



# DIGEST

## *Around and About*

FIVE EXECUTIVES in the County engineer department, all intent on filling the chair of their boss, County engineer John Lambie, will take an oral civil service examination next Monday (March 8). Lambie will retire at the end of this month. The five: Harvey Brandt, chief deputy County engineer; Coleman Jenkins, superintendent of building; and three assistant chief deputies—William Jensen, James Rostron, and Robert Williams.

SEVERAL OTHER long-timers are cleaning out their desks at the end of this month. John Passarella, auditor-controller's tax division chief, who began as a County hospital messenger more than 35 years ago, said his retirement plans include some trips, some golf, and just maybe another crack at acting (he appeared in *Our Gang* comedies for several years in the early 1920s after a director picked him off a school playground at Temple and Beaudry streets). Three others in the A-C department are retiring with more than 40 years service—Ruth Macart (44 years 3 months), Richard Blum (41 years 3 months), and Pauline Carson (40 years 1 month). Jack

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MARCH 5

1971

Volume 4 Number 4

## CAO's FORECAST: Black Ink -- Maybe

AFTER TWO months of a crack-down on spending, CAO Arthur Will said he is "cautiously optimistic" that the County will end the 1970-71 fiscal year next July "in the black."

Will reported to the Board of Supervisors last Tuesday (March 2) that curtailment in hiring, building, and buying will lead to estimated savings of \$65 million by July, enough to wipe out the \$63 million general fund deficit he now predicts.

Will had foreseen a \$59 million deficit last Jan. 5 shortly after taking office, but that was before three additional drains on County funds developed: overtime pay for deputy sheriffs and firemen at the East Los Angeles riots (\$872,000), overtime pay and repairs arising from the Feb. 9 earthquake (\$1.1 million), and a \$2 million loss in property taxes resulting from Board approval (Feb. 9) of lower assess-

ments on several oil companies' mineral rights and fixtures, as recommended by assessor Philip Watson and the assessment appeals board.

Will said he hopes the federal government will reimburse the County for 75 percent of its earthquake expenses. This would mean aid totaling \$836,000. The CAO said he also hopes Uncle Sam will pick up part of the tab if the County suffers further tax losses from property owners' obtaining lower assessments because of quake damage.

Will told the Supervisors that efforts continue in Sacramento to obtain financial relief from state funds, but he described the County's chances of getting such relief as "bleak at best."

Major source of worry, Will said, remains welfare spending. If the state, as appears possible, should

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## Kaiser Revises Health Plan Benefits

KAISER FOUNDATION health plan has advised the County department of personnel that after April 1 Kaiser will liberalize certain treatment benefits (for kidney disease, polio, tuberculosis, contagious disease, and emergency victims) and will increase its charges for maternity cases.

The changes will affect the 18,560 County employees who subscribe to Kaiser health coverage.

Changes include:

- A benefit of up to \$10,000 a

year per person for chronic hemodialysis (use of a kidney machine) and for kidney transplants. Such procedures presently are not covered.

- The maximum benefit for emergency treatment outside a Kaiser facility area will be increased from \$2,000 to \$3,000.

- The \$1,000 limit for contagious disease treatment will be eliminated.

- Kaiser also will eliminate the

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## Around and About

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Gordon of the County clerk's staff is turning in his suit after 45 years and 1 month.

PHRUSTATED PHONERS have let The DIGEST know that they have been getting frequent busy signals when they call the department of personnel numbers given in the Feb. 19 issue—628-9112 for a recorded voice listing upcoming open competitive examinations, and 628-9116 for upcoming promotional exams. Helpful hint: these phones operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call at off hours.

LEONARD GOESER, who formerly operated the concession stand in room 100, County courthouse, is new operator of the third floor stand in the Hall of Administration. He replaces the late "Blind Bill" Eastman, who took over his first stand in the old Hall of Records in 1950 and moved to the Hall of Administration when it opened in 1960. Eastman died of cancer last December 1. The state department of rehabilitation's business enterprise program for the blind, which selects concession operators, is in the process of naming Goeser's successor at the Courthouse stand.

COUNTY WEIGHTS and measures inspectors soon will begin making like traffic cops with violators. Dropping the present cumbersome business of seeking formal complaints through the D-A or a local city attorney, the inspectors will hand out citations to vendors caught using a heavy thumb on the scale or faulty gauge on the gas pump. The Board of Supervisors approved the change last Tuesday (March 2). Municipal court judges will draw up a bail schedule. Weights-measures director Maynard Becker estimates his men will issue some 5,000 of the misdemeanor tickets a year.

## CAO'S FORECAST

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run out of funds for certain welfare programs, an additional \$7 million in welfare costs could be dumped upon the County before July 1.

### Where Are the Savings?

Will told the Board the biggest chunk of the expected \$65 million in savings will result from freezing capital projects as of Jan. 5. This freeze will prevent spending of \$41.2 million (the total County general fund capital project budget for 1970-71 was \$73 million).

Other sources of savings:

—Curtailed buying of supplies and services, \$9.3 million

—Freezing of most new hiring, \$7.3 million. Will reported the number of general fund employees dropped by 860 between Jan. 5 and Feb. 19, to a total of 66,412

—Curtailed in paid overtime, \$753,000

—Deferred purchases of equipment, \$2.7 million

—Curtailed programs in many County departments, \$3.4 million.

### A Look Ahead

The CAO told the Supervisors that the present economy program "probably will prove sufficient to end this fiscal year in the black, although constant monitoring is essential to assure this objective."

Will continued:

"Additionally, functions must be reassessed to identify service programs and activities which may be eliminated, substantially curtailed, shifted to another responsible agency, or otherwise removed from general fund financing. I have instructed my staff to initiate such studies. As these studies are completed, I will report my recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Although recommended adjustments in County programs will have little effect on our efforts during the current fiscal year, they will be felt during 1971-72."

## KAISER BENEFITS

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limitation for care of polio cases. At present that limit is two years' care or \$5,000.

• Kaiser will provide treatment for tuberculosis except during the contagious stage requiring acute hospitalization and sanitarium care. Treatment now is limited to diagnosis.

• Members will be charged \$150 for full maternity care if they have been with Kaiser for ten continuous months, \$350 if delivery takes place prior to completing ten months' membership. The increase affects pregnancies confirmed after April 1. Present charges, in effect since 1962, are \$100 for deliveries after ten months' membership and \$175 for others.

Kaiser now accepts enrollments only from new permanent, full-time County employees during their first 90 days with the County. The other three County-sponsored health plans—Blue Cross, Blue Shield, and Ross-Loos—also accept enrollments during the first 90 days of employment, but in addition they will admit other County employees who are in acceptable health. Forms for filing such health statements are available through each County department's personnel office.

County of Los Angeles

## DIGEST

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