



County's Therapy Dogs Help Children's Balance, Confidence

Watching 7-year-old Diana Montes with Toby the golden retriever, it's easy to see there's still good in the world.

Diana dropped her crutch and hobbled slowly toward Toby, a treat in her small hands. Everyone standing around this little girl held their breath. Tears sprung into their eyes.

Diana, diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, was barely able to walk until she met Toby. Now, she can walk with a small crutch and give the dog commands.

"It's so wonderful to see the progress these dogs are making with the children. The bond is indescribable," said Sallee O'Brien, a volunteer with the County's Paws'itive Team, a group of volunteers and therapy dogs who work with children in Escondido.

O'Brien and fellow volunteer Carol Birch were recently honored at the County's Volunteer Recognition Ceremony for their hard work and dedication. The Escondido pilot program will now be expanded to other medical therapy units within the County, starting in El Cajon.

"Helping to improve their motor skills is one of the main goals, but seeing the smiles on these kids' faces as they gain more confidence is priceless," O'Brien said.



Diana Montes spends therapy time with Toby the golden retriever.

Diana placed the treat gently on Toby's nose and backed up several steps. Then she belted out her command: "Go!"

With a single motion, Toby flipped the treat off his nose, into the air and into his mouth.

Allison Medina, a 7-year-old diagnosed with cerebral palsy, clapped her hands in delight as she watched Diana's success from a few feet away.

Allison urged her pink walker forward ever so slightly. She was eager to work with her therapy dog, Moya, and she seemed barely able to contain her excitement.

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The Prize Patrol Is On the Loose, and You Could Be Next!

"Shh!" said Virginia Exner.

"Duck! They can probably see us right through the window!"

Exner, a staff development coordinator, huddled with nine other Human Resources employees in a Kearny Mesa parking lot. They all inched closer to the sport-utility vehicle they were unloading.

They pulled out three cakes, a huge sign decorated with tissue pom poms and a dozen balloons.

"Okay," Exner said. "We're going in."

The group ran through double doors right into a Registrar of Voters staff meeting, surprising nearly 100 employees with cheers as they made their way to the front.

"Surprise! It's the Prize Patrol!"

ROV staff were bewildered. But Registrar Deborah Seiler was in on the surprise.

The intruders were DHR's Prize Patrol, Seiler explained, and they were there to commend ROV employees for their stellar customer service.

"We wanted to come up with a really fun way to recognize them," said Human Resources Services Manager Elaine Pitpit.

"It's the presentation; we could walk in there and say, 'good job,' but what we really want to do is create excitement about the program and acknowledge employees for their accomplishments and to ensure employees keep in mind that customer service is our number one priority."

Pitpit said that the idea for the Prize Patrol was born with DHR's new customer service program.

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County employees strike a pose on the lawn of the CAC during a free yoga session provided by County Libraries. Another session is planned for noon on June 20.



Juanito Amor, ROV Outreach Coordinator, shares in the excitement as he is recognized for outstanding customer service.

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Alpine Sheriff's Station Opens

The Sheriff opened for business at 2751 Alpine Blvd. last month. Construction and remodel work on the 14,188-square-foot building is now complete, and the remaining parking lot construction was wrapping up late last month.

The new facility will provide the community with a significant improvement in services and capability compared to the previously leased 4,678-square-foot station on Tavern Road.

The project included building acquisition, interior remodel, installation of back-up power and parking area improvements. The budget of \$6.55 million was funded by \$5.55 million from the Sheriff's Department and \$1 million from the Proposition 172 Special Revenue Fund.

China to Replicate County RSVP Program

The County's successful Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is being replicated in China, with the development of a new Web site to recruit senior volunteers.

The program, which matches seniors to meaningful volunteer opportunities, is among three models chosen for China to emulate.

County Receives \$4.5 Million Grant to Reduce Wildfire Risk

The U.S. Forest Service has awarded a grant of \$4.5 million to the County for the removal of dead and dying trees in danger of catching fire.

The grant was part of more than \$9 million that was recently awarded to local Fire Safe Councils and Cal Fire, as well as the County, by the Forest Area Safety Taskforce, or FAST.

FAST is a partnership between federal, state, county and municipal governments and citizen-run Fire Safe Councils. The group formed in 2002 to address the problem of the hazardous fuels around the county.



In Walt's Words

A Storm's Coming, and It's Time to Hunker Down - Together

The skies darken, the temperature drops. The wind starts to blow and you know a storm is on its way. So you shut the windows, secure the lawn chairs and bring in the cat.

You do the best you can to protect your home to make sure it weathers whatever Mother Nature has up her sleeve.

It's not unlike what we do in government. Right now, the County is bracing for a serious storm, and the next two years will be a challenge – for some of us more than others.

Last month, the deputy CAOs and I presented to the Board of Supervisors the budget we're proposing for Fiscal Year 2008-2009, and that document reflects the reality we're facing.

It's of little comfort, but we certainly aren't alone in this. Many of our state's 58 counties are experiencing similar struggles – even before knowing the full reach of expected state cuts. With the local and national economy stagnating, counties, which administer many state programs, are being hit with a double whammy.

They face the prospect of losing significant – but still undefined - amounts of funding from the state, which is wrestling with the economic downturn and its own lack of financial solvency and discipline. At the same time, revenues that counties receive directly, such as property and sales taxes, are flattening or are down, while the cost of fuel, building materials and other materials we need to serve the public are on the rise.

The California State Association of Counties tells us that even before this storm started brewing, counties were struggling to provide services that have been underfunded by the state. A growing gap between state funding and the cost of administering certain health and human services on behalf of the state now totals \$1 billion annually. And it's the counties left holding the bag.

Our proposed budget calls for \$5.15 billion in spending, with 17,182 staff, and it describes how these dollars will be spent to meet the region's highest priority health, safety and infrastructure needs.

We believe most of the risk falls in the Health and Human Services Agency and Public Safety Group sections. Those are the groups most likely to see large funding cuts and we want everyone interested in those programs to be aware of what might lie ahead.

But we haven't factored in potential budget cuts, because we just don't know which cuts will end up being enacted. And we don't want to speculate or create undue alarm.

In tough economic times, it's essential that the County maintain a long-term fiscal perspective that balances both operating and capital needs. The proposed budget does just that. For example, it continues our commitment to reduce pension-related debt by paying down an additional \$44 million in pension obligation bond principal early – a fiscally

(In Walt's Words continued on Page 3)



Left to Right, Eric Gibson, Director DPLU; Jeff Murphy, Deputy Director DPLU; Supervisor Dianne Jacob; Ken Miller, County Fire Services Coordinator; Rich Hawkins, U.S. Forest Service Fire Chief; Supervisor Bill Horn; Ralph Steinhoff, County Fire Services Coordinator.

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Fight the Bite!

The County needs your help in fighting West Nile virus. You can protect yourself and your community by:

- Reporting dead birds by calling Vector Control at 888-551-INFO or by [clicking here](#). Dead birds may be an indicator that the virus is active in a given area, and mosquitoes on a dead bird can contract the virus and infect humans.
- Reporting mosquito breeding in a neighboring pool, backyard pond or local waterway by emailing Vector.DEH@sdcounty.ca.gov. Mosquitoes can breed even in small amounts of water.
- Reviewing the County's Mosquito Prevention Checklist.

Additional information can be found at SDFighttheBite.com in 12 languages.

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In Walt's Words
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prudent move which will save taxpayers millions of dollars in interest costs.

The plan also maintains the Board's discipline with respect to capital maintenance and renewal. We do not, in this government, ignore our need to main-

tain taxpayer-owned assets because things get rough. Instead, we believe that constant attention to infrastructure is a hallmark of a well-run organization. As such, this op plan includes:

- Appropriations for phase 1 of the County Operations Center/Annex redevelopment project;
- Funds for replacing the North Central Public Health Clinic and the Lincoln Acres Library/Community Center; rebuilding the San Pasqual Academy buildings destroyed by the 2007 Firestorm; improving the Sweetwater Summit Campground; and acquiring land related to the Multiple Species Conservation Program;
- Resources necessary to address \$17.3 million in major maintenance projects throughout the region;
- An increasing commitment to improving the region's capability to deal with emergencies. While continuing to support programs like Alert San Diego and our Regional Communications System, among other things, this plan includes funding toward consolidating and improving fire-related services in the unincorporated areas.

Maintaining essential services and meeting immediate needs without shortchanging future generations will be challenging in this time of budgetary and economic uncertainty.

However, if any organization is prepared to weather a fiscal storm, it is ours, and we can do it together.



Walt Ekard
Chief Administrative Officer

Prize Patrol
(continued from page 1)

"Many components of the 'Serving Everyone With Excellence' customer service program recognize individuals, but much of the County's best work is group- or team-based," Pitpit said.

The Prize Patrol also stopped in at the Treasurer-Tax Collector's office at the County Administration Center. That office's staff has made quite an effort to gather feedback from the public about the quality of their services. The department distributed a survey during April's property tax collection in which customers were asked if they would like to participate in a customer service focus group. Twenty-five members of the public accepted the invitation to share both appreciation and constructive criticism about the County's tax services with Treasurer-Tax Collector Dan McAllister.

The Prize Patrol burst in on two Treasurer-Tax Collector staff meetings

to thank employees for taking such initiative to continually improve their customer service.

From here on, DHR's Prize Patrol will recognize one County "team" per month for its customer service efforts. To nominate a group of employees who are delivering excellent service, internally or externally, contact [Elaine Pitpit](mailto:Elaine.Pitpit@sdcountry.ca.gov). Elaine.Pitpit@sdcountry.ca.gov



From left, DHR Prize Patrollers Virginia Exner, Shelley Reith, Elaine Pitpit, Denise Harris, Carmen Rulloda, Carrie Burrell, Giara Webb and Yaxha Mancillas say "Shh!" as they prepare to surprise ROV staff.

General Services Mitigating Fire Risks to County Facilities

The Department of General Services has begun incorporating wildfire inspections into its quarterly and semi-annual storm water inspections to help further mitigate fire risks to County facilities. To date, 221 out of 408 eligible sites have been inspected.

Facilities are evaluated using a checklist of criteria developed by utilizing information from the National Fire Protection Association, FEMA and the American Red Cross.

The checklist includes inspection of 14 areas, such as condition of the access road, fire service access, topography, area vegetation and roofing materials.

Following inspection, the facilities are rated to determine potential risk exposure, with corrective action plans put into place for sites identified as needing improvement.

Non-stormwater sites with significant risk of damage or loss to wildfires are currently being evaluated for inclusion in the wildfire inspection program.

CAC Third Floor Room Renovations

The Clerk of the Board has completed renovations of rooms 306a and 301 at the County Administration Center (CAC).

Room 306a, the conference room located just outside the Board Offices, is most commonly used for Board of Supervisors' staff briefings. The renovation included painting and new carpeting, the addition of a flat screen TV and a retractable projection screen.

Room 301 is the hearing room used for property tax assessment appeals hearings. This renovation included painting and new carpeting, furniture and window coverings. A modern projector and a large table and chairs have also been added.

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Need an expert opinion?

Have a burning question, need some advice, don't know where to turn? *County News* is here to help! Next month, we'll introduce a monthly advice column. And you, dear readers, can write to us with whatever's on your mind. We'll take your queries and track down the best County expert to answer them. Write to us at: CountyNews@sdcountry.ca.gov.

County Therapy Dogs

(continued from page 1)

Moya, a 120-pound Leonberger, a German dog as large as a lion, was hooked up to a small cart and Allison practiced her balance as Moya pulled the cart around a cement circle. First, Allison sat strapped into the cart, and then she stood, with a volunteer on each side to keep her from falling. For anyone, this task would be difficult.

"Allison used to have a lot of tremors, which would affect her movement, but now after working with Moya, she has been able to get her tremors under control," said Allison's mother, Alma Medina.

"I can't describe the effect these dogs have had on her. She is so excited to see Moya; it's like I'm looking at a different child since the therapy," Medina said.

The children are always asking for the dogs to come back, and the dogs get excited to see the kids, too, Birch

said. Dogs can read the children's non-verbal cues, which help them to connect on a different level than we do with people.

The kids also have a lot to say about their furry friends.

"The best thing that I like is when I tell Toby to do something, he does it. He's so intelligent," said Diana.

Allison smiled and nodded in agreement.

The therapy session over, Diana's mother took the girls hand. It was time to go back to school.

Diana didn't want to go.

"I want to stay here with Toby. I love him," Diana said.

The children's time with the dogs improves their balance and motor skills. But perhaps just as important is the chance to be friends with a dog and just be an ordinary kid.

Learn How to Invest

Interested in learning how to invest in stocks safely and wisely?

Check out the San Diego County Employees Investment Club at 6:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month to learn about stock selection for beginning and advanced investors.

The meetings are held at the County Health Services Complex at 3851 Rosecrans St.

This club has been in existence since 1965 and has had a successful track record using up-to-date software analysis tools.

For information, call club president Tom Ilas, at (619) 444-1569.

Changing Her Life, One Mile at a Time

It had been a rough year for Maria Cristina Herrera. She was recovering from her divorce, and her only daughter had left for college.

"I found myself with a lot of time on my hands," said Herrera, 41, a legal support assistant who works for the County's Child Support Services at the courthouse downtown.

It was her daughter, Isabelle, who turned her around.

"Mom, this is your time now," Isabelle told her mother.

Herrera got into scuba diving, and that inspired her to become stronger and healthier. And so Herrera started running, a mile here and there, and then a mile and a half. In January, she joined the San Diego Track Club, a running group with a coach, and she set her sights on something bigger.

"I thought: If I'm going to do this, I'm going all the way," she said.



Maria Cristina Herrera runs along the ocean while training for the Rock 'N' Roll Marathon.

"All the way" would be to San Diego's Rock 'N' Roll Marathon, on Sunday, June 1. Last month on a Saturday, Herrera ran 22 miles – farther than she'd ever run before, and she was feeling ready for the marathon.

In preparation for the race, Herrera began "tapering down," easing her training regimen to allow her body to rest for the big day. The night before, she loaded up on carbohydrates, the fuel she needed to power her through the run.

Running, Herrera said, has changed her life. During her runs, she feels at peace. Though surrounded by fellow runners, she is alone with her thoughts. She sees the things she might not normally see while driving a car – the sun shining on the ocean, the flowers along her path. It's a brand new morning, and anything is possible.

"I'm a lot happier, I'm a lot more energetic, I sleep a whole lot better at night. And this year, I feel like I have a lot more positive outlook on daily life," Herrera said.

"There can be challenges. But it's not a 'bad day' anymore. It's a challenge-filled day. Every time I gain another mile in running it makes me feel like I can do anything I set my mind to doing."

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Know What You're Biting Into



The stalls are full of the season's best produce, but how do consumers really know what they buy at their neighborhood farmers' market was harvested by local growers? The County of San Diego Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures certifies each market to make sure it meets specific standards.

"Our inspectors want consumers to know they are getting fresh, quality produce. We do that by visiting local growers at their farms to see the produce they plan to sell, and then we follow up at the farmers' markets themselves to ensure the products are sold by certified farmers," said County Agriculture Commissioner Bob Atkins.

The inspectors follow California

guidelines to verify that fruits, vegetables, eggs and other agricultural products at farmers' markets are grown at the producer's own farm. Their products must also meet state quality and maturity standards. Any seller who does not meet the certification guidelines is cited. Consumers can find out if a vendor at their local market has had a violation by visiting the department's Web site at <http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/awm/violations.html>.

The site also has a list of all of the certified farmers' markets in the county at http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/awm/farmers_markets.html. There are more than two dozen certified markets in San Diego County, operating almost every day of the week.

Are You More Prepared Than a Fourth Grader?

In the event of an emergency, what should a child know or do?

The San Diego County Office of Emergency Services (OES) is rolling out a new program called "OES for Kids" to help answer this critical question for fourth-grade students in San Diego County schools.

In February, OES coordinated the Federal Emergency Management Agency's "FEMA for Kids" program at four local elementary schools, and then decided to develop a local program in partnership with the County's Department of Animal Services and the American Red Cross. The first presentation will be held June 2 at Murdock Elementary School in La Mesa.

"Our OES for Kids program allows us and our partners to work with fourth-graders to provide timely information for their personal preparedness, and materials for them to take home to assist their families in preparing for any event, large or small," said Leslie Luke, Group Program Manager for OES.

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CTN Producer Honored

Jacquelyn Collins, CTN producer, floor director and multimedia manager for the Board of Supervisors, will be honored for her 27 years of County service when she is wel-



comed into the San Diego Silver Circle by the Pacific Southwest region of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

The Silver Circle is open to people who began their careers in television at least 25 years ago, and have made a significant contribution to television in the Pacific Southwest.

Collins has been with the County's Government Access Channel (later to become CTN, the County Television Network) since its inception in the early 1980s. She is one of three original employees of the County's Video Services.

Collins manages a grant program called San Diego County's Community Partnership for Governmental Access Programming, known as San Diego County's Cable TV Grant Award Program. Collins also was instrumental in the streaming and archiving of the Board of Supervisor Meetings on the Internet.

She will be welcomed into the Silver Circle, along with News 10's Loren Nancarrow, NBC 7/39's Bob Hansen and others, during a luncheon at the Bonita Golf Club on August 2.

CTN Named Best Government Television in California and Nevada

The County's television channel beat out the cities of Las Vegas and Santa Monica to win the award of Overall Excellence



in the large channel category during last month's annual awards ceremony hosted by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, California and Nevada chapter.

(CTN Named Best Government TV continued on Page 6)

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CTN Named Best Government Television (cont.)

The network also won several first, second and third place awards. The first place honors were in the following categories:

- Magazine: Sam the Cooking Guy
- Performing Arts: Java Jams, Isaac Cheong
- Public Safety: Juvenile Justice Day
- Training: General Management System
- Instructional: How to Manage Manure, Composting for Horse Owners

Pending Wildfire Season: Outlook, Preparation & Awareness

The preliminary outlook for the upcoming fire season calls for current drought conditions to persist or intensify, with lower than normal moisture levels throughout the region.

The higher than normal grass growth and large grass crop may increase the potential for fire danger. Beginning June 1, CAL FIRE is at peak staffing in San Diego County. The US Forest Service and CAL FIRE have forward-deployed firefighting aircraft, engines and strike teams which will stand ready to respond to any wildfires.

CAL FIRE is also working closely with the Marine Corps and the Navy to streamline the military aerial resources support request process. Combining resources, the Marines and Navy have over twenty specialized "buckets" in our region, which are used by firefighting helicopters to carry water in aerial firefighting. The actual number of helicopters available in the region will vary based on global military missions.

Several County agencies are collaborating on a regional wildfire public awareness campaign that will be launched in late summer. The educational campaign will focus on communicating three main messages:

- Residents will be encouraged to register their mobile phones with AlertSanDiego, our community notification system.
- Information will be provided to residents on creating defensible space to help save lives and property.
- The campaign will provide homeowners with remodeling and upgrade suggestions, plus information about using fire-resistive landscaping elements.

The ultimate goal of the campaign is to mobilize residents to take wildfire preparation steps to ensure the safety of their families and their properties.

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FREE MOVIE UNDER THE STARS COMING TO A PARK NEAR YOU

Popular Event Grows to Include More than 30 Locations This Summer

The County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation has teamed up with the cities of National City, La Mesa, San Marcos, Poway, Oceanside and Lemon Grove to bring 33 movies to parks and pools this summer, making it the largest free movie event in the county.

"We are excited to expand the program this year to include additional cities," said Renée Bahl, Director of the County's Department of Parks and Recreation. "It gives local families the chance to enjoy time together while experiencing the outdoors."

The program kicks off June 6 with

a showing of "E.T." in Heritage Park in Old Town and continues through September 27. Movies include such box office hits as "Transformers," "Horton Hears a Who" and "Ratatouille." They will be shown in high-quality digital on a 10 x 18 inflatable screen.

All movies are free, open to the public and begin at dusk. Some locations do have a parking fee. The events will also include great giveaways, family games and healthy concessions.

For a list of dates, times and locations, please visit www.sdparks.org, and click on "Movies in the Park."



Be prepared by having your immunization record online!

San Diego County residents are no strangers to disasters – or to evacuations. But some might not think of immunization records as an important document to take along during an evacuation.

We all need to be sure that our vaccinations are up-to-date, especially during a crisis. Vaccinations help protect evacuees who may be living in close quarters with others, health care workers and first responders who need to protect themselves as well as the individuals for whom care is provided, and volunteers who assist during emergency efforts.

One way to keep track of your immunization records is to store them in the San Diego Immunization Registry. This is a secure and confidential Web site for storing immunization data and is used by medical providers and schools to check immunization status.

After completing a registration process, individuals can print their immunization records whenever needed for

a job, school, childcare, and summer camp requirement, or when changing health care providers.

You can still send your immunization record to the registry even if your healthcare provider stores your immunizations in an electronic medical record. Access to immunization records on the registry is strictly limited to users who have completed a registration process and they will only be able to view their own or their child's record.

All residents of San Diego County, including County employees, are invited to send their immunization records for all family members to the San Diego Regional Immunization Registry, part of the statewide California Immunization Registry. Please go to the San Diego Immunization Coalition Web site, at <http://www.immunization-sd.org/parents/eng/index.html>, to download the form and instructions on how to send in your records.

Are You More Prepared Than a Fourth Grader? (cont.)



American Red Cross Outreach Coordinator Ricardo Moran and Tally talk to fourth-graders about home safety during a disaster.

The students rotate between four stations where they learn about the disasters that could affect their community, what they can do to stay safe, how to make a home survival kit and how to take care of their family pet during an emergency.

Lt. Daniel DeSousa of Animal Services said educating kids about pet safety is a critical part of preparing for a disaster.

“It is well documented that people may not evacuate if they cannot take their animals with them and ensure their safety. Pet safety and disaster preparedness for pets is a crucial aspect of a family’s emergency plan. After all, the pets are part of the family as well,” DeSousa said

“By helping children understand the importance of having a plan for their furry or feathered family members, it is our hope that they can carry that message home to their parents,” he said.

The children also practice Stop, Drop and Roll with local firefighters and learn how to Duck, Cover and Hold On during an earthquake. They can play safety games on OES’ new Web site, www.ReadySanDiego.org. And, a puppet show created by the Red Cross helps children prepare for the emotional toll a disaster can take.

“The puppets Tally, Sierra and Diego help teach kids about different types of disaster and what to do if they are affected by one,” said Oreda Chin, community outreach manager for the local chapter of the Red Cross.

“The vision of the San Diego/Imperial Counties Chapter of the American Red Cross is to become America’s most prepared community. Our puppets are helping make that happen, one child at a time.”

OES for Kids is just one component of the County’s extensive public awareness campaign, launched in 2006. The County also sent a Family Disaster Plan to every household in the county, and has worked with the San Diego County Office of Education and other community partners to bring special programs to schoolchildren in the San Diego area.

Assessor Offers Tax Relief to Property Owners

The office of the Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk (ARCC) is receiving over 300 applications per day for tax relief through a reduction in assessed value from property owners who bought at the height of the real estate market and now believe their property’s market value has fallen below its assessed value.

It was estimated that more than 18,000 applications would be received for the ARCC’s informal review process by the deadline of May 30, compared with a total of 2,000 processed by the ARCC last year.

To be proactive, Gregory J. Smith, Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk launched a public education campaign informing taxpayers about the program and how to file.

The campaign included press releases and interviews with numerous television and radio stations. The ARCC is also alerting the public that, although several companies are currently offering to file the tax relief paperwork on behalf of property owners for a fee, there is no cost associated with the filing and free assistance is available at any ARCC office.

More Investors Take a Dip in the County’s Investment Pool

Treasurer-Tax Collector Dan McAllister is pleased to announce that two new voluntary participants have joined the San Diego County Investment Pool, thereby increasing the assets managed.

SANDAG joined the Pool with a \$103 million deposit on April 8, marking its first participation since 1997. The Santa Fe Irrigation District has agreed to join the Pool and was expected to deposit about \$1 million.

The San Diego County Investment Pool is a local government pool with approximately \$5.2 billion in assets as of April 30, 2007.

Depositors in the Pool include the County of San Diego, K-12 school districts, community colleges and various special districts and agencies in the region. The primary objectives of the Pool, in order of importance, are safety, liquidity and yield.

News Makers

County Counsel Attorneys Recognized

Nine County Counsel attorneys have received Statewide Recognition Awards from the County Counsels' Association of California - the largest number of awardees from any of the 58 counties.

Thomas Bunton, Senior Deputy County Counsel, received the Outstanding Appellate Practice Award, which annually honors one attorney in the state for successful litigation of an appealed case that has statewide significance.

Katharine Bird, David Brodie, William Johnson, Deborah McCarthy, Nate Northup, Ellen Pilsecker, Paula Roach and County Counsel John Sansone were also recognized for their accomplishments.

Edgemoor Honored as "Restraint-Free" Facility

The County's Edgemoor healthcare facility was recently featured in an article of *Long Term Living* magazine, highlighting recent efforts to transform the hospital into a "restraint-free" facility. According to the magazine, Edgemoor achieved the "seemingly insurmountable goal of no restraints – physical or medicinal," through staff teamwork over a three-year period.

Edgemoor took second place in the magazine's 2007 Optima Award competition, which honors proactive programs that go beyond routine patient care. The full article in the March 2008 edition of the magazine is available at www.ltlmagazine.com.

Aguirre Named "Mental Health Person of the Year"

The County's Director of Mental Health Services Alfredo Aguirre has been named the 2008 "Mental Health Person of the Year" by a panel of representatives from the mental health community.

The annual award was presented to Aguirre for his efforts to implement Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63) programs and his state-level work with cultural competency and suicide prevention, as well as his accessibility and responsiveness to the mental health community.

State Auditors Praise County's AIS Program

A recent full-scale state audit of the County's Aging and Independence Services (AIS) identified a total of 36 "best practices" -- more than double that of any other agency.

The auditors were impressed by the partnerships AIS has forged among contractors and other senior service providers in the community, as well as by the engagement of AIS staff at all levels. In their findings, auditors from the California Department on Aging repeatedly emphasized that AIS is both a state and national leader in the field of aging.

AIS Named "Program Champions" During Firestorm 2007

The federal Administration on Aging Web site, at www.aoa.gov, has highlighted the County's Aging and Independence Services (AIS) as a "Program Champion" for work performed for local seniors during Firestorm 2007. AIS, along with the California Department of Aging, was recognized for advance planning, sharing resources, and utilizing knowledge from other agencies to assist seniors during the crisis.

East Region Honored at Annual STARS Awards Ceremony

East Region employees were recently honored with three STARS awards presented jointly from the San Diego County Commission on Children, Youth and Families; First 5 San Diego; and the United Way. The awards were in the categories of Health Care, Education and Social Services.

Laura Carter, East Region HealthLink Public Health Nurse serving at-risk families, earned a Health Care award for her commitment to improving the health of East County children and assisting women affected by domestic violence.

Dennis Leggett, East Region Child Welfare Services (CWS) Educational Liaison, was recognized with an Education award for collaborating with East County schools to help foster kids in East County. His work with CWS staff, school personnel, senior mentors and the community has contributed to the educational success and graduation of foster youth as well as educational continuity for children being removed from unsafe homes.

Neighborhoods for Kids, the East Region CWS service delivery model, was awarded the Social Services STARS Award. Neighborhoods for Kids partnered with schools and other local stakeholders to ensure East County children are surrounded by familiar people and places that encourage them to thrive. The model aligned service delivery "clusters" with high schools and feeder elementary schools. As a result, CWS staff is able to develop working relationships with the schools and the communities where children and families live.

Public Works to Receive Five Awards from ASCE

Last month, the San Diego Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) recognized the Department of Public Works (DPW) and its consultants for five exemplary projects. DPW's recognized efforts included building a water quality basin in Lakeside; post-wildfire erosion control efforts throughout the county to protect homes and roads; improvements to Wildcat Canyon Road to increase safety for drivers and surrounding wildlife; widening of SR 54 and SR 94 in Rancho San Diego that included bike lanes in both directions; and provision of a flood control facility for a neighborhood in Bonita that will provide protection for 100 years.

OES Wins Award for WebEOC

The Office of Emergency Services (OES) has received the Catalyst Award from the WebEOC User Advisory Council.

The award, given to agencies that demonstrate outstanding regional use and integration of WebEOC software, was presented at the WebEOC Users Conference in Boston in April.

WebEOC is a software program that OES uses to link local, state, federal, volunteer and private sources to help facilitate coordination and decision-making during an emergency. WebEOC was heavily used with great success during the October 2007 firestorm.

Amy Bjorklund (HHS, Mental Health Services) was acknowledged for the counsel and guidance that she provided to a troubled youth and his mother, who wrote *"There are not enough thanks that I can express to you..."*

"You helped us in so many ways. I walked out of family therapy each week with more tolerance, less suffering, more experience, and always supported. I am so thankful you came into our lives. You will never be forgotten."

Nars Sabat, Steve Martinez and Li Zhou (General Services/Facilities Maintenance) were recognized for "doing a wonderful job of maintaining the Housing & Community Development building."

"They are always willing to take a little extra time to try to accommodate our employees' needs or to make suggestions on how we may be able to operate a little smarter. The crew always responds as quickly as they can to any problems and does their best to get things done as quickly as possible."

*"I also wanted to recognize **Ken Frederiksen**. Ken is always willing to take the time to explain things or help resolve issues that may arise."*

Marilou Rivera (Treasurer-Tax Collector) "did everything that should have been done" in helping a customer straighten out a lien on his property.

"Thank you so much for your good help and service this morning, and also for your understanding and having the patience to listen."

Sharon Ford (Housing and Community Development) was recognized for "her outstanding performance."

"She treated this project as her own, doing what was necessary to help a park of senior and low income residents. She represents the County with the highest level of professionalism, yet a rare passion for her job. For this, we are grateful, and wanted to take a moment to share with you our appreciation for Ms. Ford."

John McKee (Planning and Land Use/Code Enforcement) was commended for his "professionalism, courtesy and thoroughness" in a letter sent to Supervisor Horn from one of his constituents.

"Mr. McKee was assigned to investigate... He phoned me to clarify the issue, followed up and kept in contact. It also helps that he got results on the issues in question. I request that you and his direct management recognize his excellent representation of our County government."

Liza Baua (Health and Human Services Agency) was recognized for her exceptional service and positive attitude.

"Liza is very accommodating, very courteous and very friendly. I feel very comfortable talking to her. You need more employees like her."

Eloy Zetina (General Services) and his facilities maintenance staff, Darlene O'Brien-Gallant, Margarito Gomez, Donald Noblitt, Juan Laguer, Jr. and James Calkins received kudos from the Sheriff's Department for the "outstanding service" that they provide to the Vista Courts and the San Marcos Sheriff's Station.

"I've been delighted with your staff's timeliness and efficiency in providing everything from basic maintenance repairs to more complex building issues. I have come to depend on the great service."

"We wanted to extend our sincere appreciation of you and your staff's excellent response to our many requests for repair here at the San Marcos Sheriff's Station. You and your staff are to be commended."

Jocelyn Porter (Clerk of the Board) received a great compliment for helping a customer apply for a passport.

"Jocelyn was very helpful, very courteous – awesome!"

Josyl So (Clerk of the Board) was also commended by a customer who was applying for a passport.

"She was friendly, courteous and helpful. Everything was fast and easy."

The Encinitas Branch of the County Library opened to enthusiastic and appreciative crowds a few months ago. Here are some comments from visitors:

"This new branch is amazing!" "A beautiful well run library, can't wait to come back." "I'm proud and excited about our new library!" "This was worth waiting four years for – it is extraordinary. We are so thrilled."

Plus, overheard from a little boy visiting with his parents:

"Wow, this place is great! It's like the Internet, but it's real..."

Tim Jordan's facilities management crew, Margarito Gomez, Jim Casey, Donald Noblitt, Enrico Miranda and Carlos Amezcua (General Services) were applauded by the Sheriff's Food Service Division in the Vista Detention Center for the "superior level of finish work" that they performed in the facilities kitchen.

"Your staff has always maintained a positive and professional attitude when working with the Food Services department. They always arrive well prepared to handle any issues that may arise while working in this unique environment... Often they are asked to make immediate repairs on some of our essential equipment and do so without hesitation. I can't say thanks enough to these gentlemen for their hard work and service."

Terril Shewmaker (Treasurer-Tax Collector) made a terrific impression on a client who wrote, "I can't tell you how outstanding she is."

"She is better than any other recorder that I have ever worked with and really deserves high marks for her efficiency and customer service. Three cheers for Terril!"

David Kellum, County Entomologist, and Pat Nolan, Plant Pathologist (Agriculture, Weights and Measures) were commended by a Senior Biologist from the state's Department of Food and Agriculture for helping to make this year's Pest Prevention conference "one of the best we have ever had!"

"They did a great job! The feedback we received was excellent and everyone found the workshops both informational and current."

And another letter of appreciation for Dr. Kellum, this one for his participation in the Valley Center – Pauma Unified School District's Ag Day:

"We received outstanding feedback from teachers and administration on how well received the event was and how great your presentations to our students were. We are forever grateful..."

Leah Cabling (Treasurer-Tax Collector) was thanked for "taking time out of your schedule to help us resolve the tax liens."

"I appreciate your service and kindness."

[Ver•ba•tim]

Roberta Gonzalez (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk/Vital Records) continually receives praise from the public because of her terrific customer service. Here are a few examples:

“Roberta was fabulous!” “Roberta was so helpful and knowledgeable. You have a great employee in her.” “Thank you for helping me so quickly.” “She deserves an award!” “Thank you very much for all your help and for being so pleasant. It is truly appreciated!” “This has been among the fastest responses I’ve had to a request, so I feel this effort needs to be noted.”

Mark Tusi and his crew (Probation/Work Project Program) were acknowledged for their “commitment to excellence and ongoing pride in completing the task right the first time.”

“It really looks nice and makes the area so much better.”

Sharon Jassy and her team, Charlien Heckerroth, Tim Gallagher, Kathleen Nishida and Sheryl Conner (Auditor & Controller) were thanked by the San Diego Superior Court for “going far above and beyond” when the court’s operations and payroll were compromised by a computer virus.

“Without their help, our payroll operations would have been severely affected as there would have been no mechanism to pay our employees correctly. We feel very fortunate to have you as our colleagues.”

Wendy Martinez and Peter Neubauer (Environmental Health) received special thanks from the owners of the Palomar Mountain Water Company for going “above and beyond the call of duty in the performance of their jobs.”

“We will never forget your visit to check on us during the Fire of 2007. We so much appreciated your concern at a very difficult time...Don’t know what we would do without you.”

Maria Peraza (Health and Human Services Agency) was thanked for providing great customer service.

“I have very little experience with this office due to the fact that I am a transfer from Chula Vista. She (Maria) is extremely polite and made me feel very comfortable coming here.”

Melissa Keehan (Treasurer-Tax Collector) was rated “excellent” in all categories for her assistance.

“Melissa was most courteous and helpful. She made paying property taxes a happy experience. Please thank her for me.”

Retirements

- Joseph Q. Albano (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Virginia R. Alonso (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Myrtle L. Andrada (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Estelita A. Andres (District Attorney)
- Emelita A. Aquino (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Cathy M. Augustine (Sheriff)
- Henry A. Barling, Jr. (Public Works)
- Gerald A. Bentley (Sheriff)
- Stella M. Blackmon (Superior Court)
- Donna G. Boyce (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Judith E. Bunch (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Susan L. Burges (Sheriff)
- Carmen P. Burgos (Health & Human Services Agency)
- William A. Burkhardt (Environmental Health)
- Barbara D. Byous (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Susan J. Byrnes (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Darlene D. Carter (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Susan H. Castro (District Attorney)
- Merle F. Celis (Superior Court)
- Eileen Centola-Pierce (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Glenna L. Chevalier (Treasurer-Tax Collector)
- Hideo Chino (Superior Court)
- Joseph C. Cibit, Jr. (Public Defender)
- Ofelia C. Claros (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Linda F. Craft (Treasurer-Tax Collector)
- William J. Crane (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Barbara R. Della-Pietro (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Manuela C. Dimond-Smith (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Mark DuHamel (Environmental Health)
- Terence G. Dutton (County Counsel)
- Michael D. Edwards (Sheriff)
- Daniel W. Elkerton (Sheriff)
- Dale E. Fritcher (Sheriff)
- Francisco V. Galang (Clerk of the Board)
- Gloria S. Galvez (Child Support)
- James E. Gonsalves (Board of Supervisors/District 3)
- Fred Gonzales (Wastewater Management)
- Michael S. Goodman (Superior Court)
- Evalyn G. Greb (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Douglas C. Gregg (District Attorney)
- Guy C. Grether (Health & Human Services Agency)
- Debra M. Hanlon (Sheriff)
- Mary A. Harder (Superior Court)
- Stephen M. Hardy (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)
- Frances L. Harrison (Superior Court)
- Douglas A. Hatfield (Public Works)

Retirements

Cathleen E. Hayford (Superior Court)
 Janis K. Henderson (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Wallace R. Henderson (Sheriff)
 Christopher R. Hinshaw (Sheriff)
 Jon W. Holmerud (Sheriff)
 Antonietta L. Hyde (Child Support)
 Edna T. Ito (Sheriff)
 Keith E. Jackson (Sheriff)
 Robert C. Jacobson (Public Works)
 Barbara Jarratt (Superior Court)
 Margaret M. Katungi (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Kelly J. Kidwell (Sheriff)
 Larry W. Knight (Auditor & Controller)
 Robert D. Krotzer (Superior Court)
 Fred K. Kuhlman (Wastewater Mangement)
 James D. Ladner (Sheriff)
 Cynthia Lamon (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Robert J. Ledermann (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Ignacio Lizarraga (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Georgianna Mace (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Patricia Maglio (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Nerisa A. Maquiling (Sheriff)
 Alicia D. Marmolejo (Auditor & Controller)
 Terrence R. McCarthy (District Attorney)
 Michael R. McClure (Probation)
 Thomas O. McGuire (Sheriff)
 Michael J. Medearis (Sheriff)
 Irma Y. Meza (Superior Court)
 Michael Meza (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)
 Sylvia R. Mosse (Environmental Health)
 Alexandra S. Nunn (Housing & Community Development)
 Dianne K. O'Connor (Superior Court)
 Nancy S. Olaes (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Evelyn V. Oropilla (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Barbara D. Parr (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)
 Thomas R. Parry (Public Works)
 Sandra L. Pedrin (Child Support)
 Monica T. Perez (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Judy L. Quenga (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Kay D. Quinn (Library)
 Richard A. Quinn (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)
 Michael I. Radovich (Sheriff)
 Aida S. Ramos (Superior Court)
 Josefina C. Ranido (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Joann J. Reichert (Library)
 Maria A. Reyes (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Maria L. Rinonos (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Robert N. Roberson, Jr. (Sheriff)
 Geronimo Rodriguez (Probation)
 Lillian M. Rodriguez (Sheriff)
 John P. Rolfe (Probation)
 June C. Rosario (Planning & Land Use)
 Ingrid M. Russon (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Rosa Saucedo (District Attorney)
 Leslie K. Seifert (Public Works)
 Mikel P. Shirley (Sheriff)
 Zenaida L. Teyes (Probation)
 Christopher J. Thomas (Probation)
 Nancy M. Thompson-Wiggins (Air Pollution Control District)
 Sandra L. Tom (Superior Court)
 Hung T. Tran (Public Works)
 Sharmie Truesdale (Superior Court)
 Robert L. Venter (Environmental Health)
 Barbara A. Vickers (Planning & Land Use)
 Maria Villavicencio (District Attorney)
 Robert P. Villegas (Sheriff)
 Natalie N. Washington (Probation)
 John Weinold (Probation)
 Edward E. Wells (Sheriff)
 Duncan S. Werth II (Superior Court)
 Haroline F. Williams (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Lindsay S. Worcester (Agriculture, Weights & Measures)

Service Awards

35 Years

Robert L. Hudson (Sheriff)
Mary Gouveia Walsh (Sheriff)

30 Years

Maria Rubio-Lopez (Public Works)

25 Years

Daniel G. Lamborn (District Attorney)
Ivelyn Scott (Sheriff)

20 Years

Jorge L. Briseno (Sheriff)
Ruth Burrows (Health & Human Services Agency)
James Capewell (Probation)
Sharon A. Douglas (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)
Crispina R. Espino (Child Support)
Sharon L. Ferguson (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)

20 Years (cont.)

Margarita C. Flores (Sheriff)
Angela Higuera (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)
Eyah L. Jerauld (Auditor & Controller)
Jocelyne C. Kouassi (Health & Human Services Agency)
Delores J. Leonard (Health & Human Services Agency)
Allison E. Matthews (District Attorney)
Janet L. McCue (Air Pollution Control District)
Ronnie L. Miller (Probation)
Casimir Mroz (Auditor & Controller)
Rhonna M. Navarro (Sheriff)
Sylvia N. Peralta (Health & Human Services Agency)
Traci M. Polidor (Sheriff)
Jacqueline Shelly (Animal Services)
Peter A. Sitz (Probation)
Edward Taglioretti (Public Works)
Thomas W. Whitney (Probation)
Margarita E. Zasueta (Sheriff)

In Memoriam

Florence S. Barach (Edgemoor Hospital, 1967)	3/08
Nicomedes E. Barcinas (Treasurer, 1995)	4/08
Bettie J. Bauerlein (Health & Human Services Agency, 1984)	3/08
Joan M. Bond (Health & Human Services Agency, 2005)	4/08
Marilyn J. Bowman (District Attorney, 2000)	3/08
William J. Burfitt (Health & Human Services Agency, 1996)	3/08
Virginia M. Cheak (Medical Examiner, 1993)	3/08
Emile F. Cote (Health & Human Services Agency, 1999)	3/08
Porter D. Cremans (Clerk of the Board, 1985)	3/08
Frances C. Day (Department of Education, 1977)	3/08
Mary H. Dickinson (Health & Human Services Agency, 1981)	4/08
Edna R. Doren (Revenue & Recovery, 1988)	3/08
Margaret L. Gold (Health & Human Services Agency, 1974)	4/08
Lillian M. Harvey (County Camp Commission, 1971)	3/08
Dana Marsh (Superior Court, 2006)	3/08
George H. Mills (Probation, 1986)	3/08
Charlotte Nethaway (Health & Human Services Agency, 1978)	3/08
Anthony M. Peyou (Probation, 1983)	4/08
Sylvia C. Rivinius (Registrar of Voters, 1997)	3/08
Jerome J. Schaefer (General Services, 1985)	3/08
Harry Schanbacher (County Clerk, 1976)	3/08
Pamela Smith (Superior Court, 1998)	2/08
Anne H. Stewart (County Clerk, 1973)	4/08
Franklin R. Vessels (General Services, 1987)	3/08
Elma L. Williams (Coroner, 1985)	4/08