

Snow in forecast for Snoopy House grand opening

For the first time, the iconic Snoopy House display at City Hall will be accompanied by 10 tons of snow to play in at the opening night of this free-to-the-public event this Saturday Dec. 12.

“Snow is definitely a rarity here in sunny Southern California,” said Costa Mesa Mayor Steve Mensinger. “So we are happy to do our part to add a nice winter touch to our annual Snoopy House display for the enjoyment of children and families.”

The 10 tons of snow will be delivered on the opening night Dec. 12 and another 10 tons is scheduled for delivery on Dec. 19, barring weather conditions.

Snoopy House, which features holiday scenes populated by “Peanuts” characters, is a free event available for viewing at City Hall from 5:30 to 9 p.m. nightly from Dec. 12 through Dec. 23.

The tradition started in 1966 when the Jordan family first created the display at their Eastside Costa Mesa home.



Family members and friends put together a series of Christmas scenes that eventually took up most of the front yard, side yard and even the roof of their home. Since its inception, the display attracts an estimated 80,000 visitors annually.

The Snoopy House moved to Costa Mesa City Hall in 2011 when city officials learned the fate of the annual tradition was in jeopardy. The city of Costa Mesa agreed to host the display and provide other assistance and has been doing so every year since.

This partnership with the Jordan family has continued ever since and city personnel partner with Jim Jordan and his wife Linda, who work tirelessly on this labor of love each year. Since its arrival at city hall, additional features including nightly live music and free train rides for children. To complement the Snoopy House, the city also puts on a nightly light show on the façade of City Hall.

In addition to snow, Saturday's opening night will begin with a formal presentation by the mayor and city council members at 5:30 p.m.

Santa will also make special visits to the event each night between 7 to 9 p.m. beginning opening night, Dec. 12, through Dec. 23. Children and their families will have opportunities to receive free photos with Santa.

Several youth nonprofit groups will have booths at the Snoopy House display each night selling beverages and snacks. Visitors to the event can also donate to the city sponsored Spark of Love toy drive.

Learn more about Early College High School

Early College High School is hosting an informational night on Jan. 28, 2016 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room.

ECHS is for those students interested in an alternative to the typical large high school feel, those that are motivated, encouraged and ready for the challenge college classes bring. If this sounds like you, this program may be what you're looking for. [Click here](#) to see a flier about Early College High School.

After School program launches at Rea Elementary

The R.O.C.K.S After School Program announced that Rea Elementary is an official R.O.C.K.S site.

As of Nov. 16, the site has a total of 19 children registered.

Participants will partake in homework time, games, sports, enrichment activities, and arts and crafts. In addition, once a week, the Fitness Program will lead R.O.C.K.S participants in interactive and fun health, fitness, and nutritional activities to encourage a healthy lifestyle.

Bark Park gets a new part-time staffer

The Parks & Community Services Department announced it has hired a new part-time staff member to who has been assigned solely to the Bark Park.

The staffer works 24 hours a week Monday through Friday. The Bark Park is a heavily-used park which requires daily maintenance and cleaning needs. The maintenance worker is able to fill holes daily to meet safety needs, clean chairs, sweep walkways, monitor public postings, empty trash cans and assess larger maintenance needs.

Having an increased staff presence in the park has also helped with gathering feedback from the regular users in regards to park enhancements as staff moves to create a master plan for overall park improvements.

Police graduate 20 from citizen's academy

The department held a citizen's academy graduation on Wednesday Nov. 18 at 6:30 pm.

There were 20 citizens who graduated from the 11 week program. The academy is designed to provide citizens with an understanding of the police department's operations. Students will learn from police department personnel who are experts in the areas of S.W.A.T., narcotics, major crimes, patrol operations, traffic laws, criminal law, crime scene investigation, and other related fields.



Students will also be scheduled for a ride-along during the academy. Students gain an overall knowledge of the Costa Mesa Police Department, how it's organized, how it serves the community, and who the people are who respond when citizens call.

Tanager Drive landscape renovation completed

Costa Mesa public service crews recently finished the Tanager Drive landscape near the Costa Mesa Country Club main entrance.

The work resulted in the removal and replacement of several hundred feet of tired chain link fencing and the declining woody vines, which blocked views to the Costa Mesa Country Club.

The entrance project, funded by golf course revenues, made a tremendous improvement to the main access for the City's golf course and the clubhouse. The attractive plants, decorative stone treatments, accent lighting, and the new gold lettering of the new entrance quickly highlighted the poor condition of the remaining street-scape along Tanager Drive.

The installation of wrought iron fencing and a pedestrian access gate was finished off with a creative blend of water efficient plants in a meandering design. As the plant material becomes acclimated and begins to grow, the colorful blend of succulent plants with their wide variety of forms and textures will keep the small slope stable and provide an attractive frontage to the golf course.

ARTventure gets rave reviews

The opening reception of ARTventure, the Cultural Arts Committee's new signature event, took place on Friday evening Nov. 13 at the Cisco Home showroom in the SoCo Collection.

The evening included an exhibition of nearly 150 pieces of art that were displayed on and around unique furnishings, fixtures and home design elements.

Prizes were awarded to the artists by judge Kirby Piazza, in front of the more than 650 event attendees. The second day drew in a crowd of nearly 400 art lovers and included two live culinary demonstrations by Bistro Papillote and St. Patisserie, four musical performances including a flamenco guitarist, a jazz duo, a youth string quartet and a duo of dueling guitarists. An edgy graffiti artist demonstration ended the day.

The final day of the event was geared towards youth and families and included a saxophone soloist performance, four dance performances by Halo Dance for Autism Foundation, a techy robotics demo provided by Strategic Kids, a performance by the All American Boys Chorus and an afternoon with the author segment that featured child author Ryan Rector. About 300 people visited the event on this final day.

City is gearing up for new ARTventure weekend event beginning Nov. 13

The City's Cultural Arts Committee and Parks and Community Services Department have set the stage for a unique, three-day

arts event that will feature more than 100 pieces of art submitted by local community members.

The artwork will be displayed alongside one-of-a-kind pieces of furniture and vibrant home décor inside of the Cisco Home Showroom located in the SoCo Collection design center.

“This inaugural ARTventure event is primed to become an annual signature event that highlights and signifies why Costa Mesa is known as the City of the Arts,” said Justin Martin, the city’s supervisor of Parks and Community Services, which is overseeing the event.

The new ARTventure event, founded by the city’s Cultural Arts Committee, is free to the public and will run Friday, Nov. 13 through Sunday, Nov. 15.

This one-of-a-kind juried exhibition of art will showcase the work of local artists in a non-traditional gallery style format that pairs individual artwork with furniture, fixtures, home décor and unique design elements.

Accepted submissions include a variety of media, including oil, watercolor and acrylic paintings, graphite drawings, metal sculpture, fashion, photography, fiber art, mixed media as well as literary art.



To enhance the atmosphere of the event there will be live entertainment featuring strolling vocal and instrumental musicians, dance performances, and literary and culinary demonstrations. Youth performances and youth art coming from K-12 Costa Mesa schools will also be part of the event.

Friday's event begins at 5:45 p.m. with a welcome from city leaders and members of the Cultural Arts Committee. Awards covering several categories will be presented to selected winning artists. Food and beverage will be part of the festivities as well as entertainment by the Irvine Jazz Trio.

Saturday and Sunday's event will both begin at 11 a.m. and run until 5 p.m. Saturday's event will feature displayed artwork as well as culinary demonstrations by Bistro Papillote and ST Patisserie, and a special musical performance by Ruben Gonzalez of Pasion Gitano, provided in thanks to the Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

Sunday is family day and will feature displayed art, demonstrations from the Strategic Kids Lego Engineering and Robotics Team from Davis Elementary School, an interactive animation station with special guest animator Lynn Okimura, a performance by the All-American Boys Chorus and an afternoon reading and discussion with 10-year-old child author Ryan Rector.



Ryan Rector

All submitted entries will be screened, juried and displayed at the Cisco Home venue. The art will then be judged by Kirby Piazza, Costa Mesa High School's ACE Academy Visual and Performing Arts chair.

In addition to Cisco Home, the SoCo Collection design center and the Segerstrom Center for the Arts are sponsors of the event.

The SoCo Collection center is located at 3303 Hyland Ave, Costa Mesa.

Three captains and division chief honored at swearing in ceremony

The Fire and Rescue Department held a special swearing-in ceremony on Friday Oct. 30 at the City Council Chambers to honor both the promotion of three new fire captains and a

division chief as well as the memory of those who perished in the Sept.11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

Steve Airey, Fred McDowell and Taylor Voss received their badges at the event. Airey and McDowell are newly promoted captains and Voss was promoted last August. In addition, recently promoted Division Chief Jason Pyle also received his badge.

“With this promotion, we are moving three veteran firefighters with decades of experience to the helm of our company office cadre,” Fire and Rescue Chief Dan Stefano said. “I look forward to their contributions to the fire service and the Costa Mesa community for years to come.”



Airey began his career with the Costa Mesa Fire Department in September, 2003 and as a firefighter/paramedic. In 2013, he managed a project to activate the department's first Paramedic Assessment Unit and he's spent 16 years as a seasonal beach lifeguard with the City of Coronado. He's a graduate of the Santa Ana College Fire Academy and he has a Bachelor's Degree in kinesiology from San Diego State University.

A longtime musician, McDowell joined the Costa Mesa Fire Department Honor Guard as a volunteer bugler in 1995 and was later hired as a firefighter in 1998 and promoted to fire

engineer in 2002. He is a graduate of the Santa Ana College Fire Academy. He has a Bachelor's Degree in education and music from Cal State University Fullerton, and he has continued his volunteer role with the Honor Guard for 20 years.

Voss is a third-generation firefighter who joined the Costa Mesa Fire Department in 2003. He has been the department's EMS Committee Chair and has been a key member on the Rescue Ambulance Committee, among many other departmental contributions. Further, Taylor brings over three years of experience, training, and leadership from his respected military service as a member of the United States Navy. He is a graduate of the Santa Ana College Basic Fire Academy and is currently pursuing his Bachelor's Degree from Kaplan University.

In addition to the captain and division chief promotions, the fire department announced that Daniel Cooper and Clint Brown have officially begun their employment with the Fire Department as paramedics. The pair will first complete the Orange County Paramedic accreditation process and then begin an intensive, two-week orientation academy before being placed into their respective shift assignments.

Cooper is a graduate of El Camino College's Basic Fire Academy and the Paramedic Training Institute. He has recent experience working as a firefighter/paramedic for the Sierra Madre Fire Department, in addition to experience working as a reserve firefighter for the Culver City Fire Department and as an ambulance operator for the Long Beach and Hermosa Beach Fire Departments. He holds a Bachelor's Degree from California State University, Los Angeles.

Brown is a graduate of San Pasqual's Basic Fire Academy and the National College of Technical Instruction's Paramedic Program. Most recently, he worked as a paramedic in Riverside County, as an EMT with Care Ambulance, and previously served

as a reserve firefighter for the Fountain Valley Fire Department.

Coinciding with the swearing in ceremony was a display of the 9-11 Rescue Remembrance Project at City Hall. The firetruck was one of several Rescue units that were called into service when terrorists attacked the World Trade Center in New York City on Sept. 11, 2001. Every member of that rescue firetruck team perished in the World Trade Center attacks. The Rescue truck has been visiting Southern California fire agencies throughout the summer and will leave Costa Mesa Friday as it goes on tour throughout the nation.

Fair Board unanimously OKs going forward with Arlington Drive bio-swale and bike trail project

The OC Fair Board of Directors voted 9-0 at the October meeting to begin the process to enter into a partnership with the city of Costa Mesa to construct a new vegetated bio-swale and multi-purpose bike and pedestrian trail along the southerly portion of Arlington Drive.

The board was given a presentation by Public Services Director Ernesto Munoz, who outlined how the city's Engineering Division will work together with Kabbara Engineering and the OC Fair & Event Center to complete the project, which will require the removal of approximately 70,000 square feet of asphalt concrete on Arlington Drive.

The \$3.2 million project will serve to beautify Arlington Drive and provide a biological filtration system for water runoff to the Upper Newport Bay.

To pay for the project, the City of Costa Mesa received a grant for \$1.69 million and the OC Fair & Event Center will provide an additional \$1 million. In addition, the Costa Mesa City Council allocated \$510,000 for the work.

“This project will result in significant benefits to the OC Fair & Event Center and the overall community by installing much needed amenities along this unimproved section of Arlington Drive,” Munoz said. “It is exciting to take part in this partnership between the City and the OC Fair & Event Center to achieve common environmental as well as aesthetic goals.”

The collaboration between the City, the OC Fair & Event Center, and Kabbara Engineering will now continue in the development of construction documents.

Presentations of the upcoming improvements will be made to various stakeholders, including the Newport Mesa Unified School District as well as the Mesa Del Mar Community in early 2016.

Construction is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2016.

Substation for a day a big hit on Shalimar Drive

On Saturday, Oct. 31, the Costa Mesa Police Department hosted a “Substation for a Day” on Shalimar Drive. The goal of the event was to reach out to the local community, and make them aware of services that are offered.



The department partnered with Mika CDC, who took care of notifying all the local residents. From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., residents were able to come out and greet the officers and explorers, and since it was Halloween, all children in costume received a bagful of candy.

Crime prevention information was available, including child safety ID kits and trick or treat safety information.



Recreation leaders were there with large games for the kids, and several of the police officers on hand played with the kids. Several adults came out and met with officers, offering some information on criminal activity in the area.

This gave the adults an opportunity to meet with officers in a non-threatening environment. In addition, 34 bicycles were licensed. This type of event is designed to bring the community and law enforcement together, and encourage a partnership to keep neighborhoods safe.

Costa Mesa Fire veteran Jason Pyle promoted to division chief

Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano announced that Fire Capt. Jason Pyle has been promoted to fire division chief, giving him oversight over the department operations and placing him into a vital role with the Command Staff.

“This promotion comes at a very important time for our organization,” Chief Stefano said. “I look forward to the contributions and support Jason will bring in his new role to lead and carry out the duties and responsibilities that define his new position.”

Pyle has held department leadership positions in community relations, California Incident Command Certification System administration, records management, negotiations, mapping and training program management.

He is grateful for the opportunity this new role will provide.

“It is a great honor to have been chosen for this new leadership role,” Pyle said. “I have so much admiration for the team that we have assembled here in Costa Mesa, and I vow to work together with them to ensure our department remains at the forefront of fire and rescue operations.”

Pyle is a 19-year veteran of the fire service, beginning his career as a reserve with the Anaheim Fire Department in 1997. After holding roles with Los Alamitos, Menlo Park and

Fullerton fire agencies, he joined the Costa Mesa fire service in 2003.

Pyle has a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from UC Irvine and an associate degree from Santa Ana College. He is also a Certified Battalion Chief and currently serves as the Orange County associate director for the California Fire Chiefs Training Officers Section. He holds several other distinctions and honors.

Pyle will begin his new role on Monday Oct. 19 and he will be based out of the Fire Department Administration offices on the fifth floor of City Hall. His official swearing in ceremony will take place on Friday Oct. 30 in City Council Chambers.