



Around Tulare County

DELIVERING INFORMATION ABOUT TULARE COUNTY

OCTOBER 2017

Your Board is Keeping Busy Making Policy Improvements



Fall is here and with its arrival our farmers are harvesting nuts, olives, and cotton along with many other commodities. Agriculture is busy and so is Tulare County.

I have been working with our County Ag Commissioner, County Counsel, and the CAO to address the abandoned citrus orchards located in the County. I have seen this has become more of an issue as a result of the recent drought.

Citrus has a long history with Tulare County dating back to the late 1800s. According to the Ag Commissioner's annual crop report, Tulare County has over a 132,000 acres of citrus with a production value of approximately \$1.2 Billion in 2016.

Abandoned citrus orchards are not only an eye-sore, but the more important issue is they attract Asian Citrus Psyllids (ACP). These are small bugs about the size of a grain of rice. The ACP is a carrier of a

disease that is very difficult to detect, is fatal to citrus trees, and has no known cure. These bugs are not native to North America, but they have arrived and with them is the threat to lose our citrus farms.

This is why it is so important for Tulare County to implement policies that will help to minimize the impact of this bug on our local citrus industry and our local economy.

Agriculture is a big deal for Tulare County. Even if you aren't directly involved in farming, we have neighbors, friends, and family who are. The businesses we frequent everyday are also supportive of our local farmers.

Another policy the Board is exploring will impact our County's bottom line is electric generation and efficiency. Staff from General Services has been working on a plan to reduce electric costs throughout our county offices, so we can use our limited budgets to more effectively provide services to the residents of Tulare County.

We know there are opportunities for solar at our many facilities and have even more capabilities to reduce energy consumption through simple equipment upgrades.

One last policy I would like to highlight for this edition of Around Tulare County is the County's new Property Acquisition process.

The Board of Supervisors recently approved a new process for purchasing property that is more transparent and inclusive to the public than previous procedures.

It is important we provide essential services to our many communities, while at the same time be responsive to the needs of those same communities.

It's been a great first ten months and I hope to see you all around...Tulare County!

Kuyler Crocker,
District One
Tulare County Board of
Supervisors

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Step Up Youth Summit

The 2017-18 Step Up Youth Challenge program is off and running. In October, 500 middle school and high school students from throughout the County took part in the annual Youth Summit event at the International Agri-Center in Tulare.



This event serves as the season opener for the Step Up Youth Challenge. Teams from each school participated in a series of breakout sessions which covered topics ranging from leadership skills to designing a community service project.

With the help of our many great partners, including Tulare County Office of Education, CSET, Health and Human Services Agency, and Visalia Unified School District;

the day was both inspiring and fun for the students.

Tulare County District Three Supervisor, Amy Shuklian, participated as the master of ceremonies for the day inspiring the audience to not only find ways to get involved in their community, but to also realize that it can be fun and rewarding to give back.

Frank Escobar of VUSD was the keynote speaker for the

day encouraging students to realize that even if they don't feel like a leader, they are already in a position to set positive examples for their peers. Frank emphasized the importance of setting goals, to dream big, and give back to our schools and community.

The Step Up Youth Challenge is a yearlong project-based learning program for students. Each year, Step Up challenges students to look at their community and think of ways that they can make it better.

Each school creates a community service project and at the end of the school year, the schools compete against each other for grants to be used to continue and expand their project. The grants are awarded at a red carpet event in May.



Annual County Toy Drive is Underway

The annual Child Welfare Services (CWS) and Friends of Tulare County Toy Drive has begun! Tulare County employees are invited to help CWS and Friends of Tulare County ensure that every child and youth in Tulare County who receives Child Welfare Services is given a gift this holiday season.

Donations can easily be made by dropping off a new, unwrapped gift for a child or youth at one of the many collection boxes - locations of drop-off sites can be found at www.friendsoftularecounty.org.

Employees wishing to make a tax-deductible financial contribution can do so



through Friends of Tulare County, a 501 (c) 3 organization, by mailing checks to 5957 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277, and writing "CWS Toy Drive" in the memo line.

CWS social workers distribute all gifts to CWS foster children and youth throughout the first week of December.

Give the gift of love this year to a child who is receiving

services through CWS by donating to this annual effort.

More information can be found by logging on to www.friendsoftularecounty.org and clicking the "CWS Toy Drive" tab.

This annual event is made possible by collaborative partners including: CWS, Friends of Tulare County, Tulare County Board of Supervisors, and many others.

Have a program you want to highlight? Please send suggestions to:

newsletter@co.tulare.ca.us

Meet the New Director of Public Health - Karen Elliott



The newly appointed Director of Public Health, Karen Elliott, is no stranger to the Health and Human Services Agency.

The Visalia native began working for the agency 18 years ago as an accountant, and has gradually moved up the ranks with knowledge in a variety of areas within the agency including fiscal, mental health, and public health.

"It has really been a nice training ground for me in

getting to experience all the different aspects and levels of HHSA," shared Elliott.

Elliott was appointed by HHSA Director Jason Britt in September of this year. She holds a Business Degree from Chico State University and a MBA from Fresno State.

As the Director of Public Health, she will oversee all public health programs including County Health Clinics, the Public Health Lab, Environmental Health Division, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Programs, and Animal Services – just to name a few.

In assuming her new role, Elliott wants to continue to learn and educate herself in the area of public health including the social determinants of health; such as safety, nutrition, health care access, and health education programs. For example, Elliott plans to continue the successful work of Community Health

Assessments and the County's Community Health Improvement Plans.

"It is rewarding to utilize the community for their input and as a group, work together to determine what can be improved in the area of public health."

According to Elliott, it is the employees that makes HHSA and the Public Health so gratifying to work for.

"We have really good employees in Public Health and I want to continue our work to sustain and grow that," says Elliott. "We are truly helping those in need and we should never take for granted the services we are providing."

Outside the office, Karen enjoys spending time with her family and taking trips to the coast, to the mountains, or even sometimes camping in the desert.



Supervisors Host VIEW Partnership Outreach Events

October is National Energy Awareness month and each year the County of Tulare collaborates with the VIEW Partnership (Valley Innovative Energy Watch) to organize community resource fairs. These outreach events focus on energy cost savings and low to no cost energy efficiency programs available to residents.

This year, Supervisor Worthley, Supervisor Ennis, and Supervisor Vander Poel all hosted events within their districts.

Four events took place this year in the following communities: Goshen, Ducor, Allensworth, and Pixley.

The VIEW Partnership, Pacific Gas and Electric, Southern California Edison, SoCal Gas Company, Proteus and CSET all attended each event handing out energy saving resources along with energy efficient light bulbs and prizes provided by the VIEW Partnership.

In addition, numerous County agencies were on hand to share the range of programs offered by the county including: Alcohol and Other Drug service programs, WIC, TCAT, Animal Control, Mental Health Services, Tulare County Warmline, Kings View South Tulare County Mobile Unit, Tulare County Fire, Tulare County Probation, Sheriff's Office and many more.

Tulare County Public Health department also provided free flu shots to attendees, which is always a popular service offered during this time of year.



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^ Above - PINK Tuesday

Board of Supervisors, CAO and staff participate in the county-wide PINK Tuesday on October 3 for Breast Cancer Awareness month. Thank you to all the county employees and agencies who also participated.



^ Above - New County Official Sworn In

On October 9, Cass Cook was sworn into office as Tulare County's new Auditor-Controller and Treasurer-Tax Collector, following the retirement of Rita Woodard.

Make A Difference Day at Mooney Grove



Tulare County Parks & Recreation, in partnership with Community Services and Employment Training (CSET), is seeking volunteers to participate in Make A Difference Day projects at Mooney Grove Park on **Saturday, October 28, 2017**, from 9:00am - 12:00pm.

Make A Difference Day is the largest annual single day of

service nationwide and the perfect opportunity for local residents to take part in this family-friendly day of service. Community members are encouraged to join Tulare County Parks staff in various outdoor cleaning, repair, tree planting and arbor painting projects around Mooney Grove Park.

There are also indoor volunteer opportunities

available at the Tulare County Museum, within the park.

All volunteers will receive free admission to the park, as well as snacks and beverages. Registration is

encouraged ahead of time and may be completed by calling the Tulare County Department of General Services main office at (559) 624-7227, via email to TulareCountyParks@co.tulare.ca.us or on CSET's website www.cset.org/makeadifferenceday.

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 Carrie Monteiro.

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UPCOMING COUNTY ACTIVITIES, DEADLINES, EVENTS, AND MEETINGS

Event/Meeting: (Date/Time)

Board of Supervisors Meeting: 9:00 a.m. October 31, November 7, November 14 **No Meeting: November 21, November 28**

Tulare County Planning Commission: 9:00 a.m. November 8

Tulare County Water Commission: 3:00 p.m. November 13

Tulare County Youth Commission: 3:00 p.m. November 20

More Information:

(559) 636-5000

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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.