

# Issues Brief

## ✦ Sponsors Step Up To Help Save Outdoor Summer Cinema Series

Since it began several years ago, the Outdoor Summer Cinema Series has been a great way for people of all ages in Yakima to spend a cool summer evening enjoying a movie under the stars. However, due to budget constraints, the popular summertime activity, which has always been free to attend, was on the verge of being cancelled this year.

Now, thanks to the generous support of local businesses, the series is scheduled to begin another run starting in July. Senske Lawn and Tree Care, Elliot Insurance Service, and Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center have all chipped in \$600 a piece in sponsorships.

Even with that support, the number of movies featured during the series has been cut in half this year and will only take place at one City park rather than rotating between two parks as it has in the past. Traditionally, the series included ten movies and rotated between Gilbert Park on Sundays and Randall Park on Fridays. This year's series will only include five movies, all of which will be shown on Sundays at Gilbert Park.

Opening night for the series will be July 15<sup>th</sup>. The movie shown that night will be *Puss in Boots*. *Dolphin Tale* will be shown on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, followed by *Hugo* on July 29<sup>th</sup>. On August 5<sup>th</sup>, the Adam Sandler movie *Jack and Jill* will be the featured attraction. The final movie of the series will be *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1* on August 12<sup>th</sup>.

Outdoor Summer Cinema Series movies will begin at sunset, usually around 8:30 pm.

"The sponsorships from Senske, Elliot Insurance, and Yakima Regional will go a long toward covering licensing fees for the movies, staffing, and other costs that come with putting the series on," said Parks and Recreation Manager Ken Wilkinson. "We're still working hard to find additional sponsors. Obviously, the more support we get from the community, the better," said Wilkinson. "Without it, the series likely won't survive."

The Outdoor Summer Cinema Series is a cooperative effort of Allied Arts and Yakima Parks and Recreation.

*For more information about this article, contact Parks and Recreation Manager Ken Wilkinson by phone (575-6020) or by e-mail (kwilkins@ci.yakima.wa.us).*

## **Two Key Management Roles Filled By Experienced Staff**

Mark Soptich has nearly 40 years of experience in the fire service. Tara Lewis has spent almost 30 years in the finance industry. Now, the City of Yakima is benefitting from that vast experience having recently hired Soptich as a deputy fire chief and with Lewis being promoted to financial services manager. Both started their new duties on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Originally from Selah, Soptich began his career with the Selah Fire Department in 1975. He filled several roles in the six years he worked for the department, including as deputy chief in charge of the training and inspection divisions. From 1981 through 1987, Soptich served as a firefighter and emergency medical technician for the Hanford Fire Department. In 1987, he was hired by the Oak Harbor Fire Department as a training officer. Two years later, Soptich became the Oak Harbor fire chief. Along with his duties as fire chief, Soptich also served as director of emergency services for the Western Washington town until earlier this year.

"Mark brings a wealth of knowledge to the Yakima Fire Department ("YFD")," said Yakima Fire Chief Dave Willson. "We couldn't be more thrilled to have him as part of our senior command staff. He is an excellent addition to our department," said Willson.

Soptich's duties as deputy chief will include supervising the YFD's training and investigation divisions as well as its rescue team, serving as the department's safety officer and grants writer, handling hiring, promotions, and internal affairs for the department, and being in charge of facilities and equipment. His salary is just over \$8,300 a month.

Lewis, who grew up in Renton, graduated from Central Washington University in 1984 with a bachelor's degree in accounting. After spending a year working for a Yakima accounting firm, Lewis was hired as chief accountant for Sunnyside Community Hospital. In 1986, she earned her license as a certified public accountant. During her tenure at Sunnyside Community Hospital, she also served as fiscal services director. From 1987 to 1992, Lewis worked on the financial end of the medical services industry for Kadlec Medical Center in Richland ('87-'89) and Carondelet Regional Health System in Pasco ('90-'92). In 1992, she was hired by Faith Assembly Christian Center in Pasco as its comptroller. Lewis moved to Columbia Basin College ("CBC") in Pasco in 1996 and spent the next decade filling various roles for CBC including accounting supervisor and director of accounting services. In 2006, Lewis became director of accounting services for Yakima Valley Community College and served in that capacity until she was hired by the City in March 2010 as its financial services officer. Lewis also holds a master's degree in business administration, which she received from Washington State University in 2000.

"Tara has both a lot of technical experience and a lot of managerial experience," said Director of Finance and Budget Cindy Epperson. "Being able to promote Tara and have her take on more responsibility is a real plus for the City. We're excited to be able to more fully utilize her talents," said Epperson.

As financial services manager, Lewis will oversee the accounting and treasury operations of the Finance Department. Her salary is about \$7,200 a month.

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