

THE HERCULEAN

NEWSLETTER OF THE CITY OF HERCULES
P. O. BOX 156
HERCULES, CALIFORNIA 94547
PHONE: 758-4880



APRIL, 1979

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

The rapid growth of the City of Hercules—we have doubled in size in less than two years—has been a challenge and an opportunity for the City Council to oversee the development of a model community. Our decisions have been based on the General Plan and what we believe to be the best interests of the present and future citizens of the community. We are always anxious for the input of Hercules' citizens. Up to this point that input has been rather informal; people calling us or individuals speaking at Council meetings. In an effort to receive more input on a wide range of issues, the Council is in the process of creating three Citizens' Advisory Committees. These committees are a Hercules Tomorrow Committee to review the General Plan; an Open Space Maintenance Committee to advise Council on the best use and maintenance of public open spaces; and a Sister City Committee to select a foreign community as a Sister City for Hercules. (Further details on qualifications and application deadlines are outlined in another article in the newsletter.) We hope that many of you will apply. We want your ideas and suggestions so that we can better represent you.

Ronald Ardissonne
MAYOR
City of Hercules

CHIEF'S COUNTRY

The Hercules Police Department is pleased to report that crime and traffic accidents have decreased in the last two months. Most of our property damage accidents are on San Pablo Avenue at Sycamore. Please be extremely careful at that intersection. In addition, if you are driving up any of the hills including Violet, Lupine, and Redwood, watch for residents who are turning into their driveways.

A recent ordinance requires that red curbs be painted in all courts. These "no parking" zones will ensure that there is room for emergency vehicles to reach all houses in the court. There have been incidents when aid vehicles could not reach the scene of an emergency because of cars parked in the street. Park your cars in your driveway or in the parking spaces provided. If you do not do so, you will be ticketed and/or towed.

Two new officers and a reserve will graduate soon from basic training at the police academy. Officers Janice Ono and Larry Watts and Reserve Officer Mark Stevenson will be on duty in Hercules late this spring. The addition of these new officers will bring our total police force to seven officers (plus the Chief of Police, Lieutenant, and Sergeant) and ten reserves.

We would urge you to call the Police Department at 758-4883 if you see anything suspicious in your neighborhood. We would much rather answer a false alarm than miss the chance to apprehend a criminal. In addition, police officers are available to speak to organizations or neighborhood groups about burglary prevention, rape and other public safety issues. Call 758-4883 for more information.

If you have always been curious about what actually happens on a police beat, contact the Police Department at 758-4883 for information regarding the citizen Ride-Along Program. You will be allowed to accompany an officer on his/her patrol and watch him/her in action.

Spring is here and with it comes softball. The Police Department has organized a softball team. We challenge any

community softball team to a game at Woodfield Park. Contact Chief Quinn (the coach) at 758-4883 if you are interested.

One last announcement—Officer Tigger, head of the Mouse Patrol, gave birth to five kittens on March 23. Mother and kittens are doing fine.

COUNCIL IS LOOKING FOR ADVICE

The City Council is seeking applicants for three Citizens' Advisory Committees. These committees will meet regularly for a specified length of time to study a specific issue. Applicants must be willing to spend time at meetings and time doing background research between meetings.

Hercules Tomorrow Committee—This committee will meet regularly for one year to study the General Plan and present quarterly reports to the City Council. Areas of study would include land use, housing mix, commercial and industrial development, annexation policies, traffic impacts, and social impacts of rapid growth. Eleven (11) members will be appointed by Council and will be selected with regards to age, geographic location, cultural and ethnic background, professional and technical expertise (to include groups such as architects, engineers, economists, planners, and fields related to the subjects discussed), and special interests such as developers, ecologists, P.T.A., etc.

Open Space Maintenance Committee—This committee would discuss the proper use of public open space, alternative means of maintenance, maintenance costs, and related topics. Seven (7) members will be appointed and selected on the basis of location (to include people who live adjacent to open space and those who do not) and professional expertise (to include architects, landscapers, horticulturists, and related professions). This committee would meet regularly for four months and make monthly reports to the City Council.

Sister City Committee—This committee would explore the possibility of having a city in another nation be the Sister City of Hercules and would propose programs which the two cities could participate in. Since the Pacific Refinery in Hercules was the first refinery in this country to receive crude oil from the Peoples' Republic of China, some overtures were made to the Chinese government regarding a possible Sister City in that country. The committee would explore this as well as connections with cities in other countries. The committee would report back to the Council in two months and each month thereafter until a Sister City is established. Seven (7) members will be appointed with consideration given to national and/or ethnic background and international affiliations such as involvement with import/export trade, consulate relations, or relatives in a foreign nation.

All committee members are volunteers and will serve without compensation except for travel expenses outside the immediate area which are authorized by Council. The City staff will offer any assistance necessary to the committees.

Hercules residents interested in applying for one of the committees should write a letter stating their name, address, phone number and qualifications for the specific committee they are interested in serving on. Send your application to Citizens' Advisory Committees, City Hall, P. O. Box 156, Hercules, Ca 94547 by April 16.

THE HISTORY OF THE HISTORICAL AREA OF HERCULES

The City of Hercules was founded in 1900 as a company town for the Hercules Powder Company. Workers at the plant lived in the company-provided houses some of which still stand on Santa Fe and Hercules Avenues. Most of these houses are of identical design—the tract homes of the early 1900's. The buildings on the hill were the office buildings and laboratory of the plant, a clubhouse for workers and their families, and an industrial hospital.

Throughout the last few years, several plans have been examined on the best way to deal with the area. Outlined below are the various ideas that have been explored.

Since the first General Plan of 1975, the area on the "hill" has been designated as part of the waterfront park that would be the other end of the linear park that starts in Refugio Valley. During informal discussion about the buildings on the hill, the City Council had expressed an interest in buying the property and buildings and using the buildings for recreational purposes. No bids could ever be made on purchasing the property because its owner, Valley Nitrogen Producers (VNP), wanted to sell this land plus the old plant as a unit. The City in turn could buy the waterfront park area from the new owners. Valley Nitrogen Producers has not sold the land yet. In the last few weeks, however, VNP has indicated an interest in selling the park area apart from the plant.

The old company houses are located in Neighborhood 6 of the General Plan. When the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was heard in October, 1978, it included a proposal to save eight of the best examples of the old homes around the Triangle Park area on Hercules Avenue for a small commercial area. There was some discussion about whether or not a commercial area would be profitable there because of its location. The DEIR also called for a school site where the old tennis courts are and a waterfront park near the water to connect with the land on the "hill". Single family and patio homes would be built on the meadow.

The City Council did not feel that they had enough information to approve the DEIR and asked that more study be done, especially on the historic area. As a result, Sally Woodbridge, an architectural historian, was hired by the developer to make a survey of the old houses. She felt that there were twenty houses which were structurally secure enough to be renovated. Their only significance was as a representation of a company town, and not as individual architectural models; and therefore, they should be placed together around the Triangle Park or along Bay and Pinole Streets.

The City Council was also thinking of creating a City historical district that would include the buildings on the hill and some of the houses near the meadow which would be congregated either around the Triangle Park or along Bay and Pinole Streets. The rest of the area by the houses would be used for a school site and the waterfront park.

At about this time, Dr. Joseph Mariotti of the Pinole Historical Society and the members of the Hercules Environmental Resources Committee (HERC) were applying to have the whole area, including the hill, the Triangle Park, the proposed school site, and the proposed waterfront park, placed on the list of the National Register of Historic Places. They did not want any of the houses moved but wanted new, custom built houses to be built between the existing old houses. The school site would have to be located elsewhere and the size of the waterfront park would be altered.

At a meeting in March, 1979, the area was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in the configuration proposed by the Pinole Historic Society. This meant that the owners of the houses were eligible to compete for some special rehabilitation loans from the Federal Government. In addition, if Federal funds were used, the houses could not be demolished or moved without approval from the Office of the National Register of Historic Places in Washington, D. C.

The listing on the National Register meant that the Council would have to re-examine its position on the area. At subsequent meetings, the Council restated their continuing interest in the historic area. They also expressed a strong desire to keep the land in Hercules under the control of the City with as little State and Federal interference as possible. They instructed the City

staff to explore in detail a municipal historic district such as the Council had proposed before and to suggest ordinances that would govern this area without the need of State and Federal guidelines and mandates.

The staff recommendations will be heard at an April or May City Council meeting. Watch for notice of this meeting on the bulletin board in front of the school and in the press.

WHO LIVES IN HERCULES?

The week of January 29 a special census was taken in Hercules. The results have been tabulated and, as was suspected all along, Hercules is a unique community. Thirty-nine hundred (3900) people live here as of January, 1979. Citizens are young—the median age is 27. Almost one quarter of the population is under nine years of age and only 1% of the population is over 65 years of age. About one third of the heads of household are professionals and managers. Another third are blue collar and service workers. Over 75% of the families in the City have two wage earners which is why the City seems so empty during the day. Most workers commute to San Francisco and Oakland area to work. The median income per household in 1978 was approximately \$26,000.00.

Citizens in Hercules come from diverse ethnic backgrounds and no one group is a majority group. Forty-seven percent (1,818) of the population is white; 21% (830) is Filipino; 10% (406) is black; 8.4% (327) is Chinese; and 4.9% (189) is of Spanish descent. The citizens here are also highly educated. Over a quarter of the heads of household hold bachelors degrees and forty-one people (4%) have earned doctorate degrees.

The citizens of Hercules are an interesting group of people. Because of our cultural diversity and our highly educated working population, the citizens will have an opportunity to develop a unique and exciting community.

THE ARTS ARE COMING!

Hercules residents should get their toes primed for tappin' and their eyes and ears ready for some great sights and sounds, as THE ARTS are on their way. The City's new cultural consultant, Linda Parker Yglesias, is preparing an extensive community arts proposal that would offer citizens of all ages innovative experiences in visual and performing media. Already the wheels are in motion for a summer Street Music program in which sounds from Dixieland forward will wind their way through Hercules neighborhoods. The monthly happenings are set to begin in June and Ms. Yglesias urges residents to look for further information beginning in early May.

Ms. Yglesias moved recently with her husband to Hercules from Tampa, Florida, where she was the administrator for a community arts program.

"Hercules is a perfect setting for community arts," she said. "It is a new, growing community where the arts can become a part of daily life. Not only is the setting beautiful, but there is an awareness among the residents here that art is indeed a necessity rather than a luxury. Federal studies show that the arts are viewed no longer as ends within themselves, but also as tools for social interaction, rehabilitation and, perhaps most importantly, a better educational system. It has been shown that, if Johnny learns to draw, Johnny may better learn to read."

The Council will review other programs which will include neighborhood projects in the visual arts, murals, painting workshops and wood sculpture, which could be available to residents as early as September. In addition would be experiences in the performing arts, from ethnic dance and music to mime, improvisation and puppetry and a special project of Ms. Yglesias would offer film-making to Hercules youth.

"By setting up a community approach to the arts, the very highest arts processes can be enjoyed," Ms. Yglesias explained. "There is no pressure to perform; emphasis is on experiencing the art process rather than on setting unrealistic, and often intimidating, standard for participants. This means that the community can be drawn together through the arts. The community can experience in a low-key, informal setting the dreams and visions that for too long have been found only on concert stages and museum walls."

MEDIATION SERVICE RESULTS

The Home Mediation Service was set up several months ago at the request of the City Council to provide a means for homeowners dissatisfied with the developer's service to find a solution to their problems. Many homeowners have been hesitant to use the service until they found out how the "other guy" fared with the mediation service. The "other guy" has taken the first step and found a successful resolution to his problems. John and Patricia Patterson had several of their doors out of alignment, some problems with the stucco cracking, and a problem with their kitchen cabinets. After a mediation meeting at the Patterson home with the Pattersons, the developers, and the mediators in attendance, developer agreed to remedy the problems—even one problem they said was not under warranty. The Pattersons were very satisfied with the success of the mediation and felt that they would not have achieved the same results on their own. John Patterson's comment was that "Mediation is a good thing for the community," and he urged other citizens who have problems to use the Home Mediation Service.

If you would like more information or an application form, call Pam Dorway-Worley at City Hall, 758-4880.

The Home Mediation Service is not the only option available to homeowners, however. Complaints regarding your home can be lodged with the State Department of Consumer Affairs at 8301 Edgewater Drive in Oakland, California 94603. They will send you information and forms. You can also go to the small claims court if you feel that \$750.00 or less damage has been done to your home. You must appear in person at the Municipal Court, 100 - 37th Street, Room 248, in Richmond to complete forms and pay a \$2.00 filing fee. You must name an officer of the development company as the defendant in the case.

Although the majority of citizens in Hercules are satisfied with their homes, it is hoped that those who have problems will take some positive action to correct the problems.

CABLE TV

Cable facilities are in place on all streets in Hercules with the exception of Country Run townhouses and the 200 block and up on Swallow Way. If you are interested in receiving Cable TV service, you can have the cable connected to your house. Call 799-0111 for an appointment. Hookups usually take place within a week after you call. However, problems are being encountered in many areas because mud has gotten into the cable conduit and must be cleaned out before the cable can be put underground. In these cases, your house will be hooked up the day of your original appointment. A construction crew will then be notified that the conduit is plugged and will clean it out. They have a backlog, so this may take as much as an additional two weeks. After the construction crew has completed the job, the cable will be operable in your house and you will be asked to pay the fee. Fees are \$15.00 for installation and \$7.50 per month service charge to receive 19 channels. If you would like to receive the movie channel in addition to this, they will hook up the additional line for another \$15.00. You will be billed \$9.95 per month for the movie station plus the standard service fee. Video Engineering was awarded the Cable TV franchise in Hercules by the City Council. Rates cannot be changed without Council approval.

Video Engineering also agreed to provide several local option channels to be used for local programming. Possible uses are numerous and include the broadcasting of Council meetings, Little League and high school events, recreation and language classes. Corki Johnson of 169 Orchid Court, a student at St. Mary's College, is conducting a study of the local option for Hercules. She and others will be conducting a door-to-door survey of cable subscribers to determine what they would like to see on the local option station. The survey will be taken in late April or early May. The local option station is an opportunity for residents to be involved in their community through television. Programs will only be successful if they fill a need or desire of the community. Please give your opinion if you are asked.

LEISURE SERVICES EVENTS

April 14—Recycling Day from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the lot across from Woodfield Park. Bring your newspapers, magazines, glass, aluminum, cardboard and tin cans to be recycled.

April 20—A Dance sponsored by the Reserve Officers of the Police Department and the P.T.A. will be held from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the Hercules Elementary School for students from seventh grade through eleventh grade. The cost is only twenty-five cents (25¢) per person at the door. Goodies will be on sale during the dance. Adult supervisors will be in attendance throughout the dance. The music will be provided by two special people who really know how to make the records sing. A dance contest is scheduled so polish your dancing shoes and be ready to boogie!!

April 25—A BAF (Bring a Friend) trip to the John Muir Home and the Benicia State Capital will be conducted from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The cost of \$3.50 includes admissions but does not include lunch which will be at the Commandant's House in Benicia. Registration begins April 2.

March 2—An Open Gym program to play basketball starts at Pinole Valley High School gym and will continue every Friday until May 25 for people over 18 years of age. Cost is fifty cents (50¢) per person. Supervision will be provided by the City.

Teen Open Gym is every Wednesday from 7:15 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. at the Pinole Valley High School gym. Basketball will be played the first, second, fourth and fifth Wednesdays. Volleyball will be offered the third Wednesday of the month. The program is for everyone between the ages of 13 and 18. Cost is fifty cents (50¢).

A five-day camping session at Redwood Glen in the coastal Redwoods near Pescadero will be offered as a **Children's Summer Camp** on June 18 to June 22 for ages 8 to 12. The \$80.00 cost includes food, lodging, transportation and insurance.

The summer Leisure Services calendar will be arriving at your home in late May or early June.

For more information on any of the above programs or other Leisure Services activities, call 758-4880.

SWIMMING POOL FENCES

Due to the danger of small children falling into swimming pools and drowning, the City Council has passed an ordinance requiring that fences be built around swimming pools. The fences or walls shall be at least four and one-half (4½) feet high with openings, other than doors or gates, no larger than four (4) inches wide. In most cases your yard fence will be adequate. In those cases where the side fences are less than four and one-half feet high, the fences must be raised or a new fence built around the swimming pool that is at least four and one-half feet high. All gates and doors opening through a swimming pool fence shall be equipped with a self-closing and self-latching device which will keep the gate or door closed at all times that it is not in use.

Hot tubs are excluded from these requirements if a lockable cover is installed at the time of installation of the hot tub that would prevent anyone from getting into the hot tub.

All swimming pools and hot tubs existing in the City at the time this ordinance is in effect will also have to comply with the ordinance; all swimming pools must be surrounded by a fence at least four and one-half feet high with gates such as those described above, and all hot tubs must have a locking cover.

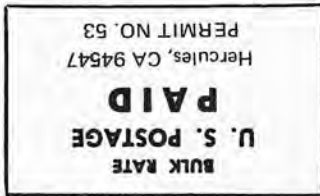
This ordinance was passed March 20 and will become effective April 30. All existing pools and hot tubs must conform to the ordinance within 90 days after the effective date, or July 20.

You do not need a building permit to build a fence.

The Building Official, Bill Burke, will be happy to answer your questions regarding this ordinance. Call him between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.; or 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. at 758-4880.

HAWAIIAN CLUB FORMING

A club for families originating from the Hawaiian Islands or who have an Hawaiian heritage is being formed in Hercules. An organizational meeting is being planned for late April. All Hawaiians are welcome and are invited to attend to meet other Hawaiians in Hercules. Call Roy Wong at 799-0910 or Reuben Lee at 799-3305.



CITY OF HERCULES
P. O. BOX 156
HERCULES, CA 94547

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE MOSQUITOS COME

Mosquito season is almost upon us and since over one dozen species breed in marshes, creeks, drainage ditches and rainwater in various areas of Contra Costa County, it is time to think about mosquito abatement. The Mosquito Abatement District budget has been cut by 55% due to Proposition 13. Although preventive planning, treatment and inspections for pest and disease carrying mosquitos are still taking place, severe limits must be placed on visits to individual homeowners. Therefore, Charles Beesley, Manager Entomologist of the District, suggests that the homeowner pay special attention to the following items in order to prevent the breeding of mosquitos on his property.

- Eliminate standing water, including rainwater, around your house where mosquitos can breed.
- Stack pails, tubs and other containers upside down so that water, where mosquitos can breed, will not accumulate.
- Stock ornamental ponds with mosquito fish. Ornamental ponds that do not have running water become breeding places. The Mosquito Abatement District will provide free fish for your pond. They can be picked up at the address below.
- Clean your swimming pools and doughboy pools early and thoroughly to keep standing water from accumulating.
- Check the drainage around your house for standing water.
- Don't deposit any debris in creeks since it blocks them and causes standing water.

In addition, if you see swarms of mosquitos, call the District. When they receive several complaints from one area, they schedule treatment for that area.

You can contact the Mosquito Abatement District at 1330 Concord Avenue in Concord, and at 685-9301.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

The City Council has authorized the purchase of 1,000 five-pound fire extinguishers that will be sold at cost (less than \$15.00 per unit) to residents in the Rodeo and Pinole Fire Districts. Watch the newspapers for details on when and where to purchase the extinguisher for your home. Sales will be limited to three per household. Fire Department personnel will instruct buyers on the proper use of the extinguishers. Hercules residents will be considered first for purchase since the City's money was used for the initial purchase.

IT'S A CULTURAL FESTIVAL!

Saturday, April 14, from 12:00 Noon until 5:00 p.m., Woodfield Park will be the site of the Hercules Cultural Festival. Filipino, Japanese, Hawaiian, Caucasian, and other groups will be providing food, crafts and entertainment for the whole family. Admission is free but the food and crafts will be for sale.

The Leisure Services Department, sponsors of the event, would like to have additional contributions from cultural groups in the City. If you would be interested in selling ethnic food or crafts, providing music or dance, or some other contribution, contact Cyndy Maloney at City Hall, 758-4880. The City will provide the booths and electricity. Restrooms will be available.

The citizens of Hercules represent many cultures from around the world. This festival is a chance for everyone to share their culture and learn about their neighbor's way of life. Mark your calendar for April 14—see you there!

CARPOOLING AND VANPOOLING

One vanpool is underway in Hercules and another is forming. If you are feeling the squeeze from the high price of gasoline, you can contact one of the following people about a ride to San Francisco on weekdays.

Lily Bischof of 112 Iris Court needs additional riders in the vanpool she started. They leave about 6:30 a.m. from Hercules and at about 4:15 p.m. from San Francisco. Call her at 799-1312 if you wish to participate.

Ted Wong of 433 Violet is starting a vanpool which will leave Hercules at 6:30 a.m. with stops at the bus terminal and Civic Center in San Francisco. They will leave San Francisco at about 5:00 p.m. Call him at 799-0873 (home) or 558-2515 (work) if you are interested.

Robert and Jesse Craig will be starting a jitney service which will drive commuters to Richmond and Oakland beginning in May. They are also looking for people interested in going to San Francisco. Call them at 799-5198 for more information.