

COUNTY NEWS



PUBLISHED FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

December 2007

County Librarian Escaped Hurricane Katrina, Only to Face the Fires

They say lightning doesn't strike twice, but it must not feel that way for at least one County employee. Youth Program Services Librarian Margo Smart was working for the New Orleans Public Library System when Hurricane Katrina struck; in the aftermath of the storm, she moved to San Diego County and experienced the recent wildfires firsthand as a County employee.

In August 2005, Smart was a Children's Librarian in the 3rd ward of New Orleans at the Keller Branch Library. "We had been practicing evacuation for a few years," she said. "Knowing to pack up the household and the pets when there was a severe warning had become second nature to many of us, usually a day or two ahead of the storm. We would laugh and book a nice room somewhere in Northern Louisiana and come home rested and go back to work and say "The Big One missed us again!"

Of course, Hurricane Katrina shaped an entirely different story. Once Smart and her husband had evacuated their home, they weren't able to return to



County Librarian Margo Smart leads an afternoon storytime for students from a neighboring school at New Orleans' Keller Branch Library. This branch was severely damaged and closed following Hurricane Katrina, but plans exist to rebuild and replenish the library's collection.

New Orleans for more than two months. When they were finally able to reenter the city, Smart immediately sought out the libraries' status. Only two of the twelve New Orleans Public Library branches were functioning at the time, and unfortunately the Keller branch had not escaped the storm.

"When I returned to see for myself, there was a clean-up crew in full zip-up suits and masks," said Smart. Just before the storm, the branch had received a generous donation of children's books, and as Children's Librarian, Smart had

placed all the new books on the shelves. "I watched all those books being thrown into the dumpster," she recalled. "The mold marks on the walls of the library were above my head and the front circulation desk looked like a wall of mud had just washed over the computers. I still weep just thinking of it."

Smart relocated to San Diego County in early 2006. Along with other County Library staff, she provided childcare assistance, arts and crafts, books, toys and games for children at both the Ramona and Fallbrook Local Assistance Centers (LACs)

in the immediate wake of the recent wildfires.

"The difference between a Louisiana flood and a California wildfire is that split-second judgment call," she said. "Leaving your home in the wake of a blazing fire must be the hardest thing anyone can possibly imagine. I only started to understand when the staff around me [at the County Library headquarters] starting evacuating during the work day. It was like reliving Katrina all over again but in fast forward motion."

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Records Management is the Right Move

Until six months ago, a 20 x 30 foot room in the Department of Human Resources' County Administration Center office was jam-packed wall-to-wall with files. Today, the room is a well-organized, spacious printing and scanning center.

While such a turnaround may seem impossible, Human Resources Services Manager Janice Horning attests that the transformation wasn't a nightmare at all. "Thanks to new technology," she says, "we made this happen in just six or seven months, and now we are light years ahead of where we were before."

During that short period of time, DHR staff was able to scan over *three million documents* into a secure computer software system called Documentum. The hard copy of each document was securely destroyed, and the department now has an electronic copy of its 18,000 employee master files, 18,000 employee benefits files and thousands of job applicant files.

DHR staff members appreciate this electronic management system for many reasons, not the least of which is that anyone with permission can access a needed file

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"You really feel that you know your co-workers when they have seen you in a swimsuit!"

To find out what this County employee is talking about, turn to the story on Page 3 and see how some County employees spend their time off-the-clock.

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Taking Advantage of Direct Deposit for Benefits

While everyone tries to figure out how to save money this holiday season, employees also can elect to save a little time by filling out a simple **Direct Deposit Authorization Form**. With employee permission, all spending account payouts will be automatically deposited into your personal checking account. Not having to wait for a check to arrive in the mail can help maintain a balanced checkbook, and also saves a trip to the bank or the ATM depository every time you receive a reimbursement.

Serving With More Excellence Than Ever

Human Resources has just debuted its new comprehensive customer service program, "Serving Everyone With Excellence." The program is designed to not only encourage County employees to provide excellent customer service, but also to better recognize their efforts.

Co-workers, supervisors and external customers alike are encouraged to fill out a recognition form upon receipt of excellent service and nominate that employee as a Customer Service Hero. Each Hero will receive a fun giveaway prize and will be recognized by name for their effort, and those who truly go above and beyond can be nominated for "Superhero" status by management.

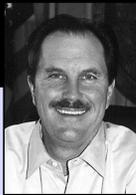
"Serving Everyone With Excellence" also will feature a revitalized Mystery Shopper program in the coming months. The program will re-focus its efforts in order to provide more comprehensive information about customer service results to individual departments. Departments will undergo more targeted Mystery Shopping, and each will have the opportunity to develop feedback and address their unique issues with greater accountability.

For more information about these incentives and resources, visit Human Resources' new **Customer Service Web site** on the Intranet.

Miracle Field Named Project of the Year

The Department of Parks and Recreation recently received a "Project of the Year Award" for the Miracle Field project at San Dieguito Park from the American Public Works Association (APWA). The award was for the best parks project in Southern California, and was granted based on the exemplary collaborative effort

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In Walt's Words

County Caroling

The winter holidays are the perfect time to have a little clever fun. As you know, in years past I have held an "annual holiday trivia contest." Starting this year, I'd like to take the liberty of changing it to simply an "annual holiday contest" of some sort, and not exclusively trivia.

The trivia contests have been great, and they will undoubtedly resurface in the future. However, I want to make sure to involve as many great minds as possible in my friendly holiday competitions, and thought that perhaps not everyone is a maven of random facts or a researcher extraordinaire. So this December, we'll be trying something a little different.

I'd like to invite brave souls to take a stab at rewriting the lyrics to an old holiday favorite, "Here Comes Santa Claus." Now, I'm not saying that the song's original composers, Gene Autry and Oakley Haldeman, didn't get it right the first time back in 1947. But I do think that it would be awfully fun to hear your take on this cherished carol, adapted to a "County" theme. The lyrics can be about your particular job, your office or department, or the County as a whole.

You'll need to write two verses, and you can refer to the original lyrics below for help. All submissions should be e-mailed to *County News* at countynews@sdcounty.ca.gov no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 7. The judging will be a bit more subjective than that of the trivia contests; I will personally select the winner, based upon the "singability" of his or her song. This year's winner will receive a visit from me with a holiday treat, and I will sing their rewritten version of "Here Comes Santa Claus." I'm sure it will be difficult to choose just one song, so the lyrics of two "runners-up" will be published in the next edition of *County News* as well.

As always, I expect that you will compose on your own time, and not while at work. I look forward to your creativity, and wish you all the very best this holiday season.

"Here Comes Santa Claus"

Here comes Santa Claus!
Here comes Santa Claus!
Right down Santa Claus Lane!

Here comes Santa Claus!
Here comes Santa Claus!
Right down Santa Claus Lane!

Vixen and Blitzen and all his reindeer
are pulling on the reins.
Bells are ringing, children singing;
All is merry and bright.
Hang your stockings and say your
prayers,
'Cause Santa Claus comes tonight.

He's got a bag that is filled with toys
for the boys and girls again.
Hear those sleigh bells jingle jangle,
What a beautiful sight.
Jump in bed, cover up your head,
'Cause Santa Claus comes tonight.

Walt Ekard
Chief Administrative Officer

County Employees Grow Close, Even Away From Their Work



ARCC employee Manuel Serrano, retired ARCC employee Jackie Serrano, a friend, retired ARCC employee Earleen Polick, and ARCC employee Mark Sitzer out on the open road during a motorcycle group outing.

While County employees may be serious about providing excellent customer service at the office, County News has learned that off the clock, there are a lot of fun-loving social butterflies out there. Readers responded to the recent request for submissions with many stories of camaraderie shared with colleagues.

In fact, one employee alone had a few stories to share. Sue McCullough, a Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) supervisor, was asked to become an usher at Balboa Park's Old Globe Theater several years ago by a co-worker whose mother, also a County employee, was an usher. Over time, four more DCSS employees have joined them, forming an usher team which today consists of a number of current and retired County employees.

DCSS employees also compete on a bowling team on Wednesday nights at Kearny Mesa Bowl. In times past, the department has had a full team, but these days it is down to McCullough and Child Support Officers Lilli Dotson and Bob Pitt.

Most recently, McCullough has begun swimming with two fellow County employees: Felicia Walton, an Administrative Analyst in the County Technology Office, and Child Support Officer Jennifer Hell-erud. Together, they take on a water

exercise class, leading McCollough to the observation that "You really feel that you know your co-workers when they have seen you in a swimsuit or you have seen them!"

Far from the swimming pool, Bill and Nohemi Randall can be found tearing up trails in their Jeep Wrangler. Bill is a Plumber with Facilities Management, and his wife Nohemi is a DCSS supervisor; they are members of a small, informal rock crawling and trails group called "The County Crawlers." A handful of General Services employees join the Randalls in riding their Jeeps rough across local hills, the desert and Big Bear. The group has even trekked to Sedona, Arizona together. Most of their outings take place during the fall and winter months, and Bill Randall says, "Our Jeeps range from stock to lifted-- nothing real crazy!"

Other County employees who enjoy a good ride outdoors are motorcycle enthusiasts. Mark Sitzer, a supervising Appraiser with the Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk (ARCC), says that a group began riding together about three years ago on County holidays. The Department of Public Works' Public Affairs Officer, Bill Polick, invited him to join the fun. Sitzer says that "while most bikes are Harleys, all brands are welcome."

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between the community and the County to make the Miracle Field a reality. The field opened in May 2007 for disabled children.

HR Launches the Learning Management System

Human Resources has just launched the Learning Management System (LMS), which will vastly improve employee access to training. Previously, in order to register for anything from Countywide to job-specific training, an employee had to print a form, obtain their supervisor's signature, and then fax the form to DHR's Employee Development & Training division. With the new LMS, employees can easily search all available trainings and register online; the system will even send an e-mail notice to an employee's supervisor for confirmation.

Aside from streamlining the enrollment process, every employee who logs in can track their own progression towards fulfilling individual training needs. For example, many County employees are required to keep certain certifications and licenses up-to-date in order to perform their jobs; the LMS will automatically notify both the employee and his or her supervisor when it is time to renew training. In addition, supervisors can develop and monitor individual training plans that are tailored to help each employee develop his or her career and meet specific goals.

DHR has begun to train employees and supervisors on the LMS, using a variety of tools including Webcasts and short videos. To learn more, visit <http://cww/dhr/LMS>.

Vending Machines Go Green & Healthy

Host and Rainbow Vending companies are completing the transition to new vending machines at the Sheriff's detention facilities and other County departments. These new machines comply with Board Policy K-14, which focus on putting healthier options into beverage and food vending machines on County-owned property. These new vending machines also have energy-saving devices and proceeds from the machines continue to go to employee activities. New machines will be installed in more locations in the future as contracts expire or departments request them.

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County Librarian Escaped Hurricane Katrina, Only to Face the Fires (Continued from Page 1)

Her experience volunteering at the LACs provided an affirmation of sorts. "It was so heartwarming to see this well-organized support system in place and functioning. I will not even try to compare the disaster of the aftermath of Katrina-I think we all witnessed that in the media. It has been a complete turnaround in my life knowing that

there is such organization in place in San Diego County, to see people in great need supported and helped immediately."

If you have a unique story to share about your experience or perspective working during the fires or the recovery process, please contact CountyNews@sdcounty.ca.gov.

County Employees Grow Close, Even Away From Their Work (Continued from Page 3)

He adds that he does not ride a Harley himself, and says that "we do talk bikes on breaks or lunch. It is a nice thing to have in common, and is our alternative to talking about fantasy football."

While some County employees connect with the wind blowing their hair back, at least one group of employees shares a more refined get-together. Every September, several ARCC employees dress up in their Sunday best for high tea at the historic Horton Grand Hotel in downtown San Diego. The tradition began as a birthday celebration, and has kept the group united in friendship. Property Assessment

Specialist Wendy Christopherson says that "We work at various places throughout the County, and some of us only have occasional contact in the course of our regular job duties...Relationships forged during these outings carry over to workplace networking. As the years have come and gone, we have learned about each other's lives and seen careers progress."

If you have a story about an ongoing and consistent outing that you enjoy with County colleagues, please let CountyNews@sdcounty.ca.gov know all about it; you may be featured in an upcoming article.

Records Management is the Right Move (Continued from Page 1)

immediately on his or her own computer; there is no risk of a file being left to languish on a vacationing colleague's desk or under a stack of papers.

"This enables us to serve our internal customers—employees and departments—as well as our external customers, who are job applicants, so much cheaper, better and faster," says Human Resources Analyst Patricia Coughlin.

A winning example of that increased efficiency can be found in the hiring process. Previously, when a departmental hiring manager was ready to conduct interviews for a position, a DHR employee had to venture into the filing room and locate each applicant's file, then photocopy, staple, bundle and mail copies of every application for that particular position to the hiring manager. Coughlin explains that this left departments "with their hands essentially tied for a matter of days until we could deliver the applications."

Now, every submitted application is scanned and saved as an electronic document; DHR can securely e-mail the hiring manager a special Internet link to each application for instant review.

Maintaining documents electronically saves an enormous amount of time, effort, trees and money; Horning says that DHR has saved 70 percent of printing costs and 75 percent of staff time thanks to the new approach.

All of that saved staff time is particularly exciting. "Our clerical support staff is able to spend their time doing bigger and better things," Horning says proudly. "It used to be that three-quarters of an employee's day would be spent copying or locating documents. Now, our employees are able to take on a greater variety of tasks and cross-train. This helps staff to learn and grow, which in turns gets everyone thinking more about their career path and how they can develop within the County. No one is tied down to a photocopier all day anymore."

Horning goes on to add, "It's not that this new technology has eliminated jobs; rather, it makes our clerical support staff's jobs so much more interesting."

For more information about records management, please visit http://cww.co.san-diego.ca.us/purchasing/records_services/index.html.

NEWS MAKERS

David Nelson, the County's Privacy Officer, has been appointed to the California Privacy and Security Advisory Board. The Board's primary goal is to identify and recommend privacy and safety standards for the confidential and effective electronic exchange of health information. Nelson will represent all 58 counties in the state while serving on the board.

After an extensive search, **Mark Jenkins** was selected as the County's new Chief Probation Officer. Jenkins currently is the Director of Juvenile Field Services for the Orange County Probation Department. He has served Orange County for almost 30 years, working with Adult Field Services, Adult Court Services, sex offender and domestic violence special supervision programs, Drug Court programs and substance abuse offenders. He will begin his new position this month.

Board of Supervisors

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Dianne Jacob, District 2
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Chief Administrative Officer
Walter F. Ekard

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Work Safe / Stay Healthy Turns Five – A Red Carpet Birthday Event!

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) recently celebrated five years of creating a safer workplace through the Work Safe/Stay Healthy (WSSH) program. DHR hosted a red carpet event for the premiere of WSSH V featuring birthday cake and the program mascot, a busy bumblebee nicknamed “Bee Safe.” The premiere began with red carpet interviews of previous headliners, highlighting four years of WSSH success, and then continued with the feature presentation: the rollout of WSSH V for fiscal year 2007-2008.

New WSSH program features will include a monthly safety tip e-mailed Countywide, a coordinating monthly safety tip calendar, a new Ergonomic Principles class, and over 40 new Distance Learning topics added to the training catalog focusing on various safety topics. The Countywide 2007-2008 Quality First Goal is for all departments to provide monthly WSSH training to their employees and conduct a minimum of one comprehensive hazard identification review.

One department in particular was recognized for its stellar WSSH efforts over the course of the past year. The Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk was named the 2006-2007 WSSH Super Performer for reducing their number of new incidents by 14 percent, reducing lost hours of productivity by over 50 percent, and reducing expenditures by more than \$400,000. Staff achieved such success by participating in Distance Learning classes and discussing safety articles on a monthly basis.

Human Resources Services Manager Amy Bouck said, “The Work Safe/Stay Healthy program has had a tremendous impact not only in terms of cost savings to the County, but in creating a culture of safety which has enhanced the well-being of our employees.”

For more information about the WSSH program, visit http://cww.co.san-diego.ca.us/dhr/Risk_Management/WorkSafe/index.html.



The Pink Panther, played by Employee Development Division intern Nicole Navarra, and Inspector Clue Sue, played by Senior Risk & Insurance Analyst Susan Eldridge, were interviewed on the red carpet. They were the stars of last year’s rollout, which featured a “Follow the Clues...” theme for hazard identification. This year, “Bee Safe” was the star of the show, played by Human Resources Analyst Susan Horton (not pictured).

Who Says WSSH Isn’t Fun?



Edgemoor Hospital employees are serious about WSSH. Nurse Assistant Marcia Rutledge proudly displays the Safety Jackpot cards she has earned.

In 2006, staff at Edgemoor Hospital rose to the challenge when their facility faced a rising number of workplace injuries. HHS Assistant Deputy Director Gwenmarie Hilleary and Building Maintenance Supervisor Greg Deis developed an innovative program called the “Safety Jackpot,” which encourages and rewards excellence in safety. The incentive program awards scratch-off game cards to employees based on WSSH goals. Each game card has a point value and staff can redeem the cards for merchandise in a prize catalog. “Some of our staff members are so fun,” says Personnel Officer Kimberly King. “They’ll save up tons of cards so they can cash in for the biggest prizes!” According to Deis, those prizes range from flashlights to golf clubs to television sets.

There are three ways that employees can earn a card. If there are no new injuries for one month or 100 percent attendance at WSSH training modules, they can win with their entire unit; if a target percentage reduction in claims is achieved during each six-month period, they can win with everyone in the facility; or, employees can individually earn cards by correcting safety hazards, getting their flu vaccines and annual physicals, and attending WSSH trainings.

Edgemoor saw an incident reduction of 52 percent during the first six months of the “Safety Jackpot” program. The facility also saw a 27 percent reduction in claims expenditures, which translated into more than \$170,000 in savings during the program’s first six months. Due to the success of its first year, the program was approved to continue in 2007.

Other fun ideas include:

- Snapping pictures of mock hazards around the office and having a contest amongst employees to see who can correctly identify the most hazards in a slideshow, as the Public Safety Group Executive Office has done.
- Employees baking their favorite healthy recipes to share with colleagues at a staff meeting.
- Taking a cue from the Probation Department, where safety training has been entertaining through a “safety scavenger hunt” and regular games of Worker’s Compensation Jeopardy and Safety Family Feud.
- Discussing healthier versions of favorite game-day snacks for football season with the help of the following tips from the American Heart Association’s [Game Day Playbook](#).

Parks Goes Above & Beyond In Its Own Backyard

This year has been unprecedented for the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). The department has held eight facility opening and groundbreaking ceremonies in the last three months, which is an extraordinary accomplishment in comparison to its average of one or two openings per year.

This series of openings began with **Barnett Ranch** at the beginning of August, featuring land acquired near Ramona for hiking, biking, horse-riding and inclusion in the Multiple Species Conservation Program. The **Del Dios Highlands County Preserve** followed, featuring a one-half mile trail that will be the first to link the communities of Del Dios and Harmony Grove. These new hiking and recreation grounds were soon complemented by the new **Beyer Boulevard** Local Staging Area, Ranger Station and trail at Otay Valley Regional Park.

The **Santa Margarita County Preserve** opened in October as the first official equestrian staging area in Fallbrook. Its lush terrain offers visitors a cooler hiking experience.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the new, state-of-the-art **baseball park in Lakeside** also took place in October. The future facility will feature four artificial turf fields, a playground, batting cages, a concession stand and restrooms on ten acres of County property for the benefit of Lakeside youth and families.

Four years after the Cedar Fire consumed Goodan Ranch and Sycamore Canyon, the brand new **Goodan Ranch Center** was unveiled. The energy-efficient facility houses a ranger office, community room, comfort station, kitchenette, and educational exhibits. The Center was recognized as a Sustainable

Community by San Diego Gas and Electric.

November featured the groundbreaking of the **San Elijo Nature Center** in Encinitas. When completed, the two-story facility at the San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve will serve as a base for education, land stewardship, and environmental protection. It will be made from recycled building materials and will feature solar panels, irrigated roof plants, and recycled water.

Most recently, on Nov. 29, the **Spring Valley Gymnasium and Teen Center** opened. Complete with a recording studio, counseling and resource center, basketball and volleyball courts, computer lab, and multi-purpose room, the 15,860 square foot facility is state-of-the-art and will provide activities and diversions for Spring Valley youth.

According to Public Information Specialist Dennis Parker, DPR has been able to persevere through many obstacles, including the recent San Diego wildfires. "Teamwork was the key factor," he said. "Each of these openings was made possible with the help of our partners at the local, state, and federal levels, especially funding provided by the Board of Supervisors. And without our community partnerships with conservatories and non-profit agencies, DPR would not have been able to have such an outstanding year."

DCSS Assists the 2-1-1 Call Center

One day after the 2007 wildfires began and their scope had become painfully clear, it was evident that as many operators as possible were needed to handle the multitude of 2-1-1 phone calls from County residents.

As one of the only entities in the County with experience in running a high-volume call center, the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) was chosen to collaborate with several County and private agencies to establish a 2-1-1 Overflow Assistance Call Center. The phone structure and staff at DCSS' downtown San Diego office were swiftly integrated with 2-1-1's main Call Center in Mission Valley to answer calls that exceeded its capacity.

DCSS immediately took ownership of staffing the 24-hour overflow center for five full days. DCSS managers and staff coordinated updates with the main 2-1-1 Call Center and the Office of Emergency Services to answer questions and provide assistance to fire victims and the general public.

Cadets from the Sheriff's Department Law Enforcement Academy, local volunteers, the County Technology Office and Public Safety Group staff joined forces with DCSS to answer calls and solve technical issues.

During its operation, the Overflow Assistance Call Center answered 24,156 calls, nearly 25% of the 108,637 calls answered by 2-1-1 through October 28. The average speed of answer at the overflow center was only one minute, 36 seconds.

During this time, DCSS staff also continued to provide regular child support services to the public via telephone. The DCSS call center staff handled 4,202 child-support-related phone calls, taking an average of only two minutes, eight seconds to answer each call even in the midst of a major emergency and with many staff diverted to the 2-1-1 overflow center.

"I'm pleased that Harold Tuck (Public Safety Group Deputy Chief Administrative Officer) had the confidence in our staff to step in on short notice and help in this emergency," said DCSS Director Jeff Grissom. "I am very proud of the job that our staff, and other County volunteers, did in providing much-needed information to the residents of San Diego."

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Board of Retirement Election Results

A scheduled election for the Board of Retirement's seventh seat, which is occupied by a Safety member, was not held as planned in November because the incumbent, David A. Myers, ran unopposed.

As a result, Myers' current term will be extended by three years beginning Jan. 1, 2008. Also, because no other qualified petition for the Safety election was received, the alternate Board member seat will be vacant as of January 1. The term for the current Safety alternate Board member expires Dec. 31, 2007; since no second candidate petitioned to run at the time of the election, the seat must remain vacant throughout the term until the next Safety election in three years.

Medical Examiner Team Pronounced Victorious in Boot Camp Challenge

A tough team from the Medical Examiner Department recently competed in the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Boot Camp Challenge, which consisted of a three-mile course featuring physical obstacles and Drill Instructor harassment. Together, the team's three doctors and two investigators placed second in the event's Public Safety Division. The team's completion time of only 30 minutes and 51 seconds was faster than 163 other teams and 441 individuals throughout the competition.



Standing proud in their workout gear with several U.S. Marines are Forensic Pathology Fellow Dr. Craig Nelson, Investigator Dana Gary, Deputy Medical Examiner Dr. Bethann Schaber, Investigator Debora Reach and Deputy Medical Examiner Dr. Steve Campman.

El Cajon Library is Holiday Toy Donation Drop-Off Site

The El Cajon branch of the County Library is a drop-off location for toys donated to the East County Toy & Food Drive through Friday, Dec. 14.

Toys for the donation barrel should be new and unwrapped for children 14 years or younger. The El Cajon branch will not be collecting food donations.

More information about the toy drive can be found on the **East County Toy & Food Drive flyer**.

San Marcos Library a Holiday Food Drive Drop-Off Site

The San Marcos branch of the County Library is collecting non-perishable food donations to the San Diego Food Bank through Monday, Dec. 31.

Canned meat and tuna, tomato products, canned meals (chili, stew, ravioli, etc.), canned soups, canned fruits and vegetables (especially corn and green beans), dry cereal, powdered milk, peanut butter, pasta and rice are especially appreciated.

All food items must have ingredients clearly labeled. Home canned or baked products, cans that are leaking or bulging, glass containers and baby food in glass jars cannot be accepted.

Intergenerational Program Wins National Award

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) and the MetLife Foundation have chosen Legacy Corps San Diego as one of only three programs nationwide to win the 2007 Older Volunteers Enrich America's Award of Excellence in Volunteer Program Management.

The program provides caregivers with much-needed respite by matching seniors and the at-risk youth they mentor with clients and caregivers. The program receives \$2,500 to support its efforts and is invited to share best practices during the n4a teleconference this month.

OES Preparedness Programs Honored

The Office of Emergency Services' "Preparedness Starts With You" campaign won the International Association of Emergency Managers' Partners In Preparedness Award, and also was honored with third place in the association's Public Awareness Award. The awards sought to honor local government for innovation and cooperation in preparing the community for emergencies.

Ver • ba • tim

Sharon Ferguson (ARCC/Assessment Services) was praised for handling a homeowner's difficult problem with "finesse, sensitivity and tremendous efficiency." They called her "a real star."

"She is smart, she is organized, she is efficient, she is polite, she is nice and she reflects very, very well on your department and on county government as a whole."

Linda Haycock (Parks and Recreation) intervened on behalf of a family from Canada who was camping in Potrero and needed a replacement for their rental car because it was unsafe to drive.

"We are very grateful to Ms. Haycock...Because of your helpful employee, we had a wonderful and memorable summer. Ms. Haycock's acts should be commended."

An official from the City of La Mesa was thrilled with the work of **Ben Valverde (Probation)**, a supervisor for the Work Project Program.

"We were surprised at how much work Officer Valverde and his crew got done at La Mesita Park...he is a pleasure to work with."

Evelyn Hunnewell (ARCC/Marriage Room) was acknowledged for doing "a terrific job" and going "well beyond the call of duty" in helping a dad arrange a surprise for his son's wedding day.

"I think if more offices like yours showed more compassion for those using the services, the world would be a far better place. Thanks again, you were great!"

Darnell Johnson "DJ" (Clerk of the Board/Maintenance) was recognized for "an outstanding act of courtesy and kindness" helping a 91 year old woman get to and from the wedding arbor so that she could witness the ceremony.

"I believe this exemplary act of customer service and human compassion is certainly worthy of acknowledgement...this unselfish act of kindness became the centerpiece of the entire wedding ceremony."

Candi Corless (Public Defender) received a letter of appreciation for her responsiveness, hard work and pleasant demeanor.

"It is unbelievably refreshing and helpful to have someone so considerate and willing to accommodate...I am truly and sincerely grateful for not only the help and information provided by Ms. Corless, but more importantly the manner in which it was given."

Alex Anonas (ARCC/Assessment Services) was praised for being "a great help."

"He showed outstanding customer service."

Marilyn Marshall and Pat Nolan (Agriculture, Weights & Measures) garnered kudos from a grateful customer.

"Thank you for all your kindnesses in analyzing our soil and plants."

Euketa Oliver (Public Defender) received a note of gratitude for helping a family with their court case.

"I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for believing in my children and me. You were magnificent in the court and I pray your career only excels."

Mark Tusi (Probation) and his work project crews earned praise for "helping keep Cuyamaca College looking great!"

"During the three days that the work crews came to our school, the amount and quality of work provided exceeded our expectations."

Roberto De La Torre (Public Works/Road Crew) was commended by a grateful resident of Crest for having done a "superb job" and making their streets "just beautiful".

"He was kind, considerate and prompt. I can now relax over a situation that affected my friends, relatives and me in having easy access in parking next to my house."

Martha Lozano (ARCC/Realty) so impressed a customer that he suggested that her supervisor "give her a raise, keep her in the department at all costs, hold on to her as long as possible, and get more employees like her."

"It is not common for people to take the time to listen and get all the information. She was very thorough and very helpful."

David Kellum (Agriculture, Weights and Measures) was thanked "for his kindness and dedication" and for bringing the Insect Fair to Polinsky School.

"Once again this year, it was just fabulous! Not only did it help them academically, but knowing that it was done especially for them helps emotionally during this time of trauma in their lives."

Cash Mroz and the Storeroom group (Auditor & Controller) received a note of appreciation from Treasurer-Tax Collector Dan McAllister.

"Thank you again for your assistance in preparation for our annual tax bill roll out. You and your team do a great service for us each year and I wanted you to know how much your efforts are appreciated."

Diane Day (Public Works/Cartography) did such an amazing job for the DA's office that they called her a "total ROCK STAR."

"Did I tell you the defense was completely floored with the belt/stick exhibit? For the first time in over a week, he was speechless. I think he even turned kind of pale."

Cathy Caler (ARCC/Realty) earned a letter of gratitude from a customer who said "She was prompt, personable and dedicated to doing a fantastic job."

"She went above and beyond my expectations and was one of the most helpful people I've come across in a long time. Her customer service was extraordinary."

Todd Hudson, Felicia Mack and Betty Johnson (Housing & Community Development) were praised for the "pride and effort" that they put into their jobs.

"The team effort, respect, promptness and competency of your staff are one of the most remarkable works I have ever seen and experienced. I thank you for your time and especially your promptness in this situation. Thank you is never enough for taking pride in your work."

Officer Curtis Butts (Probation/Work Project Program) does such a consistently great job that his supervisor and the 42 agencies that he serves wishes there were more of him to go around.

"I just wanted to bring you a praise report on behalf of Officer Butts. He has done an outstanding job for our area. He is always going the extra mile."

Ellen Zyroff (Library) earned praise from the San Diego editor of a children's Web site who was up in Alaska during the fires.

"I wanted to thank you for keeping me (and everyone else) updated on the libraries' status. You're amazing!"

(Continued on Page 9)

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John Madigan and Susan Knauss (Sheriff) received some nice comments from Public Safety DCAO Harold Tuck on the Sheriff's Annual Report, which was produced by the Sheriff's Public Affairs Division.

"Your annual report is very well done. You and your team are to be commended for the quality of service you provide to the public. The report, like your team, is 'First Class', setting you apart from the rest of the Sheriff offices statewide."

The staff at the San Diego Mental Health Facility, particularly Rose Marie Bill, Pat Stroman, Roland Hernandez, Mark Ziegler and Michele (HSA, SD County Psychiatric Hospital) received praise from a patient.

"Recently, as a patient at this facility I was made to feel respected. I'm grateful for the professionalism, kindness and devotion you showed to myself and the others here. All of the staff should be proud..."

An Escondido couple who lost their home in the recent wildfires thanked **Carol Vandenberg (ARCC/Realty)** for her "kindness and consideration."

"Just wanted you to know how utterly helpful and professional Carol Vandenberg was...It is just absolutely terrible to lose your home from a wild fire. Thank you for helping (us) through some very difficult times."

A family who recently lost their home to the Rice Canyon fire wrote a letter to the editor of the *San Diego Union-Tribune* to thank **staff of the Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk's office** for their "outstanding service."

"The term 'good government' is not always an oxymoron. We went to three offices to get copies of deeds, birth certificates and marriage certificate. We had prepared ourselves for a long day of waiting in long lines. Instead, we walked out of the building with official copies of all of these important documents, and all in only 45 minutes."

Linda Gregg (ARCC/Marriage Room) was recognized for the outstanding service she provided during a wedding ceremony.

"She was not only professional, but kind and generous. She made sure our ceremony was not only memorable but very special."

Pauline Glaser (Registrar of Voters) was commended for keeping an absentee voter's status updated.

"I have appreciated your good efforts over the years, to assist me in absentee voting – I moved to San Jose, Costa Rica nine years ago. I have never missed a vote – thanks to you carefully watching out for me and many others."

At least one County resident with a soft spot for animals was relieved to see **David Johnson (Animal Services)** on a local television news interview.

"It was wonderful to hear your heartfelt concern for the injured animals, and to see you gently petting a severely burned, precious cat. It's clear that the extra attention, care and emotional support that you and your staff are providing has replaced their fear and pain with comfort and hope."

The resident also sent Animal Services twelve embroidered blankets to help comfort the injured animals.

Staff at the Imperial Beach branch of the County Library helped a visitor from India who was hoping to use the Internet while in town.

"I was greeted warmly and made to feel welcome. My English is not easily understood but everyone was most patient and very obliging. I have used Internet at other public institutions and never have I been most welcome."

Steve Hardy (ARCC/Realty) was commended for being "especially helpful over the years, giving information, answering questions and solving problems."

"Mr. Hardy listens to our concerns or problems and tries very hard to solve them...he tries to understand our elderly residents' viewpoints and then he reacts accordingly."

Registrar of Voters Urges Employees to Become Poll Workers

County employees can sign up to be poll workers for each of the three statewide elections in 2008. The Registrar of Voters' motto for the historic upcoming election year is "Mission: Possible," and the department must recruit over 6,000 poll workers for each election: the newly scheduled Presidential Primary on Tuesday, Feb. 5, the traditional Direct Primary on Tuesday, June 3 and the Presidential General on Tuesday, Nov. 4.

County employees are eligible for a unique volunteer op-

portunity. Employees can serve at the polls for a day without using personal time and are paid a stipend ranging from \$75 to \$150 depending upon the assignment. Bilingual poll workers receive an additional \$15. County employees are eligible to attend poll worker training during regular work hours.

Visit the CWW homepage's Employee Messages section for a link to the application (<http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/voters/Eng/election/PWapp.pdf>) or call Jean Vukotich at (858) 694-3419 for details.

Service Awards

35 Years

Michael Meza (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)

30 Years

John Barry Charnley (Parks & Recreation)

Michael E. Dick (Facilities Management)

Patricia A. Eblen (Facilities Management)

Robin L. Friedman (Health & Human Services)

Diane C. Kaelin (Health & Human Services)

Larry W. Knight (Auditor & Controller)

Susan E. Martin (District Attorney)

Stephen G. Nystrom (Health & Human Services)

Janet S. Phillips (Sheriff)

Bernice G. Pritchett (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)

25 Years

Catherine A. Bilodeau (Health & Human Services)

Larry E. Bodenhamer (Environmental Health)

Isabelita V. Bognot (District Attorney)

Amelia Bosset (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)

Lydia M. Cash-Brooks (Child Support)

Rose Marie Cook (Health & Human Services)

20 Years

Chyio M. Ali (Health & Human Services)

Angelina E. Avila (Health & Human Services)

Henry A. Barling, Jr. (Public Works)

Tyrone A. Berlanga (Public Works)

Ella L. Bookwalter (District Attorney)

20 Years cont.

Pamela S. Catlin (Sheriff)

Cheryl A. Cordero (Environmental Health)

Madeline Croft (Health & Human Services)

Amethyst C. Cureg (Health & Human Services)

Pamela J. DiMuro (Sheriff)

John L. Edwards (Health & Human Services)

Robin L. Enns (Sheriff)

Karl J. Eppel (District Attorney)

Bruce D. Falconer (Sheriff)

Ronald R. Faris (Sheriff)

Robert J. Grable (Fleet Maintenance & Support)

Jeffrey J. Jackson (Sheriff)

Mark G. Lindstrom (Health & Human Services)

Roberta L. Olin (District Attorney)

Christine Marie Robbins (Sheriff)

Julio Sandoval, Jr. (Sheriff)

Marsha M. Steinberg (Probation)

Amparo C. Suter (Public Works)

Catherine Trout Lichterman

(Housing & Community Development)

Martha Viazcan (Health & Human Services)

Theresa A. Walker

(Farm & Home Advisor/UC Cooperative Extension)

Janet B. Wright (Sheriff)

Retirements

Charles R. Cianciola (Sheriff)

Joe H. Duran (Public Defender)

Corazon G. Espiritu

(Housing & Community Development)

Gilbert J. Grayson (Sheriff)

Dennis D. Hamilton (Probation)

Sharon A. Hathaway (Superior Court)

Karen T. Kain (Sheriff)

Cynthia A. McMillan (Superior Court)

Linda C. Mino (Health & Human Services)

Consolacion C. Montes (Health & Human Services)

Romy P. Oconer (Sheriff)

Robert C. Phillips (District Attorney)

Deborah L. Vandersall (Health & Human Services)

Wade M. Watanabe (General Services)

In Memoriam

Joffre Baker (Health & Human Services, 1980)	8/07
Grace P. Blaszkowski (Health & Human Services, 2000)	7/07
Robert H. Blayney (Human Resources, 1986)	10/07
Ira G. Cotton (Public Works, 1983)	10/07
Denise G. Cronkright (Health & Human Services, 1986)	6/07
Lawrence M. Haley (Probation, 1984)	9/07
Lanier F. Jay (Municipal Court, 1981)	9/07
Edward C. Lynch (Sheriff, 1998)	9/07
Mateo E. Matel (General Services, 1999)	9/07
Eileen M. Miller (Probation, 1979)	10/07
Helen C. Morey (Health & Human Services, 1983)	9/07
Agnes L. O'Connor (County Schools, 1984)	9/07
Ervin R. Porschatis (Public Administration, 2000)	9/07
Julia A. Smith (Health & Human Services, 1990)	8/07
Jerri K. Stringer (Superior Court, 2005)	9/07
David G. Withey (Health & Human Services, 2007)	10/07