

Open spaces, parks, culture on the move

by Robin N. Clayton

staff writer

Natural open spaces, parks and cultural events are top priorities for the Buckeye Community Services Department.

At Monday's town hall meeting, Community Services Director Jeanine Guy gave an update on her department, including plans for a 65-acre municipal park and a new cultural division in the department looking to bring the arts to town.

Guy said one of the main goals of the Community Services Department is to maintain the natural open space in the community.

"We have some absolutely amazing open spaces in Buckeye," Guy said, adding it is imperative the town preserve those spaces.

"The open space sets us apart from other municipalities," Guy said, with the White Tank Mountains to the north and the Buckeye Hills and Gila Bend

Mountains to the south.

Buckeye also has plans for a town lake south of MC85 near the Gila River bottom and that would add to the town's open spaces, Guy said.

Guy also updated residents on a 65-acre park planned for the corner of Rainbow and Lower Buckeye roads.

The first phase of the park, which will include three ball fields, a concession stand and playground equipment, has a projected July 2008 completion date.

The initial master plan for the municipal park includes an aquatic center; multigenerational facility; courtyard, baseball, softball, volleyball and basketball courts; soccer fields; playground and splash playground; trail system; and areas for skate, bike and dog parks.

The town will hold a public meeting in the future regarding a smaller, 25-acre park planned for the West Park community, Guy said.

Another focus for community services will be an attempt to attract more art and

cultural events to the town, Guy said.

A new cultural division of community services will work to bring cultural programming to Buckeye.

Recently the town entered into a land trade agreement with the Buckeye Union High School District to swap the town-owned Ellis Field for the school-owned A-wing building, which houses an auditorium.

The high school will continue to use the auditorium through this school year; a new auditorium will be complete by the start of school next fall, according to district officials.

Guy said the town will restore the building and it will be "a perfect venue for events such as small theater, orchestra and band."

The other two Town Hall meetings will be held from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Oct. 15, at Verrado Middle School, 20880 W. Main St., and Oct. 23 at the Sage Recreation Center in Sun City Festival, 26501 W. Desert Vista Blvd.