

Mono County Quarterly Newsletter

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District 1, Supervisor Larry Johnston

Season's greetings and welcome to 2014!

As the District #1 Supervisor, I have the honor to represent one of the most compact, dynamic and diverse Districts in Mono County on the Board of Supervisors. Our two-square-mile district is in the heart of Mammoth Lakes consisting of the central and eastern part of the Town .

This core of our community is home to some of the Town's most vibrant neighborhoods and is the hub for visitors and residents to enjoy all our community has to offer. District One is a gateway to the community and contains so much variety. It includes the factory outlets, varied lodging establishments, sporting goods retailers, restaurants, Rite Aide, the hardware stores and lumber yards, all three Mammoth Schools, family friendly neighborhoods, the Town's industrial park, and the new south county Court House.. The First

District is home to 2,800 year round residents with the most diverse cultural background in the region. Our residents are the soul of our local economy, providing the needed workforce and supporting local businesses with their patronage. Good jobs, thriving businesses, and affordable housing are many of the issues facing our District. CONTINUED on page 9

As we put 2013 behind us, I want to thank all Mono County employees for their efforts in providing the highest level of service to our residents and visitors. County government is an integral part of the high quality of life we enjoy here in the Eastern Sierra. Most people aren't aware of the fact that 75% of services provided by government in the United States are administered to some extent through Counties.

County government can also play an important role in economic development on the local level. Partnerships between regional industries and local government are key to local job development and quality of life. My main focus for 2014 is economic development in District Three as well as the entire County.

With new ownership of the June Lake Rodeo Grounds as well as other community upgrade projects and activities scheduled, the opportunity to advance the June Lake Loop economy is a distinct possibility. A comprehensive master-planning effort will be the initial action necessary to move the June Lake community toward realizing its awesome potential as an all-season destination resort area.

Trout fishing has, and always will be, a cornerstone of our recreation economy. Continued development of the aquaculture facility on the Mono County-owned Conway Ranch is crucial to sustaining the Trophy Trout program that has brought much acclaim and tourism to our County. As Federal and State budgets become stressed, trout programs become threatened. To sustain the unique trout fishing activities and programs we have become known for, a self-sustaining, County controlled trout farm must be completed.

I want to wish all of our employees a Happy New Year. Because of you, we are able to accomplish great things.



District 4, Supervisor Tim Fesko

Happy New Years Mono County! 2013 saw some great projects in north County such as the School Street project (this has really dressed up the Courthouse area), new streets in Bridgeport and Lee Vining. Memorial Hall also had several new improvements with more to come in 2014. After a controversial shutdown, the Memorial Hall Theater was once again opened and with great fan fair. Improvements at Bridgeport's Bryant airport are complete with great praise by the public.

While these are only some of the recent visual improvements, there are many behind the scene things that have gone on also such as, improvements in Social Services, Public Health, Probation and more.

I'd like to give a big "Thank you" to each and everyone of you for your efforts this past year. While 2013 had its challenges for all of us, we all stepped up and pulled together to provide great services to the residents and visitors of Mono County.

With 2014 upon us, new challenges are before us and I am confident that we will all step up and face these together.



District 3, Supervisor Tim Alpers

Upcoming Events

January 20 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday

February 17 - President's Day Holiday

March 9 - Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 31 - Cesar Chavez Day Holiday

Trivia!

Suggested by: Alicia Vennos

Where is the Upside Down House in Mono County, and what inspired its construction?

Send your answers to jsimpson@mono.ca.gov

Last Issue Answers:

1. In what lake (yes, "IN" the lake) in Mono County might you find a slot machine or several, if you went diving, and why?

Answer: June Lake! According to the June Lake Historical Society website, some gambling was permitted in California in the 1930's and 40's and a June Lake company called "Mono Amusements" had about 150 Draw Poker and Slot Machines established throughout the county. In the early 1950's, however, gambling in California was declared illegal and Sacramento state officials arrived in Mono County to confiscate as many machines as they could carry. The remainder were thrown into June Lake and the dump. Neither Mono Amusements nor Mono County ever received any of the monies from the confiscated machines. For more details: <http://junelakeloophistory.org/>

2. What local attraction receives more returned souvenir items than probably all retailers in Mono County combined? Why?

Answer: Bodie State Historic Park! Bodie has binders full of letters from visitors apologizing for taking enclosed "souvenirs" from the park – a nail or bolt or small item found on the grounds. The letters state that in sending back their "souvenir" of Bodie, the writers hope that the string of bad luck events which ensued immediately upon leaving the park will come to an end!

Free VIP Skate Passes

The Town of Mammoth Lakes Parks & Recreation department has kindly supplied Mono County with two transferable VIP Skate Passes that provide free admission and skate rental at the Mammoth Ice Rink this winter season. They are laminated passes on lanyards, you can sign them out from our Community Development Department front desk in Mammoth.

County employees can also show their ID Badge at the rink, and receive \$10 off an Adult or Youth "Five Skate Pass."

Mammoth Ice Rink Hours:
Monday – Wednesday: 2:30pm – 6pm
Thursday – Sunday: 11:30am – 9pm

Regular Admission including Skate Rental:
Adults: \$10.50
Youth: \$8.50
MUSD Students with ID: \$2.00

For more information you may visit their website: www.mammothicerink.com or call (760) 934-2505.

Danielle George from the Behavioral Health Department and Jennifer Co, wife of Steven Sakoguchi in the Social Services Department have already taken advantage of the free passes!



IT Computer Tips

Suggested by: Greg Newbry

IT computer tips can also be found on the County Common drive (R) called "A Computer Tips from IT". All tips plus supporting documentation will be in this folder.

County employees can use Citrix to access work files. Citrix will need to be installed on the computer you're using; you may need administrative rights to do this.

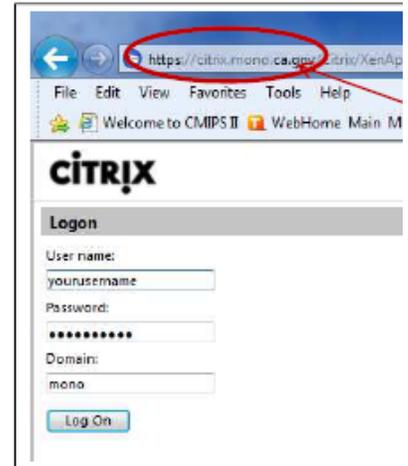
1. In the address line enter: <https://citrix.mono.ca.gov>
2. You will be prompted to install Citrix. OK to install.
3. Once installed, the logon screen appears. Enter your county domain username (first initial last name). Password is your current password; domain is mono.
4. It may be a bit slow, give things time to load.

You should see programs and folders related

to your profile. For instance, you can open Timelive to enter your records from home. You can't see the files in your U drive, but you can access them by opening the applicable program. For instance to find and open a Word document; open the Microsoft Office folder and the open Word (give it time to load).

Using Word, select open file and you should see list of available locations (the \$ sign is program symbol), including the x,y,z drive, common drive and your home pc drive. Browse to the file desired, open, edit and save to where you want. Note; you can't use the back button, instead click "Main" just below "Application" on the far left to get back to the main screen.

As always, contact IT for assistance; support@mono.ca.gov or call ext 5500.



Wild by Nature: The Return

In early December, Ed Nolan and Tony Iniguez (Public Works Maintenance Workers in the Facility Division) were driving back to Bridgeport from an assignment in Lee Vining. As they drove North on Highway 395, they noted something on the side of the highway that didn't look right, and it was hopping. Ed suggested that Tony pull over so they could check it out. What the two workers saw turned out to be an injured rough legged hawk.

They reported the wounded bird to our Animal Control Department, who in turn worked with Eastern Sierra Wildlife Care. The bird made a full recovery thanks to their efforts.

On Tuesday, December 31st Angelle and Ed Nolan were allowed to participate in the release. The healthy bird was returned to the wild on Twin Lakes Road, in Bridgeport just in time to celebrate its freedom and a new year.

For more information about becoming a volunteer you may visit the Eastern Sierra Wildlife Care website at: www.eswildlifecare.org or call (760) 872-1487



Annual Holiday Potluck Luncheon Photos



Department Highlight: Clerk-Recorder-Registrar's Office

The 2014 election year is upon us with the June 3rd Primary and the November 4th General Election. On December 27, 2013 potential candidates for the Primary Election started pulling their Petition-In-Lieu of Filing Fee documents. What this means is that for every registered voter's signature obtained, there is a monetary value that will help meet their filing fee. The deadline for submitting these petitions is no later than 5:00 pm on February 20, 2014 and must be delivered to the Elections Office in Bridgeport or hand delivered to Lynda Roberts in her Mammoth office.

State offices that you will see on the June 3, 2014 Primary Election ballot include Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Controller, Treasurer, Attorney General, Insurance Commissioner, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, US Representative-District 8, State Senate-District 8, State Assembly-District 5, and Board of Equalization-District 1. There will also be a number of state measures, that number will be available later.

Our local offices will include Assessor, District Attorney, Sheriff/Coroner, Superintendent of Schools, Supervisor-District One, and Supervisor-District Five. Also, there will be three seats available on the Town of Mammoth Lakes' Town Council.

Under Proposition 14, passed on June 8, 2010 California created a 'top two' or 'open primary'. The above listed state offices are now known as 'voter nominated' and what used to be known as 'political party affiliation' is now known as a 'political party preference'. If all of this is confusing, you're not alone. Give us a call or go to the Secretary of State's website: <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/statewide-elections/2012-primary/new-open-primary-info.pdf> for clarification.

As per Election Code §2220(a) our office will be mailing out confirmation postcards to all registered voters in Mono County the first part of February. This will allow voters to notify the Election's Office of changes to their residence address, mailing address, or if they have moved from the area. The postcards are postage-paid and we would like to request that they be mailed back to our office as soon as possible.

Important Dates to Remember:

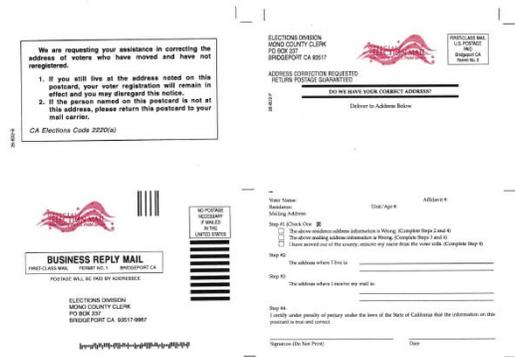
Dec 27, 2013 to Feb 20, 2014	Petition-In-Lieu Of Filing Fee
Feb 10 to Mar 7	Candidate Filing Period
Mar 8 to Mar 12	Extension period if incumbent does not file
May 5 to May 27	Request Period for Vote-By-Mail ballots
May 19	Last Day to Register to Vote

Also, if it has been a few years since you filled out your registration form and your signature may have changed, it's not too early to check with our office and make the necessary correction. This is very important if you vote-by-mail as all signatures are checked to see if they match.

As always, we are here to assist our voters and candidates and answer your election questions.

Linda Romero, Assistant Registrar

Election Office: 760-932-5537
 elections@mono.ca.gov
 Lynda Roberts: 760-932-5538
 Linda Romero: 760-932-5534



Great Place to Work

“A great place to work is one in which you trust the people you work for, have pride in what you do, and enjoy the people you work with.” –Robert Levering, Co-Founder, Great Place to Work

A great place to work features three fundamental relationships that an employee has— their relationship with management, with the work they do and with coworkers. Trust is fundamental. In a trusting environment, all employees feel safe to speak up to share their points of view.

Employees, as well as employers play important roles in creating a great place to work. Employees in the best workplaces excel in teamwork, participation in hiring new team members, welcoming new employees, inspiring each other based on shared values and goals, communicating, especially listening, collaborating, thanking and showing appreciation, contributing to self and other’s development, celebrating their achievements, and sharing credit, recognition and rewards for work well done.

Great places to work may include the following as part of their philosophy:

1. Employee input. Allowing employees to share their knowledge and suggestions keeps them engaged.
2. Employee empowerment. Allowing team members to make customers happy using their own discretion and common sense, for everything from welcoming customers to problem solving can benefit.
3. Excellent communication between management and staff. Employees want to be informed about important information and changes before they occur, and also want to be able to ask reasonable questions and receive timely and accurate responses.
4. Effective and considerate leaders who are great communicators, especially when it comes to performance expectations and feedback to employees about their performance and development.
5. A culture of continuous improvement and continual learning providing employees with opportunities to learn, develop, and grow.
6. Performance that is measured and rewarded. Never taking consistent high performers for granted. Acknowledge hard work and high achievement.

7. Services that add value, making it possible for employees to derive a sense of meaning from their work and to feel good about where they work.

Recognizing that laughter and tasteful humor on the job can help improve morale and manage stress, plus make work more fun.

Engaged employees who are enjoying their work and working relationships are more likely to earn customer confidence and satisfaction and be appreciated by management and coworkers. This combination sets the stage for a great place to work.

Please take a moment to meet our new employees

Teresa Neely, HR Generalist



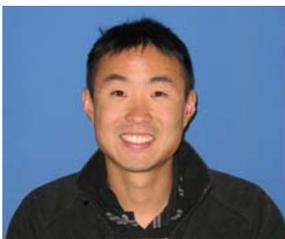
Neil Pieterse
IT Specialist II
Information Technology
Start Date: 10/22/13



Laura Cruz
Fiscal & Technical Specialist I
Behavioral Health
Start date: 11/4/13



Rose Martin
Vocational Trainee
Social Services
Start date: 11/6/13



Andy Liu
IT Specialist III
Information Technology
Start date: 11/6/13



Bianca Longino-Feria
Office Assistant II
Behavioral Health
Start date: 11/4/13

New Employees



Rene Christ
Social Worker III
Social Services
Start date: 12/2/13

Brian Butters
Appraiser II
Assessor
Start date: 12/2/13



Yvon Guzman-Rangel
Eligibility Worker I
Social Services
Start date: 12/10/13



Armando Alvarez
Eligibility Worker I
Social Services
Start date: 12/10/13

Grant Howard
Emergency Medical Technician
EMS
Start date: 12/16/13



Sean Macedonio
Emergency Medical Technician
EMS
Start date: 12/16/13

Not pictured
Kyle Rose
Emergency Medical Technician
EMS
Start date: 12/16/13

Not pictured
William Van Kampen
Solid Waste Gate Attendant
Public Works
Start date: 12/9/13

Retirements

11/2013 Theresa Moscovitz 22 years
11/2013 Jeannie Nelson 12 years
12/2013 Harry Bryan 26 years

Not Pictured
Daniel Flynn
Emergency Medical Technician
EMS
Start date: 12/16/13

Not Pictured
Mark Wilson
Deputy Sheriff II
Sheriff's Department
Start date: 12/9/13



Kaylan Johnson
Eligibility Worker I
Social Services
Start date: 1/2/14



Kevin Christensen
Deputy District Attorney II
District Attorney
Start date: 1/6/14



Jackie Beard
Fiscal & Technical Specialist I – Temporary
Assessor
Start date: 1/7/14

Strategic Planning Update

In December 2013, the Board formally launched the Mono County Strategic Planning Process. This process will involve all employees in building a long term organization that addresses our most pressing issues, establishes clear purpose for our efforts and produces greater accountability. What emerges from this process will help everyone decide how best to use scarce resources for maximum return.

Change is coming whether we plan for it or not. Financial uncertainty, uneven weather and the public's request for better services will cause changes to how we do business.

Effective strategic planning goes beyond identifying and completing tasks but changes how we do business and builds context for all operations.

Strategic Planning will provide us the ability to focus on change and not

merely on the next year. Together we can create a five, ten and twenty year plan that is focused investment on service improvement.

The key components to a strategic plan include:

- Vision** – Where are we going and what will we be when we get there?
- Mission** – what is our purpose, our reason for existing?
- Values** – What motivates our service? What Principles do we live by?
- Goals** – What are we going to achieve and how?
- Results** – How will we measure success?

This process needs you!

There will be all-employee and department sessions where you get to help shape the future of this County.

An Ad Hoc MCSP Steering Committee has met and has started to develop some ideas on how to maximize this effort. This group is comprised of the following people: Jim Leddy, Bill Van Lente, Lynda Salcido, Marshall Rudolph, Tim Kendall, Robin Roberts, Alicia Vennos, Nate Greenberg, Karin Humiston, Jeff Walters, Kathy Peterson and Scott Burns. We have asked departments to start asking for volunteers who crave the adventure known as Strategic Planning to help create the process.

Look forward to an announcement of meeting dates that will ask everyone to participate!

For additional information please visit the Strategic Planning website at www.monocounty.ca.gov/strategicplan

A Note from Supervisor Johnston

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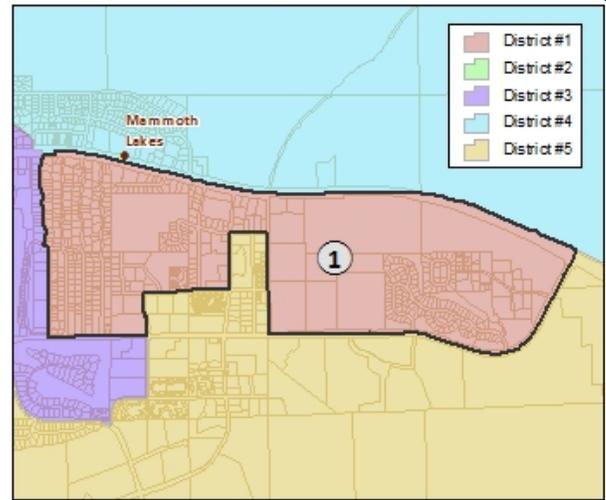
As 2014 begins, our County is facing challenges in many forms. Among these are anemic economic conditions and the lack of “white gold” – snow. County Finances are driven by many factors and one of the largest is property taxes. Although our schools receive nearly 50% of every property tax dollar, the County is reliant upon a healthy real estate market. , avoid substantial layoffs; and, for the last two years (2012 and 2013), begin to build back our reserves. Although not yet ideal, we now have about \$1.7 million in reserve, with another \$300,000+ in contingency. For this, I give credit and thanks to all levels of the organization for their hard work, dedication, and sacrifice for the advancement of the County.

After five long years of downward trends, there is some good news on this front. The decline of assessed property values in the County has leveled off and there is even a chance for a slight uptick. This hasn't happened in four years! Another factor holding hope for recovery is growth that is being seen in urban regions, such as the Bay Area and Southern California, which has experienced some positive signs of property value increases. This, combined with a recovering Stock Market and reductions in unemployment rates, sends a signal to the many visitors that fuel our tourism-based economy to return and invest in our community and support our local businesses .

However, these positive notes must be tempered by pending local issues, such as local tax assessment appeals, a continued depressed level of housing starts in the region, the fact that recovery in Mono County lags behind other parts of the state by a few years, and recent State Department of Finance population estimates which place Mono County among several rural counties that lost population, down since 2011 by 202 people to 14,175. And, finally, the lack of snow, for the second straight year, is hindering robust regional economic recovery.

For The Town of Mammoth Lakes, the current dry weather is particularly disheartening since so many jobs and businesses depend on winter success. Simply put, lack of snow means less business

for the town merchants, potential job loss/fewer hours, negative effects on community sustainability, and less bed tax revenue to provide Town services. The effect of winter drought on county tourist businesses is very important, but likely less than the Town's, since many county businesses are primarily summer-based. This diversity of our economic base is an important long-term effort we must foster in order to assure that one (or two) dry winters don't hurt our communities.



Still, we will be impacted if there is a continued lack of snow, especially in June Lake, which has just re-opened to winter recreation. And, snow ultimately translates into water in our streams and lakes, so summertime economic impacts could be present later this year. Even the Town's new TBID can't create water.!

Any business slump hurts recovery of property values. This is particularly important for the Town's assessed values, since the property values there provide 70% of all County General Fund tax revenue (e.g., values in District #1 alone exceed the assessed value in the rest of the county combined). It is a fact, what is good for Mammoth Lakes is good for the County. This is why we continue to seek out ways to work together for more efficient and effective services that save both the Town and County money, while ensuring that residents receive the services they require.

The good news is that the County's primary revenue is not based on volatile bed taxes, but on the stronger slower adjusting property tax system. One could make the analogy of the Tortoise and the Hare; the Tortoise churns along on property taxes while the Hare spurts along on bed tax. This has allowed the County, during the last 4 to 5 years, to sustain services, avoid substantial layoffs; and, for the last two years (2012 and 2013), begin to build back our reserves. Although not yet ideal, we now have about \$1.7 million in reserve, with another \$300,000+ in contingency. For this, I give credit and thanks to all levels of the or-

ganization for their hard work, dedication, and sacrifice for the advancement of the County.

We are not yet out of the woods,. There are still challenges yet to resolve through thoughtful, engaged and responsible decision making and dialogue with all communities across the County. We will continue to move forward, maybe slowly like the tortoise, but we will cross the finish line!

Our future reflects a commitment to strengthening all communities in Mono County. We will be sustainable by solidifying the tourism base (e.g., snow sports, programming, fishing, camping, hiking, etc.). We will endure by diversifying the economic base (geothermal energy production, Digital 395 business spinoffs, biomass usage, environmentally appropriate operations, etc.). We will remain strong by budgeting for sustainable services (solarizing county facilities, utilizing fuel efficient vehicles, etc.). We will thrive by inviting creative solutions from all levels of our organization and from the community (the employees and public often share some of the greatest insights of innovation!). We will flourish by collaborating among our own departments and with other local, state, and federal agencies. We will continue to make Mono County the best model of local government around, a government of which we can all be proud.

Program Highlight: Students in Our Midst



Academic Pursuits Enrich our Employees and Our Department

Many positions in the Department of Social Services require on the job experience over formal degree programs, but did you know that Mono County actually has a highly educated staff working to serve our local communities?

A Master of Social Work (MSW) is a versatile graduate degree that can come in handy when employees provide counseling services; refer clients to national, state and local resources; and perform case management for individuals and families. These programs are usually completed in 2-3 years. Social Worker Heather Edwall graduated last spring from CSUN's on-campus program and Staff Services Analyst Marlo Preis has been working on her MSW through distance learning at Sacramento State. Sandra Villalpando will start earning her MSW this year through distance learning at Humboldt State, and her program is especially relevant to our area because it focuses on work with rural and Native American populations.

New Eligibility Workers Yvon Guzman-Rangel and Armando Alvarez both graduated recently from UC Riverside with Bachelor Degrees. Yvon double-majored in Women's and Chicano Studies with a minor in Spanish and Armando double-majored in Latin American Studies and Anthropology. (He is also fluent in Portuguese.) These areas of interest reflect our county's growing Latino population as well as the county's commitment to meeting the unique needs of our constituents. Experienced Eligibility Workers Steven Sakoguchi and Patty Harris bring diversity to our staff – Steven has a Bachelors in English and Patty is licensed as a municipal judge in Mexico. New Social Workers Renee Christ and Rose Martin both have B.A.'s in Psychology from Sac State and UCSD, respectively.

Director of Social Services Kathy Paterson holds a Master of Public Health degree from UCLA. Social Worker Supervisor Alex Ellis already has a Master of Arts and is licensed by the state as a Marriage and Family Therapist, but just in case that isn't enough she is working on her PhD in Holistic Theology. Eligibility Program Manager Francie Avitia majored in Business and Eligibility Supervisor

Jack Anderson has a B.A. in Social Science from Chico State in addition to two music degrees.

Kaylan Johnson attended Cerro Coso to obtain her Associate Degree in Arts & Humanities. Up in North County, Megan Foster is working on her Associate Degree in Accounting. Rick Williams just finished his second Mass Casualty Incident training, which he participates in on an ongoing basis as part of his duties as Captain of the Benton Volunteer Fire Department.

If reading about the Department of Social Services' wide variety of academic achievements has inspired you to enroll in a class or pursue that degree you've always dreamed of getting, don't forget that Mono County offers an Educational Incentive Program. With prior authorization from your Department Head (this funding comes from each individual's department's budget) and the CAO, you can be reimbursed for up to \$700 of qualifying expenses per year – please contact Stacie Klemm ext. 5408 in the County Administrative Office for additional information. In the meantime, the lifelong learners at DSS look forward to putting our hard-earned knowledge to work for you in the Eastern Sierra.

Heather Edwall, MSW, Social Worker
Department of Social Services

