



# Around Tulare County

DELIVERING INFORMATION ABOUT TULARE COUNTY — SEPTEMBER 2012

## Supervisor's Message: Update on Two Important Issues



Tulare County residents should be pleased with the efforts of its local government employees. While there are many excellent examples of their hard work, I want to share with you two ongoing efforts of note.

### Suicide Prevention Week

Between January 1, 2012 and June 30, 2012, Tulare County lost 18 lives to suicide. Each completed suicide directly impacts numerous family members, friends, loved ones, and by extension, our whole community.

Bringing awareness of suicide prevention information, resources, and training is vital to the health and well-being of our community. On September 11, the Board of Supervisors will play a minor role in raising awareness by declaring September 9-15, 2012 Suicide Prevention Week in Tulare County at our meeting. The main efforts for raising awareness, however, are being put forth by the Tulare & Kings Counties Suicide Prevention Task Force (SPTF), which our Health & Human Services Agency employees

participate in.

Each year, the SPTF puts on the Festival of Hope. The Festival of Hope is a two-day festival featuring a variety of elements to engage and inform our community. The SPTF strives to create a positive atmosphere filled with breath-taking street murals created by professional and volunteer artists. Free live concerts will fill the air with music and diverse performances will feature music and dancing. Local resources will be present to provide information about services that can transform lives. Through these activities the SPTF's goal is to bring hope to those in our community who have lost a loved one and to put resources into the hands of people who need them. All activities are free and everyone is encouraged to participate in the creation of sidewalk chalk murals.

This year, the two-day festival will be held Oct. 6-7 at the Tulare Outlet Center, 1407 Retherford St. Tulare, CA 93274. For more information, please visit [www.sptf.org](http://www.sptf.org).

### Marijuana Eradication

One of the most grueling tasks this year is being carried out by our own County Counsel, Sheriff's Department and Resource Management Agency (RMA):

marijuana eradication.

Last week the Sheriff's Department and RMA eradicated more than 2,800 marijuana plants combined at locations in Ivanhoe and Porterville. The street value was estimated to be more than \$8 million. The eradication of these two grow sites are examples of the hard work that has been put in by our employees during this grow season.

As of August, more than 160 grow sites were contacted and some were found to be in violation of County ordinances. These visits have resulted in the abatement of 58 percent of those grow sites. In addition, RMA currently has 30 ten-day notices served and active and 11 administrative hearings set in November.

Residents who want to report a concern regarding medical marijuana sites can call anonymously at 559/725-4194 or email [tcso@tipnow.com](mailto:tcso@tipnow.com).

I would like to thank all Tulare County employees for providing important services. Keep up the great work!

Pete Vander Poel, District Two  
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

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## County Approves General Plan 2030 Update



Dozens of residents attended the General Plan 2030 Update public hearing

Tulare County now has an updated general plan.

On Aug. 28, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to approve the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. In addition, the Supervisors certified the Final Environmental Impact Report and adopted a Climate Action Plan, a document that outlines how to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions as new development occurs.

“On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, I would like to thank staff for years of hard work and dedication,” said Allen Ishida, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. “I would also like to thank the residents who participated in

the process, especially those who were opposed to the County’s General Plan Update. They were instrumental in helping the County formulate a sound and good General Plan Update.”

The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update provides a comprehensive, long-term plan for the future land use and physical development of the County through the year 2030. The Plan promotes healthy sustainable growth while protecting agricultural lands by directing growth to urban areas. The General Plan Update consists of policies that set forth objectives, principles and standards that guide future land use decisions within the

County.

Tulare County Resource Management Agency staff has been working on the General Plan Update since 2003. During the update process a series of 19 workshops, 11 Board of Supervisors meetings, 12 technical advisory committee meetings and four joint Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission meetings were held to discuss, review, recommend and provide public input.

For further information, please visit [www.generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/](http://www.generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/)

## County Addresses Solid Waste Fund Deficit

### Did You Know?

Enterprise funds are used for services provided to the public through user charges, which should cover 100 percent of the cost of service through no subsidy from the County.

There are more than 20 Enterprise Funds in Tulare County.

Various measures were approved on Aug. 28 by the Board of Supervisors to help bridge a projected \$5.1 million deficit to the County’s Solid Waste Enterprise Fund for Fiscal Year 2012-13.

Solid Waste staff reported that the approved measures - the closure of four transfer stations and reducing operating days at the Teapot Dome Landfill, and requiring licensed refuse haulers to deliver waste to a landfill within the County - would cover \$1.5 million of the projected deficit. The transfer station closures and reduced operating hours will go into effect November 1, 2012. Requiring licensed refuse haulers to deliver waste to a landfill within the County will go into effect October 1, 2012.

A third measure, a landfill fee overhaul, was also

approved pending review by the Tulare County Auditor-Controller. More than 20 fees are subject to review and approval. In addition, a decision on one fee increase, a \$3 per ton tipping fee on general refuse, was delayed until the September 11, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting to allow Solid Waste staff time to meet with incorporated cities and contracted solid waste collectors to discuss future impacts. Prior to Tuesday, fee increases at landfills had not been changed since 1994. Upon review, the approved landfill fees would go into effect October 1, 2012.

Staff estimates that the landfill fee overall measure would cover \$3.1 million of the projected deficit. The remainder of the deficit - \$500,000 - has been covered by measures staff put in place in the past few

months, which included eliminating seven full time vacant positions, postponing equipment purchases, and reducing service contracts. Those measures saved \$800,000.

Tulare County Administrative Officer Jean Rousseau said the projected operating deficit to the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund can be attributed to dated landfill fees, a reduction in material received due to recycling requirements, low interest rates, and a reduction in reserves that earn interest.

“We will need to monitor the impacts of these changes to the Solid Waste Fund to determine if additional changes are necessary,” Rousseau said.

## Spotlight: John Hess



**Name:** John Hess

**Title:** Administrative Analyst

**Years of Service:** 7

**Duties:** My duties are to provide fiscal, policy, and administrative review to the County Administrative Officer. Primarily, I review budget information, agenda items, new programs and policies, and special projects for the CAO and the Board.

**Family?** My wife, Sarah, is a High School Counselor. My parents and sister also live in Visalia.

**Hobbies?** I enjoy a variety of outdoor activities, like running, cycling, and backpacking. I also enjoy playing guitar and was in a local band called Cactus Rat. Other than that, I

like to spend my time reading and traveling.

**Clubs/Organizations?** I am a member of First Baptist Hanford, where I teach High School Sunday School and serve on the Mission's Committee. I am also a member of the Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority of Tulare County, where we administer thousands of affordable housing units throughout the County.

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

As a public servant, I believe that my biggest reward comes from the opportunity to serve the residents of the County by providing services, programs, and projects that make a real and positive difference in the quality of their lives. I get a lot of fulfillment from being a part of projects that improve our unincorporated communities for our County's residents. My most rewarding experiences

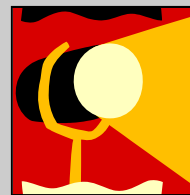
have been witnessing first-hand the positive impacts of these projects over the past few years.

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

While I was in college, I worked at an airport in Los Angeles and met a number of celebrities. I got to meet Tom Cruise, John Travolta, Hillary Clinton, Tim McGraw, Dr. Phil, Paula Abdul, Puff Daddy, Dennis Leary, and Simon and Garfunkel, and some others. It was an interesting and sometimes surreal experience to talk with some of them.

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

Yokohl Valley is a great place for running and cycling. I have also had the opportunity to backpack in a lot of the Sierra Nevada backcountry. My favorite spots in the backcountry would probably be the Tablelands and the Mineral King area.



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)

## Program Spotlight: Indian Gaming Local Community Benefit Committee

Tulare County's Indian Gaming Local Community Benefit Committee (TCLCBC) is seeking interested residents to fill three vacancies.

The purpose of the committee is to facilitate the distribution of grant funds made from the Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund. Last year, more than \$263,000 was appropriated to the seven-member committee for distribution to eligible entities. Funding allocated for the TCLCBC to administer is mandated by Senate Bill 621 (2003), which makes grant funding available to counties, cities and special districts impacted by tribal gaming from the Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund.

The committee is composed of seven members consisting of the following: two County representatives appointed by the Board of Supervisors; three representatives appointed by mutual agreement of the Board of Supervisors and the Tule River Indian Tribe; two representatives appointed by the Tule River Indian Tribe.

In addition to the seven members, there are also three alternate positions. The committee meets at least twice per year. Committee members do not receive stipends or mileage reimbursement.

Currently, the TCLCBC is seeking two mutually selected

representatives and one alternate mutually selected representative.

Applications for the TCLCBC can be obtained from the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors located at the County Administration Building, 2800 W. Burrel Ave. Visalia, CA 93291 or you can call 559/636-5000 and request an application be mailed to you.

Completed applications should be mailed back to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

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

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

## Step Up Youth Challenge Recruiting Schools

### Youth Challenge Timeline

**September 12, 2012:** Each registered school will send a representative to advisor training.

**October 11, 2012:** Each registered school will participate in the Step Up Challenge Youth Summit.

**October 12, 2012:** Youth Challenge projects begin.

**April 12, 2013:** Youth Challenge projects complete.

Middle schools from throughout Tulare County have a chance to participate in a program that seeks to decrease gang activity and support positive options for youth.

There are a total of 20 spots available for middle schools and 10 spots available for high schools (already filled) to participate in the Step Up Youth Challenge, a seven-month program designed to engage a diverse group of students in a service learning-based Challenge Project that impacts their school culture and community. Participating schools will have the opportunity to show how their projects made a positive difference at school or in the community in a competition for grants totaling \$15,000.

The 20 middle school spots available for the schools are on a first-come, first-served

basis. So far, 14 middle or junior high schools have enrolled in the program.

For example, Mulcahy Middle School Assistant Principal Mark Thompson said his school enrolled in the Step Up Youth Challenge for a second year because the program inspired the campus.

“The results of the Step Up program on our campus: not a single gang fight all year,” Thompson said. “The program really made a difference and the Step Up Challenge did what it was supposed to do and achieved its mission. It created a whole new campus.”

Interested middle schools should contact Board Representative Allison Pierce at 559/636-5000 or by email at [AG-Pierce@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:AG-Pierce@co.tulare.ca.us).

For more information on the Step Up Youth Challenge, please visit [www.stepuptc.com](http://www.stepuptc.com).

The program is sponsored by the Tulare County Gang Prevention Task Force, whose goal is to decrease gang activity and support the growth of positive options for youth throughout Tulare County.

### 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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### SEPTEMBER COUNTY ACTIVITIES, DEADLINES, EVENTS, MEETINGS

#### Meeting: (Date/Time)

Tulare County Water Commission: Sept. 10. 3 p.m.  
Board of Supervisors' Meeting: Sept. 11, 18, 25. 9 a.m.  
L.A.F.C.O. Meeting: Sept. 12. 2 p.m.  
Tulare County Planning Commission: Sept. 12, 26. 9 a.m.  
Tulare County Association of Governments: Sept. 17. 1 p.m.

#### More Information:

559/636-5005  
559/636-5000  
559/624-7274  
559/624-7000  
559/624-7274



**Places to Go Play:** Col. Allensworth State Historic Park is located in southwest Tulare County. This park memorializes the first town that was founded, financed and governed by African Americans. The park is open Friday thru Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and for special events. Learn more about Col. Allensworth State Historic Park and other places to “Go Play” in Tulare County at [www.tularecountymap.com](http://www.tularecountymap.com).