



# Around Tulare County

DELIVERING INFORMATION ABOUT TULARE COUNTY – JANUARY 2012

## Supervisor's Message: Priorities for 2012



This year will mark the second time I have the honor of serving as your Chairman of the Tulare County Board of Supervisors.

There are few items I am looking forward to working on with County staff and management in 2012.

### Economic Development

Tulare County has had a longstanding vision to create an economic development website that includes relevant industry information about local agribusiness, workforce development partners, site selection, zoning assistance and other factors considered essential to implement an effective campaign that will foster increased economic development. The Tulare County Resource Management Agency (RMA) and other departments are bringing this vision to fruition.

In December, RMA staff presented an overview of a new Economic Development website to the Board of Supervisors. This website should be complete this month.

The website being

developed by County staff includes industry portals designed to quickly inform prospective business site selectors about Tulare County's dominant industry, agriculture. The website also provides detailed information about important local demographics, along with a guide to local educational institutions and other business development partners that can provide access to a local workforce with the relevant specialized skills a particular business desires, and other key data.

### General Plan

Tulare County's 2030 General Plan Update moved one step closer to final approval in 2011 when the Planning Commission made its recommendations of approval to the Board of Supervisors.

The Board of Supervisors will schedule a public hearing in early 2012 to consider the Planning Commission's recommendations regarding adoption of the proposed 2030 General Plan Update and proposed Climate Action Plan.

The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update provides a comprehensive, long-term plan for the future physical development of the County. The plan consists of development policies that set forth objectives, principles and standards that guide future land use decisions within the County.

### Public Safety Realignment

One of the cornerstones of California's solution to solve its budget issues was to shift certain inmates from State prison to County jails.

Tulare County's District Attorney, Health & Human Services Agency, Probation, Public Defender, and Sheriff's offices have done an excellent job in putting together a plan in place to absorb the influx of future State inmates.

However, a number of issues have risen over the past few months which include: the number of parole violators occupying jail beds; medical issues and associated costs from realigned offenders; and the length of jail sentences.

Regarding jail space, the Board of Supervisors supported the Sheriff's Department in December by approving a grant application to seek State funds for a new jail in Porterville.

However, solutions to the medical costs and length of jail sentences will have to be closely monitored.

As we move forward in 2012, I would like to thank County management and staff in advance for all their hard work and dedication.

Allen Ishida, District One  
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

### Inside this issue:

SUPERVISOR'S MESSAGE **1**

PROGRAM CREATED TO BENEFIT AG **2**

GENERAL PLAN UPDATE MOVES FORWARD **2**

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: RODNEY BLACO **3**

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: HOLIDAY COMPUTER PROGRAM **4**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WEBSITE **4**

COUNTY DATES FOR EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, AND MORE **4**

### Did you know?

A different member of the Board of Supervisors serves as the Chairman each year.

The member who serves as Chairman is determined by numerical rotation.

District One Supervisor Allen Ishida is scheduled to serve as the Chairman in 2012.

Supervisor Ishida plans to give his State of the County speech on January 24, 2012.

## Around Tulare County: [www.aroundtularecounty.com](http://www.aroundtularecounty.com)

### Public/Private Partnership Benefits County Ag

**"This type of service may be critical for the protection of agricultural crops from a freeze or other type of weather occurrence or accident."**

**Supervisor Phil Cox**

Tulare County's agriculture community has a new tool to use to keep their farms running when an electrical outage occurs during extreme weather conditions or other unforeseen incidents.

The Electrical Agriculture Wind Machine/Ag-Well Emergency Program provides a 24-hour, on-call service to farmers – Southern California Edison (SCE) and Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) customers – when an electrical outage occurs. The program is a partnership between the two utility companies and the Tulare County Resource Management Agency's (RMA) Building Department, who issues the appropriate electrical permits when an outage occurs.

How does it work?

- Owner or contractor calls 1-877-770-2960 for SCE or 1-800-743-5000 for PG&E.
- RMA staff is contacted by utility and receives outage information.
- RMA staff contacts owner or contractor to visit site location and approves an inspection to release power.

- Owner or contractor applies for an Electrical Building Permit within two working days of the electrical reconnection.

Tulare County Farm Bureau Executive Director Patricia Stever-Blattler said the agriculture community is appreciative of the County's efforts to implement this new emergency response service program.

"Agriculture depends on many factors, and when weather or unforeseen circumstances disrupt power to critical agricultural equipment like pumps or wind machines, it is important for farmers to have access to emergency response services and be able to get service reconnected in real time," Stever-Blattler said. "In the winter months in particular with frost conditions so volatile, having the ability for a grower to access the County's inspection services and reestablish service on a wind machine or pump could be the difference in saving the crop and potentially protecting tens of thousands of dollars in crop investments

and farm income."

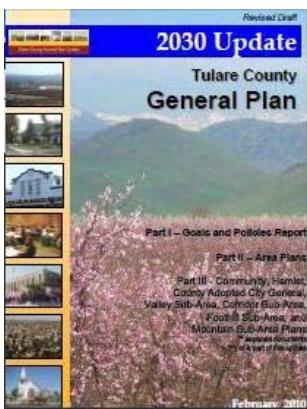
Tulare County Supervisor Phil Cox said the program extends beyond extreme weather conditions.

"This type of service may be critical for the protection of agricultural crops from a freeze or other type of weather occurrence or accident," Supervisor Cox said. "Agriculture is the life blood of the San Joaquin Valley and this program will help protect valuable commodities, and, in the long run, preserve jobs."

RMA Chief Building Official Dennis Lehman said the 24-hour emergency program will benefit the agricultural community tremendously.

"Prior to the program's creation, RMA staff would only respond during normal County working hours," Lehman said. "If a farmer needed service on a Friday night during cold temperatures, a fix to the issue could last all weekend. This is a proactive step to assisting our agricultural community."

### General Plan 2030 Update Moves Forward



Tulare County's General Plan 2030 Update moved one step closer to final approval at the December 7 Planning Commission meeting.

By a unanimous 7-0 vote, the Tulare County Planning Commission approved the following recommendations to the Board of Supervisors: approve the certification of the proposed Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the proposed General Plan 2030 Update

and proposed Climate Action Plan; adoption of the proposed General Plan 2030 Update; and adoption of the proposed Climate Action Plan. The vote was not an approval or certification. The General Plan Update and supporting documents will now be brought to the Board of Supervisors for review and final approval.

The Board of Supervisors will schedule a public hearing in early 2012 to consider the

Planning Commission's recommendations regarding adoption of the proposed General Plan 2030 Update and proposed Climate Action Plan.

For further information regarding this project, contact David Bryant, Project Planner, at (559) 624-7000. Information is also available online at:

[www.generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us](http://www.generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us)

# Volume 3, Issue 6

## Employee Spotlight: Rodney Blaco



**Name:** Rodney M. Blaco

**Title:** Deputy District Attorney

**Years of Service:** One year

**Duties:** Responsible for prosecuting Consumer and Environmental crimes.

**Family:** Married to Lia and expecting their first child, a girl, on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Hobbies:** Playing soccer, softball and flag football. Coaching baseball, football and soccer. Reading.

**Clubs/Organizations:**

Member, Visalia-Mineral King Masonic Lodge No. 128. President, Visalia American Little League. Coach, West Yosemite Valley Youth Football League.

**What is your most rewarding experience as a County employee?**

My position with the District

Attorney's Office allows me to be proactive in protecting the citizens of Tulare County from both consumer fraud and environmental hazards. A recent issue I was involved in addressing was working to eliminate the illegal sales of cosmetic contacts within the County. These sales pose a serious health risk to the children and young adults in our community who purchase and use them without proper medical instruction or supervision. While these types of cases don't make headlines, I feel as though I'm helping protect our community from those who would seek to take advantage of, defraud or harm Tulare County's residents. Because of this, every day, I get to work on matters that are personally rewarding, have a positive impact in our community and allow me to fulfill the notion that...we should always do the right thing for the right reason.

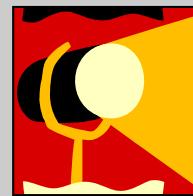
**Please tell us something other employees might not know about you?**

I once lectured on democracy in rural China. I was selected

to participate in a service learning program, focusing on poverty alleviation, through Tsinghua University in Beijing. As part of the program I spent time in rural China visiting villages and working with students and teachers at a middle school. When the opportunity presented itself, (i.e. the 'Party' members were not present) I was asked to speak about democracy, freedom of speech, etc. to the teachers. Following the end of the program, I spent two weeks backpacking by myself around China. It was an amazing experience.

**Where is your favorite place to visit in Tulare County?**

My wife and I are big baseball fans, so attending Rawhide games was the highlight of our first year in Tulare County. We hope to explore more of the County as we continue to put roots down in the community.



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](mailto:newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us)

### News Update on Rodney Blaco:

Blaco teamed up with Probation Department employee Juan Garcia and Tulare County Office of Education employee Adam Valenica to coach the Visalia Hurricanes to the West Yosemite Youth Football League Peewee Championship. The team finished with a 8-1-1 regular season and went 3-0 in the playoffs.

Congratulations Rodney!

## Program Spotlight: Holiday Computer Program

In December, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors, Tulare County Office of Education, Visalia Rotary clubs, and Office Depot partnered to deliver 100 computers to children. School officials nominated children to receive computers based on their outstanding character and good citizenship.

The County of Tulare contributed 100 computers and matching flat screens that were due to be sold as

surplus. The Latino Rotary Club donated funding so that the surplus computers could be delivered to children. Each computer was tested and Windows XP operating systems was installed.

County staff, Rotarians and other volunteers met at the Tulare County Surplus Store on Dec. 14 to load up vehicles with the computers and delivered them to students Countywide.



Computers were picked up at the County Surplus Store.



Loaded in to trucks by volunteers.



District Three Supervisor Phil Cox delivers computers to students.

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

[newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us)

## AROUND TULARE COUNTY - BACK PAGE

**County to Launch Economic Development Website**

Tulare County has had a longstanding vision to develop an economic development website that includes relevant industry information about local agribusiness, workforce development partners, site selection, zoning assistance and other factors considered essential to implement an effective campaign to foster increased economic development in Tulare County.

The Tulare County Resource Management Agency (RMA) is bringing this vision to fruition. In December, RMA staff presented an overview of a new proposed Economic Development website to the Board of Supervisors. This website should be complete early this month.

A properly designed website can be a convenient and efficient medium of instant communication for business

owners, prospective entrepreneurs, suppliers and site locators to "check out" a local jurisdiction for doing business.

The website being developed by RMA staff includes industry portals designed to quickly inform prospective business site selectors about Tulare County's dominant industry, agriculture. The website also provides detailed information about important local demographics, and also a guide to local educational institutions and other business development partners that can provide access to a local workforce with the relevant specialized skills a particular business desires, and other key data.

Most importantly, the website is designed to put prospective businesses directly in touch

with dedicated contacts trained to rapidly respond to economic development needs and direct them to site locations with proper zoning and adequate infrastructure that will support their proposed business activities.

RMA developed the proposed website by teaming up with the County Information and Communications Technology Department, the Tulare County Ag Commissioner's Office and County Counsel's Office.

**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.

Around Tulare County  
2800 W. Burrel Ave.  
Visalia, CA 93291  
Phone: 559/636-5000  
Fax: 559/733-6898

E-Mail/Subscribe:  
[newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us)

Internet:  
[www.aroundtularecounty.com](http://www.aroundtularecounty.com)

**JANUARY COUNTY ACTIVITIES, DEADLINES, EVENTS, MEETINGS****Meeting: (Date/Time)****More Information:**

Tulare County Water Commission: Jan. 9. 3 p.m.	559/636-5005
Tulare County Youth Commission Meeting: Jan. 9. 3 p.m.	559/636-5000
Board of Supervisors' Meeting: Jan. 10, 24, 31. 9 a.m.	559/636-5000
Tulare County Planning Commission: Jan. 11, 25. 9 a.m.	559/624-7000
Tulare County Association of Governments: Jan. 23. 1 p.m.	559/624-7274
L.A.F.C.O. Meeting: NO MEETING	559/624-7000



**Places to Go Play:** The Exeter Historical Museum, located at 125 South "B" Street, was constructed in 1913. The museum focuses on the history of Exeter, including Mineral King and Conifer in Sequoia National Park, Yokohl Valley, Rocky Hill and other surrounding landmarks. The Courthouse Gallery of the Arts is also located next door to the museum. Learn more about Exeter and other places to "Go Play" at [www.tularecountymap.com](http://www.tularecountymap.com).