



G El Cajon Gateway



Spring 2017
City News & Guide to Recreation

Honoring Taylor Guitars
INSIDE!

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City of El Cajon

El Cajon Civic Center
200 Civic Center Way
El Cajon, CA 92020
www.cityofelcajon.us

City Council (619) 441-1788

Mayor Bill Wells
Mayor Pro Tem W.E. "Bob" McClellan
Councilmember Steve Goble
Councilmember Ben Kalasho
Councilmember Gary Kendrick

City Departments

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About The Cover

Flowers bloom in El Cajon!
Cover Design Mary Ann Prall



Daylight Saving Time Begins

Spring ahead on March 12th! Be sure to move your clocks ahead one hour and welcome spring. This is also a good time to change batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors!

El Cajon Has A New Fire Chief

Colin Stowell, Assistant Fire Chief for San Diego Fire, was selected as the next Fire Chief for Heartland Fire & Rescue, serving the cities of El Cajon, La Mesa & Lemon Grove. Chief Stowell began acting in this new capacity on November 7, 2016, following the retirement of Heartland Fire Chief Rick Sitta. Stowell, 49, spent his entire career with San Diego Fire & Rescue, starting in 1988.

Chief Stowell says, "As the new Fire Chief of Heartland Fire & Rescue, I am proud to serve the Cities of El Cajon, La Mesa, and Lemon Grove. It is truly an honor and privilege to lead this tremendous group of fire service professionals who are committed to providing the highest level of emergency services to the residents and visitors of our Cities. Ensuring safe communities through education, prevention, and emergency response is our organization's highest priority and it's reflected in the services and attitudes of the Heartland Fire & Rescue professionals every day. We exist as an organization for one purpose, to protect the lives and property within our fine communities in time of need. I can assure everyone that the men and women of Heartland Fire & Rescue embrace this core mission with the utmost compassion and respect for those they serve, maintaining the high level of services our citizens have come to expect, and making a difference in the communities we serve."



Newly Elected Councilmembers

The City held an Inauguration Ceremony for newly elected Councilmembers Steve Goble and Ben Kalasho, along with incumbent Bob McClellan, on the last City Council meeting of 2016. All three took their "Oath of Office" marking the beginning of their four-year terms.

In addition, the El Cajon City Council gave special recognition and proclamations to out-going Councilmembers Tony Ambrose and Star Bales. Both were praised for their many years of service for the City of El Cajon. Both Councilmembers had served on the Planning Commission and other commissions prior to joining the City Council.

This special ceremony, opened to the public, was held in the City Council Chamber located at 200 Civic Center Way in El Cajon and was immediately followed by a brief reception.

Congratulations Jimmie Johnson

El Cajon's Jimmie Johnson won his seventh NASCAR Sprint Cup title at the 2016 season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway on Sunday, November 20, tying Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt Sr. for the most titles in NASCAR Premier Series Championship history.

El Cajon is very proud of his accomplishments!



4 District Elections Update

Community Workshop To Implement "Measure S" - Reviewing the Draft Maps

On November 7, 2016, the residents of El Cajon approved a City-sponsored ballot measure, called "Measure S," with 69% of the vote. As a result, it officially amended the City Charter to establish district elections within the City of El Cajon, beginning in 2018.

The process to establish districts for its City Councilmembers has begun, with several public hearings and community workshops already being held. Residents are encouraged to attend the below community workshop and future City Council Meetings to provide input on the composition of districts within El Cajon. This April 18th workshop will give residents the ability to review maps with draft district boundaries and provide feedback.



Tuesday, April 18 - 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

**El Cajon Police Station Community Room
100 Civic Center Way, El Cajon**

- Be part of the process to create City Council districts
- Discuss the draft district maps submitted
- Discover how others envision the future of El Cajon
- Voice your opinion and feedback on draft district boundaries
- Translation services available in Spanish & Arabic

(619) 441-1716

www.cityofelcajon.us/District-Elections

Honoring Taylor Guitars' Founders



The Mayor of El Cajon, the City Council, Senator Joel Anderson, and other local dignitaries had the distinct privilege of honoring Taylor Guitars and its founders, Bob Taylor and Kurt Listug, on October 28, 2016. It was an opportunity to acknowledge, honor and applaud the numerous accomplishments that Taylor Guitars has achieved in its 42-year history. Also present for the celebration were Taylor's and Listug's families, as well as several employees from Taylor Guitars. The Mayor declared it to be "Taylor Guitars Day" in the City of El Cajon, along with a proclamation and an official "Key to the City."



Founded in 1974, Taylor Guitars has been headquartered in El Cajon for the last 24 years, having a major impact on the identity of El Cajon and its local economy. A

true example of "The American Dream," Taylor Guitars continues to be the top-selling acoustic guitar brand, and the overall top-selling guitar brand in the United States. The company employs almost 1,000 people to produce guitars in its state-of-the-art factory complexes in El Cajon and in Tecate, Mexico. About 400 of those employees are based in El Cajon.

Among the numerous awards they've received through the years, Taylor Guitars received the distinguished "Award for Corporate Excellence" by then Secretary of State John Kerry in 2014. The award honored Taylor Guitars' transformative work in the ebony trade and in the lives of its many employees at its ebony mill in Cameroon. The prestigious award annually recognizes U.S.-owned businesses that play vital roles around the world as good corporate citizens in supporting sustainable development, respect for human and labor rights, environmental protection, open markets, transparency, and other democratic values.



Taylor Guitars has also given back to the community, donating hundreds of guitars to various non-profit groups to assist them in raising funds for their organizations. Additionally, the organization has worked with schools and community colleges in East County, assisting them with training at wood shop classes and donating wood for their projects.

To publically recognize Taylor Guitars for all their amazing accomplishments, the City surprised Bob and Kurt with plans to build a new "Welcome to El Cajon" sign, which proudly states "Home of Taylor Guitars." The sign will be located at a main entrance to El Cajon, off Cuyamaca, and near the 52 freeway.



New Marriott Hotel To Open



Construction continues on the new hotel for the City of El Cajon, a four-story Marriott Courtyard. Work began in early 2016, and is expected to open for guests in the summer of 2017. The 88,000 square foot hotel will feature 120 rooms, a swimming pool, outdoor dining areas, a business center, two conference rooms, and two commercial lease spaces on the ground floor at the corner of Magnolia Avenue and Rea Avenue.



The development of east county's first true four-star business hotel by a renowned company such as Marriott marks an economic turning point for the City of El Cajon. The development of the well-regarded Courtyard brand will not only be visually iconic within our downtown, but will inevitably draw additional business investment into nearby areas.

New Animal Care Facility To Break Ground Soon

The City is a step (or paw) closer to building a beautiful new animal shelter! A conceptual plan for the 10,900 square foot building, with a 2,600 square foot exterior, was approved by the stakeholders. The \$9.3 million state-of-the-art facility was approved by the City Council in the fall of 2016. Groundbreaking for the new shelter is expected in the spring, with completion planned for the summer of 2018.





Mercedes-Benz of El Cajon

Construction has begun on a new 65,000 square foot Mercedes-Benz dealership located at the southwest corner of Marshall Avenue and Wagner Drive. The site will provide a new home for the dealership currently located on El Cajon Boulevard. A grand opening is planned for the summer of this year.



A New KaBOOM! Playground For Crisis House

In early December, close to 200 volunteers came together to build a beautiful new KaBOOM! playground for Crisis House in El Cajon, located at 1034 Magnolia Avenue. Community sponsors and volunteers for this project included United Healthcare, Crisis House, the City of El Cajon and KaBOOM! In addition there were eight other beautification projects and a Kids Zone to enhance the area. Together, the new specially designed playground was built in under six hours!

Why a playground for Crisis House? The primary reason is that more than 4,800 children and their families are served by Crisis House each year. Many are from families affected by domestic violence, or impacted by steep economic challenges and poverty. When families visit Crisis House for services, such as counseling, obtaining emergency food packages, or while completing important paperwork that will help them on the road to being self-sustaining, this new playground will provide a naturally creative, safe and fun place for the children to play.

Exciting Renovations At Ronald Reagan Community Center

The Ronald Reagan Community Center (RRCC) has served the citizens of El Cajon and surrounding communities for over 29 years with the highest of standards. To ensure the popular center maintains this high quality for years to come, the RRCC has undergone renovations that include: a more prominent lobby, new customer service office/reception, expanded patio areas, the addition of a small suite, and simplified rental packages for events.

Upon re-opening this spring, rental clients will enjoy a relaxed environment when booking the facility, increased space and flexibility for events, and cutting edge technology. Overall, the renovations will help RRCC continue to be competitive with today's industry standards and enable clientele expansion. For more information, please call (619) 441-1754.



Current

Proposed

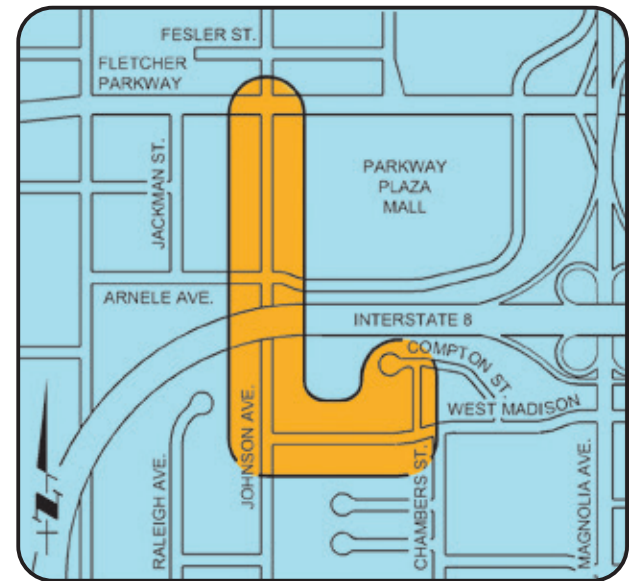
Potential Mixed-Use Housing Areas

Several key commercial areas of the City may have new opportunities for high quality residential development under a new mixed-use overlay zone. The City is considering an overlay zone that would allow for property owners to add new housing to these areas to create vibrant new mixed-use neighborhoods, while ensuring existing commercial businesses remain and grow. The mixed-use overlay would allow for commercial, residential or mixed-use development in the four key areas of the City.

The photo rendering shows the potential of new investment in the Fletcher Hills neighborhood and envisions how this neighborhood could change over time into a dynamic mixed-use village with housing, commercial services, schools, parks and a library all within close proximity. The City would like community input on the proposal. For more information, to see the map with the four key areas, and to provide feedback, please visit the project's webpage, www.cityofelcajon.us/rezoning-program, or contact the Planning Group at (619) 441-1773.

Johnson Avenue Sewer Relief Project Phase 2

Phase 2 of the Johnson Avenue Sewer Relief Project has begun. An El Cajon-based business, S.C. Valley Engineering Inc., has been contracted by the City of El Cajon to install a new large diameter sewer trunk main with sewer manholes which will alleviate issues with sewer flows in and around Parkway Plaza. The project stretches from the intersection of Johnson Avenue and Fesler, north on Fletcher Parkway to Madison Avenue; Madison Avenue to the alley behind Chambers Street and down the alley behind Chambers Street to Compton Street. Additionally, sewer lines will be replaced in the parking lot of Parkway Plaza. Bringing this stretch of the existing sewer system up to current standards will improve system reliability and reduce maintenance needs and costs.



A New Business In Downtown El Cajon – StarTech



The next time you're in Downtown El Cajon, stop by and visit StarTech gaming center. Bring your friends and have a friendly game of competition. With a great selection of PC games, you can enjoy a state-of-the-art gaming network until 10:00 p.m. seven-days-a-week! They also have future plans to host gaming tournaments and offer food service.

In addition, they build custom computers, server systems, and offer computer repair services. StarTech is located at 229 East Main Street, just east of the Prescott Promenade, between New York Bakery and Nicolosi's Italian Restaurant.

The owners are making major improvements, including a façade renovation, interior improvements, and an outdoor seating area. This new project establishes a use that will further activate downtown El Cajon, providing a new activity for residents and visitors to participate in.

Parkway Plaza Continues To Thrive With New Stores And More

Parkway Plaza Mall continues to meet the needs of East County shoppers! rue21, one of the country's leading teen shops, opened a new 7000 square foot store in October! A favorite among teens, rue21 offers trendy, must-have clothing, accessories, and shoes including sweaters, graphic tees, jeans, scarves, sunglasses, heels, sneakers, jewelry and more for men and women. The Parkway Plaza store also features a full plus sized section with varieties of junior plus size clothes from skirts to jeans to bodysuits, everything you need to look fresh year round is here. The new rue21 is located between Sears and Walmart on the West side of the shopping center.



Zales Jewelry has moved to Center Court, completing the new look to the main entrance and center court upgrades at the mall. Zales new store is a prototype "next generation store" that features the retailers new look.

Shiekh Shoes is moving from their current location near the Food Court to a brand new 5,100 square-foot store near Walmart. Shiekh offers a huge selection of shoes featuring athletic footwear and apparel from brands like Nike, Jordan, Adidas, Reebok, K-Swiss, Sketchers, Lacoste, Converse, and Steve Madden for men, women and children including many exclusive products not sold by other retailers.

The exterior main entrance to Parkway Plaza is going through a major landscape overhaul. New Palm Trees and succulent plants will add a more welcoming front door to the center.

The Oh, So Simple Rewards program continues to be a favorite among East County shoppers. Shoppers are rewarded with fantastic deals and deep discounts every time they shop at Parkway Plaza. Rewards are tied to your individual credit or debit cards and the awards can then be redeemed at other Parkway Plaza stores.

Go online to www.shoppingparkwayplaza.com for more information about Oh, So Simple Rewards or for the latest news and events happening at Parkway Plaza.

City & Housing Projects At Your Fingertips

Check out the new interactive project map on the City of El Cajon website, highlighting major development projects throughout the City by going to www.cityofelcajon.us/projectmap. For more information on development projects, please contact the Planning Department at (619) 441-1742, or email planning@cityofelcajon.us.



Sign-up for E-Notifications

For the latest information on City of El Cajon services, news and special events go to www.cityofelcajon.us and click on the e-notification link at the bottom of the home page.



Body Cameras Now Being Used By Police

In 2016, the El Cajon City Council approved the purchase of Body Worn Cameras for the El Cajon Police Department. Body cameras continue to be an emerging trend in law enforcement across the nation, including San Diego County. The Taser Axon Body Worn Cameras were found to meet all of the City's requirements and 88 cameras were purchased. The system includes digital evidence management software, for accountability and interoperability with county justice agencies. The approved purchase, including software, storage, and accessories was at a cost of \$160,032. Following an extensive testing and training period, the body cameras were officially activated department-wide at the end of 2016.



Police Partnering With Region to Reduce Homelessness

The El Cajon Police Department announces its new partnership with other East County agencies for a homeless outreach program. The East Region Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) consists of the El Cajon Police Department, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department in Santee, the County of San Diego's Health and Human Services Agency, and the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team. These Public safety agencies have adopted a regional approach in the East County to better address and serve the homeless population.

This collaborative team effort will provide a humane and socially responsive approach toward improving the quality of life for chronically homeless individuals in East County. By leveraging the resources of all the partner agencies, the program hopes to assist those homeless individuals by developing and implementing a plan to end their homelessness. This involves providing evaluation and assessment of social service needs and mental health or law enforcement needs. The team will continue to work closely with the City Attorney and District Attorney for any assistance in alleviating chronic homeless issues.

Disaster Preparedness From Heartland Fire

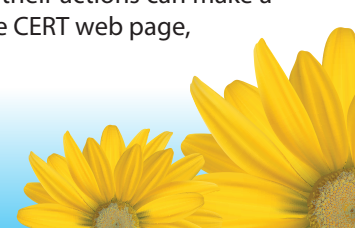
The El Cajon Valley is a beautiful place to live and work. Being in such a wonderful place it can become easy to forget that there are certain hazards we all face. It's no secret that this is earthquake country. Remember that in 2003 and 2007, huge wildfires burned through dry chaparral at a tremendous rate, destroying thousands of homes along the way. There have been no large earthquakes, or giant wildfires for many years. However, it's not a matter of "if", but "when" these will occur again. There is no need to fear them if prepared for them. There is a lot of free information on how to be ready for the next emergency. All it takes is a little time and research.

The following is a short list of websites to help get started:

- www.heartlandfire.org/emergency-prep.html
- www.readysandiego.org
- www.ready.gov

Once prepared to successfully face the next disaster, help the community prepare for and respond to emergencies. One of the best ways to do that is by joining the East County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). This program is designed to help protect residents and neighborhoods in an emergency situation. CERT is an all-risk, all-hazard training. The course is designed to be a positive and realistic approach to emergency and disaster situations where people may initially be on their own and their actions can make a difference. For details on the East County CERT program and more information on how to participate, visit the CERT web page,

<http://www.heartlandfire.org/east-county-cert---free-disaster-preparedness-classes.html>.





5th Annual St. Patrick's Day Half Marathon

Celebrate an early St. Patrick's Day and enjoy beautiful downtown El Cajon at the annual RunEC Foundation's Annual St. Patrick's Day Half Marathon, Sunday, March 5. This event will feature a Finish Line Festival with live entertainment, vendors, and fun activities for children and adults! The first run will begin at 7:00 a.m. with the Green Mile, followed by the Certified Half Marathon, and then a 5k, all starting and ending near the Downtown El Cajon Arch, located at 198 West Main Street. Proceeds will support several East County charities. For more information or to register, please visit www.StPatricksDayHalf.com.



"Come Play for the Day" is the theme of the fourth annual America on Main Street City event, scheduled for Saturday, May 20, in Downtown El Cajon! Thousands are expected for this exciting event that coincides with Armed Forces Day and celebrates the American spirit, through appreciation and respect of the many diverse ethnic and historical groups located in the community.

America on Main Street is a full day of free activities and attractions for people of all ages. Highlights include three stages of live entertainment, American and ethnic food booths, a chili cook-off, amusement rides and attractions, arts, crafts, display booths, a large unique petting zoo, a rock wall, and much more! It all takes place in Downtown El Cajon, on East Main Street and Rea Avenue, between Magnolia Avenue and Ballantyne Street. Hours are from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m., admission and parking are free! For business sponsorship and volunteer opportunities, visit www.americaonmainstreet.org, or call (619) 441-1762.



Keeping El Cajon Clean

Trash is a major component of pollution entering creeks and rivers in our San Diego River watershed. Every year - thousands of pounds of trash and debris are removed from Forrester Creek and San Diego River. Most of the trash that enters our local creeks and rivers comes from municipal storm drain systems.

Help protect local waterways by taking a few simple steps, such as placing trash into the proper receptacles and holding onto trash until a receptacle can be located. This will greatly reduce the amount of trash that enters our waterways.



Research has found that cigarette butts account for approximately one in every five items collected during beach cleanups. This may be a result of smoking bans placed inside public buildings and facilities throughout California. Today, over 99 percent of cigarettes are smoked outside.

Cigarette butts thrown onto streets, parking lots and sidewalks get washed into storm drains, which then flow to creeks, rivers, and eventually to our beaches and ocean. Once submerged in water, toxic chemicals from cigarette butts leach from the cigarette filter, threatening water quality and marine life. By avoiding this, it will reduce the amount of trash entering our local waterways - creeks and rivers.

For more information, contact the Storm Water Protection Program at (619) 441-1653, or visit www.cityofelcajon.us/stormwater.



Landscaping Tips

Due to drought conditions and water reduction mandates, landscape areas and hillsides have retreated and caused exposed soil slopes. These exposed soil slope areas can be a source of sediment and other pollutants such as nutrients and fertilizers causing an impact to Forrester Creek and other drainage channels tributary to the San Diego River in the El Cajon area. Significant accumulations of eroded soil shall be removed or contained to prevent sediment transport in runoff to the storm drain system. Protect unpaved areas, including landscaping, from erosion using vegetative physical stabilization.

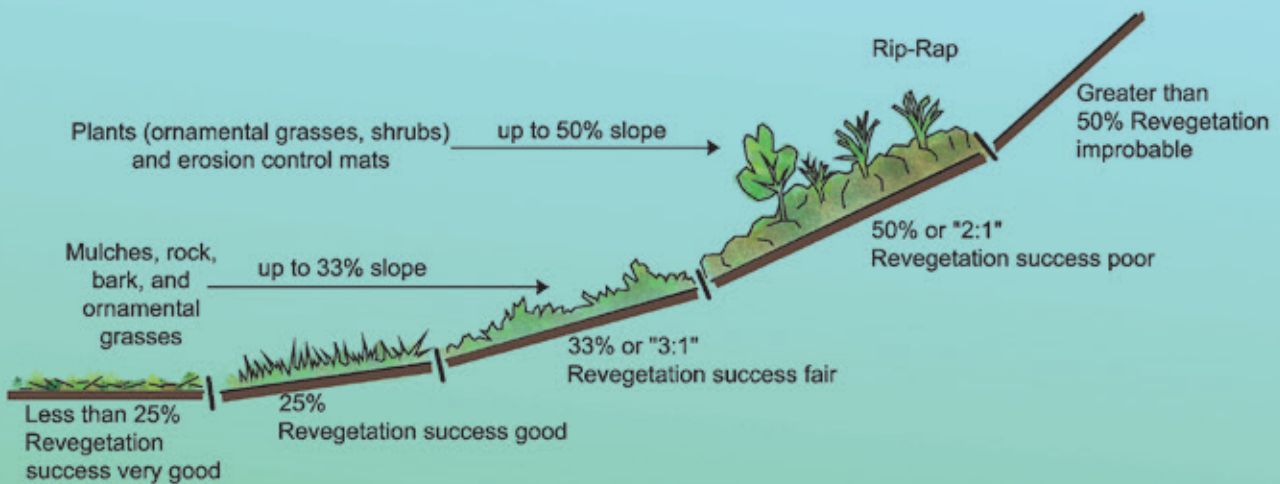


Prior to the onset of the rainy season, please take a walk around your site (residence, commercial facility) and conduct the following:

- 1) Check and clean all existing on-site drains, roof drains, ditches or pipelines.
- 2) Clear a path and direct debris flow away from your property and around your property to drainage BMP device or out to the street.
- 3) Check your site for exposed soil areas and deploy appropriate temporary cover material (tackifier, bonded fiber matrix, jute matting) or other long-term cover material such as mulch or rock to help protect and keep your soil in place and stabilize exposed soil slopes.
- 4) Place protective measures (BMPs) to divert debris away from your property. Retain a collection of erosion and sediment control materials (gravel bags, fiber rolls) for use on your site.
- 5) Work with your neighbors or surrounding businesses for a unified approach.

For more information, contact the Storm Water Protection Program at (619) 441-1653, or visit www.cityofelcajon.us/stormwater.

SLOPE STABILIZATION FOR VARIOUS GRADES



Fats, Oils and Grease

While Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) add extra flavor to our food, pouring these oils down the sanitary sewer can leave a real mess in the El Cajon sewer collection system. Improperly disposing of FOG down the sanitary sewer can create blockages and clog inside the drain line. FOG can build-up inside of the drain line and become hard as concrete. This can completely block pipelines and laterals, resulting in backups and discharges of raw sewage and spillage onto your property, street and local storm drains. These blockages and backups in the home or kitchen can result in costly plumbing repairs.

The following Best Management Practices (BMPs) can be used to help reduce the amount of FOG entering the sewer collection system:

- Collect cooking waste oil by pouring liquid FOG into a storage container/plastic bag before washing dishes and throw the container away when it is full.
- Wipe pots, pans, dishware, equipment, utensils, and serving pieces. This can be done with scrapers, squeegees, and absorbents that keep the bulk of food pieces, oil and grease from entering sewer drain system.
- Install drain screens to catch food particles instead of washing them down the drain.
- Use dry sweeping, absorbents (i.e. cat litter) or other materials to contain and collect spills before mopping the surface. **DO NOT** hose down spills.

Restaurants:

- Collect FOG from fryers and place into GREASE recycling bins. **DO NOT** pour into sinks, floor drains, or parking lots.
- Schedule cleaning of interceptors and grease traps by a qualified grease hauler. Post procedures over sinks to remind employees of FOG reduction techniques.

For more information, contact the Storm Water Protection Program at (619) 441-1653, or visit www.cityofelcajon.us/stormwater.





City of El Cajon
200 Civic Center Way
El Cajon, CA 92020

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POSTAL CUSTOMER

ENJOY EL CAJON!

Below are some upcoming events in El Cajon. For more information and to stay up-to-date, visit our website at www.cityofelcajon.us/events.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY HALF MARATHON

Sunday, March 5

7:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Start in Downtown El Cajon

www.stpatricksdlayhalf.com

RECREATION DANCE RECITAL

Saturday & Sunday

March 18 - 19

Greenfield Middle School - 1495 Greenfield Dr.

(619) 441-1534

ANNUAL ARBOR DAY CEREMONY

Saturday, March 25

8:00 a.m.

Kennedy Park - 1675 E. Madison Ave.

www.cityofelcajon.us/events

FAMILY PLAY DAY

Saturday- April 1

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

El Cajon Library - 201 E. Douglas Ave.

(619) 588-3718

CAJON CLASSIC CAR SHOW

Wednesdays, April 19 - October 25

5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Downtown on Main St.

www.downtownelcajon.com

DINNER & A CONCERT

Fridays, May 5 - September 29

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Prescott Promenade - 201 E. Main St.

www.downtownelcajon.com

POLICE AWARDS CEREMONY

Friday, May 5

6:00 p.m.

El Cajon Elks Lodge #1812 (Banquet Room)

1400 E. Washington Ave.

BIKE TO WORK DAY

Thursday, May 18

6:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Pit Stop at E. Main St. & Sulzfeld Way

www.cityofelcajon.us/events

FARMERS' MARKET

Thursdays

March: 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

April - October: 4:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Prescott Promenade - 201 E. Main St.

AMERICA ON MAIN STREET - MAY 20
12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Downtown El Cajon - www.AmericaOnMainStreet.org

*If you would like to contact the Mayor about any issue,
please email bwells@cityofelcajon.us*