



Mono County Employee Newsletter

FALL 2012

Coffee with the CAO

My ongoing Coffee with the Employees was held on October 30 & 31. We had about 100 employees attend both sessions. I plan to do these on a regular basis and again I invite ALL employees.

Some of the issues discussed and questions raised were:

1. Misconception of Union Negotiations - I have been told that some bargaining units are not giving the same concessions as others. Negotiations aren't a standard type of process where everyone does the same thing. Each unit values things differently and there are changes but we attempt to keep them pretty similar. Lately, a rumor has been started stating the PSO Group is

receiving more longevity. This is NOT true. It is true that bargaining tactics of groups has been different but all employee groups on an average have conceded similar amounts and items.

2. What reserves does Mono County have in the bank?

The Board of Supervisors finalized the annual budget without drawing from the reserve account. At the end of the budget process they deposited \$200,000 into the reserve account bringing it to \$1.6 million (approximately). As I've stated before, it's important to bring this account to a level that will aid us if any emergency might happen. The reserve account should be approximately 10% of the annual budget.

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Photo by Greg Newbry

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2012 Election Season Ends

For almost a year, the Clerk's Office has been hard at work organizing two major elections—the June Primary and the November General. We are now in the final stages of certifying the results of the November 2012 election, which had a record-breaking turnout (see Fun Facts on page 7).

Elections require a team of County employees—most of them working behind the scenes—to help ensure that everything runs smoothly. I sincerely thank our **great Elections Team!**

Public Works:
Ed Nolan and Tony Iniguez, who deliver the voting equipment to

and from the polling places. A special thanks to managers Joe Blanchard and Claude Fiddler for their support.

Community Development Department:
CD Ritter, Cedar Barager, Brent Calloway, and Wendy Sugimura, for assisting voters at the satellite vote-by-mail drop-off location. A special thanks to Scott Burns, department head, for his support. Additional thanks to CD and Cedar for helping at polling places.

IT Department:
Keith Park, Nate Greenberg, Clay Neely, Cameron Cary, Peter Kobylarz, Steve Connett, Jami Peterson, Greg Newbry,

Ryan Goodner-Belli and Kirk Hartstrom for helping to open and close polls, and for providing on-site technical assistance. Special thanks to Clay Neely, department head, for his support. Additional thanks to Keith Park for the 2-3 months he spends preparing the equipment.

Clerk's Office:
Shannon Kendall, Debra Van-deBrake, and Sherrie Hale for support services. Additional thanks to Shannon for long hours she spends on Election Day at the Board of Supervisors meeting and afterwards helping with the election.

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Upcoming Events

November 22 & 23 - Thanksgiving Holiday

December 11 - County Holiday Luncheon - Bridgeport

December 13 - County Holiday Luncheon - Mammoth

December 24 & 25 - Christmas Holiday

December 31 & January 1 - New Year's Holiday



Halloween Around the County



Digital 395 Construction Underway!

By now, many of you have seen the construction crews, heavy equipment, or large spools of conduit or Fiber Optic cable as you travel the roads between Carson City & Barstow. Some may have even been stopped at a traffic control location in the Bridgeport Valley as crews ran boring equipment through the wet meadows along Highway 395.

All of these are artifacts of Digital 395 - a 583 mile long fiber network which roughly follows the alignment of Highway 395 as it crosses through Douglas, Mono, Inyo, and eastern Kern counties. The project consists of a 432 strand high-capacity fiber cable that will connect roughly 250 government, educational, and medical 'anchor' facilities along the route, as well as serve as a much needed 'backhaul' for telecommunication companies who distribute cellular and Internet services to subscribers throughout the area.

After nearly two years of patiently wading through a permitting and cultural review process that involved more than forty different agencies and resulted in over a hundred different issued permits, construction on Digital 395 began earlier this summer. The construction portion of the project is being headed up by Praxis Associates, who has three separate sub-contractors doing work simultaneously along the route.

In Mono County, construction began in August in downtown Bridgeport on Kingsley Street, then quickly moved west out of town and through the Bridgeport Valley. Since that time, crews have completed the segment between Bridgeport and Coleville, in addition to significant portions of the route outside of Mono County (Barstow to Ridgecrest, being one of them). Construction recently began on the segments immediately south of Highway 203, and will begin in the areas between Bridgeport and Mammoth in the coming weeks.



A rock saw cuts through Burcham Flat Road.



Crews receive Fiber Optic cable near Coleville after travelling underground for nearly 2mi.

The crews are working hard, and making significant progress each day, though are now at the mercy of the changing seasons and winter weather. Construction efforts are being focused on the areas that are likely to be impacted by snow first, or will be challenging to work in once things melt in the spring. Crews will continue work through the winter months, in the areas of the route that they can access.

Praxis is striving to begin connecting anchors in select areas (such as Bridgeport) to the network early next year. The majority of the construction on the project should be completed by spring of next year, leaving them a couple months for testing and wrapping up other details before the July 31 project deadline.

As the network is 'lit up', the service providers who we rely on for home and business Internet, Cable TV, and phone use will also begin to leverage the newly found bandwidth. For those of us who have Internet already, we can expect to see the quality and speed of that service improve. In portions of the County where Internet is not currently available, conversations are underway to engage providers to build new infrastructure - the ultimate goal being to connect as many people as possible within our key community areas and transportation corridors.

If you have questions about the project, or want to know more information, contact Nate Greenberg at x1819 or ngreenberg@mono.ca.gov. Also check out the official project website - <http://www.digital395.com>.



Plowing conduit between Walker & Coleville.

Trust in the Workplace

Today more than ever there is the need for trust—a human need and a business need. The County landscape is constantly changing; i.e., restructuring, with shrinking resources and asking people to do more with less has become a way of life. There is a growing need to take the County to the next level—greater customer satisfaction, improved cost saving measures, cutting-edge technology, reduced union grievances, expanded outreach in our community. Mono County needs employees to embrace and adapt to change and to show up highly committed, talented, motivated people with heart, soul and deep pride in the work they do. In short, we need people to work in relationships with one another to produce results.

Business is conducted through relationships, and trust is the foundation of effective relationships. People need trusting relationships with each other if they're to get their job done. They need to be able to depend on each other to do his or her part, to believe that what coworkers are saying is the truth, to have confidence that they have what it takes to get the job done, to receive honest feedback on work and coaching from one another to learn new skills. Trusting relationships are what make the difference between people's feeling good about what they do and simply going through the motions. Employees have a need to understand others and to be accepted and understood in return; to use their talents and full range of skills; to challenge and be challenged; to share and receive information.

When trust is present, employees are excited about what they do. They work to-

gether on common goals, communicate with each other, share information, and people are not afraid to make mistakes. Employees take pride in the organization they work for and are more engaged in their jobs. In trusting environments, people are able to focus on their work, are more productive and want to come to work.

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Please take a moment to meet our new employees

Teresa Neely, HR Generalist



Orlando Mejia
Deputy Probation Officer
Probation
Start Date: 8/27/12



Danielle George
Social Worker
Social Services
Start Date: 9/4/12



Karin Humiston
Chief Probation Officer
Probation
Start Date: 9/24/12



Elisabeth Collins
Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner
Mental Health
Start Date: 10/9/12



Bertha Jimenez
Case Manager II - Bilingual
Mental Health
Start Date: 10/15/12



Ryan Goodner-Belli
Cadastral Mapper/GIS Technician
Information Technology
Start Date: 11/5/12

Retirements

- 11/2012 Michael Vaughan 31 years*
- 12/2012 Paula Proctor 21 years*
- 12/2012 Karen Simon 14 years*
- 12/2012 Pam MacBride 7 years*
- 12/2012 Richard Scholl 5 years*

Not Pictured
Nicholas Way
Public Safety Officer
Sheriff's Department
Start Date: 9/5/12

Temporary employees Richard Bonneau, Mental Health Alcohol & Drug Counselor and Jeff Simpson, Economic Development Assistant who were introduced in the Winter 2012 Newsletter have become full time

Brian Muir will be leaving at the end of the year to work for Shasta County, his contributions to Mono County will be sadly missed.

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Breaking that trust is going to happen, even in well-intended relationships. What gradually breaks trust are small acts that accumulate over time. When we don't do what we say we will do, when we renege on decisions we agreed to, when we gossip about others behind their backs, when we hide an agenda and work on it behind the scenes, when we spin the truth, we break trust and damage relationships. When we do these things intentionally, it is done for the purpose of hurting, damaging, or harming another person. Breaking this trust causes employees to lose confidence and question their capabilities, shakes their identities, and in turn employees show up for work distracted, unable to concentrate and question their sense of belonging. We end up shutting down and withdraw our spirit and energy from our work or fight back, neither of which is a good solution. It is employees working together in rela-

tionships with one another that ultimately deliver results. We need to talk through the situations with each other. Taking the time to build and maintain and rebuild trust allows employees to focus their energies on what they are there to do. When situations are worked through appropriately, it strengthens relationships and organizations and builds teamwork.

Good leaders understand the need for trust to build strong performance in great teams. Leaders take the time to earn trustworthiness by practicing honesty, behaving consistently even during the challenging times, including employees in decisions, providing feedback and opportunities to learn new skills, and open communication. Trustworthy leaders are safe to talk with, share concerns and problems. As a result, employees feel safe to express their ideas, are more willing to takes risks, admit and learn from their mistakes. Employees who

trust their bosses keep them well-informed because there is no need to dance around the real story.

Trust is in every aspect of our relationships with each other. Working environments that inspire trust allow employees to feel good about themselves and the employees they are working with. They enjoy coming to work and work harder at their jobs—giving more of themselves, accepting challenges and seeing change as an opportunity rather than a threat. Let's all take time to learn and practice the behaviors that build trust. It will make a difference in our lives, our performance, and our County.

The New Face of Bridgeport



Who says the government can't move quickly? Just eight short weeks after the Bridgeport Main Street Revitalization Design Fair concluded at the end of August, fresh pavement was laid and a new striping scheme applied to Main Street. A product of collaboration among the community, Caltrans, the County, and design team consultants, the street design calms traffic with two travel lanes, a center turn lane, bike lanes, and a mix of back-in angle and parallel parking.

The dramatic change was developed and vetted during an intensive and well-attended Design Fair of multiple community workshops. An impressive turnout of 78 people attended the final workshop, where the overwhelming consensus was to reduce the number of vehicle lanes to two with a colorized center turn lane. A majority of participants also supported back-in angle parking and curb extensions. Immediately after the Design Fair, local outreach by Bridgeport Valley Regional Planning Advisory Committee (BVRPAC) members and Main Street business owners, Bob Peters and Steve Noble in particular, built additional consensus on the location of back-in angle parking. The Design Team finalized a conceptual striping plan supported by the BVRPAC, and Caltrans refined and engineered the plan. County staff ensured all the pieces progressed in concert with each other, and that details and potential conflicts were handled. Opticos Design, the planning and architecture firm on the project noted, "[This] is quickly proving to be the most rapid implementation we've ever experienced."

Project success is due to many factors, including pure luck in timing the Caltrans pavement overlay, which had been delayed for over a year due to asphalt mix failure issues. It just happened to be moving forward at the conclusion of the Design Fair. Without the overwhelming community support and subsequent on-the-ground outreach, the striping plan concepts may never have been accepted by Caltrans. The Design Team, led by the Local Government Commission and nationally recognized walkability authority Dan Burden, along with traffic engineer Michael Moule from Nelson\Nygaard and designers from Opticos Design, was a critical component as was Caltrans District 9, in particular Terry Erlwein, Forest Becket and Brad Mettam. Tony Dublino, former planner and now Solid Waste Superintendent, initiated the process by securing grant funding and developing the project work program. With Tony's



departure, Wendy Sugimura stepped up as project planner and aggressively implemented the work program, often working nights and weekends to ride herd over the multiple players and pieces of the project. Appreciation to all, including staff of several County departments (Health, Public Works, Finance, Economic Development, Sheriff, CAO and Community Development), who helped support the effort to create a safer pedestrian environment, calming traffic as it passes through the community, and generally improving the environment for Main Street businesses.

More is yet to come. The project economist recently visited the community and will be assessing market opportunities and business improvement strategies. The BVRPAC is anxious to move forward on "Phase II," and the Board of Supervisors has directed a fast-tracked facilities plan. For Bridgeport, this is just the beginning.

Scott Burns and Wendy Sugimura
Community Development

Events around the County



The Benton Community Center new



Mono County participated in Nation Breast Cancer Awareness Month by placing pink ribbons along the fence in front of the Mono

The Behavioral Health Department at the wellness center in Walker celebrated Halloween with their consumers and community members by hosting a children's costume contest, cake walk, Pin the Wart on the Witch Game and Feed Frankenstein Game – good food and



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Also, additional thanks to Debra for her help at one of our busiest polling places.

Our temporary helpers are invaluable: Dorothy Cummings, Renn Nolan and Judy Curti.

Linda Romero deserves endless kudos for her hard work managing hundreds of details and hundreds of questions from voters. She works tirelessly every day to ensure effective management of each election.

I also thank Pam Kobylarz, Stephanie Daniel, and Mark Crough (Town of Mammoth Lakes), and Michael O'Kelly (Minaret Shopping Center Management) for their special assistance

Lynda Roberts
Clerk-Recorder-Registrar & Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Fun Facts: Comparison of Past Presidential Elections

November 2004

Total Voter Turnout: 77.56%
Percent Casting Vote by Mail Ballots: 28.80%
Provisional Votes Cast: 142

November 2008

Total Voter Turnout: 81.83%
Percent casting Vote by Mail Ballots: 27.60%
Provisional Votes Cast: 109

November 2012

*Total Voter Turnout: 83.05%
Percent casting Vote by Mail Ballots: 52.26%
Provisional Votes Cast: 326

*Total turnout will be higher after provisional votes are counted.

Clean Air Projects Program Grants

The Road Department has received delivery of two MT Trackless snow blowers. These pieces of equipment were acquired through the Clean Air Projects Program (CAPP), a joint project of the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

The MT Trackless snow blowers will provide improved snow removal services in Mono County's Road Areas 1 and 3 which include communities of Paradise, Swall Meadows, Crowley Lake, Hilton Creek, McGee Creek, Lee Vining, June Lake, and Mono City. While these pieces of equipment are significantly smaller than the vehicles they are replacing, they are capable of performing similar snow removal. Over the years, snow storage in these areas have been reduced in size requiring equipment capable of placing snow quickly and accurately in these smaller areas.

This equipment will replace two 1958 snow blowers and improve air quality in the Great Basin Air District as well as provide drastically superior engine efficiency and reliability. Although some minor work remains to ready the vehicles, both are expected to be placed into service by winter.



The Facilities Department is pleased to announce the completion of the exhaust pollution removal system installations at all of our County Road Shops (Walker, Bridgeport, Lee Vining, Benton, and Crowley Lake).

These systems will address two significant issues which are the reduction of air pollution, and the waste of energy. It will directly reduce air pollution by filtering exhaust emissions through an air purification system and indirectly reduce energy usage by allowing the shop doors to be closed while working on running vehicles. The system attaches a flexible hose to the exhaust of vehicles in the shops capturing 100 % of the vehicles emissions which are then channeled to an in-line filtration system.

The installation of these systems in our road shops will be a welcome addition to both the environment as well as to the shop employees.

These pieces of equipment were acquired through the same grant program.

For more information you may visit the website: <http://capp.gbuapcd.org>



Coffee with the CAO
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3. Town Bankruptcy and June Mountain closure; what affects will these have on the County?

I'm sure all of you have followed the events unfolding in both June Lake and Mammoth Lakes. Neither is an ideal situation and we hope that June Mountain reopens soon and that Mammoth Lakes restructuring is accomplished with minimal pain. The County Board will continue to work with both locations to attempt to work for the best possible solution. There will be talks with the Town soon about potential shared services.

4. Space Issues: We are continuing to work on space issues in both Mammoth and Bridgeport. Discussion is centered around moving all offices into the Sierra Center Mall but only if there is adequate space at an acceptable price. We will not move unless our costs are lowered. Bridgeport has seen some

interesting twists in space needs. We are ready to move Animal Control offices to the newly renovated "old" Public Health Building. We are still looking at options for the remainder of the offices in the old hospital (including relocating the Clinic). I'll keep you informed of any developments.

5. Status of Digital 395? Praxis is working on the construction of the new Digital 395 fiber optic system from Carson City to San Bernardino. Much of the line has already been installed in the Bridgeport area and they are still working in the higher elevation areas in hopes to finish before bad weather sets in. The target is to complete the system by the end of the year but we will have to wait and see if they meet that goal.

Since I have limited space here I will continue in future additions to give you information about Mono County. Once again, I appreciate your dedication to this great County and look forward to speaking with each of you.

Jim Arkens, CAO



The Flu and You!

In the words of Dr. Richard Johnson, Health Officer: "Influenza is a serious disease leading to hospitalization and death for thousands of Americans each year. It is not just the elderly that suffer from complications. Very young children are hospitalized from the flu at rates similar to other groups at high risk for influenza-related complications. About half of all hospitalizations from seasonal flu, and about a third of the deaths occur in children with no underlying medical conditions". The flu vaccine is recommended for everyone over the age of 6 months!

Mono County Health Department launched their annual Flu Vaccine campaign in September this year. From mid September through the beginning of November, flu vaccine clinics have been held in every community and at every school within the County. In addition, as compared to last year, even more clinics were scheduled to accommodate the busy schedules of our residents. It is during this time of year that all programs and staff within the Health Department come together to host the clinics. Thus far, 1,600 flu vaccines have been administered!



GET VACCINATED! Protect yourself, your family, co-workers, neighbors, and community. It is not too late to get vaccinated. The County offers the flu vaccine to every employee free of charge. Please call the Health Department to schedule an appointment for your flu vaccine: Bridgeport: 760.932.5580; Mammoth Lakes: 760.924.1830. The Health Department would like to thank everyone for their support during our flu vaccine campaign season!