

Calendar

FRIDAY, MAY 29, 2009

• Renewal Through Art Class. Renewal Through Art for Seniors is an art class for adults 55 and older. A ten-week session will be offered on Thursdays at the Joslyn Center from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm beginning May 29. A variety of media will be used and techniques demonstrated with the overriding object the student's experience, not the art product. The class is free and students provide their own materials. Pre registration is required. Call the Older Adults Program at (310) 802-5447.

UPCOMING

• CERT Annual Meeting. June 17: Manhattan Beach Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) annual meeting. 6:30 p.m. at the Joslyn Community Center, 1601 Valley Drive. "Citizens Helping Neighbors, and Our City"

• Fun Class for Kids on Etiquette and Social Skills. The City of Manhattan Beach Parks & Recreation Department proudly announces the return of its popular course in good manners by etiquette instructor Dianeh O'Farrill. "Etiquette and Social Skills for Children" Ages 6-12. A two-session course on Saturdays, July 18 & 25, or Saturdays, August 15 & 22, 2009 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Classes will take place at Live Oak Park Hall 1901 Valley Drive Manhattan Beach. Residents \$78; non-residents \$84. For further information, please call The Manhattan Beach Parks & Recreation Department 310-802-5448. This popular educational program covers the basics of good manners needed by children to interact successfully in various social situations. It offers children tips on social interaction that help boost self-esteem and confidence. Manhattan Beach Recreation Services Manager Idris J. Al-Oboudi says: "Mrs. O'Farrill's class has been a very popular course. And now, back by popular demand, we are thrilled that the program will continue under the direction of her niece Dianeh O'Farrill." Dianeh is a graduate of San Diego State University with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and has five years experience in teaching and developing socially confident boys and girls.

In addition, she earned her Masters of Arts in Teaching and Multiple Subject Teaching Credential from the University of Southern California. For information please call The Manhattan Beach Parks & Recreation Department (310) 802-5448

ONGOING

• Older Adults discussion group. Come discuss current events, movies, topics of local and national interest, whatever is on your mind. The discussion group meets every Monday from 9:00 a.m. - noon at the Joslyn Community Center, 1601 Valley Drive. For more information please call (310) 802-5447.

• Play Reading. Fun and adventure await you. Spontaneous and unrehearsed activity facilitated by KC Johnson and Maria A. Ruiz, two experienced artists in the South Bay, offers each participant a role in scenes chosen for you - or you may bring your own short scenes to read. Every 1st Tuesday from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Joslyn Center, 1601 Valley Drive, MB. Free Event, Sponsored by Parks and Rec. All are welcome. Info: 310-325-3251 or 310- 540-5635.

• Play Scrabble. This event is sponsored by the Manhattan Beach Parks and Rec and facilitated by the Manhattan Beach Senior Citizens Resource Committee. 1-3-1-1-2-3-1-1 (Scrabble). Play Scrabble every 1st and 3rd Thursday at Joslyn Community Center, 1601 Valley Drive. A free event, experience not required and all are welcome (4-1-1-3-1-3-1). 1:30 - 4 p.m. Info 310-802-5447.

• Poetry Reading Circle Recent/longtime, amateur and wannabe poets are welcome to read their own o favorite poems every 2nd and 4th Tuesday from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Joslyn Center, 1601 Valley Drive, MB. Free Event, Sponsored by Parks and Rec. All are welcome. Info 802-5447.

• Petanque, French game of Boules at Live Oak Field, Manhattan Beach. Play Petanque (played by 17 million people in France), an outdoor social game for every lever of fitness; no experience required. Sponsored by Parks and Rec. All are welcome every 2nd and 4th Thursday 1-3 p.m adjacent to Joslyn Center. Info 310-802-5447. •

MINI's have Maximum Payoffs

By Evan Ortega

City employees will soon be riding in style after the Manhattan Beach City Council approved the lease and use of up to 10 electric-powered MINI Coopers, MINI E's, for a year beginning this summer.

City Council members approved the deal with MINI USA after being briefed on it by Finance Director Bruce Moe. "What MINI is really after is some feedback on the drivability of it," Moe said. "They're looking to have a limited number of people with each vehicle assigned to it for that purpose, to make sure that they're getting sufficient time behind the wheel to provide the periodic feedback."

Moe said that because MINI USA is leasing the vehicles for research purposes, the City would get a good deal for each vehicle. "The total out of pocket is \$10 a month plus tax," Moe said. "As far as the maintenance on these vehicles, MINI picks up the entire cost of that, so we'll go to them for the periodic maintenance that's required." Moe said the cars were worth about \$50,000 each.

Councilmember Richard Montgomery, who helped initiate the deal, said driving the electric vehicles would be a way to not only help the environment, but also save money. "Take away the green component for a second," he said. "Look at it the other way around. You are paying \$10 a month for a vehicle. We're not paying gas fees... there's no wear and tear on our own vehicles, and it makes business sense to us."

Moe said the two-door cars would be made available to each City department for miscellaneous errands around town and limited freeway driving. He said batteries behind the driver and front passenger seat leave little room for cargo. "The cargo area is fairly limited but if you're talking about errands...going out and getting any types of supplies, this would seem to be something that would fit that bill well," Moe said.

Councilmember Montgomery said he has driven the prototype vehicle and feels the MINI Coopers are much roomier than they appear on photos. "It's not a box--they're much roomier than that," Montgomery said. "There's no downside to them except that they're really not meant to be a heavy duty vehicle for, let's say, public works to use."



This charger box can completely recharge the MINI in less than five hours.

City Manager Geoff Dolan said Council members may be able to use the cars for City business. He added that MINI USA only wants a limited number of drivers for each car to give feedback. "We'll try to identify two or three or four people that drive each one and kind of assign it there," said Dolan.

Moe added that MINI USA would provide the City with a charging station for each car. "It would be necessary to recharge these because they have a range of about 130 to 140 miles, depending on how you drive it," Moe said. He said he was unsure of the additional cost in electricity to charge the cars.

Montgomery thought the City would save money by powering the cars with electricity instead of gas. "With gas going up, I would trade [electricity] over a gallon of gas any time of the day," he said, adding that the program would be a good way to determine the advantages and disadvantages of using such vehicles. "I think it's an offer too good for us to pass up. Let's at least try it for a year and see what it does for us."

Manhattan Beach would be the first city to have such a program, according to Montgomery, who emphasized that it would be a great way show leadership in the green movement. "The City would be leading the

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