

Report to the
People

MEASURE AA NEW CAPTAIN
GREENER HOLIDAY STAR WARS DAY
CLEAR PATH TO EMPLOYMENT TREE LIGHTING

COMMERCE 2012





The City, in collaboration with the Industrial Council, hosted the Commerce Relay for Life event at Veterans Park in August, raising more than \$10,000 to help in the fight against cancer.



Eddie Tafoya, executive director of the Industrial Council, introduced the Mayor, who spoke to local businesses about the City's future plans in the Annual State of the City address.

From the desk of the CITY ADMINISTRATOR

As we come to the close of another year in the City of Commerce we have an opportunity to take a look back at what our community accomplished in 2012.

Throughout the year we have provided quality programs and services to the community despite major economic challenges that include the end of the City's Redevelopment Agency, the loss of at least \$50 million dollars in local redevelopment that Sacramento has taken, and a slow economic recovery. For the Fiscal Year, which began in July of 2012 and runs through the end of June 2013, the City Council approved a balanced budget of approximately \$50.5 million and eliminated an estimated \$4 million deficit in the process.

Although the City faced a number of financial challenges in 2012, Commerce athletes gave us great cause to rejoice. Commerce Water Polo Alumnus Margo Miranda was inducted into the USA Water Polo Hall of Fame; the Commerce Aquatics Teams proved they are one of the best teams in the nation during the Junior Olympics; and Commerce icon, Brenda Villa led the US Olympic Women's Water Polo Team to the Gold Medal during the 2012 London Olympic Games. To honor this signature achievement, the City renamed the Aquatorium as the Brenda Villa Aquatics Center.

This is a time of year not only to reminisce, but to plan for the upcoming year. We are looking forward to 2013 as one filled with great potential for the City. On Election Day, Commerce voters approved Measure AA, the half cent sales tax, which passed with 67% of the vote. The additional revenue to be generated by Measure AA is estimated in the range of \$4.5 to \$5 million a year, beginning July 1 of 2013 and will be geared toward maintaining and improving a wide range of vital services, including public safety, repair of City facilities and streets while protecting other community programs. That the Measure passed by a significant margin is a clear signal that the community supports public investments which positively impact quality of life in Commerce. More specifics on the legal and policy decisions governing this revenue measure will be forthcoming and reported in early 2013.

The coming year will also mark the commencement of the long awaited Commerce Central Library Renovation Project. During construction, the Central Library will experience a temporary change in hours and space, however, once completed, this renovation will improve our award winning Library system and enrich the services we provide to patrons of all ages.

The year is not quite over yet and there are fun events in December we encourage you to mark on your calendar. The Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony is on Monday, Dec. 3 at 6 p.m. at the steps of City Hall. Parks and Recreation is hosting the Children's Holiday Faire & Santa's Sweet Shop on Saturday, Dec. 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Park, which features holiday crafts for children, games, treats, and a visit from Santa.

Finally, there's still time to donate to the Holiday Cheer Program. Acceptable donations include money, food, toys, gift certificates and pledges that will go toward benefitting Commerce families in need this holiday season. The deadline to give is Dec. 12. To find out how you can help, contact the Community Services Department at (323) 887-4460.

Remember, City Hall will be closed on Mon., Dec. 24 and Tues., Dec. 25 in observance of the Christmas Holiday and will also be closed on Monday, Dec. 31 and Tues., Jan. 1 in observance of New Year's Day.

On behalf of the City Council and your City employees, we wish you and your family a memorable holiday season and a happy new year.

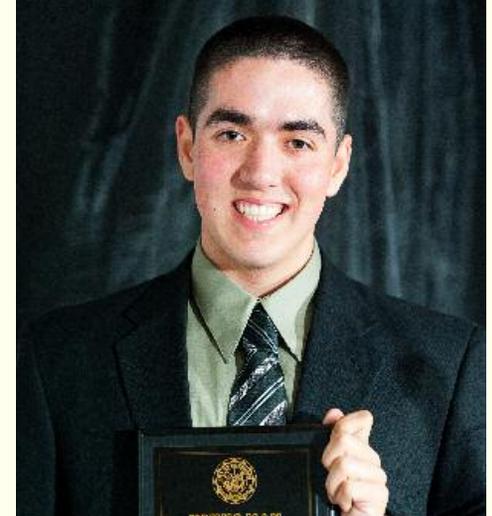
Sincerely,
Jorge Rifa

BRENDA VILLA AQUATICS CENTER



The Aquatorium was renamed after Olympic Gold Medalist Brenda Villa in August. The Brenda Villa Aquatics Center will inspire future Commerce Olympians for generations to come.

YOUNG MAN OF THE YEAR



Ernie Covarrubias was awarded the 2012 Young Man of the Year Scholarship in February.

2012 MISS COMMERCE AND ROYAL COURT



Unique Hernandez was crowned Miss Commerce 2012 on February 25. Also crowned as members of her court were (from l. to r.) Miss Fourth of July Jannine Mancilla, Miss Dodgers Alyssa Rubio, Hernandez, Miss Galaxy Karely Ramirez, Miss Cinco de Mayo Amanda Alvarado and Miss Friendship Jennifer Mendoza.

I-710 PUBLIC HEARING



Concerned residents from Commerce and neighboring cities attended the I-710 Public Hearing on the freeway expansion in August.

BEVERLY HOSPITAL DONATION



The City donated a 10-passenger van formerly used for the Commerce Medi-Ride Program to Beverly Hospital in February.

STUDENTS TAKE OVER



Local high school students took over City Hall in March for Student Government Day to learn about careers in government and how the City provides programs and services to residents.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME



Commerce Residents participated in 12 block parties held throughout the City to celebrate the National Night Out against crime.

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK



The City of Commerce, Rosewood School and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department teamed up to fight bullying at Rosewood School in June.

HALL OF FAMER



Commerce Water Polo Alumna Margo Miranda was inducted into the USA Water Polo Hall of Fame at the 2012 USA Water Polo Olympic Send-off Party and Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in July.

YES WORKERS



This summer 85 Commerce youth gained real world work experience by volunteering in the City of Commerce Youth Education and Service (YES) Program.

UNIFIED GROCERS TURNS 90



Congresswoman Judy Chu, pictured here with Unified Grocers President Robert M. Ling Jr. (left) and CEO Alfred Plamann celebrated Unified Grocer's 90th Anniversary in June.

EARTH DAY



Commerce youth celebrated Earth Day by participating in various activities, including drawing posters like these Commerce youth pictured here at Rosewood Park.

SIDEWALK CPR



The LA County Fire Department and the American Heart Association hosted a "Sidewalk CPR" demonstration in front of the Senior Center in June to teach members of the public the basics of lifesaving CPR.

TEENS GIVE BACK



Teens helped beautify the Teen Center at the Community Day of Service in January. The Day of service was in honor of the work of Martin Luther King Jr.

COMMITTED TO A BRIGHT ECONOMIC FUTURE



The Citadel Outlets are ready to enter a 4th phase of expansion that will bring the number of stores to approximately 150.

The City Council is working to build a bright future for Commerce's business and residential communities through continued fiscal responsibility and establishing a clear vision for the City's future economic growth.

Because of the Nation's slow economic recovery and the elimination of the City's Redevelopment Agency, the City Council has carved more than \$6 million in cuts out of the budget in the last four budget cycles. In addition, the City faces \$30.1 million in short term infrastructure costs to repair the City's crumbling streets and roads and an additional \$4.1 million to maintain and repair City facilities.

To face these challenges, Commerce voters made their voices heard when Measure AA, a ½ cent sales tax, passed in the November 6 General Election with 67% of the vote. Measure AA is projected to generate \$4.5 to 5 million annually to address Commerce's most critical needs. These funds will be used for infrastructure and to help protect vital City services that include an extensive library system, parks, recreation centers and public safety provided by the brave men and women of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's and Fire Departments.

And it doesn't stop there. The City is looking forward to further expansion along the Telegraph Road Corridor, including the Citadel Outlets Phase IV, which will bring the total number of stores to approximately 150.

To support this economic activity the City recently approved the Citadel Express, a new bus line that runs from Commerce to Downtown Los Angeles and back. This new bus line will transport commuters and shoppers from high foot traffic, population dense areas in Downtown L.A. to key Commerce destinations like the Citadel and the Commerce Casino. This project will be 100% funded by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Federal Transit Administration at minimal cost to the City.

For more information on the new Citadel Express bus line, contact the Transportation Department at (323) 887-4419.

COMMERCE SCHOLARS



Sixty-five Commerce residents were presented scholarships totaling \$86,000 during an awards breakfast at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in August.

BRENDA VILLA FAREWELL



Commerce Olympian Brenda Villa spoke, participated in a shootout, posed for pictures and signed autographs in July, shortly before she left for the 2012 London Olympics.

A NEW SHERIFF IN TOWN



Commerce's new captain, James Wolak of the L.A. County Sheriff's Department is pictured here with Commander Henry Romero.

The City of Commerce was recently introduced James Wolak, who will serve as Commerce's new captain in charge of the City's law enforcement services for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Captain Wolak is enthusiastic about his new position. "I look forward to serving the City of Commerce," said Wolak, whose priorities include keeping Commerce safe and working closely with residents to prevent crime in their neighborhoods.

"I enjoy the opportunity to speak with the people we serve," said Captain Wolak, who did just that when he talked with residents in English and Spanish at a recent Neighborhood Watch Meeting in the Bristow Park area.

A 23-year veteran of the Sheriff's Department, Captain Wolak graduated at the top of his Academy class and was named the "Honor Cadet." Wolak also brings with him to Commerce a wealth of experience and a diverse background in law enforcement.

Wolak has worked at numerous stations and facilities for the Sheriff's Department, including the training academy, the personnel unit and most recently as an executive aide for Undersheriff Paul Tanaka. The City of Commerce is pleased to welcome Captain James Wolak to the City of Commerce.

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION



The Commerce Independence Day Celebration drew a crowd of more than 8,000 people to enjoy the carnival and fireworks show.

COMMERCE TO COLLEGE FAIR



The Annual Commerce to College Fair held at Veterans Park in September drew more than 1,000 students and their families. Pictured are the grand prize winners.

WIZARD OF OZ TEEN PRODUCTION



The On Cue Performing Arts Group from the Teen Center performed the classic "Wizard of Oz" in April.

JOURNEY FOR A BETTER WORLD



Endurance athlete Jason Lester visited the Citadel Outlets during his 102 day "Journey for a Better World" sponsored by Nike.

APPLIED TECHNOLOGY CENTER



A unique high school opened its doors to incoming freshman to prepare them for college and the workforce.

COMMUNITY GALAXY NIGHT



Residents of the City of Commerce came together to support the LA Galaxy against the Toronto FC during Community Galaxy Night in September.

HALLOWEEN PARADE



Commerce Residents of all ages participated in the City's annual Halloween celebrations in all four parks.

CESAR CHAVEZ DAY



Mariachi's from local arts program Plaza De La Raza were just part of the activities and entertainment at the Cesar Chavez Day Celebration at the Atlantic Branch Library.

PRESCHOOL GRADUATION



Graduates of the 2012 Commerce Preschool Program with Miss Commerce Unique Hernandez and the Royal Court.

READ ACROSS AMERICA



Volunteer readers from throughout the residential and business community read to students at Rosewood School in honor of Read Across America and Dr. Seuss.

THE HUNT FOR EASTER EGGS



Children scamped across Rosewood Park in search of goodies left by the Easter Bunny on April 7.

SENIOR LUAU



Commerce senior Raul Elenes cuts a rug with Hawaiian dancers that performed for the Senior Luau in July.

JUNIOR OLYMPIANS



After a year filled with impressive wins and record breaking feats, the Commerce Aquatics Teams brought home gold in Water Polo and Swimming from the Junior Olympics.

SOUTHEAST JOB FAIR



More than 870 people attended the Southeast LA Job Fair held at Huntington Park in July. The fair was hosted by Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard in collaboration with the City of Commerce.

CENTRAL LIBRARY STARWARS DAY



The evil Darth Vader (Young Adult Librarian Erik Jackiw) and a Mandalorian Mercenary posed with Princess Leia during the Library's Star Wars Reads Day.

The Force was strong in the City of Commerce on Saturday, Oct. 20 when the Central Library hosted the 'Star Wars Reads Day.'

The event drew more than 100 kids and their families, many of whom dressed up as their favorite Star Wars characters. Parent David Perez came to the event to share his love of Star Wars with his family. "I love Star Wars. That's why I'm here with my daughter. We're a Star Wars family. I think what the library did here is great." Young Commerce resident Lex Lopez liked the event as well "It was good. I liked the games and the movie. I liked Darth Vader." The event started with a number of activity stations all around the library. The children's area had kids run an obstacle course with a stuffed Yoda on their backs. At the end of the course, the kids took lightsabers and fought off the evil Sith Lord Darth Maul.

The Media section had kids playing a dancing Star Wars game on the X-Box Kinect. The Study area had a Blaster Challenge, where kids shot targets in the forms of characters Greedo, Jar Jar Binks and the Death Star. Han Solo (Homework Helper Hector Campos) and Bounty Hunter Boba Fett (Technical Services Librarian Greco Venegas) supplied the blasters. Sigrid Skywalker (Children's Librarian Sigrid Hudson) took over the periodical section, conducting a Star Wars-themed Loteria/Bingo.

After the activities, Sigrid Skywalker and special guest Darth Vader (Erik Jackiw) gathered all attendees together for storytime. This was followed by a costume contest, with first place and a toy lightsaber going to a little girl dressed up as Queen Amidala. The event ended with a Darth Vader Pinata.

Young Adult Librarian Erik Jackiw organized the event. "When I was a kid, Star Wars was my favorite movie. There were books that inspired me to read beyond my reading level and it got me to read more challenging books. We thought it would be great to share our enthusiasm with some of the kids."



Youth volunteers from various City clubs and programs like the Crush Traveling Volleyball Team pictured here, cleaned up along the Telegraph Road Corridor. Craig Realty donated \$100 to a program of each youth's choice.



The Commerce Employment and Business Development Center and the Citadel Outlets hosted a job fair in September that helped more than 800 people find jobs.

SEASON'S "GREENINGS"

*Twas the night before Christmas
And all through Commerce
Residents were shopping
With tote bags in tow*

*Children wait for St. Nick to appear
Bestowing gifts and good cheer
Gather around the artificial tree
With ornaments reused newly aglow*

*Twas the night before Christmas
And all through Commerce
Businesses were giving
To their heart's delight*

*'Tis the season after all
For all to give and ponder
On family, community and health
So reuse, recycle, and donate tonight*

The above poem written by Commerce Environmental Services Manager Gina Nila highlights opportunities to be "green" this holiday season. By taking greater responsibility to conserve natural resources and promote environmental sustainability, we can save money while reducing our carbon footprint. Below are a few ways to make a positive difference:

GREEN HOLIDAY TIPS

- Use reusable table linens, plates and utensils instead of disposable types.
- Set out recycling containers for all bottles and cans.
- Buy Christmas gifts, wrappings and cards that have recycled content.
- Take canvas tote bags to stores to use as shopping bags.
- Plan your shopping trips to combine as many errands as possible. Cars turned off more than an hour emit 5 times more pollution than a warm car.
- Clean out your closets and donate reusable items to charity.

TREE RECYCLING

We encourage everyone to buy an artificial tree and continue to reuse it, or to buy a living tree and plant it in the ground after the holidays to help improve air quality.

For those who do buy a tree we encourage you to recycle. Calmet makes it easy by picking up Christmas Trees on regular waste collection days from Dec. 26 through Jan. 11 for recycling. Remove all decorations and tree stands. Trees taller than four feet must be cut in half. Flocked trees will be accepted. For more information, call CalMet Services at (800) 990-6387.

ARMED FORCES DAY



The City Council honored active duty members and veterans of the US Military in May for their dedication and sacrifices to preserving our freedom.

COMMERCE SENIORS



Commerce Seniors enjoying a game of billiards, just one of many activities available at the Senior Center.

YOUNG SKYWALKERS



The Library hosted 'Star Wars Reads Day' on October 20, which drew fans dressed as their favorite Star Wars characters. Pictured here are winners of the costume contest.

TEEN ADVENTURERS



The Teen Center's Adventure Club went on a five day trip to San Simeon, Monterey and Morro Bay in August, consisting of hiking, horseback riding, swimming, and other fun activities.

HOME DEPOT SAFETY FAIR



Commerce Residents Angelina and Isabella Leon learned the basics of doing it yourself during the Home Depot Children's Safety Fair in June.

LITTLE BROADCASTERS



Commerce youth learned how to film and produce video by participating in the Cable TV Division's 'Little Broadcasters' program.

COMMERCE SWIMMING CHAMPION



Jesse Barragan (center) won the 50m Breaststroke Championship at the Speedo Grand Championship in May with a record breaking time of 36.74 seconds. He went on to win the 50m and 100m Breaststroke Championships at the Junior Olympics in July.

VIDEO PRODUCTION GRADUATES



The City Council honored graduates of the City of Commerce Video Production Course. Past graduates have went on to careers in film and television.

COMMERCE MEANS BUSINESS



The LA County Economic Development Corporation recognized the City of Commerce's participation in the 2012 Most Business Friendly City Program.

NEW TRANSIT BUSES



In August, the City put two brand new, ADA compliant 32 passenger transit buses into service.

NIKE SHOOTOUT



Nike hosted a basketball clinic at Rosewood Park in order to introduce their new shoe line. Residents got a chance to try them out during a skill test "Shootout" and Nike raffled off a few pairs to participants.

KIDS ARE CUTE BABY SHOW



Parks Commissioner Rudy Torres and Miss Galaxy Karely Ramirez with one of the winners of the Annual Kids are Cute Baby Show, Aron Rouse.

RED RIBBON WEEK



The LA County Sheriff's Department, Library staff and McGruff the Crime Dog encouraged kids to 'Just Say No to Drugs' at Red Ribbon Week celebrations at local schools and parks.

CELEBRATING CINCO DE MAYO



Miss Cinco De Mayo Amanda Marie Alvarado and the Royal Court at the Commerce Garden Show, one of many activities featured at the Cinco de Mayo Celebration.

SPORTS PROGRAMS



The City's four parks hosted recreational youth sports including baseball, basketball, flag football, and soccer throughout 2012.

DON'T MISS THE ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY



Local entertainment is just one of the highlights of the upcoming Tree Lighting Ceremony on Mon., Dec. 3 at 6 p.m. in front of City Hall.

Once again, the Holiday Season is upon us. For the residents of the City of Commerce, it means taking part in one the City's oldest traditions: the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony being held on Mon., Dec. 3 at 6 p.m.

This annual event gives the residents of Commerce the opportunity to celebrate the holidays with their family, friends and neighbors. The event features complimentary hot chocolate, warm churros, and great local entertainment provided by the City's youth dance programs, Commerce seniors and City employees.

Santa Claus will also be dropping by to pay young Commerce residents a visit, but the highlight of the evening is when City Council and Miss Commerce light the City's Christmas tree, which is a beautiful sight to behold.

These are just a few reasons for people to come out and enjoy the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. Mark your calendars for this fun, family event. We hope to see you there!



The City of Commerce Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony is a fun and festive event, perfect for the whole family.

COMMERCE CITY COUNCIL



Lilia R. Leon, Mayor
 Tina Baca Del Rio, Mayor Pro Tem
 Joe Aguilar, Councilmember
 Ivan Altamirano, Councilmember
 Denise M. Robles, Councilmember



The Public Information Office welcomes your story ideas, suggestions, and opinions. Deadline for submission is the first of each month for publication the following month. For more information, call 323•887•4447

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NATIONAL POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE

A CLEAR PATH TO EMPLOYMENT



Students in the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program at National Polytechnic College in Commerce.

"We take pride in providing people with a clear path to employment," said Alfonso Zavala, director of National Polytechnic College located on Telegraph Road in the City of Commerce.

National Polytechnic College offers a variety of career training programs,

many of them in the health care field, including MRI technologist, medical assistant, massage therapist, dental assistant, and diagnostic medical sonography (radiology/ultrasound), which is one of the newest programs at the school. Other programs include criminal justice, media technical pro-

duction (television and film) and computerized accounting.

As per Federal requirements, National Polytechnic College provides financial aid, as well as job placement services. According to Zavala, approximately 70% of graduates find jobs through the service. "Even before graduation, we place them in internships, which often turn into job offers when they complete the program," he said.

Although they are career based, National Polytechnic University participates in the Commerce-to-College Fair every year to provide people with an alternative. "With this economy not everyone or their parents can afford to pay for college, so for some people this is a better tool. In nine months you can be working and earning a paycheck," said Zavala. "Graduates who get jobs in a field of work they enjoy can use their education and experience as a stepping stone to higher education and greater career possibilities."

According to Zavala, National Polytechnic College began offering General Equiva-

lency Diploma (G.E.D.) tutoring earlier this year in partnership with a non-profit group through Lynwood Unified School District. "We found that 30-40% of applicants don't have a GED or diploma, which is a requirement to qualify for Federal Financial Aid. We saw the need so we made it a part of our program," said Zavala.

NPC offers day and evening classes and works with businesses including Alta Med, Costco, Fox Sports West (media), as well as local medical and dental clinics to provide internships and job placement. Training programs vary in length with the average being 9-11 months and the longest program taking 24 months.

NPC is a for profit operation that offers Federal financial aid opportunities. For more information, call National Polytechnic College at (323) 728-9636 or visit their website at www.npcollege.edu.

December Dates to Note

<p>3 Tree Lighting Ceremony, 6 p.m. Front of City Hall</p> <p>English Book Club, 6 p.m.</p> <p>Youth Advisory Commission, 7 p.m.</p>	<p>8 Library Children s Holiday Program, Council Chambers, 10 a.m.</p> <p>10 Education Commission Meeting, 6 p.m.</p>	<p>13 Community Services Commission Meeting, 6 p.m.</p> <p>15 Children s Holiday Faire & Santa s Sweet Shop Veterans Park, 10 a.m.</p>	<p>24-25 Christmas Eve and Day City Hall & Libraries Closed</p> <p>26 Planning Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.</p>
<p>4 City Council/Successor Agency Meeting, 6:30 p.m</p> <p>5 Senior Citizens Commission, 12:30 p.m.</p> <p>Traffic Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>11 I-710 Local Advisory Committee (Ad Hoc) Meeting, 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Poetry Club, Central Library, 6:30 p.m-7:15 p.m.</p> <p>12 Last Day to Donate to Holiday Cheer</p>	<p>17 Spanish Book Club, EOC room, 6 p.m</p> <p>18 City Council/Successor Agency Meeting, 6:30 p.m</p> <p>Library Commission Meeting, 5:30 p.m.</p>	<p>31 New Year's Eve City Hall & Libraries Closed</p>
<p>6 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, 6 p.m</p> <p>7 Deadline for Candidate Filing for March election</p>	<p>Extended deadline for candidate filing for the March election if any Council incumbent fails to file on Dec. 7</p> <p>Social Security Online Services, Central Library, 10 a.m-12 p.m.</p>	<p>Library Embajadores Meeting, 6 p.m.</p> <p>19 Employment Task Force Meeting, 1 p.m.</p>	<p>January 2013</p> <p>1 New Year's Day City Hall & Libraries Closed</p>