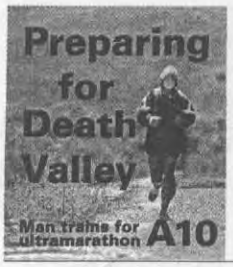

TODAY'S localnews

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City Council candidates gear up for race

Upcoming projects critical for Escondido's future, mayor says

By Darcy Leigh Richardson
darcy@tlnews.net

ESCONDIDO — November will bring change to Escondido's City Council, when three seats, including the mayor's, go up for grabs.

Councilman Ron Newman announced his decision not to run for a second term last week; incumbent Councilwoman Marie Waldron will run again.

Mayor Lori Holt Pfeiler has no competition at this time for her position, although former councilman Tom D'Agosta said Wednesday he will make a final decision whether to run for mayor early next week.

"I'm just thinking about it," D'Agosta said.

Two members of the community, Dick Daniels of RMD Communications, and Inki Welch, member of Escondido Charter High School's Board of Directors and a real estate broker, have decided to run for Newman's vacant seat.

"The opportunity was open," Welch, 48, said about why she decided to run for council.

This is Welch's first run at a public office and she wants to be an example for her three children, who are 7, 9 and 20. Welch, a resident of the city for 20 years, said her strategy will be to "play by the books."

"I want to apply business principles to the growth of Escondido and have quality growth instead of quantity," Welch said. "Ultimately, my purpose is not to win but this is a learning experience for me and my children. If I win, it's a fringe benefit."

Daniels, 64, a former Escondido Rotary Club president and current member of the Downtown Specific Plan R talization Committee, tak different view.

"I fully intend to win," I iels said. "I have a cer amount of name recogni but I need to take myself tc doorstep of this commu I'm planning a full-press, g roots campaign."

Daniels, a resident of Es dido for 16 years, operates own public relations comp

Candidates A

National probation week honors work of officers

The week of July 16 through 22 is National Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Week. In San Diego County, officials are encouraging community members to honor the people who work in probation and parole. There are more than 950 sworn probation officers in San Diego County who work in units including gangs, juveniles and drug offenders.

The week of July 16 through 22 is National Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Week.
Sean DuFrene | sean@tlnews.net

North County officers work with drug offenders

By Jaimy Lee | jaimy@tlnews.net

Juanita Rhodes started her career as a probation officer late in life.

For years, the mother of two raised her children and occasionally worked as a school aide until a friend convinced her to take an education class at MiraCosta College when she was 48.

The soft-spoken woman with blond hair never got her teaching credential but stumbled into a career as a probation officer after earning a degree in criminology from San Diego State University. She now works in the North County Regional Center's Adult Field Services office as a sworn probation officer.

It's a choice — and a career — that Rhodes is enthusiastic about. She even encouraged her friend's son to work in probation, and the experience led him to his dream job with the Escondido Police Department.

While probation officers can work in units such as family violence, sex offender and gangs, Rhodes works only with Proposition 36 clients.

Proposition 36, also known as the Substance Abuse and Crime Prevention Act, allows first- and second-time, nonviolent drug offenders to opt for a substance abuse treatment program instead of jail time.

> "Sometimes, all they need is someone to take an interest."
>
> Juanita Rhodes, probation officer

Of the more than 950 sworn probation officers in San Diego County, only three officers, including Rhodes, work in the Proposition 36 office in North County, said Derryl Acosta, a spokesman for the county.

The program was approved by 61 percent

Probation A6 >

Classes aime at seniors to continue at Cal State

Director: Lifelong learnin program reaches audienc not served by university

By Michael Dolan | dolan@tlnews.net

SAN MARCOS — Cal State San Ma Office of Extended Studies has recei a grant to continue offering courses through the Osher Lifelong Learnin Institute.

The awarding of the $100,000 gra marks the third year the university h received the grant to fund the progr which started at the university in 20

The program — designed for mature learners 50 and older — offers a range of classes from arts to sciences, said Jan Jackson, dean of extended studies.

Suzanne Strassburger, director of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Cal State San Marcos, said the program reaches out to an audience not served by the university.

"Most of the people are retired," Strassburger said.

She said the class times — daytime hours on weekdays — make it convenient for the target group of learners.

"What differentiates the Osher Li long Learning Institute courses are they are for the sheer joy of learnin Strassburger said.

Osher Lifelong Learning Instit

WHERE Classe offered at the Escondido Cha ber of Commer 720 N. Broadwa Escondido; anc Mission San Lu Rey, 4050 Missi Ave., Oceansid

WHEN Fall clas begin Sept. 11 i Escondido and 16 in Oceanside

COST There is $15 administra fee. Classes ar $50 per person class. Individu and couple rat are available f those intendin to take up to 1 classes in a 12- month period.

INFORMATION zanne Strassb er, 760-750-871

Church to host KidsGames

ESCONDIDO — Emmanuel Faith Community Church will host KidsGames, a weeklong program to teach children in kindergarten through sixth grades arts, crafts and sports.

The program will open with an Olympic-style opening ceremony for children and their families from 4 to 7 p.m. Sunday at Emmanuel Faith Church athletic field, 639 E. Felicita Ave., at the corner of 17th Avenue and Encino Drive.

The program will then run from 9 a.m. to noon from Monday through Friday with an opening assembly, Bible dramas, sports and games or art programs and a closing assembly each day.

The week will finish with a closing ceremony at the church from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Friday.

A $20 donation is suggested for each child, not to exceed $60 per family.

Each child will receive a T-shirt, and snacks will be provided each day.

To register for the program, call 760-781-2104.

For information, visit www.efcc.org.

— Kathleen Dowling

Candidates

>From A1

and plans to continue working full-time if he is elected.

"We need to create more jobs and expand our job base for all residents. We seem to be attracting a good stock of quality market-rate housing, which means more money for merchants," Daniels said. "Escondido is not a bedroom community anymore; it is a self-contained city."

Pfeiler has been mayor for nearly eight years and a full-time mayor for six years.

"I'm running again because there's so much activity going on and it's a good time to serve," Pfeiler said. "There must be a balance between housing and business development. Not that much has been built; there's been talk and I hope for action in the upcoming year."

The deadline to file for mayor is Aug. 11 and the deadline to file for council seats is Aug. 16.

Reach reporter Darcy Leigh Richardson at 760.752.6753.

Probation

>From A1

of voters in California in 2000, and more than 35,000 people pass through the program each year, according to the proposition's Web site. In San Diego County, about 53 percent of voters were in favor of Proposition 36.

In June, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger reformed the proposition so offenders who do not attend the required treatment get two to 10 days of jail time.

The Drug Police Alliance filed an injunction this month to stop the reform, said Connie Mareno-Peraza, an administrator with the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency.

The acting proposition is a little "vague," Rhodes said. Some people want to join the program because they don't have to go to jail and don't really understand or want to understand that the program requires recovery.

"Some people are eligible but not suitable," Rhodes said. "But there are a lot of pros to the program. . . . These aren't bad people. For whatever reason, they've made bad choices."

With about 15 new referrals a week, it's a busy schedule for Rhodes and the two other officers who work with North County clients. There also are units in downtown San Diego, El Cajon and South Bay.

Officers sit down with each offender to explain the program, the expectations and the treatment. It's Rhodes who decides if the client needs outpatient or inpatient treatment, but the program is 100 percent voluntary.

Because she works only with parolees in the program, her case load has about 100 names, but her two partners each work with 300 to 500 people, she said.

It's hard to know the success rate of the program because recent studies show only the numbers of people who make it through their treatment program. Others simply never make it to one class.

"Sometimes, all they need is someone to take an interest," she said.

Rhodes attends as many treatment program graduations as possible and even called a client from a vacation in England to make sure the client was attending her program.

"You want to see success," she said. "You want to say that guy or gal made it."

Reach reporter Jaimy Lee at 760.752.6754.

Osher

>From A1

While the courses are academic in nature, Strassburger said there are no tests, homework or grades.

"It fosters discussion and participation in the classroom so people can bring their own years of knowledge and experience to discuss with others," she said.

Based on the evaluations she receives after the classes conclude, Strassburger said the more discussion and student participation, the better the experience for those in the class.

"Not only is it a learning environment, it is a social environment, as well," she said.

Strassburger maintains the popularity of the program lies in the nonmandatory nature of the classes, meaning people take what they want to learn and are not forced to go to classes they don't want to attend.

One student she mentioned was a retired engineer. His formal education and career were technical.

So, he took a literature class on marriage and mayhem in the 19th century British novel.

"He really enjoyed it. He said it was the first time he had an opportunity to take a literature class since high school," Strassburger said.

Classes offered this fall have titles such as Terrorism: Can We Win?, Shakespeare's Italy: Land of Beauty, Love and Blood and the Cuisine of Five French Regions, which will be taught at Bistro Le Bouchon in Escondido.

Each course is taught by a Cal State San Marcos professor or an expert in the field.

The funds will go to continuing the program.

Classes are offered in two North County locations: the Escondido Chamber of Commerce and at Mission San Luis Rey in Oceanside. Classes are offered in the fall, spring and summer.

"A lot of people have said they want to take classes at both locations," Strassburger said.

The five-week sessions meet once a week for 2 1/2 hours. The Escondido session begins Sept. 11 and runs through Oct. 13. Oceanside classes start Oct. 16 and finish Nov. 17.

Nationwide, there are 93 lifelong learning institutes funded by grants from the Bernard Osher Foundation.

For information on Osher Lifelong Learning Institute classes at Cal State San Marcos contact Strassburger at 760-750-8712.

Reach reporter Michael Dolan at 760.752.6749.