



Around Tulare County

DELIVERING INFORMATION ABOUT TULARE COUNTY — JANUARY 2014

Supervisor's Message: County Moved Forward in 2013



When I took over as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors in 2013, I wanted to address four broad areas that I believed would help Improve Life in Tulare County. Those areas included: Health & Wellness; Public Safety; Investing in Youth; and Building Communities. Although I cannot say that all challenges were completely addressed over the last year, I do feel that efforts were undertaken that pointed Tulare County in the right direction.

Regarding Health and Wellness; I think Tulare County Government made great strides amongst our own workforce and also in the general public. The first ever Healthy Tulare County Week was held, with each day of the week being dedicated to improving health and well-being in the County through a specific subject area. Additionally, through the dedication and hard work of the Human Resources Department and Rhonda Sjostrom, Tulare County also adopted our first ever comprehensive Health and Wellness Program, which will certainly result in positive health improvements for Tulare County employees. Tulare County also assisted in

bringing awareness to many critical health issues that challenge our community; Mental Health Awareness, Suicide Prevention, Drug and Alcohol Awareness through Red Ribbon Week, just to name a few.

Last year was also a strong year for public safety. The Board, in collaboration with the Sheriff's Department, Resource Management Agency, and County Counsel, began crafting a detailed marijuana policy in hopes of further enhancing safety within the Communities of Tulare County. Also, the Community Based Officer Program was continued in several unincorporated communities in the County, despite the termination of the grant that initially funded the program. Thanks to the work of Dennis Lehman and the Code Enforcement Division and the assistance of County partners in Animal Control, Health and Human Services, and the Sheriff's Department, a Nuisance Property Abatement Program was established and is on its way to cleaning up the County and hopefully becoming a self-sustaining program with lasting impacts. Tulare County also secured an additional \$40 Million grant to construct new correctional facilities in the North part of the County.

Tulare County also continued to make significant investments in our Youth through the Step Up Program, summer work programs for Youth, and recognition of outstanding achievements by our Young residents. We also continued to strengthen Tulare County

by building communities. There were many ways that we were able to work towards this, but one of the most tangible in 2013, was the work done by the Tulare County Flood Commission and Resource Management Agency Staff. The three initial projects that are being designed and or constructed are the Juvenile Detention Facility near Cottonwood Creek project, the Seville-Sontag Ditch project, and the Yetttem-Button Ditch project. These projects will have a long term impact in the County.

Last year was also a year of improved accessibility of the Board of Supervisors to Tulare County residents. Five meetings were held in each Supervisorial District, occurred in the evenings, and were very well received. In addition, the Board also hosted the first ever joint meeting between the County and the Tule River Tribal Council in an effort to break down barriers and improve communication with the sovereign nation.

In conclusion, I think that 2013 was a great year for Tulare County and its residents. I want to thank my colleagues, County Administration, and all County Departments and Employees for their tireless and outstanding work to improve life in our County.

Pete Vander Poel, District Two Board of Supervisors

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County Closer To Receiving \$40 million Jail Construction Grant

“This is a facility that is certainly needed due to the influx of state prisoners as a result of realignment. I would like to commend the Tulare County team that put together the application that will ultimately meet a very important need.” District Two Supervisor Pete Vander Poel.

Tulare County is one step closer to receiving \$40 million in state funds to replace the existing Men’s Correctional Facility and Day Reporting Center located north of Visalia.

In December, a committee of the Board of State and Community Corrections recommended to allocate \$500 million to 15 counties for upgrading local jails to include rehabilitative program space that meets Gov. Jerry Brown’s prison and public safety realignment goals. The recommendations will be considered at the Board of State and Community Corrections meeting on Jan. 16, 2014 in Los Angeles.

“This is very exciting news for Tulare County,” said Pete Vander Poel, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. “This is a facility that is certainly needed due to the influx of state prisoners as a result of realignment. I would like to commend the Tulare County team that put together the application that will ultimately meet a very important need.”

Tulare County Sheriff Mike Boudreaux said the recommendation is extremely

good news for his department.

“I am so pleased with the positive collaborative effort from all of the County partners that made this proposal viable,” Sheriff Boudreaux said. “The future of this department and the County as a whole requires us to actively seek opportunities such as this to improve the infrastructure of our Detention Facilities. Our team has been diligently working on this project, making several trips to Sacramento. I am excited for the project and for the future of our department.”

If the recommendation is approved, the funding would pay for 90 percent of construction and related expenses for the project. The program requires Tulare County to pledge 10 percent, or \$4.4 million, of the project amount in matching funds from cash or in-kind sources.

The project would replace existing facilities with at 384-bed jail, day reporting center, vocational center, and program space in Visalia. Features of the project include a jail that will house inmates in small groups; several classrooms dedicated to educational, cognitive

behavioral therapy, and vocational instruction; and a small number of administrative segregation cells.

According to the Board of State and Community Corrections, 36 counties submitted requests for funding that were ranked according to how closely they met the requirements of AB 109’s landmark reform mandate to house and rehabilitate non-serious, non-violent, non-sexual offenders in their home communities. Realignment seeks to improve rehabilitation results by keeping offenders close to families and support systems. It includes constitutionally guaranteed funding for proven programs that support offenders’ successful transition back into the community.

The construction funding is a result of SB 1022, which provided for the issuance of lease revenue bonds to help finance the jail modifications needed to accommodate offenders who otherwise would have been sent to state prisons.

Tulare County Tech Fair on Tap for January

Tulare County Information & Communications Technology is proud to host the Third Annual Tech Fair for County employees, local businesses, education agencies, and organizations.

The Tech Fair will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on January 16, 2014 at the Visalia Convention Center: 303 E Acequia Ave, Visalia, CA 93291. The theme for this

year’s fair is security and is setup to be the biggest one yet!

From the Digital Photo Contest Display to security demos, there will be more than 25 vendor booths to visit. (The ICT prize wheel will be back, along with the popular vendor sponsored raffle.)

In addition, there will be several workshops to attend. The

workshops will cover anything from using collaborative technology tools to cyber security.

For the most up to date info check out the website: <http://tularecounty.ca.gov/techfair/> Don't forget to register to attend the 2014 Tech Fair, Secure Your Future, Grow With Us!



Employee Spotlight: Lisa Bertolino



The Tulare County Board of Supervisors appointed Lisa Bertolino as interim Public Defender following Michael Sheltzer's appointment by Governor Jerry Brown to serve a judgeship in Tulare County Superior Court.

Bertolino, who has served as the county's assistant public defender since 2003, has been with Tulare County since 1989. Prior to her career with Tulare County, Bertolino was a certified public accountant.

"Based on her experience within the department, the Board is confident Lisa will be

able to maintain the integrity of the Public Defender's Office," said Pete Vander Poel, Board of Supervisors Chairman.

Bertolino has a law degree from the Ventura College of Law and Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from California State University, Humboldt. She has also been a member of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission since 2001.

The Board of Supervisors officially appointed Bertolino interim director after its December 17 meeting.

About the Public Defender's Office:

The Public Defender is mandated by state law and the Constitution to provide

competent, effective and ethical legal representation to people unable to afford private counsel in certain kinds of cases where life or liberty issues are at stake.

Attorneys in the Public Defender's Office are appointed to represent: defendants accused of crimes in misdemeanor and felony cases; juveniles in delinquency cases; mentally disabled individuals facing involuntary commitments to locked facilities; and defendants facing incarceration in contempt of court cases arising out of a failure to obey civil court orders.



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

Program Spotlight: County Establishes Fraud Hotline

Tulare County Auditor-Controller, Rita A. Woodard, would like to announce the implementation of a new County of Tulare Fraud Hotline: **559-636-5230**.

The County has financial and operating controls in place to provide reasonable assurance that fraudulent, illegal or dishonest activity by employees, officers, business contacts or others is prevented or detected. However, the Auditor-Controller recognizes the potential for inappropriate activities and behavior still exists within the County, as it does in any organization. To ensure the County's controls are effective, a fraud hotline has been established for whistleblowers to report improper or

inappropriate activities not identified by existing controls.

Reportable activities include, but are not limited to: theft, embezzlement, improper reporting of time, payments, misuse or questionable use of cash, diversion of or lack of timely deposit of county revenues, credit card fraud, inappropriate communication of confidential information (pay, social security number, other protected personal or financial information), and any other illegal or questionable acts that have a financial impact on the County.

Incidents can be filed by either providing information via the dedicated hotline number at (559) 636-5230,

or an online form can be completed and emailed directly to the Auditor-Controller's Office. The link to the online form can be found at <http://tularecounty.ca.gov/auditor/>. The person submitting the report may choose to remain anonymous, or he/she may leave additional information so that he/she can be contacted with any questions.

For more information, please contact the Tulare County Auditor-Controller's Department, Financial Reporting and Audits Division at (559) 636-5200 or log on to our website at <http://tularecounty.ca.gov/auditor/>.

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

newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us



Youth Receive Computers & Bikes in December



The Tulare County Board of Supervisors, Tulare County Purchasing, Tulare County Office of Education, Visalia Rotary clubs and Office Depot partnered together in December to deliver 110 computers to worthy children from 45 schools. School officials nominated children to receive computers based on their outstanding character and good citizenship.



The County of Tulare contributed 110 computers and matching flat screens that were due to be sold as surplus. The Tulare County Purchasing Department 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 to load up vehicles with the

computers and deliver.

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

Bike Give-A-Way

The Tulare County Sheriff's Department hosted its annual open house, which also featured a bike give-a-way provided by the Police Activities League.

Five children from each of the Sheriff's Department's substations received a bike. Sheriff's employees helped each child with their bike and provided safety equipment.

The Sheriff's PAL Program is a non-profit chapter of the California Police Activities League. The Sheriff's PAL board consists of 20 members

ranging from community based officers to civilian volunteers. The program targets underprivileged youth who demonstrate good character while keeping them involved in safe activities that reduce the risk of juvenile delinquency.

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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JANUARY COUNTY ACTIVITIES, DEADLINES, EVENTS, MEETINGS

Meeting: (Date/Time)

Board of Supervisors' Meeting: 9 a.m. Jan. 7, 14, 28.*
Tulare County Association of Governments: 1 p.m., Jan. 20.
Tulare County Planning Commission: 9 a.m. Jan. 8, 22.
Deadline for Digital Photography Contest: Jan. 3, 2014

More Information:

559/636-5000
559/624-7274
559/624-7000
559/636-4806

* The State of the County Address will be given on Jan. 28.



Places to Go Play: The Tulare Historical Museum preserves and showcases the history of the City of Tulare. In addition, the museum features holdings such as an art glass collection and has an entire wing devoted to military history - the Manuel Toledo Military Collection. The museum serves as a cultural center for the community, and also hosts a revolving collection of special exhibits. Learn more about the Tulare Historical Museum and other places to "Go Play" in Tulare County at www.tularecountymap.com.