



Nuclear Meltdown Not a Mystery

It's a warm summer day, and you are enjoying the surf and sand at San Onofre State Beach. All of a sudden, sirens are sounding and within minutes law enforcement teams are on the beach, informing you that there has been a radiological release from the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station—the nearby power plant.

While this or any similar experience would be scary no matter what, it could be a lot less stressful if you knew what to expect.

Immediately, beachgoers would be told to evacuate south to the decontamination center at Carlsbad High School.

As an evacuee, you would be directed to walk through a portal monitor. The monitor would determine if you had been contaminated or were free of radioactive residue. If the portal monitor indicated contamination, you would be sent into the men's or women's locker area and your personal belongings would be bagged for monitoring.

Most radiological contamination would likely be removed just by shedding your clothing, and you would take a shower to remove additional contamination with soap and warm water. After showering, you

would walk through a second portal monitor. If readings still indicated contamination, a HAZMAT worker would use a hand-held survey meter to identify the contaminated parts of your body so that you could soap up those particular areas again in a second shower effort.

Personal belongings free of contamination would be returned to evacuees upon exiting the shower area, although contaminated items would be temporarily held.

Evacuees would then enter the gymnasium for the receipt of information about potassium iodide pills and their appropriate dosages. Potassium iodide, also known as KI, protects the thyroid from radiation damage but is not an anti-radiation pill.

In the meantime, the American Red Cross would register all evacuees and try to determine immediate needs such as transportation and temporary lodging. Hundreds of public servants, officers and volunteers would be working hard to ensure your health and safety—just as they have been trained to do.

"We hope a disaster of this magnitude will never take place," said County Public Health Officer Wilma Wooten. "However, in San Diego County, we take disaster preparation seriously."

Nobody wants to imagine a radiological release from San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station. But if it ever does happen, the County will be better prepared than ever to handle the repercussions.

More than 200 emergency workers and County staff put a radiological monitoring and decontamination plan to the test in a major drill held last month. The exercise, graded by the federal government, occurs every six years.

"We successfully demonstrated our ability to protect the health and safety of

the public by setting up a reception and decontamination center and providing the public with potassium iodide placebos," said Ron Lane, director of the Office of Emergency Services (OES).

Emergency workers were evaluated by FEMA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for proper use of equipment, maintaining "clean" areas separate from "contaminated" areas, distributing prophylactic medication and managing the care of evacuees.

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Board Chairman Greg Cox passes through a portal that detects radiological residue.

Probation and Sheriff's Departments Step Into the Ring

Peace officers with the County's Probation and Sheriff's departments put up their dukes for the benefit of children last month when they fought in the Battle of the Badges.

They joined correctional officers from Donovan State Prison, police from National City and San Diego, firefighters from San Diego and Border Patrol agents to face off in the ring at the Community Youth Athletic Center in National City. More than 100 volunteered to help plan and run the event or box. Eleven officers were County employees: Matilde Casas, Enrique Frias, Claudia Romano, Adrian Rubio, Jermaine Simpkins, Enrique Frias, Kip Weaver and Marco Del Rio from the Probation Department; and Esteban Gonzalez, Robert Smith and Michael Cerda from the Sheriff's Department.

The event, with 14 bouts, raised more than \$67,000 for at-risk youth. The money raised will help provide free or low-cost boxing lessons to kids and fund other programs at the center including tutoring, graffiti abatement and community service.



Deputy Probation Officer Marco del Rio, in red trunks, won his Battle of the Badges fight with David Rodriguez, of the San Diego Police Department.

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Padres Pitch Wildfire Campaign

The San Diego Padres are teaming up with the San Diego County Office of Emergency Services to help pitch the County's message about wildfire awareness and emergency preparedness to San Diego residents.

At the Sept. 13 game – and County employee discount day – two Sheriff's Department firefighting helicopters and a San Diego Fire-Rescue Department helicopter will fly over Petco Park in support of the County's Wildfire Awareness campaign, which overlaps with National Preparedness Month.

The Padres will play a public service announcement featuring pitcher Jake Peavy urging San Diegans to complete a Family Disaster Plan. During the game, OES will give away two Family Disaster Kits to fans.

Since Aug. 25, the Padres have been flashing a public preparedness message on the out-of-town scoreboard to encourage fans to "Register for AlertSanDiego at ReadySanDiego.com." The Padres will continue to display the message through the end of the season.

Petco Park is also giving away promotional six-pack coolers to attendees.

Non-profits Get Airtime with County Grants

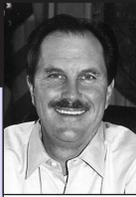
Non-profits will have the chance to partner with the County of San Diego to produce programs that inform and educate - and make a difference to county residents.

The Community Partnership for Local Government Programming Video Grant Program, which helps fund and produce half-hour videos for nonprofit organizations, community groups and educational institutions, is now taking applications. The deadline is 5 p.m. Nov. 24. Awards will be announced in March 2009.

The Commission is interested in proposals for segments that deal with issues related to County programs, and especially ideas for highlighting one or more of the three County Strategic Initiatives: Children, Environment, and Safe and Livable Communities.

The County Board of Supervisors will award up to five grants of \$10,000 apiece to institutions willing to work with a County department or agency to produce the program. The completed grant programs must be suitable for cablecast on CTN, the County Television Network, which can be found at Cox 19 (North), Cox 24 (South), and Time Warner 24 and 124 on the digital tier.

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In Walt's Words

It's Never Too Late to Head Back to School

There's a chill in the air, the leaves are starting to turn and we put away our linen and pull out the wool. Oh wait, we're in San Diego! Hmm. Still 70 degrees. Sunny. What's different now that fall is upon us? Well, the long-time San Diegans among us will notice the nearly imperceptible change in the light and shadows, the shrinking hours of daylight and the return of Santa Ana winds. But there's something else.

The kids! They've gone back to school. And the Zonies, our friends to the east, have returned home, leaving us a little more space on our beaches and freeways. Thanks, neighbors. See you next summer!

Back-to-school time always makes me a little wistful. As a kid, who isn't sad to see summer end? But there was also the lure of a new adventure. A new teacher, new classmates, a new lunch box and new shoes. Not to mention the excitement of learning something new, and making a fresh start.

Lucky for us, the chance to grow and challenge ourselves doesn't just belong to children or college students. We, too, can go back to school. We do that by constantly learning and pushing ourselves to be better at what we do. Life is more interesting when we're challenged and when we're growing.

Here at the County, we've made it easy for you to grow. There are opportunities galore – whether it's through tuition reimbursement (yes, the County will cover the cost of a university class related to your job), training required for your position, or training you seek out because you want to learn.

In January, Human Resources launched the Learning Management System, or LMS. LMS allows employees to learn from their desks – instead of having to drive somewhere – and it keeps track of completed courses for employees and supervisors.

Employees can search the catalog of courses and see what training is available, then pick something that fits their schedule. No forms to fill out, nothing to fax. Employees sign up on their own

and they can cancel on their own, too. They also can leave a training session in the middle and return to it later – and LMS remembers where in the training to pick things back up again.

Topics range from the routine – say, brushing up on Word or Excel – to specialized topics like the Brown Act. If you click on "Catalog," you'll see our five groups – Community Services, Finance and General Government, Health and Human Services, Land Use and Environment and Public Safety – with their departments listed below, as well as a section for newly hired employees, Countywide training and lessons on County applications, like Oracle and Kronos.

You can also search by month. And in September, if you're interested in developing Web pages, there's an HTML course; a class on stress management, if you're feeling a little under the gun; and a session that prepares you for taking civil service tests should you want some extra confidence heading into that challenge.

Though the system is new, many County employees are taking advantage of LMS. At the end of June, LMS had recorded 95,000 course completions. That's a lot of learning!

HR tells me that eventually, we'll be able to conduct meetings on LMS. Imagine how much time and gasoline that would save us all, especially now with fuel costs so high.

You can find LMS through the County's Intranet site. There's a link on the left. Just click on it and you're there.

Go ahead, have a look. I guarantee there will be something there that will catch your eye. And once you've found a class and signed up, you might as well treat yourself to a nice, new lunch box and a great pair of new shoes. It's fall, after all, and kids shouldn't have all the back-to-school fun!

Walt

Walt Ekard
Chief Administrative Officer

SONGS Drill
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OES coordinated the drill with assistance from Environmental Health, HHSA and Probation. Dozens of representatives from fire and police departments, the American Red Cross, and Southern California Edison participated, along with local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members. The drill took place at Carlsbad High School.

"In this time of terrorist concerns it is good for everyone to know that this decontamination center is not limited to the Carlsbad High School location. We can set this up anywhere in the county that has a gymnasium and parking lot," said Nick Vent, a supervising Environmental Health Specialist.

County Board of Supervisors Chairman Greg Cox walked through the drill as a mock evacuee to gain a better understanding of what a potentially contaminated public would experience during such an emergency.



Volunteers, playing the role of victims who may have suffered radiological exposure, pass through portals that check for radiological residue.

"I really enjoyed getting a first hand look at our County plan in practice. The drill reinforced my confidence in our reception and decontamination plan and I think that we are equipped to protect and respond to a radiological emergency," Cox said.

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Past grant-funded videos have focused on County disaster preparedness; how to choose quality childcare; exercise and health programs; responsible pet ownership; and the environmental diversity of the San Diego region.

CECO Thanks 2007 Campaign Donors

The spirit of giving is alive and well among County employees. In 2007, despite many employees being displaced or overworked by the October wildfires, 2,819 County employees, active and retired, raised \$391,545 (annualized) to help organizations assist the needy and the sick in the region and employees in need of emergency assistance. There were 31 employees who signed up to contribute over \$1,000 annually.

Of the total amount raised, \$266,388 or 68% went to CECO and \$125,157 went to United Way/CHAD. On behalf of the people who will receive a helping hand because of our employees' donations, the CECO Executive Committee and Board of Directors extend a very big and grateful "Thank You" to all donors for their generosity and interest in our community.

In 2007, CECO funds raised during last year's campaign were distributed to nearly 90 non-profit organizations, all based in San Diego County, to assist people in need. The CECO Executive Committee is currently preparing to solicit applications from non-profit organizations for the funds raised in the 2007 Campaign. It is anticipated that distribution of the funds will take place in March 2009.

The County and United Way/CHAD are preparing to launch the 2008 Campaign in the fall but employees do not have to wait until then to show their support of community non-profit organizations – they can make a pledge to start contributing now by logging onto Employee Self-Service (via CWW), selecting CoSD Employee Self-Service, and selecting "CECO/United Way Pledge." From there, employees can elect to start contributing or update the amount of their charitable deduction. In addition, employees can view and print their contribution information for tax purposes and/or personal records. If you would like to learn more about CECO or the CECO-United Way/CHAD Campaign, please visit www.sdceco.org or contact the 2008 United Way Campaign Coordinator, Adrienne Perry, at (619) 515-4294.

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Ready, Set, Think! And Discuss, Too.

In his column last month, Chief Administrative Officer Walt Ekard introduced County employees to a new initiative to plan for and prepare the County of San Diego for the future.

This initiative, called GMS 2.0, is simply an extension of the County's General Management System, taking the County's successful GMS to the next level. It meant to increase the County's flexibility and adaptability. Its success depends on employee participation.

During each quarter of this new fiscal year, managers will be asking for their staffs' thoughts on a different topic. Employees can preview the topics by visiting the GMS page on the County's Intranet site. The page also has a list of Frequently Asked Questions and some background on [GMS 2.0](#). Here are the quarterly topics:

- 1st Quarter: GMS 2.0 – What changes are happening in your business?
- 2nd Quarter: Is your department green?
- 3rd Quarter: What is a knowledge worker?
- 4th Quarter: What technology breakthroughs are going to change the way you work?

After their discussions with employees, department heads will report back to five committees – Continuum of Change/Demographics; Environment; Economic/Global; Technology; and HR and Organization. Those committees, comprised of people with diverse backgrounds, then will make recommendations to County management on what can be done to prepare for the future.

New Display Captures Essence of San Diego County

Steve Jonas tried tissue paper, toilet paper and cotton gauze. None of it, no matter how he shredded and scrunched it, looked like the foamy surf he was trying to capture.

He was stuck until one day, after caulking his bathroom, he looked at his hands. They were covered in caulk. It was white, it was stiff – and soon it would be molded into the waves crashing against the shore of the topographic landscape he was building.

That landscape will soon be on its way to Sacramento, where it will join other small exhibits from California counties in the Capitol building. It replaces a San Diego County display that had grown old and outdated.

On his visits to the Capitol over the years, Board of Supervisors Chairman Greg Cox would see the display, and every time, he was reminded that the County needed something new.

“When I’m in Sacramento on business involving the County or the California State Association of Counties, it bothers me that an old, ugly display has represented our beautiful San Diego region,” Cox said.

“With this new display, we can all be proud that our region’s diverse attractions will be presented in the best light in the state Capitol.”

The County’s Cartographic Services began the project early this year. Cartographer Jonas and Diane Day, a graphic artist, set to work on the design and construction, respectively, with significant contributions from Tribal Liaison Chantal Saïpe, Director of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs Sarah Aghassi, Chief of Resource Management Trish Boaz and Deputy Director

of DPW’s Management Services Division Donna Turbyfill.

The group had 650 photos to sort through, and over the course of a few months, whittled the pile down to 16.

“How do you say San Diego County?” Day said of the challenge to settle on just a few pictures to represent the region.

The old display was heavy on the county’s commercial attractions – Sea World and the Zoo. The new display was going to be more than that. “We wanted to show the diversity that can be found in the county of San Diego,” Jonas said. Their first attempt, created on a small scale, showed each of the region’s climate zones: coastal, inland, mountain and desert. Each zone was explained with text.

“It was too busy,” Day said. “We didn’t want people to be reading a novel; we wanted them to be reading a brochure.” And they wanted to keep in mind the countless schoolchildren on field trips to the Capitol, a sizable segment of their passerby audience.

So they abandoned that idea and started fresh. Here’s what they’ve come up with to fit inside the Capitol’s 63-inch-high, 45-inch-wide and 23-inch-deep case: a Del Mar meets Sunset Cliffs beach scene, with teeny tiny people and even smaller birds, surrounded by 16 photos and sprigs of Torrey pine and poppies and the branch of an orange tree, where a painted lady butterfly perches and slowly flaps its wings.

Jonas found the butterfly on the Web. It plugs into an outlet, and only costs a few cents a month to run. Jonas built the sandy cliffs with papier-mache, and graphic artist John Rodgers airbrushed them in shades of brown. Some of the tiny people weren’t appropriately dressed for the beach, so Jonas painstakingly repainted them in bathing suits. He also painted the birds, Least Terns no more than 3/16 of an inch in width.

On a board that will serve as a window to the beach scene, Day arranged all the photos, with text about the region’s history and a County seal.

The display will be taken apart and shipped to Sacramento, where Jonas and Day will reassemble it and settle it into its new home. And hopefully, they’ll have a chance to stand back and see what all those schoolchildren think of their work.



Cartographer Steve Jonas applies the finishing touches to a miniature windsurfer.



Cartographer Steve Jonas and Graphic Artist Diane Day will travel to Sacramento to install the display in the state Capitol.

Board of Supervisors

Greg Cox, District 1
Dianne Jacob, District 2
Pam Slater-Price, District 3
Ron Roberts, District 4
Bill Horn, District 5

Chief Administrative Officer
Walter F. Ekard

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To contact County News:

Elizabeth Fitzsimons, Editor
Phone: (619) 595-4513
Fax: (619) 557-4027
Mail: 1600 Pacific Highway, Rm 208
San Diego, CA 92101 (MS A-359)
E-mail: CountyNews@sdcountry.ca.gov
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Battle of the Badges (continued from page 1)

Now in its sixth year, the Battle of the Badges builds relationships between law enforcement officers and children, said Victor Nunez, assistant chief of the Superior Court Division in the District Attorney's Office. Nunez organized the event and has been involved with the center for 13 years.

"They respect police officers now. They're not afraid of them; they don't run away from them. It's a great transformation," Nunez said.

The men and women also become mentors and role models, he said.

"A lot of these kids come from a gang-infested family or a drug-infested family and they need someone to fill in that role – as a mentor, or a mother or a father."

The boxing wasn't just for men. There were four bouts between women.

Previous boxing experience wasn't required, but training was. Most of the participants began preparing for their fights several months ago, training at the center and at other gyms around the county.

Kip Weaver, a Deputy Probation Officer who has worked for the County for more than eight years, had boxed as a boy in his backyard. When he heard about



Deputy Probation Officer Kip "The Dream" Weaver and Sheriff's Deputy Robert "The Show Stopper" Smith traded punches during the Battle of the Badges.

the Battle of the Badges, he thought it would be fun to compete. He started training at City Boxing in San Diego, and he settled on his name: Kip "The Dream" Weaver.

For his fight, he was matched with Sheriff's Deputy Robert Smith, or as the audience came to know him: Robert "The Show Stopper" Smith.

The two men spoke during the weigh-ins and joked around before their bout. But inside the ring, it was all business. Smith won the fight, and afterwards Chief Probation Officer Mack Jenkins stepped into the ring for a photo.

"He's a good guy and was an aggressive fighter," Weaver said of Smith.

County News was unable to reach Smith for his comments before press time.

Weaver said he liked representing the Probation Department and helping to raise money for charity. And the training gave him a reason to exercise. But he wasn't sure he'd do it again next year.

"I think I'm going to retire as of now... but who knows?" Weaver said.

"Once the next event starts getting nearer, then I might have to pull a Brett Favre and come back for one more!"



Chief Probation Officer Mack Jenkins congratulates Sheriff's Deputy Robert Smith, left, and Deputy Probation Officer Kip Weaver, right, after their fight.

Neglected Bunnies Need New Homes

Animal Control Officers recently found a variety of animals living in extremely unsanitary conditions in a Mira Mesa house and have launched an investigation into animal cruelty. Marley and Speck (pictured below) were rescued along with 29 other rabbits who had been left to roam the property and had to eat food that other animals had defecated and urinated on.

The Department of Animal Services coordinated an adoption event for the rabbits on Aug. 30 with great success, and



a second rabbit adoption event will take place on Sept. 14 at the San Diego House Rabbit Society Adoption House from 12 noon till 4 p.m.

According to Lt. Dan DeSousa, several of the rabbits were also pregnant and have given birth since arriving at the shelter. He estimated that the newborn bunnies would be available for adoption sometime next month, when they are old enough to be spayed or neutered.

"People don't realize what great companions rabbits can make," said Dawn Danielson, Director of the Department of Animal Services. Danielson added that the confiscated bunnies as well as the other bunnies currently in County shelters "are especially wonderful for apartments or condos because they virtually make no noise." The County and the San Diego House Rabbit Society are working together to find new homes for the sheltered rabbits

and to educate adopters on the proper care of rabbits. All of the rabbits available for adoption at County shelters are friendly, social pets that would make good family companions. The rabbits have all been spayed or neutered and are trained to use a litter box. For more information about adopting a rabbit, visit www.sddac.com or www.sandiegorabbits.org.



Photos, from left: Speck (with ball) and Marley (with stuffed animal) are two of the bunnies rescued by Animal Services and put up for adoption.

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Medical Examiner Puts Newsworthy Cases Online

A new, automated system posts details of newsworthy death investigations by the San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office online. Press releases on newsworthy cases can now be found at www.sdcounty.ca.gov/me/press/press.html.

"This new system is a win for all parties," said Dr. Glenn Wagner, Chief Medical Examiner.

"The media will benefit by receiving information sooner, and in more detail than before; the public will benefit from being provided with more information, and potentially quicker than before; and my investigators will save time with the streamlined system to release information, and by a significantly decreased volume of incoming media calls," Wagner said.

The posting of news releases will occur as soon as investigators finish their preliminary reports. Typically the initial postings will not include information about the cause and manner of death, or the contributing conditions. The name of the decedent may be withheld if investigators have not yet identified the person or notified the next-of-kin.

Subsequent postings will update those items not initially posted as soon as they become available. The Web page will be updated every 15 minutes. Information other than what is listed in the press release format will be released only after the case is closed.

Gourmet Meals Benefit Polinsky Children's Center

A sold-out crowd took a trip around the world in seven plates when they took part in The International Culinary School's Final Practical Exam at the Palette Restaurant, located at the Art Institute of California, San Diego.

Each year the chefs at the culinary school select a charity to receive the profits of their final cooking exam, served on site in the school's restaurant. Proceeds and gratuities from this year's event, held in June, were donated to the Polinsky Children's Center. Guests paid \$25 for a seven course meal selected and prepared by the students. The event raised \$895.

The students, in white smocks and chef's hats, received a standing ovation when they all entered the restaurant during the serving of dessert. The meal included a palate awakener, cold appetizer, hot appetizer, intermezzo (a sorbet to cleanse the palate), a meat course, and a trio of desserts.

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County Fights the Bite!

Nerve damage. Meningitis. Paralysis.

All three are frightening and debilitating, and all three can develop from West Nile virus (WNV).

While anyone can contract West Nile virus- a 24 year-old man was recently diagnosed- the County is especially focusing outreach and prevention efforts on "baby boomers" and seniors, who make up the majority of human cases.

To help ensure that the disease is contained and as few residents as possible infected during the height of the season this year, County Vector Control is working hard on many fronts.

Vector Control staff developed a WNV Strategic Response Plan, which has three levels: normal season, emergency planning, and epidemics.

Throughout the year, Vector Control operates under the normal season response level; however, during August and September of last year, the response level was elevated to emergency planning due to the increased number of human cases.

Several techniques are used to detect the presence of WNV in the environment, including:

- regularly testing sentinel chickens for WNV antibodies
- investigating and inspecting more than 1,900 known mosquito breeding areas within the county
- mosquito testing
- "green swimming pool" helicopter flyovers
- dead bird pick-up

Dead birds are one of the earliest warning signs that WNV is present in the area, because birds are the first incubators of the disease. Crows, ravens, jays and raptors such as falcons and hawks can be especially susceptible to the virus. Mosquitoes then feed off of the birds and can transmit WNV to humans through bites.

Eighty percent of infected humans will never experience even a slight

illness from the disease, while one in 150 will develop a serious illness; the percentage of fatal cases is less than 1 percent. Humans are "dead-end hosts" of WNV, meaning they cannot further transmit the disease and therefore are not contagious.

Traditionally, Vector Control eliminated mosquito sources and populations with chemicals such as "Golden Bear," a petroleum-based insecticide. However, over the past few years, Vector Control has shifted to more environmentally friendly control measures.

Mosquito fish are small, freshwater fish that eat mosquito larvae and are ideal for controlling the larvae in backyard ponds, birdbaths, fountains, animal troughs, untended swimming pools and other standing water sources. The larvicide now used by Vector Control acts specifically on mosquito larvae and will not harm other wildlife. It is applied by a helicopter to the vegetation in larger bodies of water, where it is simply not feasible to apply larvicide by hand.

While the breeding potential in large bodies of water is naturally of the greatest concern, mosquitoes can breed wherever they find enough standing water — just a quarter of a cup to lay their eggs. Backyard breeding sources of mosquitoes are common in San Diego County and require homeowners to assist in the fight against WNV through habitat management by removing sources of standing water.

WNV was initially detected in San Diego County in 2003. For three years, all of the human cases were determined to have been acquired outside of the county. In 2006, the first known locally acquired case in San Diego County was confirmed. Vector Control and the Community Epidemiology Branch of Public Health continue to investigate human cases. As County News went to press, there had been ten confirmed local cases of WNV in humans so far this year; there were 15 local cases last year.

For more information or to report dead birds, visit www.sdfightthebite.com.

Join the AIDS Walk!

Come out to Balboa Park and enjoy the sunshine on Sunday, Sept. 28, when Team County of San Diego is part of AIDS Walk 2008.

Established in 1989, AIDS Walk San Diego is San Diego's largest one-day HIV/AIDS fundraiser and the biggest non-governmental financial provider for HIV/AIDS in San Diego County.

Dozens of agencies that serve thousands of clients rely on funds raised at the annual walk. Money raised helps provide essential prevention and care programs to thousands of men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS.

Staff from the Health and Human Services Agency's HIV, STD & Hepa-

titis Branch of Public Health Services has joined up to form Team County of San Diego in support of this charitable event. All County employees are welcome regardless of department!

For more information on how you can participate or support the walk, please contact the County's Team Leaders, Daniel Martinez at (619) 293-4738 daniel.martinez@sdcounty.ca.gov, or Yvette Ogletree at (619) 293-4713 Yvette.Ogletree@sdcounty.ca.gov. You can also visit the County of San Diego Team's site directly at <http://aidswalksd.kintera.org/2008/countyofsandiego> to participate.



How to Read Your Credit Report

Did you know that you can get your credit report for free? Under the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act, consumers can request and obtain a free credit report once every 12 months from each of the three nationwide consumer credit reporting companies: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. (Go to annualcreditreport.com)

Now that you have your credit report, do you know how to read it? San Diego County Credit Union offers the following hints to help you understand what you are reading.

A credit report is divided into four sections.

Identifying information includes your name, Social Security number, current and previous addresses, date of birth, phone numbers, employment history, etc. Make sure this information is accurate and current.

Credit history includes the name of the creditor and the account number (which may be scrambled for security reasons). The entry also includes:

- **When the account was opened**
- **The type of credit account**
- **Total amount of the loan or highest balance on the card**

- **What is owed**
- **Fixed monthly payment or minimum monthly amount**
- **Status of the account (open, inactive, closed, paid, etc.)**
- **Payment history**

Public records list bankruptcies, judgments and tax liens. You want this section to be blank.

Inquiries lists everyone who asked to view your credit report. Inquiries are broken down into two groups; "hard" inquiries are ones you initiate by applying for credit cards and loans, while "soft" inquiries are ones from companies that send out promotional information to pre-qualified groups or current creditors monitoring your account.

If you find a mistake on your credit report, you will need to complete a form that comes with the report or follow the instructions given. The Credit Union advises checking the report carefully, as it's estimated that 80 percent of all credit reports have some kind of mis-information.

If you have any questions about credit reports, you can talk to a Financial Service Representative at any one of the 25 San Diego County Credit Union branch locations, or call (877) 732-2848.

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The Palette restaurant is open to the public Monday through Friday from 8 am to 10 am for breakfast and 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for lunch. All gratuities at the restaurant are accepted as donations for Culinary Student Support with special events in support of local charities.

Medical Examiner & Forensic Center Construction Update

The landscape at the County Operations Center is changing with each section of steel frame being erected for the new Medical Examiner and Forensic Center. All underground utility connections are complete; the next milestone will be the pouring of interior concrete slabs to allow the start of wall framing. A mock-up of a portion of the exterior wall system will be done to allow testing of waterproofing and a critical view of architectural and fabrication details.

Construction of the new County Operations Center Central Plant is scheduled to begin in October. It will be located next to the existing construction site and provide the new M.E./Forensic Center building with electrical power and chilled water for air conditioning.



The Medical Examiner & Forensic Center under construction.

Deferred Compensation RFP Results in Best Value for Employees

Nationwide Retirement Solutions has been approved by the Board of Supervisors as the new deferred compensation provider. The transition process from Hartford to Nationwide is expected to take six to nine months.

For the first time in 25 years, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Treasurer-Tax Collector's deferred compensation program to issue a full Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFP process utilized a group of employees, representing a broad base of departments, who were charged with a fiduciary duty to investigate all options, putting the needs of employees above their own. Working together for a year, the group unanimously recommended Nationwide Retirement Solutions as the provider who can provide the best value for the cost.

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Mail Services Redesigns County Inter-Office Envelope

The County inter-office envelope has been redesigned to allow County departments the flexibility of advertising their services on the back of the envelope. As a result, the back of the envelope is being used by the Sheriff's Recruiting Group, the Department of Human Resources' Work Safe/Stay Healthy programs and the San Diego County Credit Union.

"Camp Connect" Brings Foster Siblings Together

Foster siblings will have the chance to reconnect in a playful atmosphere during the first annual "Camp Connect West" set for Sept. 5-7 at Camp Cedar Glen in Julian.

Developed by the Health and Human Services Agency in partnership with the United Way, Camp Connect allows siblings who are not placed together to enjoy a weekend with their brothers and sisters. Foster siblings will share cabins and enjoy activities such as swimming, archery, basketball and wall climbing. Staffed by volunteers, the camp will serve about 65 youth, ages 7 to 16.

The County Line

Your questions answered

Q: Due to the state budget crisis and its impact on local agencies - including some of our departments - has the County considered offering employees early retirement to offset funding losses?

A: County management reports that, at this time, there are no plans to offer early retirement packages.

Have a question, need some advice? Let *County News* find the answer for you!

Write to us at CountyNews@sdcountry.ca.gov

Wildfire Awareness for National Preparedness Month

With the memories of last year's devastating wildfires still fresh in everyone's minds, The County will be asking residents to take steps to prepare their homes and protect their families for another potentially dangerous Santa Ana season.

To emphasize the importance of preparedness, the County's Office of Emergency Services (OES) is launching an aggressive Wildfire Awareness campaign just in time for National Preparedness Month in September.

"Any fire official will tell you that the best way to help them do their job of protecting our communities from wildfires is to start at home. Assess your property for risks and take steps to fortify your home against the next wildfire," said OES Director Ron Lane.

National Preparedness Month focuses on preparedness on an individual and community level. Its goals include encouraging residents to put together an emergency supply kit, complete a family disaster plan, assess the different emergencies that could affect them, obtain training and participate in community preparedness and response efforts.

While National Preparedness Month lasts through September, the Wildfire Awareness campaign will continue through October to educate residents with important preparedness and safety information.

This month, a 14-page Wildfire Awareness Guide will be mailed to homes located in communities at risk of wildfire, including those near canyons.

The guide will encourage residents to do four things to better prepare for wildfire season:

1. Register for AlertSanDiego, the County's mass emergency notification system;
2. Create a 100-foot radius of defensible space around their home;
3. Utilize fire resistive landscaping to better safeguard their home or business;
4. Consider making home improvements that would make their home's exterior more fire safe.

The guide will also be available for download on ReadySanDiego.org on the Wildfire Awareness page. Numerous public safety workshops on wildfire and general disaster preparedness will be offered at various libraries' and at least two community fairs at local Home Depot and Dixieline stores are planned for September and October. County employees should also get ready for the annual Duck, Cover and Hold drill to be held this year at 9 a.m. on Sept. 23.

To register for AlertSanDiego, visit ReadySanDiego.org. There, you will find a calendar of events, family disaster plans and other information.



The Harris fire burning in Dulzura.

NEWS MAKERS

Gundula Dunne (Agriculture, Weights & Measures) earned praise for "providing a quality experience to the children in our community" at the Humane Society's Critter Camp of 2008.

"The feedback from the campers was outstanding. I realize it is not always easy to capture the attention of children this age, so I appreciate your patience, understanding and willingness to relate to them on their terms. Thank you so much for sharing your world with our children."

Officer Ken Winter (Animal Services) received kudos from a member of Supervisor Slater-Price's staff who spent the day on a ride-along with him. The staff member was especially impressed with Officer Winter's response to a call involving a distraught woman who was surrendering an aging and ill dog that she called "her best friend for 13 years."

"From the time he first made contact, right through the moment he held the dog as a technician administered the lethal injection, Officer Winter handled the woman and her dog with compassion and professionalism. Thank you for pairing me with such a fine civil servant."

Todd Walsh (Environmental Health) was praised for his "great service" and for offering "a solution that provides a more efficient, but equally effective, method of complying with environmental regulations."

"While keeping with the regulations, his suggestions resulted in a significant cost savings to our company. He is a real asset to your team."

Araceli Manzo (Housing & Community Development) was described by a client as "patient, kind, compassionate, courteous, thoughtful and empathetic."

"I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. You, dear lady, have gone far above and beyond the realms of your job description. I consider myself blessed to be one of your work cases."

The Pine Valley Branch of the County Library received lavish praise from one of their customers.

"We feel fortunate to live by the best branch of the San Diego County libraries. We appreciate the hard work of our librarians, that they greet children by name, help them locate books, and have already established for them that the library is a special place and that books are wonderful."

Jessica Skidmore (ARCC/Vitals) so impressed a client with her customer service that it prompted him to write "Glad to see my tax dollars well used."

"She was pleasant, organized, prompt and all around great. You have a great team!"

Another round of praise for the **County Library** system from a customer at the Vista Branch commenting on a gardening program.

"Thank you for hosting the event for free. Libraries are community gems and so important!"

Officer Jim Capewell (Probation/Work Projects) earned a letter of appreciation from the County's Stormwater Division for his "great professionalism" and for "a job extremely well done."

"This job was far from the usual brush litter cleaning done by these crews. The terrain was not user friendly and the access to the job was very hard to navigate. I can't begin to say enough about what he and his crew accomplished in the time that they did."

Everado Hernandez and Brad Richardson (Environmental Health) received compliments from a popular restaurant for their "especially honest feedback on how to improve" and for providing a "wonderful learning experience."

"Mr. Hernandez was fair, courteous and diligent in performing his duties. Brad put his 'teaching hat' on and gave a thorough course in the best way to oversee the sanitation in our kitchens. Thank you and your team. We appreciate your support."

Julie Odum (Housing & Community Development) received kudos for being "professional and always helpful."

"Julie is a superb person. I always ask for her when I want to list my properties for rent. I could not give enough praise to her."

Melissa Valdez (HHSA/Family Resource Center) was complimented for her great customer service and for making work seem "uncomplicated."

"Melissa really put my mind at ease. She took the time to explain things to me and answer all my questions. Thank you Melissa!"

(Verbatim continued on Page 10)

County's Emergency Medical Services Lauded

The County's Emergency Medical Services has been named a Silver Award winner by the California Emergency Services Association Southern Chapter.

This award is presented to an individual or organization for outstanding service in the field of emergency management.

Herman Reddick, Assistant Director for the County's Office of Emergency Services, nominated EMS for the award, writing that the EMS departmental operations center was "the nucleus in coordination of medical services for the entire county during the 2007 wildfires.

"This included supporting medical shelters, nursing facilities and hospitals. They were the integral element to maintaining this population's safety, security and well-being."

DCSS Newsletter Wins Statewide Award

The Department of Child Support Services employee newsletter, *The SKOOP*, was honored in April with the 2007 Excellence in Communication Award at the California Association of Public Information Officials (CAPIO) annual convention in Lake Tahoe. A panel of judges rated *The SKOOP* as the best Internal or Employee Newsletter published in the state of California from among the entries submitted by cities, counties and government agencies.

Public Affairs Officer John Rosenthal accepted the award on behalf of the department. "This is a wonderful honor for our department," he said. "Much of the credit goes to our Publications and Public Relations Teams but also to all the DCSS staff who contribute to the content of *The SKOOP* and to the many employees that responded to the internal survey regarding what they wanted in a department newsletter."

In the past year, the newsletter was converted to an online format, resulting in a jump in readership to 80 percent of DCSS staff. Some of the comments from CAPIO judges included: "Excellent use of technology," "Nicely styled," and "Very mission focused."

Dr. David Kellum (Agriculture, Weights and Measures/Entomology) and other bug experts were on hand to answer questions about insects and other critters at the Annual Insect Fair at Quail Botanical Gardens.

"Thank you for helping us once again put on one of Quail's best events. I wish you could hear all the positive comments we have gotten. We certainly fulfilled our mission during that great event."

Vanessa Esquivel (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk) *"exemplifies the County's commitment to embracing the diversity of the customers we serve."*

"She not only was very professional and responsive to our questions, but she was also very warm and personable. She is a prime example that the diversity training provided by the County is money well-spent."

Gloria Estolano and her staff (Environmental Health) were thanked by a customer with a public records request for being *"very helpful and providing what's needed in a timely manner."*

"Thanks to everyone, especially Gloria, for your patience and wonderful service. In my opinion, your agency is top rated as far as service to the public."

Gail Straub (Housing & Community Development) was rated "Excellent" in all categories by the landlords, tenants and property managers that she serves on a daily basis.

"Very knowledgeable, prompt and courteous." "Professional and above expectations." "Quick and easy going attitude." "Really nice and friendly." "Excellent representative for the Section 8 Program, thank you Gail for a job well done."

Melissa Tibayan (Clerk of the Board) assisted some customers with a public records request and they were *"most grateful for her helpful, courteous, friendly and professional service."*

"She is a credit and an asset to your profession and the County."

Luis Castilleja and Jeff Stambaugh (General Services/Fleet) earned the gratitude of a tired Sheriff's Deputy for service that was *"Top Notch."*

"I had a blow out last week and needed to have a new tire mounted on my patrol car after working the graveyard shift. Luis went to work on it right away. He had a big smile on his face and made me feel great. I was in and out in less than 5 minutes. It's the small stuff like this that separates your team from the rest."

Retirements

Donna M. Barnes (Sheriff)
 Louise M. Burson (Sheriff)
 Patricia A. Flores (Sheriff)
 Barbara J. Garcia (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Jacqueline M. Gilmore (Superior Court)
 Gary A. Grimm (Sheriff)
 Alice M. Harris (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Donald C. Henley (Probation)
 David A. Kehrer (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Nelida L. Lagandaon (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Marti Lee (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Roger D. Mathias (Sheriff)
 Molly K. McConnell (Library)
 Scott C. McLennan (Sheriff)

Tomas O. Montillano (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Terry L. Peterson-Cripe (Probation)
 Maria Elena L. Prudencio (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Maureen F. Prystas (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Robert W. Rankin (Superior Court)
 Margaret E. Rusby (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Donna M. Sievert (Board of Supervisors)
 Catherine A. Stephenson (District Attorney)
 Robert H. Taylor (Public Works)
 Parichehr Tyler (Superior Court)
 Thomas W Whitney (Probation)
 Judy Williams (Health & Human Services Agency)
 Christine L. Workman (Health & Human Services Agency)

In Memoriam

Jasper L. Adkins (General Services, 1985) 5/08
 June M. Andrew (HHSA, 1990) 6/08
 Joyce A. Bettell (Probation, 1990) 6/08
 George G. Bryant (General Services, 1974) 6/08
 William E. Byers (Transportation, 1979) 6/08
 Edward E. Cline (General Services, 1974) 7/08
 Leslie D. Davis (Parks & Recreation, 1975) 6/08
 Margaret C. Deehring (Municipal Court, 1995) 6/08
 Robert K. Dwyer (Municipal Court, 1979) 7/08
 Richard B. Foley (Probation, 1986) 6/08
 Jerry G. Humphrey (Auditor & Controller, 2002) 6/08
 James Eugene Johnson (Edgemoor Hospital, 2004) 6/08

Lois N. Kimbell (Environmental Health, 2004) 6/08
 Joan M. Love (General Services, 1987) 6/08
 Harry G. Miller (Assessor, 1985) 6/08
 Louise K. Olson (Municipal Court, 1972) 6/08
 Margery Norton O'Neal (Probation, 1978) 5/08
 Fred G. Schatz (HHSA, 1975) 6/08
 James Tennant (General Services, 1981) 7/08
 Atala L. Torres (Library, 1988) 7/08
 Robert H. Ward (General Services, 1980) 7/08
 Harold Washington (Public Works, 1986) 7/08
 Gerald E. Wood (Probation, 1978) 6/08

Service Awards

35 Years

George T. Bennett (District Attorney)
Janel Egman Pehau (Auditor & Controller)

30 Years

Raquel Escalante (Health & Human Services)
Edward C. Jackson (Sheriff)
Charlene L. Ranger (Animal Services)
Chantal M. Saïpe (Land Use & Environment)
Brian E. Tripp (Sheriff)

25 Years

Stacy Adams-Metz (Probation)
Harry W. Blackwood (Treasurer-Tax Collector)
Scott M. Countryman (Probation)
Myra L. Glenn (Health & Human Services)
John E. Hensley, Jr. (Probation)
William M. Kemery (Sheriff)
Scott H. Kleinhesselink (Sheriff)
Andrea Y. Jackson (Health & Human Services)
Rosaura Olea (County Library)
Ester Q. Reyes (Health & Human Services)
Hector Rodriguez (Sheriff)
Abraham Salazar (Probation)
Janet R. Steverson (Health & Human Services)
Linda A. Yoakum-Latimer (Probation)

20 Years

Joseph S. Alvarez (Sheriff)
Raymond G. Aragon (Public Defender)
Orlando Arguello (Health & Human Services)
Kathleen L. Barefield (Public Works)
Michael Begovich (Public Defender)
Albert Lane Bradley (Alternate Public Defender)
William R. Brown (Sheriff)
John M. Debus, Jr. (Sheriff)
Mel C. Epley (Public Defender)
Angie Fedele (Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk)
Todd E. Frank (Sheriff)
Michael R. Green (Health & Human Services)

20 Years cont.

Stephanie Guerra (Sheriff)
Stacy D. Gulley (Public Defender)
Lisa R. Guthrie (Health & Human Services)
Rosa Gutierrez (Health & Human Services)
Linda L. Helms (District Attorney)
Jose M. Hernandez (Sheriff)
Bruce E. Hightower (Sheriff)
Linda P. Hughes (Public Defender)
Jafar Izadi (Housing & Community Development)
Edward W. Kinsey, Jr. (Public Defender)
John S. Kwiatkowski (Sheriff)
Maria A. Martinez (Health & Human Services)
Michael R. Massey (District Attorney)
Ian P. McIntosh (Sheriff)
Matthew D. McKay (Health & Human Services)
Peter P. Meza III (Sheriff)
Stephen D. Midlam (Health & Human Services)
Shirley A. Mitchell (County Library)
Kelly W. Moody (Sheriff)
Loreto N. Negado (Health & Human Services)
Melba Q. Nerida (Probation)
Sandra Nooe (Health & Human Services)
Brian K. Phelps (Child Support)
Mary Jane Scott (Health & Human Services)
Edwin M. Sinsay (Public Works)
Laura D. Spang-Dvorchak (Sheriff)
Michele M. Stress (Public Works)
Laura E. Tanney (District Attorney)
Martha Terriquez (Health & Human Services)
Mark J. Thygesen (Sheriff)
Mark R. Tusi (Probation)
Henry Tuyay (Health & Human Services)
Sharon M. Untiedt (Environmental Health)
Rodney E. Van (Probation)
Olivia Velez (Health & Human Services)
Audrey J. Wedge (Health & Human Services)
Maria Wood (Sheriff)
Jose Ybarra (Health & Human Services)
Thomas M. Ziegler (Public Defender)