

# NEWS

## City's summer concert series opens June 3

Cupertino's summer concert series begins June 3 and will run through July 8. Concerts are from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Memorial Park amphitheater, 10185 N. Stelling Road.

The June 3 concert will feature the Cupertino Symphonic Band, which specializes in classical, waltz, patriotic and big band tunes.

For a full lineup, visit [www.cupertino.org](http://www.cupertino.org).

## The public is invited to come learn about their local animals

The McClellan Ranch Park nature museum will be open to the public for open house sessions every Friday for the remainder of the school year, from 3 to 5 p.m.

Residents can stop by for an informal visit with the local animals. Volunteers will be on hand to help children meet the creatures and learn a bit about them.

Look for updates on summer open house hours on the McClellan Ranch page of the city of Cupertino website, [www.cupertino.org/McClellanRanch](http://www.cupertino.org/McClellanRanch).

McClellan Ranch Park is at 22221 McClellan Road. For more information, call 408.777.3149.

## Volunteers sought for medical corps for disaster relief

A Medical Reserve Corps orientation will be held June 5 from 9 to 10 a.m. at Cupertino City Hall, 10300 Torre Ave. Anyone interested in learning more about the city's disaster medical operations is encouraged to attend.

The city is looking for anyone with medical skills that can be helpful after a disaster such as an earthquake. The city is asking those individuals to learn about Cupertino's medical support plan.

Immediately following the orientation, there will be a Medical Reserve Corps refresher training on operating a field treatment site. Refresher training will be held from 10 a.m. to noon.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JACQUELINE RAMSEYER

Volunteer Dr. Peter Kaufman, right, helps David (last name not given) fill his reusable grocery bags with food for his family of four at the West Valley Community Services food pantry in Cupertino.

# Community Services hopes to 'bag' some costs as it faces funding cuts

## Food pantry launches reusable bag drive

By MATT WILSON

West Valley Community Services is collecting reusable shopping bags in an effort to curb the number of disposable bags

used by the nonprofit group's food pantry that serves needy residents in Cupertino, San Jose, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno and some unincorporated areas in Santa Clara County.

Its goal is to give each of its 400 client households three reusable bags to carry their food home from the pantry. The drive is both a green maneuver and an attempt to cut down on a burdensome resource in a challenging economic en-

vironment.

The drive comes as the center faces a possible 82 percent funding cut to its San Jose clients. San Jose is looking to balance a \$119 million budget deficit and could stop contributing to the program. Cupertino and other communities that contribute to the program will continue to receive assistance, but the budget cut will have a far-reaching impact on the center.

Naomi Nakano-Matsumoto, WVCS executive director, said 43 percent of WVCS' approximately 6,000 clients reside in West San Jose, and services could dry up for that area as early as July.

Collecting bags will help with some of the center's costs, said Faith McCarthy, a WVCS program coordinator.

"When we initially approached this, it

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## Bags

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was an operations issue. We go through them really, really quickly," McCarthy said.

With so many clients coming through the pantry each week and more on the way, there will always be a need for bags to carry food home. "There have been times where we have completely run out and we don't have room in our operating budget to get more. We can't go out and buy them, so we go to grocery stores and say, 'Do you mind if we take some of your bags?' We don't want to take advantage of that because our local stores already give us so much," said McCarthy. "The bag need is going to be ongoing because even if we get each of our households three bags, we still have new clients coming in all the time, and these things will wear out."

WVCS will not be picky about the kind of reusable bags, so long as they are religiously neutral and have nothing offensive written on them. They are open to almost any business logo.

To date the nonprofit has received a few thousand bags from groups such as the United Way of Silicon Valley, Allied Waste Services of Daly City, Walmart on Story Road in San Jose, San Jose Councilman Kansen Chu and various individuals.

Lynn Ching and Quyen Huynh of Sustainable Living Group donated 300 reusable bags in late April to get the initiative going. Ching remembers visiting the food pantry last year and feeling surprised as she watched so



PHOTOGRAPH BY JACQUELINE RAMSEYER

David (last name not given) fills his reusable grocery bags with food for his family of four at the West Valley Community Services food pantry in Cupertino. About 800 reusable bags were donated to the nonprofit organization—300 directly from Lynn Ching, owner of Sustainable Living Group.

many plastic bags go out the door with clients.

"It doesn't matter what type of business you do; you should go green and do the Earth-friendly business thing," she said. "Just because someone is low income doesn't mean they can't be green, too."

United Way Silicon Valley's donation of more than 1,000 reusable cloth bags featured information about United Way Silicon Valley's 2-1-1 program. The program is the dialing code for free, non-emergency community, health and disaster information in Santa Clara County.

Callers receive personalized information from a live phone specialist who can answer questions about a variety of

nonprofit services and agencies. United Way officials said WVCS clients are the target audience for such information.

The agency is trying to take steps as politicians continue to look for ways to curb plastic bag use. The city of San Jose's bag ban will go into effect next January and WVCS expects that ban to be a window into the future.

Making the most out of limited resources is a necessity when times are tough, McCarthy said.

"People living at low incomes probably reuse and recycle a lot more stuff than most people do. It's just something that is known in the community. It's not fashionable, but

they do it because they have to do it," Nakano-Matsumoto said.

The recession has put more and more unlikely candidates into the arms of WVCS.

"We're working with a lot of people who used to work but couldn't get back in the workforce," Nakano-Matsumoto said.

The private nonprofit, community-based agency has been providing assistance and referral services in the community for more than 35 years.

For more information about West Valley Community Services or to donate reusable bags, visit [www.wvcommunityservices.org](http://www.wvcommunityservices.org) or contact Faith McCarthy at 408.255.8033 ext. 306.

## Election

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years.

The change would have added a year to the terms of all five current council members. A few residents questioned the ability of the council to vote themselves an extension, but city attorney Carol Korade said state law allows councils to move elections so long as

their term extensions do not exceed 12 months and the change is approved by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

Some council members were willing to consider the election change if they could instead shorten their term by a year. However, city staff said it would likely be too short notice to push an election forward a year.

Some parents with students in the Cupertino Union School district spoke

against the proposal, noting that the change could have shifted election cost burdens onto the school district if it did not move as well. The district does not have a stance on the election change issue, according to Jeremy Nishihara, district communications director.

City leaders also said the change could have created a boost in voter turnout. According to the city, 86 percent of Cupertino's registered voters partici-

pated in the 2008 statewide general election, which saw President Obama elected. This was compared to a 42 percent in the November 2009 municipal election. In the 2006 statewide election, which was a non-presidential election year, 63 percent of Cupertino voters participated as compared to 39 percent in the city's November 2007 municipal election.

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