



IN A Nutshell



No. 213

Newsletter of the City of Walnut Creek

SPRING 2026



Birdies of a Different Feather at Boundary Oak

Boundary Oak Golf Course has a long-standing commitment to wildlife conservation. Back in the early 2000's, the course installed six barn owl boxes as a natural way to manage rodent populations, reducing chemical use and creating habitat for these nocturnal predators. The initiative was so successful that owls began nesting within the first year, earning Boundary Oak recognition as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary. In 2019, the course partnered with local Eagle Scouts to help repair and maintain the boxes.

The focus has expanded to songbirds. Boundary Oak teamed up with local bluebird conservationists and Audubon partners to repair and reinstall 14 bluebird boxes across the 160-acre golf course, enhancing habitat for species like Western Bluebirds. These efforts and other fun updates are celebrated on the course's Instagram (@boundaryoakgolfcourse).

Staff Tip: Rent a golf cart to drive around the beautiful grounds and birdwatch.

Memorial Day event

Join us in Civic Park on Monday, May 25, when the City honors those who paid the ultimate price serving our country. Mayor Kevin Wilk will host the event and share his thoughts. The keynote speaker is retired Army Lt. Col. Karl Davis, whose military career spanned 30 years. As always, the Walnut Creek Concert Band will perform. The event starts at 11 a.m. and runs until approximately noon.

PHASE TWO OF THE AQUATIC AND COMMUNITY CENTER UNDERWAY

Residents visiting Heather Farm are likely noticing more activity around the pools and community center. The next phase of work has begun, with much of the first phase focused on the design and work at the Nature Lake and the Concrete Pond. City Councilmembers grabbed golden shovels in a ceremonial groundbreaking for phase 2.

Demolition of the current Community Center began in February. A number of trees had to be removed for the new alignment of the community center and pools, but significantly more trees will be planted. In keeping with the City's commitment to sustainability and responsible resource management, staff is partnering with Bay Area Redwood to repurpose the removed redwood trees into artisanal wood products.

Meanwhile, the City of Walnut Creek has been awarded a "AAA" credit rating. Bonds will be financing some of the costs of the Heather Farm project, along with significant contributions from Measure O. The "AAA" rating signals the City's exceptional financial health and resulted in the lowest available interest rate for the bonds.

The plan is for the new Aquatic and Community Centers to be open by the end of next year.



MEASURE O IN ACTION

Business Watch program from Walnut Creek PD



The Walnut Creek Police Department, in partnership with the Walnut Creek Downtown Association and the Walnut Creek Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau, is proud to introduce Walnut Creek Business Watch.

This free program is designed to strengthen collaboration between the Walnut Creek business community and the Walnut Creek Police Department. Walnut Creek Business Watch provides direct access to valuable resources, including safety tips, informational bulletins, and crime prevention strategies, while promoting a safe, welcoming environment for both businesses and consumers. The program also fosters open



lines of communication and offers educational opportunities such as "Lunch and Learn" sessions.

Participation in Walnut Creek Business Watch helps businesses stay informed, prepared, and connected while contributing to a safer, more resilient community. All businesses located in the City of Walnut Creek are invited and encouraged to participate and become members of Walnut Creek Business Watch.

Take the next step in protecting your business and join Walnut Creek Business Watch! To join or learn more, please contact Crime Prevention Specialist Kira Raman at kraman@walnutcreekpd.com



HIGHLIGHTS

Check the cable listings for the full schedule of shows, or scan the QR code.



For original programming, community events and more, visit the City's YouTube channel at [YouTube.com/CityofWalnutCreek](https://www.youtube.com/CityofWalnutCreek). You can now also watch City programming on demand. WCTV is on Roku, Amazon Firestick and Apple TV. Search Walnut Creek TV on each site for a full list of programming from the City of Walnut Creek.

Meet Police Chief Ryan Hibbs

Get to know the City's new Police Chief in an interview that looks at his background, and how he rose to this point in his career.

Measure O at Work

See how your tax dollars from Measure O are being used. There is a video posted of work underway at Heather Farm Park, where significant construction is underway.

Live! from the Library

Walnut Creek Library Foundation's Live! From the Library recently hosted an event focusing on Kevin Fagan's book "The Lost and Found," hailed by the New York Times as riveting and deeply compassionate. It spotlights the real lives of people living on the streets.

High School Sports videos

You can find two Northgate vs. Las Lomas videos, one for basketball and one for soccer.



Diablo Ballet performance

Catch the Diablo Ballet's performance of a new version of the underwater world of The Little Mermaid.

Messages from the Mayor

Each month, the City's Mayor provides a community update, sharing the latest news and information. Mayor Kevin Wilk is carrying on this tradition with a twist. He's recording three short videos that the City posts online. Find out what's happening in Walnut Creek by checking out the Mayor's Minute.

Public Meetings

Catch recent City Council meetings, as well as those of our many commissions. Our public meetings are also broadcast live on YouTube, Walnut Creek TV, and on the City's website.

Here's what's happening

ARTS + REC

Summer Camps are filling fast!

Registration for spring classes and camps is now open, with options to keep kids, teens, and adults active and inspired. Now's the time to lock in plans for swim days, classic camps, arts, STEM, sports, and more. **Planning ahead?** Summer quarter registration begins at noon on April 29.

REGISTRATION DATES
All registration windows open at 12:00 PM
Summer Camps: open now!
Spring Classes: open now!
Summer Classes: opens April 29
View Summer Class options online starting April 8

Job Opportunities

A limited number of positions are available with Walnut Creek Arts + Rec, including camp recreation leaders, lifeguards, drivers, and opportunities at the Leshner Center for the Arts. These roles offer a fun and rewarding way to gain experience while supporting programs that serve our community. Visit WalnutCreekArtsRec.org/jobs to learn more and apply.

Senior Resource Fair

March 12, 9:00 AM -12:00 PM

Join us for a morning filled with exciting and relevant resources for seniors, caregivers, and the children of older adults. This free indoor event is designed to connect you with valuable information, services, and support. Hosted at Saint Matthew (399 Wiget Ln), and brought to you by Sensational Seniors Workshops, Saint Matthew, and the City of Walnut Creek.

Early Childhood Experiences

Give your little ones a joyful start with Arts + Rec's early childhood programs, designed to inspire creativity, social connection, and playful learning. New Pop-In Playdates at Civic Park Preschool offer a cozy, welcoming indoor space for hands-on activities, imaginative play, and caregiver connection. Families can drop in or choose an unlimited weekday pass. **Looking ahead?** Summer preschool programs continue the experience with engaging, age-appropriate activities that support growth, exploration, and confidence in a nurturing environment.

Learn more at communityarts.org or follow @CommunityArtsWC on Facebook or Instagram.

CENTER for COMMUNITY ARTS
Join US!
saturday, march 14
FAMILY ART DAY
join us for a day of art making and celebrating spring festivities around the world!
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
SHADELANDS ART CENTER

Family Art Day: Festivals of Spring

Join the Center for Community Arts in Shadelands for its annual outdoor, free, and fun-filled Family Art Day: Festivals of Spring on Saturday, March 14, 10:00 AM-1:00 PM, at 111 N. Wiget Lane.

This is the perfect opportunity to be creative with loved ones, whether it's painting, crafting, or just having fun with colors.

Create, explore, and connect while making lasting memories and art, and learning about spring festivals around the world.

LESHER CENTER FOR THE ARTS



Lee Ritenour

April 11

Known widely as “Captain Fingers,” a moniker he earned for his remarkable dexterity and musicianship, he’ll perform at the Leshler Center on April 11. Grammy-winning guitar hero Lee Ritenour began his career as a solo artist and bandleader at the height of the jazz fusion era of the mid-1970s. Still a teenage phenom when performing with the likes of Tony Bennett and Lena Horne, Ritenour made waves on the L.A. studio circuit and released his debut First Course in 1976, the first of 35 albums for the Elektra, GRP, and Concord labels including the career highlights Captain Fingers (1977), Rit (1981), Harlequin (1985), Festival (1988), and 6 String Theory (2010). Ritenour was a founding member of the fusion supergroup Fourplay and has contributed to the music of Patti Austin, Pink Floyd, George Benson, Aretha Franklin, Frank Sinatra, Natalie Cole, Joe Henderson, Steely Dan, Barbra Streisand, and Dizzy Gillespie, among dozens of others.



Other Upcoming Headliners include:

Sarah McKenzie

March 20

Australian jazz singer, pianist, composer, and arranger

Gerald Clayton

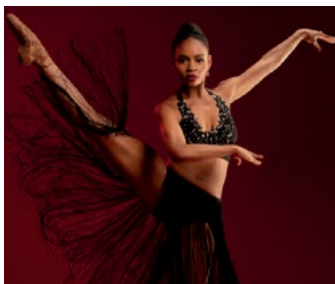
April 18

6x Grammy nominee ranks among the best pianists of his generation

Dance Theatre of Harlem

April 24-25

World-renowned multi-ethnic dance company returns



BEDFORD GALLERY

Viola Frey: Foundations

Through April 5



Aztec Stories in Modern Mexico: An Inocencio Jiménez Chino Retrospective

April 18 through June 28



The Inocencio Jiménez Chino retrospective explores five decades of the artist’s practice through paintings, video interviews, audio recordings, and artist tools including handmade brushes and amate canvases. Chino’s first-ever retrospective, this exhibition traces the artist’s evolution from early works on board to protest line drawings from the 1990s and newly completed narrative amate paintings that capture, with remarkable intimacy and detail, daily life in the Balsas River Valley of Guerrero, Mexico. Rooted in Nahuatl storytelling and cultural preservation, Chino’s work bridges ancient and contemporary traditions, offering profound insight into Indigenous culture, community, and craft.

CENTER REPERTORY COMPANY

Lost in Yonkers by Neil Simon, Directed by Nancy Carlin

March 29 - April 19

To celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the opening of Leshler Center for the Arts, Center REP is proud to present the 35th anniversary revival production of Neil Simon’s Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning heartfelt comedy. Hailed as “Simon’s most affecting works” (The New York Times), this multi-award-winning memory play transports us to a small apartment above a candy store in Yonkers, NY in 1942.

Learn more and purchase tickets at CenterREP.org or call the Leshler Center Ticket Office at (925) 943-7469 (Wed-Sun, 12-6 PM).



Public Art Walking Tours begin April 17 and continue through November.

Held on the third Saturday of every month, these one-hour, docent-led walking tours of Walnut Creek’s downtown public art collection is a perfect opportunity to explore the unique murals, ceramics and commissioned works seen throughout the City. Appropriate for all ages, tickets are now Pay What You Can and will be available by early March at BedfordGallery.org

VENUE RENTALS FROM WALNUT CREEK ARTS + REC

Host it here! From birthday parties and family celebrations to meetings, performances, and athletic events, Walnut Creek Arts + Rec offers flexible, affordable facility rentals year-round. Choose from beautiful parks, auditoriums, galleries, gyms, and community spaces, and create an experience that fits your occasion.

Explore spaces and start planning today at WalnutCreekArtsRec.org/rentals or reach out to our team at rentals@walnutcreekca.gov or (925) 295-1490.



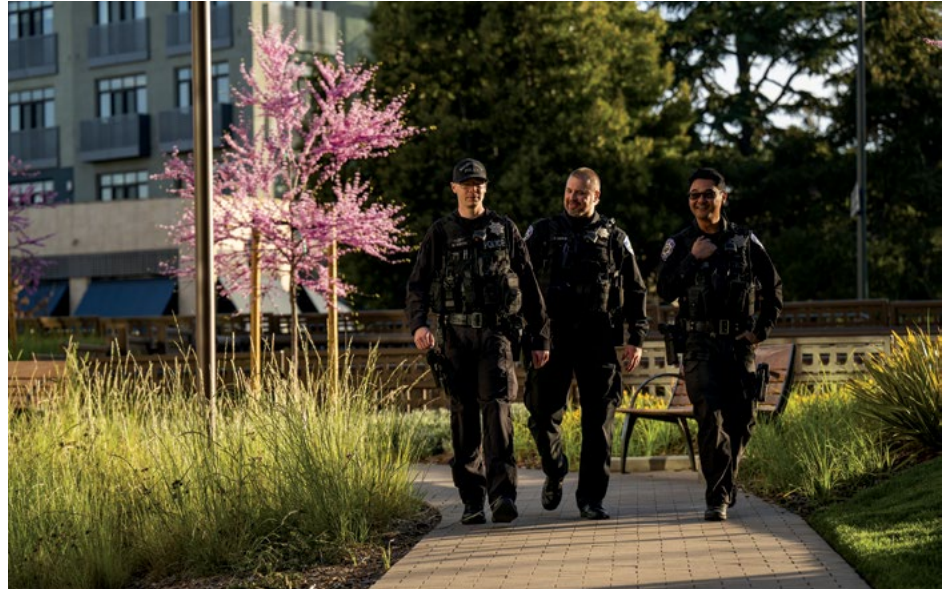
What's New Downtown

The future continues to look bright for downtown Walnut Creek in 2026. While an already established regional destination for shopping, entertainment, arts, unique dining, and nightlife with seven million annual visitors, multiple community festivals, and over 120 restaurants, downtown Walnut Creek continues to reinvent itself.

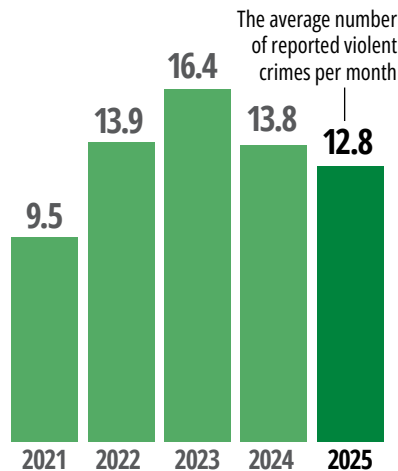
New businesses continue to choose Walnut Creek. Smash Box Golf has introduced an indoor golf simulator experience in Shadelands, and Ruby Lou's Boujee Bites & Games brings a whimsical restaurant concept with games and creative cocktails to downtown. East Coast favorite Duck Donuts is now serving made-to-order treats on North Main, while Beem Light Sauna has opened an infrared sauna studio near the Walnut Creek BART station. After 27 years, the former Yacht Club building is being thoughtfully renovated and will reopen with a new seafood concept.

Seven new outdoor dining parklets have been built in the last month, enhancing dining experiences for patrons and further activating streetscape in anticipation of warmer weather. The newest parklets have been installed at Ramen Hiroshi, Xicote, Broderick, Elia, and Limon following Sasa's installation earlier this year. These projects reflect restaurant owners' optimism about the future of Walnut Creek and are a successful response to the outdoor dining grant program implemented by City Council in July of 2025.

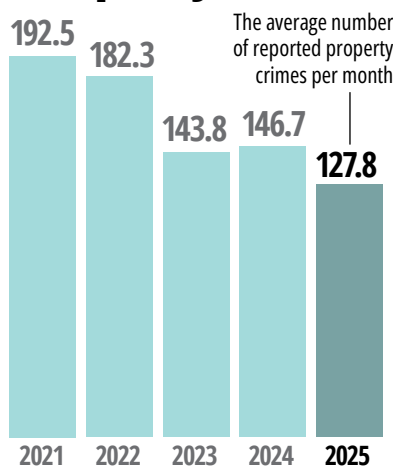
PUBLIC SAFETY TRENDS SHOW POSITIVE RESULTS



Average Monthly Violent Crime



Average Monthly Property Crime



Walnut Creek continues to be a safe place to live, work or visit. Looking back at statistics for 2025, the Police Department saw a 20% overall decrease in crime, with both property and violent crime dropping by that percentage.

2025 by the numbers:

- Residential burglary was down 40%
- Robbery was down 37%
- Vehicle theft was down 17%
- Shoplifting was down 28%
- Auto burglary was down 6%

The City did see an increase in both homicide and rape, but the totals for each continue to remain low.

"I am extremely proud of the strong work done by the Walnut Creek Police Department in both preventing crime and investigating it," said Chief Ryan Hibbs. "Our mission is simple," Hibbs said, "to protect and serve our community with integrity, professionalism, and respect."

Another element of their work involves community policing, getting to know residents in less formal settings, such as the monthly "Coffee with a Cop" sessions. Community policing is built on planning, providing strong public safety services, and a sincere partnership with Walnut Creek residents. Chief Hibbs also welcomes feedback from the community, hosting the Chief's Community Advisory Board. The Board advises the Chief on community policing strategies, engagement, transparency and best practices.

Find out more about the Police Department at walnutcreekpdca.gov.

Fundraiser for Las Lomas golf teams

On Monday, April 20th, golfers from all walks of life will gather at Rossmoor Golf Club to play in the inaugural "Knights on the Green" Golf Tournament benefiting the Las Lomas High School Boys and Girls Golf Teams. The 9-hole twilight scramble will begin at 3:00 p.m., and includes a Silent Auction and dinner catered by Sunrise Bistro. While golf continues to grow in popularity, high school teams struggle to keep up with the rising costs of reserving practice time at courses, uniforms and equipment. Athletic programs in the Acalanes Union High School District receive no funding from the District - all programs are funded by parents and through community fundraising efforts. Additionally, as the only High School in the district that does not practice at a private club, Las Lomas golfers would like more practice time. The program has a long-term goal to build an on-site training area at Las Lomas, reducing travel time to practice courses and enabling more consistent training.



"We are excited to host our first ever Golf tournament to raise much needed funds for our Las Lomas Golf Teams," said Rob Killoran, Boys Golf Coach. "Golf not only is great exercise but requires in-person social interactions and a high degree of etiquette with teammates and fellow competitors. Golf teaches honesty, integrity and perseverance - all crucial skills as our students move on to college, careers and their lives ahead. To register for the "Knights on the Green" Golf Tournament, or for information on how to become a sponsor, visit laslomasgolf.com



AARP offering free tax preparation

Through April 15th, the AARP is offering free tax preparation services, including a location in Walnut Creek and one in Rossmoor. The service is offered to people of all ages, with special attention to those aged 50 and older. No one needs to be a member of AARP to take advantage of the service. In Rossmoor, appointments are made in the Clubhouse. The Walnut Creek location will be at the Walnut Creek Library. Call 925-405-6045 for appointments.

Community Service Day



Volunteer to Help

Join with friends and family for a citywide Spring Spruce-up

**SATURDAY
APRIL 18th**

Registration is open



**Projects
for All Ages
Schools
Parks & Gardens
Libraries & Arts
Non-Profits**

Volunteer Today
www.Walnut-Creek.org/Service



New look coming for Civic Park and Walden Park playgrounds



KEEPING WALNUT CREEK'S playgrounds safe, welcoming, and fun is no small task. City staff maintain 16 playground structures across the community, following the City's Municipal Maintenance Master Plan to guide long-term care, maintenance, and timely replacement of playground equipment.

As part of this ongoing effort, the City Council approved \$500,000 in In-Lieu Parkland Funds in the 2024–25 Capital Budget to replace aging playground equipment at Civic Park and Walden

Park. These popular playgrounds, originally installed in 1997 and last renovated in 2015, are well loved and ready for their next refresh.

Community input played a key role in shaping the updates. Staff reached out to residents to help select new playground designs, presenting three options for both the 2–5 and 5–12 age group play areas. The response was strong, with nearly 600 community members participating in an online voting poll. This feedback helped guide decisions on the features, layout, and

overall look of the new playgrounds.

The survey was shared through multiple outreach efforts, including the Downtown Locust Street Festival, community pop-up events, and the City's official website, ensuring many voices had the opportunity to be heard.

With community feedback in hand, staff are moving forward with plans to bring refreshed, modern playgrounds to Civic Park and Walden Park—spaces designed for years of climbing, sliding, and imaginative play ahead.

Painted Pianos encore

“Painted Pianos” returns to downtown Walnut Creek with a festive kickoff celebrating art, music, and community. During the April 18–19 kickoff weekend, local artists and community members will paint the pianos live. Come watch the creative process unfold or even volunteer to help paint. Once complete, the colorful pianos will be placed throughout downtown for everyone to enjoy all spring and summer long. The Painted Piano Project is a community-based project administered by Walnut Creek Downtown Association, and funded through generous donations and sponsorship from the downtown business community. Learn more at walnutcreekdowntown.com



SYNERGY THEATER PRESENTS CENTER for COMMUNITY ARTS
DIAMONDS AND DETECTIVES
AN IMMERSIVE COMEDY FUNDRAISER
SUPPORTING STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS
SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026 FROM 5:30 TO 8 PM
communityarts.org/diamonds

THE EMERALD AWAKENING:

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with the Walnut Creek Concert Band



The Walnut Creek Concert Band invites the community to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with The Emerald Awakening, a festive spring concert on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, from 7:00–9:00 PM at the Leshar Center for the Arts.

Under the direction of Music Director and Conductor Dr. Matthew Sadowski and Assistant Conductor Edwin Cordoba, this vibrant evening will highlight Irish-

inspired traditions and the fresh, hopeful spirit of spring.

The program will feature several well-known works, including Percy Grainger's tender "Irish Tune from County Derry" and spirited "Molly on the Shore," the lively pub-inspired "At Kitty O'Shea's" by Johan de Meij, and an exhilarating arrangement of Bill Whelan's global sensation Riverdance, brought to life

by the breathtaking artistry of Irish dancers. Additional Celtic and spring-themed selections will further enrich this celebration of all things green and growing.

The Emerald Awakening promises an uplifting celebration of Irish heritage and new-season renewal—perfect for audiences of all ages. Tickets are on sale at LesharArtsCenter.org.

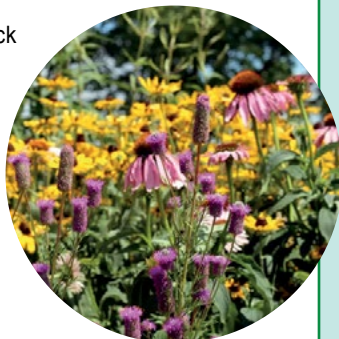
Consider Water-wise Gardens

For the first time since December 2000, all of California is considered drought-free. With the winter's generous rainfall, it is important to make the most of this precious resource. One effective way to retain rainwater is to create a rain garden.

Rain gardens are areas of land with a shallow depression that collect rainwater that falls on your property. These water-wise gardens help decrease the amount of polluted stormwater runoff that ends up in drains, ponds, and creeks. As water slowly seeps into the soil, it is naturally filtered through the absorption and trapping of contaminants. This process helps purify the water, while reducing the need for frequent landscape irrigation.

Native plants are one of the best options for creating a beautiful rain garden. They have excellent root systems for collecting water deep down, require minimal maintenance, and contribute to local biodiversity.

Curious about what a native plant garden might look like? Check out a "Bringing Back the Natives" Garden tour. On Sunday, May 3, various gardens across Walnut Creek and the Bay Area will be open for public tours. This is a great opportunity to take a peaceful stroll surrounded by native wildlife or unlock inspiration for your own home garden. Visit bringingbackthenatives.net/view-gardens to learn more.



Taste and Toast coming to downtown Walnut Creek

An event aimed at benefiting Walnut Creek public schools is coming on March 25 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Enjoy a stroll through downtown while sipping and sampling food from local restaurants and businesses. The event features live student music performances, student art displays, interactive booths at Broadway Plaza and Water Light Plaza.

It's family friendly with face painting for kids. Proceeds benefit schools through the Walnut Creek Education Foundation. Learn more at wcef12.org.



KNOW YOUR WALNUT CREEK PARKS:

Lime Ridge Open Space

WITH MORE THAN 1,200 ACRES AND 25 MILES OF TRAILS, Lime Ridge is the second largest Open Space area in Walnut Creek. It is located on the eastern edge of Walnut Creek on a dominant ridge leading to Mount Diablo. It is connected to other Open Space areas by the Shell Ridge to Lime Ridge Trail, and the broader paved trail system.

It contains some of the last remaining chaparral in Walnut Creek and is home to a rich diversity of plant and animal life. Lime Ridge gets its name from the limestone in the area that was quarried by the Cowell Portland Cement Company. Remnants of the company's operation can be seen at various locations. This quarry was originally started as a supply line to manufacture the bricks that were used to rebuild San Francisco after the 1906 fires. About 20% of Lime Ridge is owned by the City of Concord, but it is under the management and control of Walnut Creek.



This regional space provides opportunities for hiking, biking, horseback riding and sightseeing.

Due to the rich diversity of plants and animals, this Open Space has specific regulations in place to protect those resources. Dogs are allowed in most parts of Lime Ridge, except for the center section south of Ygnacio. This is the Lime Ridge Wildlife Preserve Area. In other parts, leash rules vary depending upon what section you visit, and rangers recommend dogs always remain on leash. When off leash, they must be under positive voice control from their owners at all times.

Lime Ridge is open from dawn to dusk, with the parking lots open at 7:00 a.m. Parking lots are located at the intersection of Ygnacio Valley Road and Montecito Ranch Road, and at the end of Valley Vista near the Boundary Oak driving range. On a clear day, you can see the Benicia Bridge and other Bay Area landmarks from Lime Ridge.



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ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

The Nutshell Newsletter is published quarterly. For questions and comments, contact editor Betsy Burkhart, 925-943-5895 or burkhart@walnutcreekca.gov

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