

City Newsletter

CITY OF HERCULES, P.O. BOX 156

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FEBRUARY, 1978

HERCULES POLICE UNIT FORMS

Steps have been taken to organize a full-time, full-service police unit for the City of Hercules beginning with the appointment of Russell S. Quinn as Director of Public Safety Services. Quinn, 36, is a veteran police careerist having served the Ventura, California Department, Naval Intelligence and other police-related organizations. He teaches police science in Alameda. His duties will include responsibility for all city programs related to public safety such as burglary protection, fire safety, medical alert, etc. With his wife, Marion, and three boys, he hopes to make Hercules his home in July.

Recruitment procedures have been completed for five police officers; three of whom will be entering the Police Academy at Los Medanos Community College. They are Arthur Shields, 30; Tom Muehleisen, 27; and Alona Payne, 28. After completing the Academy, they will be on temporary assignment with the Pinole Police Department for further training before assuming duties in Hercules. A fourth officer is Jeff Lastusky, who just finished in the upper quartile of the Academy and is now undergoing training with the Pinole Department. The fifth member of the team is Lester Wasco, 37, who is currently a San Francisco police officer and will be joining the unit as supervisor on June 1. The Department is expected to be fully operational by July 1.

Shields and Wasco are residents of Hercules.

More than 400 applications were received—a measure of the desirability of Hercules.

The underlying concept of the Hercules Police Unit will be to bring the police back to the people. More time will be spent on the sidewalks, in the schools and parks, meeting with the citizens groups and, by invitation, in the homes meeting residents, getting to know the kids and trying to solve inter-personal problems before they become crisis. The officers will be fully equipped to handle emergencies and will be distinctively uniformed, but the more threatening appearance and attitude of "cop" will be moderated.

A Police Reserve unit is also being organized which will be trained, equipped and uniformed to ride with regular officers as back-up, cover special events, etc., on a part-time basis. If you are interested call Director Quinn at 758-4881.

HOW TO PROTECT PERSON AND PROPERTY

Enclosed with this issue of **Newsletter** is a copy of the Contra Costa County "Crime Prevention Manual". Compiled by the Crime Prevention Committee of the County, an organization of private citizens interested in reducing the incidence of burglary and other criminal acts, the City Council believed you would be interested in having a copy for study and application. In the near future members of the Hercules Police Unit will be contacting you and your neighbors for discussion of ways you can help control crime and protect your property and yourself from attack.

You are strongly urged to read the manual carefully and to put its recommendations into effect at earliest possible moment. Only an alert and aware community can be a totally safe community for all its residents.

If you are interested in joining the Crime Prevention Committee, call Barbara Parker or Don Burke at 798-2572. They'll welcome your support.

FLOWER POWER SEWAGE PLANT

The City Council has authorized the construction of a unique ecology-oriented sewage treatment plant on property recently purchased from Valley Nitrogen Producers, Inc. The 350,000 gallon-per-day plant utilizes nature's methods of cleaning water—solar heat, plants, organisms and aquatic life. The end product is a recyclable water which can be used by industry and/or for irrigation, or returned to streams with no harmful affects upon the environment.

Wastewater will be introduced into tanks for up to six days retention time during which it is subjected to sunlight under a greenhouse-type roof, heating the sewage to over 75°, thereby stimulating the growth of healthful bacteria which consume coliforms and other pathogens present in the sewage. These, in turn, are fed upon by invertebrates such as snails and shrimp and finally, by fish. Water hyacinths will be grown on the surface of the ponds, which will absorb heavy metals and nutrients from the sewage. The water hyacinths can be easily harvested and converted to fertilizer and cattle feed, or fed to an anaerobic

FLOWER POWER SEWAGE PLANT (cont'd)

digester to generate methane gas which can generate electricity to operate the plant. Ozone will be used as a sterilizing agent as the sewage is introduced into the plant. Ozone leaves no residual and is completely neutral.

The techniques employed have been known for thousands of years but only recently understood. Much of the technology is a result of studies and demonstrations performed by EPA and NASA, but it is believed that the Hercules plant will be the first "City-size" installation of its kind, anywhere.

Designs are underway and it is hoped to begin construction in late June with the plant on-line in December or January.

If you are interested in reading more about this unusual and pioneering project, loan copies of studies and reports are available at City Hall, 758-4880.

COME TO THE "HOOPLA"!

The Hercules City Council and staff has challenged the Pinole City Council and staff to a basketball game dubbed the "Hoopla". The respective Councils have often been at odds over service contracts, truck routes, zoning and other matters but personal relationships have always been congenial. To demonstrate their spirit of friendly antagonism, they face off on the court at the Pinole Valley High School on Saturday, February 18 at 8:00 PM. Tickets are only \$1.00 for adults and 50 cents for kids under twelve. All proceeds go to the Carquinez Coalition, an area organization performing some badly needed social services for the aged and disadvantaged.

Both sides are secretly planning antics on and off the court and it all shapes up to be a real fun evening. Why not show up with all the family to see your Council people and staff make fools of themselves other than in the City Hall? There will be a drawing, too! Tickets are available at either City Hall or by calling 758-4880.

SOLAR COMMUNITY CENTER?

An application is being prepared to the Department of Energy for a grant to discover the feasibility of using solar energy to heat and cool a Community Center in Hercules. The designs are being prepared by the architectural firm of Hardison and Komatsu which has had extensive experience in solar use in buildings.

The complex, in addition to containing city offices, will also include a Youth Center, meeting rooms, day-care classrooms and an amphitheater. A swimming pool is an essential part of the solar system and will be designed as a "heat sink", warming the water for year-round swimming. Excess heat will be drawn off by fountains or roof cascades as a decorative as well as a functional element.

The plans are still very tentative and ample opportunity will be given for public input before firm decisions are made.

Discussions are being held with Hercules, Inc. to dedicate a 15-acre site for the Community Center on the northeast side of Sycamore near its intersection with Redwood Drive.

VALLEY OF THE GIANTS

Planning is underway to design and develop the extensive open space in Refugio Valley into a linear park and recreational area. The firm of Susaki, Walker and Associates have been engaged to do the preliminary planning. Play and exercise areas, along with bike, hike and horse trails, scenic turnouts, picnic spots and just plain unspoiled open spaces are being talked about. Again, there will be public meetings before plans become hard and fast.

The preservation of the gigantic eucalyptus groves in the valley is a primary objective.

FIRST PARK TO BE DEDICATED TO EX-MAYOR

Many residents were saddened to learn of the death of Gene L. Woodfield who was Mayor of Hercules during its formative period. "Woody" was instrumental in the development of the 1972 General Plan which is the blueprint for the current design of the City. He was a devotee of the out-of-doors and insisted that there be as much open areas as possible accommodated in the anticipated development. He was on hand to greet the first new family in Hercules, Mr. & Mrs. Tim Blotzer, 100 Azalea Court, and took time from his job as Maintenance Superintendent of the then Hercules Plant to present them with champagne and roses as they moved in.

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FIRST PARK (cont'd)

Retired in 1976 because of disabling heart problems, he built a woodsy retreat near Nevada City where he lived with his wife, Barbara, until his death on January 17.

The City Council felt that it was fitting to name the first city park after Mayor Woodfield and it was so done by official resolution.

The park is located next to the Hercules School on Lupine. Presently under construction, it is planned for completion in June with the official opening and dedication to follow soon after.

HERCULES NEEDS YOU!

Hercules is unique in that it is a new community in every sense of the word. New development, new people, new ideas and concepts that have not or cannot be applied in other cities, open opportunities and challenges that few have experienced. If you have read this far in *Newsletter* you can readily see that some different approaches to urban lifestyle are on the horizon.

The Council and staff have long felt that there are talents and skills among our new residents that should be utilized to help build the future for all of us and those who will be coming along later.

A questionnaire has been drafted to elicit from you: 1) what you think Hercules should be like and look like; 2) our needs, and; 3) how you can contribute to the process. It will be mailed soon.

We need to know what you can contribute in time and talent to the betterment of your community. Won't you respond?

HEY MAN, YOU'RE BLOCKING MY VIEW!

At its inception, Hercules was designed as a "no clutter" community. This meant requiring ample off-street parking, undergrounding all utilities, prohibiting RVs and boats in sideyards, keeping massive fencing to a reasonable height and, generally, attempting to maintain an open feeling in the neighborhood.

Accordingly, both the City Ordinances and the CC & Rs (Covenants, Conditions and Agreements) act to these ends. Ordinances are laws: they can be enforced in a court of law and you may be fined—even jailed for serious violations. The CC & Rs are contractual agreements that you have made with your neighbors and any or all of them may bring a civil suit to enjoin you from detracting from the enjoyment of their property. In some cases, they can collect damages from you if they can make a case.

The most prevalent problems in Hercules are: 1) fences over six feet in sideyards and backyards (the sideyard is that portion of your lot behind the main front building line), "privacy fences", usually installed with swimming pools, mounted on top of the normal six foot backyard fence are not allowed; 2) RVs and boats stored or parked in front yards (trucks and cars, too); 3) roof-top antennas. The CC & Rs limit the height of roof-top antennas and prohibit them entirely when cable television is available.

The City is understanding about TV antennas and will not take action against those residents who enjoy reception from their installations. CB and ham radio fans, though, should take stock of their situations and make application for special permits (to be considered by the Council) if they are to operate without inconvenience to their neighbors. TV antennas must be removed when Cable is in.

Please take a look at your property and evaluate whether or not you are violating your neighbor's property rights. Let's try to keep this a "hassle-free" community.

COUNCIL MEETS IN NEW LOCATION

In an effort to make themselves available and accessible, the City Council now meets in the Hercules Elementary School multi-purpose room on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. The City Hall is still located in the Old Village at 555 Railroad Avenue. Day-to-day business is conducted there, but the Council sessions will now be at the Hercules School.

The Council sincerely welcomes the input of any citizen to their discussions.

COMMUNITY GET-TOGETHER

A Hercules resident, Eduardo Manuel has submitted a comprehensive plan to the City Council for a community "hoe down" to bring together all of the neighborhoods and residents to meet each other and their official representatives. An event is proposed for early Spring which would feature entertainment, food and drinks and a "Getting to Know You" theme.

Manuel also proposed the organization of a Hercules mixed choir which, if it comes off, will be one of the first in this area.

He suggests that the community should capitalize on its rich cultural resources and develop a series of ethnic festivals wherein all residents could flavor the traditions, food, dance, and music of the heterogeneous population which marks Hercules.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS MARCH 7

All registered voters are urged to vote for Council candidates on March 7. At this writing there are two persons running for two seats on the City Council. Fred Wachowicz, an incumbent, is running as is Lynn Judnich. Former Mayor Ernest Fawcett filed for candidacy but resigned following a job offer that required his transfer from this area. Unfortunately, the legal requirements will keep his name on the ballot but it should be known that he is *not* a viable candidate. It is understood that there are petitions circulating for write-in candidates which is a sign of the political health of our City.

Councilman Ron Ardisone has taken over as Mayor and Fred Wachowicz is Vice-Mayor.

Lynn Judnich, if elected, will be the first woman Councilperson in Hercules since its inception in 1900.