



Issues Brief

City of Yakima e-Newsletter

✦ Yakima Making Another Run at All-America City Status

Hoping history will repeat itself, a group led by the Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce is again attempting to earn Yakima the designation of All-America City, the nation's oldest and most prestigious community recognition award honoring exemplary problem solving and collaboration to address local challenges.

In 1993, Yakima was named a finalist for the award, which has been presented each year by the National Civic League since 1949, but was not among the ten cities to receive the All-America City designation. The next year Yakima was again a finalist. A delegation traveled to Oakland, California for the competition and was successful in claiming the community's first All-America City Award.

To mark the 20th anniversary of Yakima being named an All-America City, in 2014 the Chamber assembled a team to make another bid for the award. As was the case in 1993, Yakima made the list of finalists, but wasn't one of the 10 cities to receive the coveted designation last year. Despite being disappointed, it didn't take long before members of the delegation chose to submit an application again this year.

Right after the awards ceremony last year, we decided to give it another try in 2015, said Joe Mann, current chair of the Chamber board of directors. When we found out in March that we were a finalist again this year, we were excited, said Mann. It took Yakima two tries before to win the All-America City Award. We are confident that after coming so close last year, we'll bring it home this time around.



Yakima delegation members staff the booth during the Civic Action Fair at the 2014 All-America City competition. Yakima is a finalist for the award again this year. A delegation will travel to Denver in mid-June to compete against ten other cities from across the nation.

The 2015 All-America City finalist competition will take place in Denver, Colorado June 11th through June 14th.

The All-America City Award is presented to communities that face challenges they may have and, through innovation and cross-sector collaboration, work to solve them. As part of the application for the award, communities present three projects that have been undertaken within the last ten years to address specific problems.

The projects featured in Yakima's 2015 application are the Yakima Gang Free Initiative (YGFI), the Perfect Attendance Creates Excellence (P.A.C.E.) program, and the 100 Jobs for 100 Kids project. The GFI focuses on prevention, intervention, and suppression to combat gangs. The P.A.C.E. program awards elementary school kids who have perfect school attendance for an entire year with a new bike and safety helmet. The 100 Jobs for 100 Kids project helps Yakima teenagers find summer work.

Viva La Música Free Concert Series Returns for Second Year

After having made a highly successful debut last year, the *Viva La Música Concert Series* will make its return to Miller Park in July for a run of ten free performances featuring popular local and regional bands.

From July 12th through September 13th, Sunday evenings at Miller Park will be filled with family-friendly music. With the exception of the final concert of the year, all *Viva La Música Concert Series* performances will run from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The September 13th concert, which will close out the 2015 series, will run from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm and will feature special music to celebrate Mexico's Independence Day.



The inaugural Viva La Música Concert Series in 2014 regularly drew large crowds to Miller Park. The free, family-friendly event will return in July of this year for a ten performance run featuring popular local and regional bands.

Last year's series was very well received, said Yakima Parks & Recreation Manager Ken Wilkinson. The size of the crowds that turned out each and every week truly exceeded our expectations. The success of the series in its first year clearly showed that there is a strong demand for events that primarily appeal to the Latino community, said Wilkinson. We're pleased that the *Viva La Música Concert Series* can help meet that demand.

This year's series kicks off with **Leopardo Salvaje** on **July 12th**. The **July 19th**

concert will feature **Los Pumas de Jalisco** and will be followed by **Enamorado** on **July 26th**. Negotiations are still underway with potential performers for the first three shows in August, which will take place on **August 2nd**, **August 9th**, and **August 16th**. Series organizers say they are working to secure bands for those dates including **Donato Tirado**, **Banda Reyna del Sur**, and **El Tiempo**. **Grandes de Tijuana** will be the featured act for the **August 23rd** concert. Organizers are still lining up a band for the August 30th date.

Hermanos Gonzales will entertain the crowd on **September 6th**. The final performance of the 2015 *Viva La Música Concert Series* on September 13th will mark Mexico's Independence Day and will feature **Rebeldes de la Sierra** from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm and a special headline performer, which won't be revealed until later this year, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

The 2015 *Viva La Música Concert Series* is being jointly presented by Yakima Radio Group, KIMA TV, Univision, and the City of Yakima.



Attention! Attention! Attention!

The City of Yakima Utility Services office will be closed on Friday, May 8th from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm while staff attends training.

Customers needing emergency assistance during that time should call the City of Yakima Water Division at 509-249-6808.

Longtime City Employee Named Interim Human Resources Director

Connie Mendoza started her career with the City of Yakima in 1993 when she was hired as a department assistant in the Purchasing Division. Now, after having served the City in several capacities and having spent time working for both King County and the West Valley School District, Mendoza has been selected as the City's interim human resources director.

Connie has a lot of experience that fits very well with the duties that the human resources director has to perform, said City Manager Tony O'Rourke. She also knows the organization very well and is familiar with how the City operates. I'm confident that she'll serve the City well, said O'Rourke.



Connie Mendoza is currently serving as the City of Yakima's interim Human Resources Director. She has worked for the City in a variety of roles since 1993.

Mendoza replaces Cheryl Ann Mattia, who resigned at the end of 2014. The City conducted a recruitment process earlier this year to find a permanent replacement for Mattia. The three finalist candidates, however, were determined not to be good fits for the position.

As a result, O'Rourke decided to look within the City organization to find someone who could fill the human resources director role on a temporary, and possibly permanent, basis.

Wednesday, we'll reevaluate what the next step will be to fill the job on a permanent basis in a few months, said O'Rourke.

Mendoza, a native of Yakima, graduated from Eisenhower High School in 1989. In 1994, a year after being hired by the City as a Purchasing Division department

assistant, Mendoza was promoted to the position of assistant buyer in the same division.

In 2001, Mendoza relocated to Western Washington where she worked for King County as a contract specialist. About a year later, she moved back to the Yakima area and became the secretary to the superintendent of the West Valley School District.

In 2006, Mendoza rejoined the City of Yakima as the administrative assistant to the fire chief. Almost a year ago, she was promoted to the position of police services manager. As police services manager, Mendoza oversaw civilian staff that manages and processes data for the Yakima Police Department.

Mendoza graduated from Yakima Valley Community College in 2005 with an Associate of Arts degree. In 2008, she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in social science from Washington State University. And, last year Mendoza earned a Master of Business Administration degree in management and strategy from the Western Governors University.

The City of Yakima Human Resources Department provides a variety of services including employee recruitment and testing, medical benefits administration, disciplinary action review, union contract negotiations, and employee training.