



Around Tulare County

DELIVERING INFORMATION ABOUT TULARE COUNTY – AUGUST 2012

Chairman's Message: Tulare County is Fiscally Sound



The financial crisis of 2008 has impacted Tulare County government for four years. However, during those tough financial times, the Board of Supervisors took conservative measures to make sure the organization remained fiscally sound.

Those measures included freezes on step and merit salary increases for employees; enacting a 40-hour furlough program on all employees; suspending deferred compensation matches; and suspending the sick leave buy-back program.

During the tough financial times, the Board of Supervisors shared in the same measures it enacted on the organization. That included deferring a 4.56 percent raise in 2009 and

voluntarily participating in the 40-hour furlough program, which equates to a 1.92 percent salary reduction. In total, the Board of Supervisors has experienced a 6.48 percent overall salary reduction each year since 2009.

The conservative measures of the Board of Supervisors during the financial crisis has put Tulare County in a position to bargain with its employees groups and restore step and merit increases to approximately 2,000 eligible employees and suspend the 40-hour furlough program for Fiscal Year 2012-13.

The conservative measures also allowed the Board of Supervisors to make a decision regarding the salary deferral in 2009. In July, three of the Supervisors, including myself, voted to rescind the 2009 salary deferral.

On average, with the restoration of steps and merits and suspension of the furlough program, Tulare

County employees will receive a \$6,749 yearly increase in salary, or 10.01 percent. In total, Tulare County will spend an additional \$10 million to restore salaries for Fiscal Year 2012-13.

The Board of Supervisors would like to thank its employees for their excellent public service during tough financial times.

Tulare County's employees should be proud to have weathered the financial storm together. While other government jurisdictions are continuing to be impacted negatively, Tulare County, through its conservative measures, is fiscally sound. In addition, our employee pension fund, a major problem for other jurisdictions dealing with budget issues, is more than 90 percent funded without any debt.

Allen Ishida, Chairman
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

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www.facebook.com/CountyofTulare

Summer Night Lights Attendance Doubles



“Summer Night Lights is bringing community and families together. Our goal is to take back our town and this program is helping us make this happen.”
Anastacia Rivera,
Richgrove resident.



Cutler-Orosi residents enjoy an evening of Summer Night Lights.

Mid-summer attendance figures show youth are attending Tulare County’s Summer Night Lights program in record numbers.

Summer Night Lights is a program that aims to curb violence and other negative activity by keeping selected parks and recreational facilities open during the summer months. The program was initiated in 2011 with three cities participating. This year, the program is taking place in eight different sites in Tulare County.

County officials credit the efforts of community organizers, the increase in site locations, and the need for positive youth activities as reasons for the increase in attendance. One city who is participating for the first time is leading all sites in attendance. At least one community has had so much success; they will try to extend the program beyond the summer months.

From June 13 to July 13, 5,039 youth have attended one of the 25 Summer Night Lights events in one of eight communities where the program is offered. On average, that is more than 200 attendees per night. In comparison to last year, 2,235 youth attended 16 Summer Night Lights events in one of three communities. On average, that is more than 139 attendees per night.

“There is a high demand

throughout Tulare County for positive programming for youth in the summer months and each community has stepped up in their own way to provide great events,” said Phil Cox, District Three Supervisor. “Tulare County will continue to work with all partners to provide a safe, positive environment.”

Through July 13, the city of Dinuba, who is participating in the program for the first year, is leading in attendance with 2,250 people attending four events, an average of 562 people per event.

Dinuba’s Community Services Department Recreation Coordinator Stephanie Hurtado said Summer Night Lights fits into the department’s motto of “We Make Fun Happen.”

“The City of Dinuba is excited to team up with Tulare County to give the families in our community a safe and fun place to create long lasting memories,” Hurtado said. “Summer Night Lights is a big hit in our community and is helping take back our town.”

While this community does not have the large numbers of Dinuba, Richgrove officials say they had no choice but to try and extend the idea of Summer Night Lights and provide similar programming throughout the year with a once-a-month movie night during the school year. Attendance in Richgrove, a community of 2,882 people in

southeast Tulare County, has averaged 105 people in each of its first two events. Richgrove will host its largest event on July 20 with a carnival night for the community.

Anastacia Rivera, Summer Night Lights representative for Richgrove, said there have been many benefits to the program.

“Summer Night Lights is bringing community members and families together,” Rivera said. “Our goal is to take back our town and this program is helping us make this happen.”

Fifth District Supervisor Mike Ennis, who represents Richgrove, said he is pleased with the turnout and participation.

“Richgrove is a take charge community and has embraced the Summer Night Lights program,” Supervisor Ennis said. “We will continue to work with community members and make a difference for the youth.”

Residents interested in finding dates and updates regarding the Summer Night Lights program can visit www.stepuptc.com or “like” the Tulare County Summer Night Lights on Facebook.

Spotlight: Employees in the News

Search & Rescue

The Visalia Times-Delta (VTD) reported that the Tulare County Sheriff's Department Search & Rescue Team found two missing hikers in the Giant Sequoia National Monument on July 4.

The climbers, both from Bakersfield, were on a formation called the Wizard when exhaustion and nightfall made it difficult for them to make it back to their vehicle.

Another member of the group who was climbing a nearby

route contacted the Sheriff's Department when they had not returned. The rescue team found the climbers, who were treated for exhaustion, dehydration and mild hypothermia.

Pot Bust

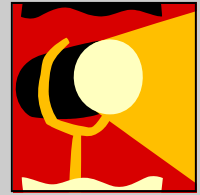
According to the VTD, the Sheriff's Department arrested four people in connection with raid on 11 marijuana grow sites in Tulare County that netted 106,529 live plants.

The raids occurred between July 5 and July 13.

Crop & Livestock Report

Tulare County Ag Commissioner Marilyn Kinoshita reported that the 2011 County Ag Crop & Livestock Report was the "highest-ever gross value in our history."

Sales of crops, livestock and agricultural products in Tulare County exceeded \$5.6 billion last year.



There are many County employees who are doing outstanding things for their community outside of their job.

Do you know a County employee who should be in the spotlight? Let us know at:

newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us

County Lowers U.S. Flags for Porterville Soldier

Tulare County Board of Supervisors Chairman Allen Ishida requested on July 11 all United States flags be flown at half-staff at all County buildings in remembrance of U.S. Army Pfc. Alejandro J. Pardo of Porterville.

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of Alejandro Pardo and all the families

who have lost young men and women who died serving our Country," Chairman Ishida said.

Chairman Ishida said flags will be flown at half-staff to July 24, the date of Pfc. Pardo's funeral services.

Pfc. Pardo, 21, died Sunday, July 7 when the tank in which he was riding was destroyed

by an explosive device in Afghanistan.

Pfc. Pardo is the fourth Tulare County soldier to die in Afghanistan in the past two years. Cpl. Jared C. Verbeek died June 21, 2011, Pfc. Douglass Jeffries died Sept. 8, 2011; and Lance Cpl. Brett Land died Oct. 30, 2010.



Program Spotlight: Digital Photo Contest

Tulare County's Information & Communications Technology Department (TCiCT) is partnering with the Tulare County Fair to put on a digital photography contest. The purpose of the contest is to ask the public to help showcase the beauty of Tulare County in a variety of ways.

There will be seven different classes of photography: Animal, Barn, Landscape, Photojournalism, Sunrise/Sunset, Events in Tulare County, and Images of Tulare County.

The Digital Photography of Tulare County contest will be

held in the Division 119 of the Tulare County Fair. Digital entries must be put on a disc and images should be a resolution of 800x600 pixels and have a maximum file size of 4 megabytes. The photographs must be taken in Tulare County.

All entry forms must be post-marked no later than Friday, August 24, 2012. If you are hand-delivering your form it must be in the Fair Administration office no later than 6 p.m. on August 24, 2012. Entries should be mailed to: Tulare County Fair, 215 Mar-

tin Luther King Jr. Ave. Tulare, CA 93274.

The Best of Show photograph will be awarded a Rosette & \$10, 1st place \$5, 2nd place \$3, and 3rd place a ribbon. Cash awards will be offered per class. The Best of Show in each class will be recognized at a Board of Supervisors meeting and featured on the Tulare County website www.tularecounty.ca.gov. The photographs will be displayed at the fair from September 12th-16th.

Want your program to be in the spotlight? Please send suggestions to:

newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us

For more information about the exhibit, please contact the Tulare County Fair at 559/686-4707.

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Tulare County Revamps Speakers Bureau



Tulare County Ag Commissioner Marilyn Kinoshita (left) received recognition for providing the most presentations, nine, by an individual County employee. Undersheriff Dahl Cleek (right) accepted recognition on behalf of the Sheriff's Department, who provided the most presentations, ten, out of any other County department since the Speakers Bureau's inception. Supervisor Mike Ennis (middle) presented the awards.

A web-based tool that brings County experts right to your door has been revamped.

More than a dozen new topics has been added to the Tulare County Speakers Bureau, a county program which is designed to provide public speakers, covering government issues, to local clubs, civic groups, neighborhood associations, community organizations and schools.

At the July 31 Board of Supervisors meeting, county staff provided an update regarding all the new topics, the success of the program, and provided recognition to those departments who have participated.

Tulare County Supervisor Mike Ennis initiated the program in 2011 when he served as Chairman of the Board and is excited about the new topics, which cover anything from

economic development and solar farms to water safety and inmate programs. More than 200 topics are covered through the Speakers Bureau.

Program success

From July 2011 to May 2012, more than 1,500 residents heard 34 Speakers Bureau presentations offered by 14 different departments.

Both the Tulare County Sheriff's Department and Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner received special recognition for their outstanding efforts. Each department who provided a Speakers Bureau presentation also received recognition on July 31.

Speakers Bureau Request

To request a speaker, please visit www.aroundtularecounty.com and click on Speakers Bureau to fill out the Speakers Bu-

reau Reservation Form and select a topic.

All requests must be received three weeks in advance of a scheduled meeting, conference or event to ensure appropriate time for scheduling.

No request will be considered as confirmed without the submission of a completed Reservation Form and confirmation provided by Speakers Bureau staff.

AROUND TULARE COUNTY

Around Tulare County is published once a month as a service to the public. Unless otherwise noted, articles are written by County staff. For additional information, contact Jed Chernabaeff.

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AUGUST COUNTY ACTIVITIES, DEADLINES, EVENTS, MEETINGS

Meeting: (Date/Time)

Board of Supervisors' Meeting: Aug. 14, 28. 9 a.m.
L.A.F.C.O. Meeting: Aug. 8. 2 p.m.
Tulare County Water Commission: Aug. 13. 3 p.m.
Tulare County Planning Commission: Aug. 8, 22. 9 a.m.
Tulare County Association of Governments: Aug. 20. 1 p.m.

More Information:

559/636-5000
559/624-7274
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Places to Go Play: Experience the best of antiques, art and agriculture in Exeter. Exeter is also known for its abundant supply of citrus, deciduous fruits, nuts and table grapes. The area has scenic beauty, thriving business community, and a population who take great pride in the town's heritage, quality housing and good schools. Learn more about Exeter and other places to "Go Play" at www.tularecountymap.com.