



July 2021

Apple Valley friends and neighbors, Happy Independence Day!

I hope this message finds you all in good health as we enjoy our warm Apple Valley summer.

I hope you'll join us as we once again return to celebrating our nation's birth, in-person, at our annual Freedom Festival at Brewster Park on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Gates will open at 2 p.m. for an afternoon and evening of food vendors, shopping, kid's activities, and live music. Local favorite Southern Spirit will take the stage in the afternoon, followed by headline band Phoenix Rising, also an Apple Valley fan favorite. The fireworks show will begin at 9 p.m. Please note, there is no smoking, pets or barbecues allowed inside the park.

We just finished celebrating our Sunset Concerts Series and let me tell you it was such a wonderful time of music, dance and social interaction that we hadn't experienced in over a year! It was so good to be together again with neighbors and friends enjoying great music under the desert night sky.

### **American Idol**

I'm incredibly proud to share that 24- year old Apple Valley resident Chayce Beckham, has won this year's American Idol.

What an amazing opportunity and experience to partner with American Idol to host Chayce Beckham's Welcome Home filming and concert. The event was put together in just 29 days at Hollywood warp speed. So many people to thank! From our Council, to Apple Valley Police and Apple Valley Fire District, to our vendors and community event sponsors.

Without a doubt it couldn't have been done without the combined energy and force and optimism of our Town staff, who worked long hours on a moment's notice, who left no stone unturned to pull together last minute resources, who conquered stress, who came out smiling, and who represented Apple Valley oh so well!

Chayce was also greeted by the Town Council who awarded him with a golden apple, as a symbol of continued prosperity. We had some fun with Chayce as we joined him to plant an apple tree in Civic Center Park, in response to his comments earlier in the show that there are no apples in Apple Valley today. The tree will join an apple orchard to be planted in Civic Center Park in 2022.

Chayce later performed what is believed to be the first open-air concert ever staged in front of the illuminated, majestic rock formations at Horsemen's Center Park before a crowd of friends, family, town officials, and event sponsors. The decision by American Idol to hold the event in the rocks "just fit Chayce's vibe" said a show producer. At the direction of the show and network producers, the event was open to a limited-capacity, drive-in crowd following social-distancing guidelines.

And not only are we proud of his incredible accomplishments and amazing voice and talents, but we are so proud of how much he's grown through adversity. We wish him continued success as he embarks on this amazing new journey. We are working with his people to try to schedule a welcome home celebration. We'll keep everyone posted and this time it will be open for everyone!

Switching gears, in one of the most important matters facing Apple Valley, Judge Donald Alvarez of the San Bernardino County Superior Court issued a tentative decision on May 7 against the Town's efforts to acquire the Liberty Utilities' Apple Valley Ranchos Water System by eminent domain. Liberty Utilities challenged Town's right to acquire the system in a trial.

The tentative decision finds that the Town's proposed acquisition of the water system is not in the public interest. If the decision against the Town's proposed acquisition is made final, the Town Council will consider its options, including appeal. The tentative decision is available on the Town's website at [www.av.town/water](http://www.av.town/water).

In another important matter facing our community, in mid-June, Providence Southern California announced its partnership with Kaiser Permanente to move its operations to a new hospital it will build in Victorville instead of retrofitting the current St. Mary's Medical Center building.

Dedicated in November 1956, St. Mary Medical Center has been a hub of community health in Apple Valley for nearly 65 years. Thanks in part to numerous community and corporate donors who rallied to build and retain the local hospital, it has grown from its origins as a 29-bed acute care and maternity facility to a 213-bed premier medical center.

Unfortunately, California earthquake laws that require hospitals to make costly building upgrades by 2030 may leave Apple Valley without a hospital or emergency room.

This news is extremely disappointing but please know that the Town is asking Providence to keep the hospital open or replace it with one in Apple Valley.

The hospital's departure will leave the community significantly further from any emergency room and critical care services. While the hospital's press statement indicates they are interested in finding a re-use of the facility, the Town would support and assist, to the extent possible, any course of action that results in the building of a local replacement that meets the new earthquake standards.

We will keep the community abreast of the matter as it progresses.

In better news, on May 11, the Town Council approved funding for eight local non-profits that provide services for seniors and disabled adults, housing for transitional youth programs, fair housing services, clothing for students, homeless shelter and homeless services, and food banks.

Each year, the Town prepares an Annual Action Plan to allocate Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide decent, affordable housing, a suitable living environment and economic opportunities for people with low to moderate incomes. The Town's Community Development Citizen's Advisory Committee reviews all applications and recommends funding for Council's consideration. These

local non-profit agencies ensure the care of hundreds, if not thousands, of local Apple Valley residents.

The funding also goes to support our existing Residential Rehabilitation Loan Program (RRLP) to assist low-income persons with improvements to their home. The RRLP provides loans of up to \$50,000 for repair work to single-family owner-occupied homes. The loans are deferred and do not require repayment for up to 30 years; however, they are due and payable upon sale, transfer or if you cease to occupy the home as your primary residence. For more information visit [www.avhousing.org](http://www.avhousing.org).

For more information on these or other Apple Valley programs, events and activities, visit [www.AppleValley.org](http://www.AppleValley.org), email [info@applevalley.org](mailto:info@applevalley.org), or call Town offices at (760) 240-7000.

You can also follow Apple Valley on Facebook and Instagram!

Have a wonderful summer, Apple Valley neighbors!