BLYTHE CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

August 5, 2025

2:30 PM

Joseph DeConinck, Mayor
Johnny Z. Rodriguez, Vice Mayor
Joseph Halby, III, Council Member
Sam Burton, Council Member
Summer Spraggins, Council Member
Mallory Crecelius, Interim City Manager/City Clerk
Brittany Roberto, City Attorney

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN THE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER, 235 NORTH BROADWAY, BLYTHE, CA

BLYTHE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
Special Meeting Notice and Agenda
Tuesday, August 5, 2025
2:30pm
Council Chambers at City Hall
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 92225

Joseph DeConinck, Mayor
Johnny Z. Rodriguez, Vice Mayor
Summer Spraggins, Council Member
Mallory Crecelius, Interim City Manager/City Clerk
Christa Elms, City Treasurer/Finance Director
Garth Dale, Police Chief
Ronnie Hasler, Fire Chief
Joseph Halby, III, Council Member
Samuel Burton, Council Member
Brittany Roberto, City Attorney
Jason Brown, Chief Building Official
Mirasol Elegores, Public Works Director

CALL TO ORDER
ROLL CALL
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SPECIAL MEETING ITEMS:

1. **Posting of the Agenda.**
   The summary of agenda items was posted on the bulletin boards on the outside of the public entrance to the Council Chamber and near the inside entrance of the Council Chamber and on the City's website on Monday, August 4, 2025.

2. **Request by E Clampus Vitus for the Exclusive Use of Quechan Park, Including Overnight Camping, October 9-12, 2025, at No Cost, and to Place a Plaque in Quechan Park to Commemorate the Bradshaw Ferry and Bradshaw Trail.**
   Recommendation: Provide direction to staff on (1) the request for the exclusive use of Quechan Park October 9-12, 2025 by E Clampus Vitus (EVC) for a private historical event and monument dedication; (2) ECV's request for a waiver of fees associated with the use of Quechan Park; and (3) the placement of a plaque by ECV in Quechan Park to commemorate the Bradshaw Ferry and Bradshaw Trail.

Public comments will be allowed on the Special Meeting items during consideration of the item(s) described. Comments shall be limited to 3 minutes in duration.

ADJOURNMENT: The next meeting will be held on August 26, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 235 N. Broadway, Blythe, California.

NOTE TO THE PUBLIC: In compliance with the Americans with Disability Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact 504/ADA Coordinator Mallory Crecelius at (760) 922-6161 EXT. 1237 or by email at msutterfield@cityofblythe.ca.gov. Notification 72 business hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.104 ADA Title II).

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the City Council regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 235 N. Broadway, Blythe, California during normal business hours. In addition, such writings and documents will be posted on the City's website: www.cityofblythe.ca.gov.

CITY OF BLYTHE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING

STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: August 5, 2025

SUBJECT: Request by E Clampus Vitus for the Exclusive Use of Quechan Park, Including Overnight Camping, October 9-12, 2025, at No Cost, and to Place a Plaque in Quechan Park to Commemorate the Bradshaw Ferry and Bradshaw Trail

PRESENTED BY: Mallory Crecelius, Interim City Manager

PREPARED BY: Mallory Crecelius, Interim City Manager

RECOMMENDATION: Provide direction to staff on: (1) the request for the exclusive use of Quechan Park October 9-12, 2025 by E Clampus Vitus (ECV), including overnight camping, for a private historical event and monument dedication; (2) ECV's request for a waiver of fees associated with the use of Quechan Park, and (3) the placement of a plaque by ECV in Quechan Park to commemorate the Bradshaw Ferry and Bradshaw Trail.

FISCAL IMPACT: Loss of parking revenue at Quechan Park.

BACKGROUND: E Clampus Vitus (ECV) describes itself as a unique American fraternal society combining shenanigans, camaraderie, and a deep love of Western U.S. History, especially that of the Gold Rush and Mother Lode regions. The group was originally founded in 1845 but died out around 1916. The group was re-established in the early 1930s. This is when they began to embrace historical preservation and dedicating plaques and monuments (over 2,000 to date). Today, ECV spans dozens of chapters across the Western United States.

STAFF REPORT: The City received a request from Kati Cusick, Community Outreach at Blythe Speedway, to allow ECV the exclusive use of Quechan Park, at no cost, for the period of October 9-12, 2025, for a private historical event and monument dedication.

During the visit, ECV intends to install a permanent bronze historical monument at a significant site in Blythe and host a public dedication ceremony open to the community. Several sites were considered, and it is staff's understanding that ECV would like to place a plaque at Quechan Park for the Bradshaw Trail and Bradshaw Ferry.

According to ECV, Quechan Park was chosen as the Ferry passed between Ehrenberg and Blythe in the late 1800s. Staff asked for a rendering of the plaque along with the proposed location for placement in Quechan Park. As of the writing of this staff report, that information has not been received.

Proponents believe this event could attract 500-600 visitors. This includes approximately 250 RVs, tents and trailers that the group would like to place in Quechan Park for overnight camping during the event. The group is requesting that Quechan Park be closed to the public October 9-12, 2025, to allow for private, self-contained lodging and event operations. ECV handles its own sanitation, power, security and logistics.

Pursuant to Section 12.28.062 of the Blythe Municipal Code, when a request is made for the exclusive use of any park or marina facility, or any specific area thereof, the following findings must be made in order for the permit for such use to be granted:

A. That the proposed activity and use will not unreasonably interfere with or detract from the general public enjoyment of the park or marina;
B. That the proposed activity and use will not unreasonably interfere with or detract from the promotion of public health, welfare, safety and recreation;
C. That the proposed activity or use is not anticipated to incite violence, crime or disorderly conduct;
D. That the proposed activity will not require any police support services, unless the same shall have been contracted for with off-duty Blythe police officers; and
E. That the facilities desired have not been reserved for other use at the day and hour required in the application.

Historically, the City has not granted exclusive use of Quechan Park or any other City park for private use. For past events utilizing Quechan Park, the City has authorized use of a specific portion of the park for the event, while allowing general public access to the remainder of the park, including the Boat Launch.

The City sells annual passes for use of the Boat Launch at Quechan Park. This year, the City held a Summer Special, with passes valid through October 31st. If Council is inclined to allow ECV exclusive use of the park for their event, staff recommends nearly exclusive access, excluding the Boat Launch area. This will allow season pass holders to use the launch.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter Requesting Exclusive Use of Quechan Park by E Clampus Vitus October 9-12, 2025

Outlook

Big Opportunity for Blythe!

From Kati Cusick [redacted]
Date Wed 7/9/2025 11:57 PM
To Mallory Crecelius <msutterfield@cityofblythe.ca.gov>; [redacted]

1 attachment (917 KB)
E Clampus Vitus.docx;

July 9, 2025

City Council
City of Blythe
235 N. Broadway
Blythe, CA 92225

Attn: Interim City Manager

RE: Request for Exclusive Use of Quechan Park by E Clampus Vitus – October 9–12, 2025

Dear Honorable Members of the City Council and Interim City Manager,

Thank you in advance for taking time from your busy schedules to consider this very unique and fun opportunity for town.

I am writing to respectfully request that the City of Blythe grant **exclusive use of Quechan Park at no charge** to the historical organization **E Clampus Vitus (ECV)** for the period of **October 9–12, 2025**, for a private historical event and monument dedication. I have briefly spoken to Mayor DeConinck and Vice Mayor Rodriquez about it to spark interest and ideas.

E Clampus Vitus is a nationally known fraternal society committed to preserving and highlighting underappreciated historical sites throughout the western United States. During this visit, ECV will install a **permanent bronze historical monument** at a locally significant site in Blythe and host a **public dedication ceremony** open to the community. They were referred to me by the President of the Quartzsite Chamber of Commerce and recently erected a monument and dedication in their area. The link below is to their Facebook article:

https://www.facebook.com/QuartzsiteTourism/posts/pfbid02L1BnY5kzFsqtkERRHPg6H7N6fYBm4n1k7tm9SyrCMdggmrV61iZnT8Vwh4HYA6rhl

Sites currently under consideration include:

- **Blythe Golf Course**

- **The Cotton Gin**
- **Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID) Diversion Dam**
- **Palo Verde Historical Museum & Society**

Each of these sites reflects over 50 years of rich local history and aligns with ECV's mission of honoring places that have played a meaningful but often overlooked role in shaping the community. ECV thoroughly researches and **records each monument and its story in an official book of historical record**—ensuring Blythe's heritage is preserved for future generations. You are welcome to add to the list if you feel there are other areas of interest.

This event also represents a **strong tourism opportunity for the City**:

- Attendance will bring in **500–600 visitors**,
- Including **approximately 250 RVs, trailers, and tents**,
- With participants patronizing **local restaurants, gas stations, markets, and retail businesses** throughout their stay.

The group requests that **Quechan Park be closed to the public during these dates**, allowing for **private, self-contained lodging** and event operations. ECV handles all its own sanitation, power, security, and logistics. Their members have a long-standing reputation for respecting host communities and leaving facilities cleaner than they found them.

This event will also bring **local and regional media attention**, highlighting both the monument dedication and Blythe's role in preserving unique Western heritage. ECV's dedication ceremonies are well-attended and often covered by historical publications, heritage blogs, and local press.

We would be honored to include **Blythe City Council members as guest speakers** at the dedication ceremony, which will be open to the public and serve as a meaningful way to connect the community to its own living history. The dedication will be either Saturday or Sunday mid morning. They will also host a dinner at some time during the weekend where you would all be invited. They really want to leave a positive mark in out town that supports us as well as their mission.

We thank you for your time and consideration and look forward to partnering with the City to make this a successful and memorable event. Please feel free to contact me directly to discuss next steps or provide additional details as needed. Please take a look at the attached history & highlights of this amazing group. I am more than happy to arrange a conference call with their lead organizers.

Sincerely,
Kati Cusick

Community Outreach
Blythe Speedway
562-547-3527

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E Clampus Vitus (ECV), often humorously referred to as "Clampers," is a unique American fraternal society combining shenanigans, camaraderie, and a deep love of Western U.S. history—especially that of the Gold Rush and Mother Lode regions.

Origins & Early Wild West Days

- **Founded around 1845** in what is now West Virginia by tavern owner Ephraim Bee, who claimed a commission from the "Emperor of China." It was set up as a welcoming parody of the exclusive societies of the day, open to any "upstanding" man—particularly miners and frontier folk ABC7 News+3ecv59174.com+3Wikipedia+3.
- As miners migrated west during the Gold Rush (~1849), so did ECV, establishing chapters such as Mokelumne Hill #1001 in 1851 ecv59174.com+5Wikipedia+5ecvgazette.com+5.
- The group was famously irreverent: ceremonies included the "Poor Blind Candide" initiation, bicycle wheelbarrow rides, faux solemn titles (like *Noble Grand Humbug*) and a goat mascot, with members dressed in red shirts and tin-lid badges—"wearing the tin"—mocking pompous elder lodges Occult World+8ecv59174.com+8Wikipedia+8.
- Despite the jest, Clampers helped widows, orphans, and towns hit by disasters, showing they had a compassionate side Sacramento News & Review+11855dsgg.com+11Occult World+11.
- Activity peaked c. 1870, dwindled by the early 20th century, and the last original lodge ended around 1916 .

Revival & Plaquing Mission

- **Reestablished in 1930–31** in San Francisco by historian Carl Wheat, along with G. Ezra Dane, Leon Whitsell and local surviving member Adam Lee Moore, who preserved knowledge of the rituals ecv59174.com+4Wikipedia+4ecvgazette.com+4.
- The revived ECV continued its playful rituals but also embraced historical preservation—dedicating bronze plaques and monuments (over 2,000 to date) at overlooked sites: brothels, saloons, quirky local lore, as well as serious historical events Atlas Obscura+2ecv59174.com+2ecvgazette.com+2.
- Commemorations include sites associated with Emperor Norton, Joaquin Murrieta, local train history, and even offbeat tales like buried circus elephants Sacramento News & Review+1emperornortontrust.org+1.
- Today ECV spans dozens of chapters across the Western U.S., with 50–100k members engaging in "Clampouts" (camping and plaque dedications), volunteering and scholarship drives—true to their roots of aiding widows and orphans 1855dsgg.com+5Sierra News Online+5Siskiyou News+5.

🏛 Culture & Traditions

- **Motto**: *Credo quia absurdum*—"I believe it because it is absurd," capturing their blend of humor and sincerity 1855dsgg.com+7Wikipedia+7Siskiyou News+7.
- **Structure**: Every member is an "officer," led by quirky titles like Noble Grand Humbug, Chairmen of the Most Important Committee, etc. Meetings are in saloon backrooms called "Halls of Comparative Ovations" Occult World+9Wikipedia+9ecv59174.com+9.
- **Attire and regalia**: Red shirts (inspired by miner undergarments), black hats, tin badges, goat mascots, and hoop skirt flags exemplify their campy aesthetic .
- Notable Clampers include Mark Twain (who heard the jumping frog tale during an ECV meeting), Father of California history Carl Wheat, and many others with historical interest .

📌 Highlights

- **1936 Drake's Plate of Brass hoax**—engineered to mock and expose a fake artifact placed in Northern California; later revealed as Clamper humor 1855dsgg.com+3Wikipedia+3San Diego History Center+3.
- **Annual Emperor Norton Day**—Clampers gather at his grave in Colma, honoring the self-declared "Emperor of the U.S." with speeches, songs, and a feast emperornortontrust.org+1ABC7 News+1.
- **Plaque dedications**—from Bass Lake to California mining towns, often followed by ceremonies mixing history and hospitality (bourbon poured over markers!) Sierra News Online.

✨ In Summary

E Clampus Vitus is a spirited blend of satire and scholarship—a fraternity that mocks solemnity while preserving local histories. From wild Gold Rush beginnings to modern heritage work, Clampers continue preserving the West's quirky past—"the comic strip on the page of California history" as Carl Wheat called it Los Angeles Times+13ecv59174.com+13Wikipedia+13.

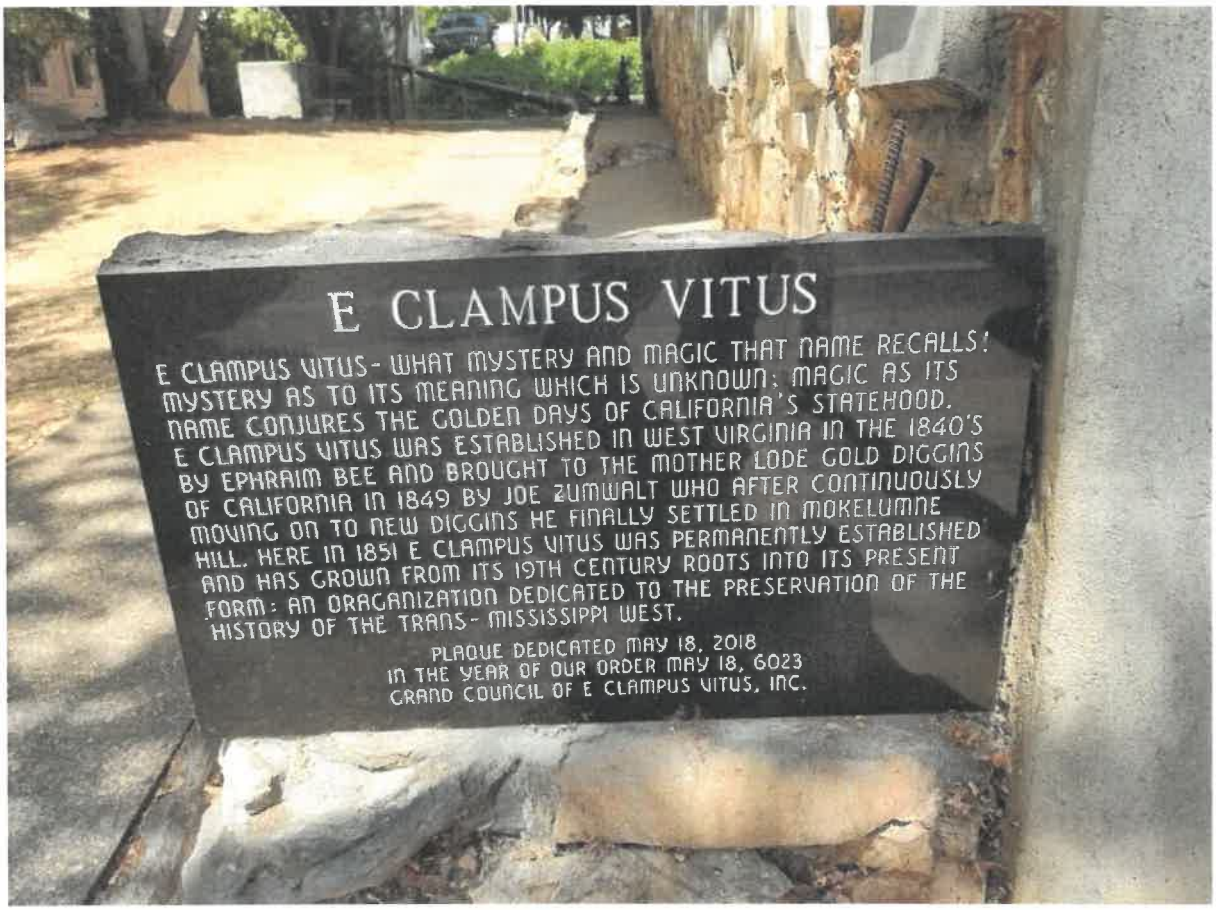
Want to discover a Clamper plaque near you, join a Clampout, or learn more about their ceremonies? I've got maps, chapter contacts, and event info—just say the word!

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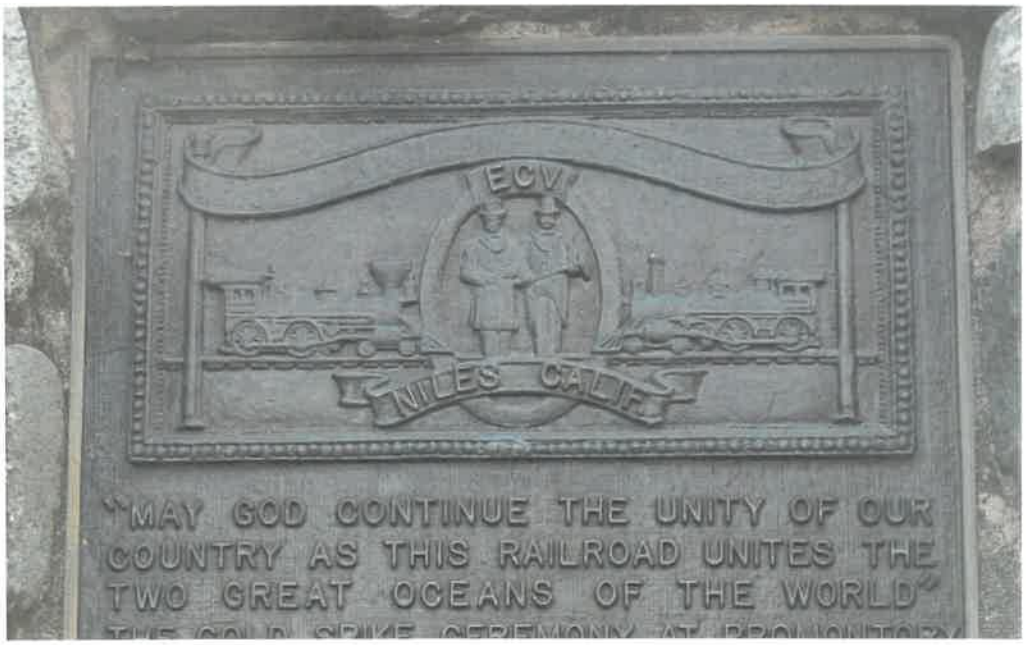
Attach

Search

ChatGPT can make mistakes. Check important info.






ECV
NILES CALIF
"MAY GOD CONTINUE THE UNITY OF OUR
COUNTRY AS THIS RAILROAD UNITES THE
TWO GREAT OCEANS OF THE WORLD"