



DIGEST

Around and About

A PAIR of three-day weekends coming up: Oct. 9, 10, 11 (Columbus Day) and Oct. 23, 24, 25 (Veterans Day). One other remains on the 1971 calendar—Dec. 24, 25, and 26.

IT'S PERMANENT, as of today (Oct. 1)—Harvey Brandt as County engineer and Robert Medina as director, senior citizens affairs. Both had been serving as probationary appointees.

A NEW face on the seventh floor, Hall of Administration: Chapman Bone, who took over Sept. 13 as city-County coordinator. Bone, 51, was La Mirada city manager for ten years and before that an administrator in Torrance, Hermosa Beach, and San Diego.

THE BOARD of Supervisors adjourned last Tuesday (Sept. 28) in honor of former registrar of voters Benjamin Hite, 73, who had died the previous night after a four-week illness. Mr. Hite entered the County service in 1926, became registrar in 1948, and retired June 30, 1968.

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BOARD ORDERS CAR POOL STUDY

CAO ARTHUR Will's staff has begun a study of a possible computerized car pool system for County employees, which would match up drivers and riders coming to work from the same areas.

The Board of Supervisors ordered the study (Sept. 21) in hopes a computerized systems might alleviate traffic congestion, air pollution, and the chronic shortage of employee parking spaces.

In making the motion for the study, Supervisor Warren Dorn also asked a report on whether County working hours should be staggered more widely than they now are, in order to ease rush-hour congestion.

The Board directed the County counsel and the APCD to join the CAO in the new study.

The San Bernardino County CAO's office informed THE DIGEST

that it now is setting up a computerized car pool for that county's 6,000 employees—a system expected to go into operation before next Jan. 1. The San Bernardino system is being modeled after a car pool system already operating at the University of California at San Bernardino, where a reported 40 percent of the employees are participating.

A San Bernardino County spokesman said that, under its system, the areas near work centers are being divided into grids, each one mile square, and a computer will provide information on available drivers and passengers within each grid; thereafter, the drivers and riders will get together to make their own pooling arrangements. In areas farther from work centers, the grids are larger, up to a maximum of four square miles.

Some Health Insurance Refunds? Maybe

THE DEPARTMENT of personnel is meeting with representatives of the four County-sponsored health plans to discuss the possibility of obtaining refunds—all or partial—on recent increases in health insurance premiums. The refunds would be based on President Nixon's Aug. 15 wage-price freeze order.

While discussions continue, auditor-controller Mark Bloodgood is paying the four health plans premiums at the former rate and is impounding the premium increase money in a trust fund to be used either for future refund to subscribers or payment to the health plans.

The increases, which ranged up to \$7.50 a month, were announced in July, to be effective for coverage beginning Sept. 1, when the County's contracts with the health plans expired (see July 2 DIGEST). First deductions for the higher-cost coverage were made from the County's Aug. 10 paychecks. However, President Nixon froze wages and prices effective Aug. 15.

Director of personnel Gordon Nesvig said the President's Cost of Living Council has ruled that any portion of a premium increase that is based on expected future rises in costs is not permissible during the

(Continued on page 2)

REFUNDS

(Continued from page 1)

freeze. But increases will be allowed if they result from pre-freeze increases in health costs that were not met by premiums paid in the preceding year, or from increased use of the health plan (for example, more doctor visits per subscriber).

County officials are discussing these points with representatives of the three "experience rated" health plans—Blue Cross, Blue Shield, and Ross-Loos—which set their rates year by year according to how much County enrollees use their services.

Nesvig said the fourth plan, Kaiser, appears to be entitled to the entire Sept. 1 increase because Kaiser is a "community rated" plan, which bases its premiums for all subscribers, County and others, on its costs for the entire southern California area. Kaiser reportedly raised its rates to other subscribers in this area April 1 but, at the County's request, delayed the boost for County subscribers until Sept. 1.

Nesvig pointed out that the President's freeze order has no effect on the increase in the County's contribution to employees' health insurance, which rose from \$8 a month to a maximum of \$16.50 a month on July 1.

He said premiums on County-sponsored life insurance policies also remain unaffected by the wage-price freeze, since the rates were established in 1968 and are guaranteed by the carrier, Fireman's Fund, for five years.

New Kaiser Cards

KAISER FOUNDATION health plan will be mailing new identification cards to its 19,000 County subscribers later this year. Any subscriber who has moved recently should send his old and new addresses (and account number) to Kaiser at Room 711, 1515 North Vermont avenue, Los Angeles 90027—or telephone the information to 660-1720.

New Agreement Recognizes Freeze

THE BOARD of Supervisors approved last Tuesday (Sept. 28) an agreement covering 200 employees in 16 power equipment repair classes. It is the first agreement approved since President Nixon's wage-price freeze went into effect Aug. 15.

The agreement includes a \$78 a month pay increase for most of the 200 men but adds that the increase will not be implemented "until it is legally permissible to do so." The language also says the County is not required to make up later any wages or benefits lost because of the freeze.

The new agreement actually is an amendment to a memorandum of understanding the Board of Supervisors approved last May for 450 employees in the automotive and equipment maintenancemen's unit. The 16 power equipment classes were not included in the M/U because of a continuing dispute over salaries.

Nathanson Reappointed

THE TERM of employee relations commissioner Ben Nathanson has been extended another three years, to Oct. 7, 1974. His present term expires next Thursday.

The Board of Supervisors reappointed Nathanson last Tuesday (Sept. 28) after being informed by the County management council and a committee of employee organizations that they consider Nathanson "the best qualified individual to fill this vacancy." In so doing the Board waived the customary method of appointing a commissioner from a list of three nominees jointly submitted by the management council and the employee organizations' committee.

Reginald Alleyne, Jr., is the second member of the commission. Nominations to fill the third seat, vacant since the resignation of Melvin Lennard, are pending.

Spanish-speaking Jobs

THE PROBATION department is looking for men and women to be Spanish-speaking deputy probation officer trainees. Salaries are \$735 a month for the first six months, rising thereafter to a range of \$795 to \$992 a month.

Candidates for the jobs may apply at room 493, Hall of Administration, beginning today (Oct. 1) until next Friday (Oct. 8). Applicants must have a bachelor's degree from college, speak fluent Spanish, and "be familiar with the needs of the Mexican-American community."

Kristovich Fired

THE BOARD of Supervisors, upon recommendation of CAO Arthur Will, permanently discharged Baldo Kristovich, public administrator and public guardian, from County service last Tuesday (Sept. 28).

He had been suspended from office Sept. 1 while an investigation continued by the district attorney and the CAO into Kristovich's conduct of his department, particularly into the auctioning of automobiles, appliances, and other items from estates.

Kristovich's attorney, Joseph A. Ball of Long Beach, told the *DIGEST* he will file an appeal from the discharge with the civil service commission. Previously the commission had granted Kristovich's request for a hearing on the suspension and had said the entire three-member commission would sit as a hearing body.

County of Los Angeles

DIGEST

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