



Around Tulare County

Delivering Information about Tulare County - January 2011

Supervisor's Message: Countywide Flood Efforts to be Commended



Tulare County received an unexpected holiday surprise from Mother Nature in December: two weeks of rainfall that caused major flooding and millions of dollars in damage to agriculture crops, infrastructure, roads, and homes.

Preliminary estimates show:

- There was millions of dollars in damage to the agriculture industry.
- More than 60 miles of roads were damaged with estimates totaling \$6 million.
- An estimated 33 homes and two commercial properties received flood damage totaling \$830,000.
- Six residents from two homes in Cutler/Orosi were displaced but found a place to stay with friends or family shortly after.

While there was a significant amount of damage and stress, City and County employees, the media, and residents stepped up and met each challenge head on. All should be commended for their efforts.

For example:

- The City of Visalia's efforts to allocate sandbags and other resources prevented major property damage and further trouble to residents and motorists.
- Quick action by the City of Porterville to pump water out of ponding basins and providing sandbags to residents also helped mitigate damage.
- County of Tulare employees from the Auditor-Controller, Board of Supervisors, County Administrative Office, Fire, Health & Human Services Agency, Resource Management Agency, Sheriff's, and Purchasing departments teamed up to notify, allocate and provide resources, and respond to calls in a timely manner.

I would like to give a special thank you to the Roads and Fire Department for their efforts to identify and take care of potential hazards in unincorporated Tulare County.

Follow Up

Both cities and Tulare County declared state of emergencies to allow the opportunity to call on the State for more resources to be utilized as quickly as possible when needed. The State also issued a proclamation declaring

disasters in Kern, Orange, Riverside, San Luis Obispo, San Bernardino, and Tulare counties.

These declaration of emergencies will allow all jurisdictions within Tulare County to request State and Federal resources to help prevent further damage and restore infrastructure.

There is no doubt that there will be much to do in 2011 in terms of assessment and restoring the damage in Tulare County. However, without the help of all the key stakeholders during this flood and series of storms, the damage could have been much worse.

Tulare County, including all jurisdictions, is prepared to meet all challenges to ensure public safety.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the flooding and damage it caused, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff at 559/636-5000 or by email at mennis@co.tulare.ca.us.

Mike Ennis, District Five
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

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Supervisors Partner with Service Clubs to Deliver Computers

“Children received computers based on their good citizenship and character.”

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors, Tulare County Office of Education, Visalia Rotary clubs, College of the Sequoias Computer Club and Office Depot partnered together to deliver 100 computers to worthy children in December. 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 worthy children. The COS computer club tested the computers, erased all sensitive files and proprietary software, and installed fresh Windows XP operating systems.

County staff, Rotarians and other volunteers met at the Tulare County Surplus Store on

Dec. 15 to load up vehicles with the computers and delivered them to students Countywide.

County school officials nominated hundreds of students to receive the donated computers. The chosen students and most of their teachers were unaware the computers were going to be delivered.

Web Extra:
View a brief video of Supervisor Vander Poel delivering computers to students at:
<http://www.twitvid.com/BUV3E>



Computers were picked up at the County Surplus Store.



Dozens of volunteers delivered and loaded computers.



District Two Supervisor Pete Vander Poel presents to students.

“Tulare County will continue to seek grant opportunities that will deliver reliable, clean water to Seville and other rural, unincorporated communities.”
Board of Supervisors Chairman Steve Worthley

County Applies for Grant to Improve Water in Seville

Tulare County took an important step in December to replace an aging water distribution system in the unincorporated community of Seville.

At its Dec. 7 meeting, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the submission of a grant application to seek more than \$1 million in Federal funding for the replacement of deteriorating distribution lines and water storage facilities in Seville, otherwise known as the Seville Water System Rehabilitation Project.

In April 2009, the Board of Supervisors approved the

County assuming temporary receivership of the Seville Water Company (SWC) – a private water company – in the community of Seville. In June 2009, the Tulare County Superior Court granted temporary receivership for the SWC to the County for a two year period.

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Steve Worthley, who represents Seville, said Tulare County is seeking to fulfill its mission of repairing the water system which serves 74 houses, approximately 375 people, and a school.

“The Board’s decision in April 2009 to seek temporary receivership has allowed the

County to take proactive measures to fix the aging water system in Seville,” Chairman Worthley said. “Tulare County will continue to seek grant opportunities that will deliver reliable, clean water to Seville and other rural, unincorporated communities.”

The total cost of the project is estimated to be more than \$2 million. The grant application for Federal funding and an existing grant application for State funding would cover the cost of the project. Self-Help Enterprises has worked extensively with Tulare County in the preparation of the grant application.

Employee Spotlight: Ruth Medlin



Name: Ruth Medlin

Title: County Training Officer

Years of Service: 10 years, 2 months

Duties: I coordinate the County's Supervisory Academy Program, which trains supervisors in behavioral (soft skills) and systems (County policies). I facilitate a number of the behavioral workshops. I also coordinate the County's Harassment Prevention Training program. I'm the editor for the County's newsletter, The Grapevine. I work with department teams upon request teaching team building, leadership, communication skills and other

requested topics. I plan and coordinate the County's annual Health and Wellness Fair in conjunction with Lupe Garza, Benefits Coordinator and Katie Arnst, HNSA.

Family? I live on my family's farm along with 3 dogs, and 5 cats.

Hobbies? Travel (I went to France in October), public speaking (I'm a Certified Toast Master), scrapbooking (I'm working on the France trip scrapbook now), reading (I just finished The Happiness Project by Gretchen Rubin-everyone should read it!), football (I go see the Raiders play whenever I can-no, I don't sit in the 'Black Hole'), I'm a fantastic cook, and a real power shopper given the right circumstances!

Clubs/Organizations? In addition to Toast Masters, I serve on the curriculum committee for Leadership Visalia, I am a member of SHRM (Society of Human

Resource Managers) and I am in training to become a Technology of Participation (ToP) trainer.

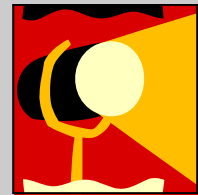
What is your most rewarding experience as a County employee? I believe I have the perfect job in the County. I meet so many wonderful County employees through the Supervisory Academy. It is a pleasure to be given the opportunity to facilitate discussions that broaden supervisors knowledge and scope.

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

I teach an aqua aerobics class 2 times a week at 5:30 a.m.

Where is your favorite place to visit in Tulare County?

Three Rivers! I love the small shops, restaurants and then going up into Sequoia National Park to stay at Wuksachi Lodge, after a good snow, it is magical.



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

Supervisors Award \$100,000 to Non-Profits

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors in December awarded \$100,000 in grant funding to eleven non-profit organizations throughout Tulare County through the Step Up Youth Activities Grant Program.

The County-sponsored program is intended to foster prevention and intervention programs that work with gang affiliated or gang exposed youth in Tulare County.

The organizations that received funding are:

District 1: Tulare-Kings Youth For Christ, \$10,000, which will fund the Team Success pro-

gram; Courage to Change, \$10,000, which will fund the Matrix Mentoring Solutions program.

District 2: Grandma's House, \$10,000, which will fund an afterschool tutoring program; Tulare Athletic Boxing Club, \$10,000, which will fund an athletics program.

District 3: Golden State YMCA, \$10,000, which will fund the UCYC program; Crossroads Community Church, \$5,000, which will fund the Visions of Hope program; Hands in the Community, \$5,000, which will fund the Gangs to Jobs program.

District 4: Boys and Girls Clubs of Tulare County, \$10,000, which will fund gang prevention efforts through the Target Outreach Plus program; AYSO Region 129, \$10,000, which will provide funding to the AYSO Region 129 soccer league.

District 5: Sequoia Council, Boy Scouts of America, \$10,000, which will fund expansion of the Terra Bella Explorer Post; Boys and Girls Clubs of the Sequoias, \$10,000, which will fund the Working on our Futures program.



Web Extra:

Read more about the Step Up Youth Activities Grant Program and all Tulare County Gang Prevention Task Force items at www.stepuptc.com

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"We appreciate the wealth of experience that Tim brought to Tulare County and believe the county benefitted tremendously under his leadership." Board of Supervisors Chairman Steve Worthley



Retired Tulare County Human Resources Director Tim Huntley

Tulare County HR&D Director Retires; Sjostrom named Interim

Tulare County Human Resources & Development Director Tim Huntley announced at a Board of Supervisors meeting that he will retire after more than 40 years of public service. Huntley's last day was Dec. 17, 2010.

Rhonda Sjostrom, who has served as the County's Assistant Human Resources Director for the past year, has been named the interim Human Resources & Development Director, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors announced. Sjostrom has been with Tulare County since 1987, where she has held management positions in the County Administrative Office and Human Resources.

"We appreciate the wealth of experience that Tim brought to Tulare County and believe the county benefitted tremendously under his

leadership," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Steve Worthley.

Huntley was hired by Tulare County on August 1, 2005. Prior to holding his position in Tulare County, Tim served more than 35 years in a variety of public service positions, many of them in upper management, with the City of Escondido, Kings County, San Bernardino County, and Yolo County.

Under Huntley's leadership in Tulare County, the Human Resources & Development team established a Joint Powers Agreement with the County of Fresno to administer the counties' health plans; instituted a system for background checks for new hires with a fingerprinting Live Scan program; created an employee discount program; assisted in the formation of the County Fire Department and IT Department and initiated

the annual employee Wellness Fair.

His most visible role with the County was as their chief negotiator with the County's 10 employee associations and unions. The recession necessitated dramatic cut backs in both employee compensation and staffing. In the last three years Huntley negotiated 27 labor contracts including reductions in compensation that helped avoid additional layoffs of employees.

"Negotiations have been difficult both for the employees and management," Huntley said. "We have struggled through these last years with good intentions, honest efforts, and a strong desire to secure agreement. I'm optimistic that our cooperation this past year will set the stage for a more fruitful future."

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 or Jeff Forbes.

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JANUARY COUNTY ACTIVITIES, DEADLINES, EVENTS, MEETINGS

Meeting: (Date/Time)

More Information:

Tulare County Youth Commission: Jan. 10, 3 p.m.	559/636-5000
Board of Supervisors' Meeting: Jan. 11, 25. 9 a.m.	559/636-5000
L.A.F.C.O. Meeting: Jan. 12. 2 p.m.	559/624-7000
Tulare County Planning Commission: Jan. 12, 26. 9 a.m.	559/624-7000
T.C.A.G. Meeting: Jan. 24. 1 p.m.	559/624-7000
Tulare County Water Commission: Jan. 24. 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.	559/636-5000
Tulare County Gang Prevention Task Force: Jan. 28. Noon.	559/636-5000



Places to Go Play: Lake Success is located at the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley about eight miles east of Porterville on Highway 190. With the scenic Sierra Nevada in the background, Lake Success provides great fishing, boating, water skiing, camping, picnicking, and more. Learn more about Lake Success and other places to "Go Play" at www.tularecountymap.com.