knew about working with kids before; I've learned a lot. I plan, prepare, and lead my own program of activities at the club. I'm also a coach for the small teams we have at the club. Like now, its basketball season, so I have my own basketball team. Our first game is after winter break. I like working there and will continue to work there until I can find something better or excel into another position.*

*The ONS means a whole lot to me because without the ONS I probably would still be running the streets. They invested a lot into me by linking me to resources, helping get my life on track, and surrounding me with positive role models. They've shown me there's more to explore in the world than just The Bay Area. Everyone in the office has been supportive of me since day 1, and I'm very appreciative to be a part of this program.*

*My dad hasn't been in my life since I was a kid and my mother raised me until it was time for me to get out on my own. I had to live and learn a lot of things about being a man on my own, and pick up what I can from other men on my own. The ONS showed up as a healthy guide in my life and I now realize it. I'm grateful to have a good team behind me such as the Office of Neighborhood Safety. I just hope I am doing my part with my role in the department. That's why any meeting, or any type of event that's going on if I'm invited I will show up.*

*Thanks and Happy Holidays!*

*Eric*

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*Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments about these or any other items of interest to you.*

***Have a great week and a great holiday season!***



***I wish you and yours the very best for the New Year.***



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