

#### **Balancing Our Budget**

They say that on the first day of Spring, it's easier to balance a raw egg on its end. Well, it's Spring and a different kind of balancing act is underway.

In each department and at the Countywide level, many staff members are working hard to develop a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2012-13. The County's budget is a little like an egg in that it naturally wants to roll to one side or the other. It's been a long time since the budget "egg" has rolled to the side of increased revenues. For several years, we've only been able to achieve a balance in the general fund through expense reductions and the cautious use of funds held in reserve. While there

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# Announcing the Golden Guardian 2012 Earthquake Exercise!

On May 15, 2012, Orange County will participate in Golden Guardian 2012, a statewide exercise designed to test the Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Response Plan. The Golden Guardian 2012 Exercise will involve participation



from eight counties, along with other local, state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations and private sector partners. The Orange County Operational Area Emergency Operations Center will be activated for the exercise and will coordinate response actions with numerous local cities, school districts and special districts. Orange County will test our ability to assess the needs of the community in a catastrophic earthquake scenario and effectively mobilize resources to support emergency responders. The exercise provides many benefits to the County including improved readiness and enhanced training for Emergency Operations Center responders. The Orange County Sheriff's Department Emergency Management Bureau encourages you to get prepared now for emergencies that may impact you and your family. You should prepare and plan for any event that may cause you to go for three days without electricity, water service, access to a supermarket or other local services. Just follow these three steps:

**1. Get a Kit:** Keep enough emergency supplies on hand for you and those in your care, including water, non-perishable food, first aid, prescriptions, flashlights and a battery-powered radio. For a complete checklist of supplies, visit www.ReadyOC.org.

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are some signs of recovery in the economy, the recovery has been slower than many people expected and the need for caution remains. Departments have been asked to continue the search for ways to reduce general fund expenditures while delivering the services our constituents have come to expect.

The County has entered another important season the start of negotiations with labor organizations for new contracts. The Board of Supervisors has adopted a new model for negotiations utilizing an outside firm to assist the County in this process. First up are talks with representatives of the Orange County Attorneys and Managers Associations. Later this month, negotiations will take place with the Orange County Employees Association. These negotiations are important to all of the parties involved and what we can say during the negotiation process is very limited. We will keep you posted when possible as this process continues.

Thomas G. Mauk
County Executive Officer

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- **2. Make a Plan:** Discuss, agree on, and document an emergency plan with those in your care. For sample plans, see www.ReadyOC.org. Work with your neighbors, colleagues and others to build a community network of resilience.
- **3. Be Informed:** Information to assist you is available from federal, state and local resources. You can find preparedness information by:
  - Signing up for emergency alerts and notifications at www.AlertOC.com
  - Accessing www.ReadyOC.org to learn what to do before, during, and after an emergency
  - Contacting your local fire station or law enforcement department to ask for a tour and information about preparedness

# **Thousands Register for Housing Assistance**

For the first time since 2005, the Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) opened its waiting list to accept applications for rental assistance and the response was overwhelming!

OCHA's primary goal was to reach out to as many low income county residents as possible to make sure that those most in need of rental assistance were aware of the opportunity to apply in February 2012. OCHA, a part of OC Community Resources, administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program with federal funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Currently, OCHA assists over 10,000 families (more than 25,000 people) with paying their rent each month.

To accomplish this ambitious effort, OCHA met with a strategic planning group of over 20 community stakeholders representing a diverse cross-section of service providers in the county. The group included the OC Office on Aging, Dayle MacIntosh

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Center, the First District Board office, Abrazar, Access California, Community Action Partnership, Mental Health Association, the Social Services and Health Care Agencies, Regional Center, Korean Community Services, OC Community Service Center and more. The objective of this group was to provide input and ideas for accepting applications, outreach strategies, and application and instruction review.

To provide the public with convenient access, OCHA enlisted the help of Stephen Salcido of CEO/Information Technology to provide an online application easily accessible to anyone using the Internet. Arrangements were also made to print up to 40,000 applications for distribution by numerous government agencies and community organizations and to accept paper applications by both mail and fax.



During January and February 2012, OCHA offered information and training sessions to over 125 additional community partners to explain the process of accepting applications and provide instructions for both the online and paper applications. Many partners, such as OC Public Libraries, agreed to have computers available for the public to apply online as well as be distribution sites for paper applications during the two-week open enrollment period.

CEO Community/Media Relations coordinated media outreach to get the word out about the opportunity to apply for assistance, resulting in television and radio coverage to the diverse communities in Orange County. With tremendous support from Board offices, OCHA was able to conduct unprecedented outreach to the entire county. Many cities had a link on their web page to direct the public to the online application.

As a result of these extraordinary collaborative efforts, nearly 12,000 online applications and 500 faxed applications were received on the first day, with as many as 15-20 per minute submitted online during peak periods. The OC Community Service Center reported assisting over 2,000 clients on the first day alone. By the end of the two-week open enrollment period, OCHA had received over 52,000 applications. Applicants will be notified sometime in June to confirm their status and be given an approximate wait time.

Our congratulations to all involved in this monumental effort to help those in need of rental housing assistance!

# **Tustin Regional Park Concept Plan Advances**

A Concept Plan for a Regional Park at the former Marine Corps Air Station Tustin took a step forward in February, gaining unanimous approval from the Board of Supervisors.

The action by the Board allows OC Parks to submit the Concept Plan to the National Park Service as part of the process to allow the Federal government to convey the property to the County. The County identified the base as a potential regional park site as early as 1966, even though the base did not close until 1999. Part of the Concept Plan is the re-use of six structures on the site including the historic north blimp hangar. The hangar is the largest free standing wood structure in the world, standing 17 stories tall with almost six acres under one roof. The hangar is still used for the filming of movies, television shows and commercials and would still be available for this use once the park is developed.

Other features of the park will include a perimeter walking trail and several open space areas. Also being explored is the possible develop-



The massive wooden north blimp hangar at the former Marine Corps Air Station Tustin will be the centerpiece of a planned Regional Park, bringing additional recreational opportunities to Orange County residents and visitors.

ment of a combination water polo/ice hockey complex that would be used for training by the U.S. National Water Polo teams and the Anaheim Ducks. While plans are still being developed, areas of the park could open to the public as early as 2016 pending all necessary approvals and the availability of funding.

#### **Public Guardian's Career Comes Full Circle**

When Lucille Lyon's career path brought her back to the Public Administrator/Public Guardian (PA/PG) Department, she returned to a much different place than when she first worked there.

Lucille remembers the Public Guardian's Department as a much smaller operation with perhaps eight Deputy Public Guardians and four Public Administrator staff. And while the department has grown in the years to follow, it remains a relatively small operation with great responsibilities to individuals and families.

After starting with the department as a Deputy Public Guardian I, she rose through the ranks to become a supervisor before leaving to become the Chief Deputy Public Guardian for the County of Riverside. There, she was involved in a three year effort to turn the department around that resulted in an agency known for its customer service. In 1998, she left for a position with a mental health agency in Los Angeles County and thought her Public Guardian career was over. Just five years later, she went to work for Los Angeles County, becoming a Division Chief at the

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Public Guardian's office. Finally, in 2011, an opportunity opened for Lucille to rejoin the County of Orange and return to the department where her career had started.

A Public Administrator protects the assets and manages the affairs of deceased residents of Orange County who at the time of death left no known heirs, no will or no named executor. The Public Guardian's role is to assume responsibility for care of individuals who are unable to properly provide for their personal needs and who may be at risk of undue influence by others, or whose property is subject to loss, injury, waste or mismanagement. These individuals are usually elderly or are gravely disabled due to mental illness.



Public Guardian/Assistant Public Administrator Lucille Lyon and Frank Tuanai of the PA/PG Office will present on the topic of "Evaluation and Realignment of a Public Guardian agency to achieve National Standards" at the National Guardianship Conference on October 22 in Portland, Oregon.

Lucille sees her return to Orange County as an opportunity to "give back to the County that introduced me to this career." Her goals are to improve services to clients and provide competent management of estates. Through an assessment of the organization's strengths and weaknesses, she has found that the Deputy PA/PG staff is dedicated and knowledgeable. She's now working to build recognition for the quality of work performed by the department through participation in professional organizations and conferences while highlighting the department's innovative programs and efforts. The Department will be presenting at the National Guardianship Conference in Portland, Oregon this October on the topic "Evaluation and Realignment of a Public Guardian agency to achieve National Standards."

She's also found other County departments to be very welcoming. "We have increased and improved collaboration with other County agencies and are getting involved with the Health Care Agency's full service partnerships as well as meeting with social workers to further this collaboration," said Ms. Lyon. She also noted the good working relationships forged with the Sheriff's Department and Treasurer in gaining improved access to clients and seeking better ways to manage estates.

The job of the PA/PG Department is likely to get even bigger in the years ahead as the largest transfer of wealth from Baby Boomers to their children becomes a reality. The personal aspect of the services provided by PA/PG staff will become even more critical to their success. "Government agencies do care," she stated. "We have to show empathy and caring for the people placed under our jurisdiction." And while the office staff may be bigger now, Lucille believes that the personal approach she learned when first working for the office is a critical component. "People need to be respected." Respect, along with ethics, professionalism and a thorough understanding of the law and standards are keys to restoring the PA/PG department's reputation in the community.

#### **Social Work Matters**



Board Chairman John M. W. Moorlach with Social Services Chief Deputy Director Mike Ryan



Board Chairman John M. W. Moorlach with Health Care Agency Interim Behavioral Health Director Mary Hale

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan officially proclaimed March the annual National Social Work Recognition Month to honor our nation's social workers. The 2012 theme of Social Work Month is "Social Work Matters." The Orange County Board of Supervisors recognized the immeasurable contributions of more than 4,000 dedicated, caring, and compassionate social workers serving the residents of Orange County in a variety of settings by declaring the month of March 2012 Social Work Appreciation Month, "to honor social workers for their competence and professionalism, and commend them for their excellence, devotion, compassion, and diligence." On Thursday, March 29th, Board Chairman John M.W. Moorlach presented the Board Resolution to Social Services Chief Deputy Director Mike Ryan and Health Care Agency Interim Behavioral Health Director Mary Hale.

Chairman Moorlach also commended social workers employed by the County of Orange Health Care and Social Services Agencies, noting that "social workers serve our community's most vulnerable populations, including victims of domestic violence, seniors who are frail and elderly, persons with disabilities, mental illness, and/or addictions, people who are incarcerated, women who are pregnant, new mothers, and children who have been victims of abuse or neglect." SSA Chief Deputy Director Mike Ryan confirmed that "social work matters" as he noted that the collective efforts of SSA social workers and employees served an average of 1-in-every-7 Orange County residents over the past year. HCA Interim Behavioral Health Director Mary Hale also affirmed that "social work matters" as she thanked the HCA social workers and other social workers throughout the County for their ongoing efforts to help strengthen families and to help individuals overcome addictions and adversity.

### **Focus on Children and Families**

The Orange County Board of Supervisors has declared the week of April 21-28 as the Week of the Young Child, bringing attention to the needs of young children and their families.

A resolution presented during the April 3 Board meeting saluted organizations working to improve early learning opportunities and recognize those who make a difference in the lives of young children.

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First District Supervisor Janet Nguyen was joined by children and staff from early childhood education organizations in presenting the resolution for the Week of the Young Child, April 21-28.

First District Supervisor Janet Nguyen was joined by County Child Care Coordinator Anne Broussard during the presentation of the resolution to representatives of the California and National Associations for the Education of Young Children as well as children and staff from the Hands Together program.

Studies have demonstrated that quality early education prepares children for Kindergarten and for life. Children who have at least one year of quality early education perform better in school, have lower rates of juvenile delinquency, have higher high school graduation rates and earn more as adults. The programs also benefit parents by allowing them to focus on their work responsibilities.

The County of Orange has conducted a Countywide survey of child care needs and has developed a resource list to help employees find a quality child care program near their work or home. A new website will soon offer information and resources to both employees and the public.



The annual observance of Public Health Week included the presentation of a Board Resolution during the April 3 Supervisors meeting. Chairman John M.W. Moorlach was joined at the dais by (I-r) David Souleles, Health Care Agency Deputy Agency Director for Public Health Services; Clara Sanchez, one of Orange County's "Champion Moms" who is helping to promote healthier lifestyles; Mark Refowitz, Interim Health Care Agency Director; and Eric Handler, M.D., County Health Officer.

# **Every Little Bit Helps**

Spring has arrived and summer is just around the corner. Almost every summer, we hear messages about conserving electricity during periods of hot weather. This year, concerns about the availability of major local power plants may make the situation even more critical. The good news is that all of us can take simple steps at work to reduce electricity consumption.

According to the Federal Energy Management Program, here's a few of the smart energy choices all of us can make:

- Switch off all unnecessary lights
- Unplug equipment that drains energy when not in use, like cellphone chargers, fans and coffeemakers
- If possible, turn off your office equipment and/or computer monitors at the end of the work day
- Close or tilt window blinds to block direct sunlight and reduce cooling needs
- Print and photocopy only those pages you really need

Office buildings are the single largest energy user in California's commercial sector. Saving electricity also saves money because energy represents as much as 30 percent of a building's operating costs.

#### Get the 411 on the Office of the Public Defender

- 1. Public Defenders are "real" lawyers. Many of the attorneys in the office reject lucrative careers in the private sector to become dedicated public servants.
- 2. In addition to representing adults and juveniles in the criminal courts, the Public Defender also represents many people in Mental Health cases. These clients are predominantly the elderly and infirm for whom guardianship or involuntary hospitalization is being sought.
- 3. On January 24, 2012 the Orange County Board of Supervisors appointed Frank Ospino as the Public Defender. Mr. Ospino had served as Interim Public Defender since August of 2011. He has held the progressive positions of Deputy Public Defender, Senior Deputy Public Defender, Assistant Public Defender, and Senior Assistant Public Defender over the course of his 24-year career with the department.
- 4. On March 16, 2012, Assistant Public Defender Sheryl Beasley received the 2012 Community Partnership Spotlight Award from the Orange County Regional Center. This award is meant to honor individuals that have demonstrated exceptional leadership and contributed to the enhancement of life for people with developmental disabilities in Orange County.
- The Public Defender partnered with the California Foster Youth Education Task Force to co-sponsor a statewide conference at the 2011 California Foster Youth Summit held in Sacramento, California.

To learn more about the Offices of the Public Defender, please visit: www.pubdef.ocgov.com



#### **30 YEARS**

Marcosa Saldana Assessor

Cathy Looney
Child Support Services

Janet Castorena Clerk-Recorder

Irma Mora
District Attorney

**Denise Wittenberg** OC Public Works

Franklin Wilcox
Probation

**Laurel Schwarz**Probation

Ronnie Epperson Sheriff-Coroner

**Timothy Board** Sheriff-Coroner

Patricia Padilla
Treasurer-Tax Collector

### 25 YEARS

Norma Dallman Assessor Phyllis Johnson Clerk-Recorder

Barbara McGinley
District Attorney

Naomi Brown District Attorney

Joyce McMaster
OC Community Resources

Wayne Morgan
OC Community Resources

**Dean Price**OC Public Works

Michael Nguyen
OC Public Works

Glenn Pattillo
OC Waste & Recycling

Steven Grimes
Sheriff-Coroner

**Brian O'Dowd**Sheriff-Coroner

Antonio Gurrola Sheriff-Coroner

Jacqueline MacPherson Sheriff-Coroner

John Barker Sheriff-Coroner

Roger Guevara Sheriff-Coroner

**Brian Hall**Sheriff-Coroner

Jeffrey McLain Sheriff-Coroner Frederick Ulrey
Sheriff-Coroner

Van-Anh Duong Social Services Agency

**Lynda Ross** Social Services Agency

Percival Basa Social Services Agency

Mercedes Julian Social Services Agency

Nora Nichols Social Services Agency

Joshua Wallingford Social Services Agency

#### **20 YEARS**

**Loan Dao**Child Support Services

**Tony Sanchez**District Attorney

Candice Umeda
District Attorney

Patrick Clark
Health Care Agency

**Steven Fitzgerald**John Wayne Airport

Joseph Bovard OC Public Works

Jan Berg OC Public Works

**Charles Van Deusen** OC Public Works

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# 20 YEARS

Rosy Arellano PA/PG

**Gregory Kibby** Sheriff-Coroner

**Bonnie Alvarez** Social Services Agency

Janice Meineke Social Services Agency

Kim Reed Social Services Agency

**Marlowe Santos** Social Services Agency

Lucila Barrientez Social Services Agency

Lisa Bui Social Services Agency

Amelia Chaffin Social Services Agency

Anita Hernandez Social Services Agency

**Hector Leon** Social Services Agency



#### **Kerrie Long**

Social Services Agency

Ha Lien Ke Nguyen Social Services Agency

**Hugo Ortega** 

Social Services Agency

**Raymond Perez** Social Services Agency

Mary Lou Solorzano Social Services Agency

Calinh Vu Social Services Agency

**Martha Walter** Social Services Agency

Susan Barela Social Services Agency

**Dorisse Paoli** Social Services Agency

Marie Rinehart Social Services Agency

**Lois Tuller** Social Services Agency

**Laura Todd** Social Services Agency

Martha I. Perez Social Services Agency

# **CONTACT US**

COUNTY CONNECTION is distributed monthly by the County Executive Officer Thomas G. Mauk. The newsletter is published by CEO Community/Media Relations. Call 714.834.6203 or e-mail ask.the.ceo@ocgov.com with any suggestions and comments.

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