

Converse

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue No. 2 - Fall 2011

Citizens of Converse,

CONGRATULATIONS! for the highest voter turnout in Converse history with a total tally of 1,056 votes. I would like to thank the voters for their active involvement & support and welcome our newly elected City Council members: Laura Beehler, Kathy Richel, and Andy Selko. I would also like to relay my sincere thanks to the outgoing City Council-members: John Shadron, Renee Paschall, and Robin Benbrook for their dedication & outstanding service to our wonderful city. I would like to officially welcome our new city manager, Shawna Dowell, who has already done a tremendous job for the past five months.



The Cibolo Valley Local Government Corporation (CVLGC) is now official. The CVLGC is a local water partnership comprised of five local cities: Converse, Selma, Cibolo, Schertz, and Seguin. This proactive initiative by the city council was established to meet the present & future residential and commercial water needs for Converse. The City Council recently ordered a Utility Rate study to address utility sewer & water rates to provide the best fair rates for all our citizens. Our Economic Development Corporation Director, Kate Silvas, continues to implement initiatives to increase our economic development and responsible growth. I would like to welcome the CVS pharmaceutical organization on their newly proposed development site at the intersection of Kitty Hawk Road & Toepperwein Road. Additionally, the New Converse Digital Marquee is now projected for installation in late September. The City of Converse has unveiled its official new website (www.conversetx.net).

Finally, everyone is invited to attend the 38th Annual "Night In Ole Converse" Festival on September 29th to October 2nd. We hope that the Converse Newsletter will continue to provide our citizens with an alternative "real-time" news source. If you have any concerns, questions, or suggestions please call on me at (210) 787-7295 or email me at mayorsuarez@conversetx.net. Or please stop by and visit me at "MAYOR'S CALL" on the 2nd & 4th Saturday of every month from 8:00 am to 10:00 am. (City Hall Conference Room). My sincere thanks to all our City Employees for making Converse a better place to live. Let's make a difference together. Looking forward to hearing from you very soon!

Best Regards,
Mayor Al Suarez

The 38th Annual Night in Ole Converse (NIOC) Festival starts Thursday, September 29th and runs through Sunday, October 2nd at Converse City Park. Pre-Sale tickets are available at City Hall and Converse Public Library from September 6th through September 29th. Tickets can also be purchased at the gate on the nights of the event. Carnival wristbands are available which allow you to ride most rides all night on Thursday and Sunday.



Special events include a demonstration from the Live Oak Parkour-Skate-Bike Association, the 1st Annual Strongest Man Strongest Woman Contest, the First Ever Sports Den and several bands throughout the weekend. Sunday afternoon will feature two-time Grammy Award Winner Sunny Saucedo.

A parade will take place Saturday morning at 10:30 am with the theme of "Celebrating America's Heroes" so put on your red, white and blue and come join us! KJ97's Randy Carroll and Jamie Martin will join us to emcee the parade.

For more information and updates on Night in Ole Converse, please visit the City's website at www.conversetx.net and click on the Night in Ole Converse link on the home page, or find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Night.In.Ole.Converse!

Streets – 659-9513

Streets Dept is continuing to work on Ave B reconstruction and, due to construction delays, we plan to complete the work in September. Pot holes and street repairs behind main breaks are continuing. Traffic signs are continuing to be replaced to conform to MUTCD standards.

Grounds – 659-9513

With the extreme heat and lack of rain, the areas we maintain are very dry. We will continue to clean our right of ways clear of trash and weeds that continue to grow. We are working on reshaping Laurel and Mission Creeks' earthen drainage channels. We will continue to pick up brush for each zone according to the schedule. If you need an out of zone brush pickup these will be done for a charge of \$50 that will be added to your water bill. You can view the 2011 Brush Pick-Up Schedule on the City's website. You can schedule an out of zone pickup by calling Water Billing at 658-1965.

Parks – 659-9513

The Converse City swimming pool had a very successful season. On September 11th we will have a memorial service for 9/11 at the City Park from 8:00 am till 11:00 am. We will be busy getting ready for Night in Ole Converse festivities; please plan on joining us to celebrate Night in Ole Converse September 29th through October 2nd.

Water Billing – 658-1965

New water rates have gone into effect which should ease the pain of this drought on your pocket book. These rates were mailed out to every water customer on August 12th. You should have received this mailing between August 15 and 19 which outlines the new water rates for all Stage Restrictions as well as in times of no restrictions. If you did not receive a copy, you may pick one up at City Hall or in the Water Billing Office.

The City of Converse would like to thank the American Legion Post 593 for their ongoing trash clean-up on Toepperwein Road.

Utilities – 658-3453

We would like to remind you that we are currently under Stage II Water Restrictions per the level of the Edwards Aquifer, and Stage III Restrictions are in the near future if we do not get any rain. Please do your part to conserve water and remember that **water waste is prohibited all year long**. For a full list of restrictions for each stage, please visit the City's website at www.conversetx.net.

Due to the ongoing drought, city water leaks and main breaks are at an all time high. Please report any leaks as quickly as possible to City Hall at 658-5356 during normal business hours or to Police Dispatch at 658-2322 after hours and on weekends. Also, please remember to be patient with our City Crews as they are working diligently to fix each problem as quickly as possible despite the heat outside.

Storm Water – 658-3453

The City of Converse Storm Water Department is now in its fourth year. Over the last year we have marked all of the existing storm water inlets within the city with storm drain markers that say NO DUMPING, DRAINS TO CREEK. In addition, we have mapped out and marked the outfalls and inlets for the storm water system and conducted inspections to see what repairs are needed to ensure good water flow. There are educational flyers in all City buildings for your benefit to help the environment. If you see illegal dumping, please call the Converse Police Department at 658-2322. Your help is needed. For more information, please check out the City's website or call 658-3453 for the Storm Water Department. Remember that it is illegal to dump trash or debris over your fence.

Fire Department – 658-8900

The Converse Fire Department would like to remind everyone to be mindful when using grills and other open flame devices outside. The current drought situation has produced extremely dry vegetation that is highly flammable. A moment's inattention can result in a rapidly spreading fire that is difficult to control. In addition, please ensure that any remaining coals are completely extinguished prior to disposing of them in the trash. Many times, live coals are placed in trash cans near outside walls, which result in fire spreading from the can to a structure. If you have any questions on fire safety, please contact us at 210-658-8900.

A Message from City Hall

Why develop a family disaster plan?

Disasters can be either natural or man-made and can occur at any time. The time to prepare is now to become aware of the risks in our area. The City of Converse has an emergency management plan for city operations and services. A good place to start a family disaster plan is right from your dining room table.

What sorts of disasters are likely to strike in Converse, Texas?

Our community is situated south of Randolph Air Force Base and northeast of San Antonio, both of which can be a source of potential disasters. Also, Loop 1604 and FM 78 are utilized by hundreds of tractor trailers that transport supplies and materials for industries across Texas. Your family must be prepared to respond in the event of natural and man-made disasters. Can your family prepare for a hurricane, tornado, flash flooding or chemical spill due to a rail accident? Yes, but planning for this is your responsibility and is easy.

Our community has a reverse 911 warning system and we will post emergency notifications on our website to which you can subscribe via email or text message. Also, we are served by several local media outlets, both radio and television, that will provide information as it becomes available.

An effective disaster checklist should include:

1. Where everyone should meet during the event,
2. How to communicate during event,
3. Escape routes from the event,
4. Emergency phone numbers for family and emergency services, and
5. Emergency supplies (water, food for three days, radio and flashlights with new batteries and first aid kits).

Remember, planning is the key and it just may save your life!

C I T Y C O U N C I L



FRONT ROW: Councilwoman Kathy Richel, Mayor Al Suarez, Mayor Pro-Tem Grant Lopez
BACK ROW: Councilman Steve Brown, Councilwoman Laura Beehler,
Councilman Randy Pannell, Councilman Andy Selko



*The City of Converse and
The American Legion Post 593
Request the Honour of Your Presence
at the Tenth Anniversary Memorial Service for
the Victims of the September 11, 2001 Attacks
on Sunday, the Eleventh of September, 2011
at Eight O'clock a.m.
Converse City Park
305 School Street
Reception Immediately Following the Ceremony*



Building Department – 658-8285

The Converse Building Department (CBD) would like to remind all residents that construction and renovation permits are required for most home improvements including but not limited to swimming pools (above ground included), re-roofs, enclosing garages, installation of siding and fences, plumbing and electrical repairs such as replacing water heaters, water softeners or heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) units. CBD will conduct inspections to ensure compliance with our building codes which are a measure of protection to ensure that safe and sound construction practices are the standard for Converse. We recommend that you secure quotes from at least three (3) contractors before signing an agreement, secure at least a one (1) year written warranty and **never provide funds prior to the completion and final acceptance of the work.**

You may contact the CBD to ensure your Contractor is licensed and eligible to obtain permits within the City of Converse. Permits must be posted on the job site and visible from the street. Please contact the CBD at 658-8285 for questions or to obtain a current list of contractors that are licensed to work in Converse. If you are concerned about construction activities in your neighborhood and do not see a permit posted, please call the CBD. Visit us at www.conversetx.net for forms, fees or information. Please be mindful that our offices are closed from 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm for lunch, Monday through Friday.

Economic Development Corporation 659-9163

The City Council recently appointed two new Board members to the Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors. They include Roy Schaufele, President of Division 7 Solutions in Converse and Elizabeth Kuhlmann, Business Development for Randolph Brooks Federal Credit Union (RBFCU).

RBFCU was the sponsor for our most recent Open House/Business Breakfast at which Roxanne Aranda, Loan Officer from ACCION Texas -Louisiana highlighted the micro-lending options offered by ACCION to small businesses needing access to funds not available from traditional commercial lending sources. For information on ACCION Texas, visit their website at www.acciontexas.org. The next Open House is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, November 16. Watch for details on the EDC website at www.ConverseEDC.com.

On September 15 at 10:00 am, the Converse EDC will officially welcome Karen's House of Flowers located at 339 S. Seguin to the Converse business community with a ribbon cutting. Staff is busily working at reaching out to the local business community with business retention visits to address the needs of local businesses and to determine the best means to expand and grow the businesses already in Converse.

Staff is also working on recruitment efforts, including following up on the results of the Buxton Community ID psychographic and demographic analysis which determined which retail operations are best matched with Converse residents.

Police Department – 658-2322

Fall in the City of Converse means the close of summer, the beginning of school and the start of football!

Take extra time in the mornings as you begin your day to remember to buckle up, be aware of school zones in your area and cell phone use is prohibited in school zones. Watch out for children at bus stops and remember to stop for the flashing red lights.

Night in Ole Converse is fast approaching, please come see us in our Crime Prevention Booth for child fingerprinting and goodies from September 29th through October 2nd.

National Night Out is upon us, Tuesday, October 4, 2011, so call 658-2322 to have your block party placed on our list for Police participation.

Citizen's Police Academy registration will continue through December 23, 2011. Interested parties should complete an application and submit for a background check. This academy is for citizens wishing to become more involved in the community and Police Department. For further information, please call Officer K. Molder at 210-658-2322.

As always, stay safe and please call to report suspicious activity! Let's keep Converse safe!

Library – 659-4160

The Converse Public Library had a successful summer reading program in 2011. We registered 164 readers during our nine-week program and hosted a total of 23 summer programs. You can see a video of the program on the City's website under **City Services > Converse Public Library > Video Archives**.

We are looking forward to the fall season. This is the time we use to purchase new books, shelving, do a lot of cataloging and prepare for a few holiday season programs. We recently purchased 26 shelving fixtures that we will receive in September. This should really help us out with our new book purchases. We are testing a new Inter-Library Loan System that will make it easier for us to get books from other libraries for our patrons.

Finally, we are co-promoting, with local strength athlete Jill Mills, the 1st Annual Converse Strongest Man Strongest Woman Contest during this year's Night in Ole Converse (NIOC) Festival. In addition to providing a new event for NIOC, this gives us an opportunity to raise awareness about health and fitness. You can find out more information by visiting the City's website and clicking on the Night in Ole Converse link on the home page.

For a full calendar including meetings and public events, please visit us on the web at www.conversetx.net.

City Council

Meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month
7:00 pm, 402 S. Seguin
There is a time provided for citizens to speak at every meeting.

Beautification & Environmental

Meets the 4th Monday of the month
7:00 pm, 405 S. Seguin

Building & Standards

Meets as needed
6:00 pm, 405 S. Seguin

EDC

Meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month
6:30 pm, 405 S. Seguin

Parks & Recreation

Meets the 2nd Monday of the month
6:30 pm, 405 S. Seguin

Planning & Zoning

Meets the 3rd Monday of the month
7:00 pm, 405 S. Seguin

Mayor's Call

Held the 2nd and 4th Saturdays
8:00 am - 10:00 am
405 S. Seguin

Council Call

Held the 3rd Saturday of the month
8:00 am - 10:00 am
405 S. Seguin

Council Corner

Council Corner is a rotating column amongst the members of City Council. It gives the opportunity for Council members to reach out in the written word directly to the residents. Contact information for this quarter's member is listed at the bottom.

I hope this issue of our city's newsletter finds you and yours well. Let me take a moment or two to update you on a few issues that we are working on to better our lives in our great city. We continue to work hard each and every day to improve life for all of Converse.

Our city is now a member of the Cibolo Valley Local Government Corporation. This will ensure that we have water for our citizens for the future. This will allow us additional water rights from the Carrizo Aquifer.

If you look around our city, you will see that we are all working to improve the beautification of Converse. Feel free to call City Hall if you see any dumping violations or anything that you would like to see improved in your fine community.

I would like to invite each citizen to consider volunteering and getting involved with one of our commissions. The commissions consist of those like the Beautification & Environmental Commission, Building & Standards, Parks & Recreation and Planning & Zoning, just to name a few. Contact Mrs. Martinez at City Hall, 658-5356, if you are interested.

Remember that our annual Night in Ole Converse (NIOC) will take place from September 29th through October 2nd. There will be quite a number of activities for the whole family to enjoy. There will be food, music, more food, contests, more food and citizen fellowship. Advanced tickets for NIOC can be purchased at City Hall. There will also be a parade held on Saturday, October 1st at 10:30 am. The theme of the parade will be Converse "Celebrating America's Heroes."

I am very excited to report to you that our city continues to grow and improve each and every day. Our city manager, Shawna Dowell, has brought a high level of professionalism to our city. If you see a city employee, no matter what department, I ask that you take a moment and tell them thank you, because without their hard work, we could not accomplish anything. I and my wife, Diana, continue to be excited for the future of our community. The sky's the limit. Remember, no one can accomplish much alone, but a team can accomplish anything together!

Randy Pannell
Converse City Councilman, Place 4
Email: council4@conversetx.net



City Contact Information

*The City of Converse Operating Hours are
Monday - Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.*

You can subscribe to the newsletter at www.conversetx.net to receive each new issue, in color, by email. This will keep you informed more quickly and help the City save paper!

Public Works

Streets, Parks, Grounds
(210) 659-9513

City Hall

Administrative
(210) 658-5356

Utilities

Including Storm Water
(210) 658-3453

Building

(210) 658-8285

Economic Development

(210) 659-9163

Water Billing

(210) 658-1965

Fire

(210) 658-8900

Library

(210) 659-4160

Police

(210) 658-2322