



# DIGEST

## Around and About

After several months' interruption caused by the retirement of former editor Lorin Peterson and shifting of editorial responsibilities to the CAO's Public Affairs office, the Digest is back.

Ahead are some changes in makeup and content. Your suggestions, criticisms and comments are always welcome . . . . .

While we were away, Yvonne Brathwaite

Burke was appointed by the Governor to fill the Fourth Supervisorial District post vacated by Supervisor James Hayes' resignation. Burke has a long and distinguished career in government,

having served in the State Assembly and the House of Representatives. Her sprawling district includes most of the coastline stretching from Malibu to Long Beach. The Fourth District seat is up for election next year, along with the Second and Fifth Districts . . . . .

Flood Control District chief engineer Arthur Bruington has departed to assume a new top job in Irvine. His retirement adds to the number of vacant department head slots expected to be filled by supervisors in the next few months . . . . .

The press continues to keep a close eye on county government. In addition to 2 wire services, some 14 newspapers, 3 radio stations, and 1 TV reporter

*(Continued on page 2)*

NOVEMBER 1

1979

Volume 12 Number 2

## Budget Wins Final Approval

By unanimous vote, the Board of Supervisors adopted a \$3.87 billion budget to finance County operations during the 1979-80 fiscal year.

As was the case last year, final adoption of the funding program was delayed until action was taken by the State in August.

Although higher in total amount than previous budgets, the spending program continues to reflect the limits on County income imposed by Proposition 13. As a result, the second post-Proposition 13 budget fell short of projected needs which will require a service reduction throughout most County departments.

Thorough examination of budget needs and careful use of resources, however, enabled the Board of Supervisors to maintain and increase certain critical services.

Services will be expanded at the Edward Roybal Comprehensive Health Center in East Los Angeles and at the Dr. H. Claude Hudson Comprehensive Health Center in downtown Los Angeles, and to improve outpatient care throughout the County's hospital system. In addition, 3 surgery rooms, a 12-bed intensive care unit and a 20-bed post-surgical ward will be built at Rancho Los Amigos Hospital in Downey.

Mental Health was allocated additional funding for a Harbor-UCLA Medical Center program in which doctors provide consultation services to community agencies on the management and prevention of mental disorders; the Sheriff received enough funds to continue to function at last year's level of service; and Mechanical Department was authorized to replace overaged Coroner's vehicles,

Sheriff's cars and other heavy equipment.

Capital projects were again severely cut back.

Special district funding was maintained at or below last year's level again because of income limits imposed by Proposition 13. The Board of Supervisors did, however, approve a benefit assessment for flood control which will be in effect for at least one year. Voters will express their views on the assessment at the November 6 special election when they pass judgment on Proposition A on their ballots.

## Blue Shield Coverage Improved

Blue Shield health plan subscribers will benefit from improved dependent coverage effective November 1. The plan's outpatient doctor office visits and \$100 diagnostic x-ray and laboratory tests benefits will automatically apply to already enrolled dependents of County employees who are Blue Shield subscribers.

This means that all of the plan's benefits will now be the same for both subscribers and dependents.

Updated Blue Shield brochures containing full details of the plan benefits will be available through your departmental personnel office about November 1.

Blue Shield subscribers are urged to obtain a copy of the new brochures for a full description of the benefits available to themselves and their dependents.

## Natural History Museum to Exhibit Photos of Rare Hawaiian Plants

Endangered plant life of Hawaii will be pinpointed by the County's Natural History Museum in an exhibit opening Nov. 3 titled "Hawaii's Unique and Vanishing Flora."

Long associated with a profusion of orchids and other exotic plants, the islands are actually a floral paradise in peril, according to Robert Gustafson, Asst. Curator of Botany at the Exposition Park museum.

"Nowhere in the United States is a flora more seriously threatened than in our 50th state," said Gustafson, who has directed the assemblage of more than 100 cibachrome photographs depicting native plants, some of them now extinct, in their original habitat.

"Misconceptions abound regarding Hawaiian plants. The orchids, plumerias, gingers, anthuriums and birds of paradise that run riot in travel folders are not native. However, rare relatives of hibiscus, like the *Kokia cookei*, are endemic to the region and are part of the unique flora now endangered or extinct."

The Natural History Museum display will be the first major show ever devoted to this subject and has been assembled as an anniversary event marking the 50th year of the Botany Section's existence as a part of the museum.

## Around and About

*(Continued from page 1)*

regularly cover the county beat out of the Hall of Administration pressroom. This is in addition to full-time reporters working out of the Courthouse and Criminal Courts Building pressrooms. Outlying courthouses also have pressrooms which are used frequently by the press to report on cases of local interest.

## PAYCHECKS TO REFLECT RAISES

County employees will be anticipating their November 9 paychecks with keener interest than usual, as the warrants will reflect their new salary rates for the month of October.

Then, on December 4—just in time for the holiday season—all monthly employees in County service will receive retroactive checks covering the difference between the old and new rates for the period of July 1 through September 30.

For most workers, this current wage increase will be six percent, a figure reached through negotiations between representatives of 57 bargaining units and the County.

With the existing contracts about to expire, contract talks began in the spring with as many as 30 County negotiators at the bargaining tables with union representatives attempting to agree on such matters as salaries, fringe benefits, and contractual language.

After months of bargaining, 60 individual contracts affecting more than 71,000 workers were agreed on, and the Board of Supervisors adopted the two-year contracts in late September.

Pay increases for most workers will be six percent now, two percent on January 1, and an additional seven percent next July, explained Harry Hufford, CAO/Director of Personnel.

The increase in fringe benefits includes a new reimbursement rate for those who use their own cars on County business; defraying the employees' retirement contribution increases to the retirement fund; and extending the dental plan to cover employees' dependents in 1980-81.

The new mileage reimbursement rates that went into effect on September 1 are as follows: 22 cents per mile for the first 600 miles driven; 18 cents per mile for each mile over 600; and a quarterly adjustment of 1 cent for each 17 cents' increase in the average cost of unleaded gasoline above one dollar per gallon.

Employees have already begun reaping the benefits of the new wage pacts. A few might not have been affected, but most employees received September 25 paychecks that reflected revised retirement contributions.

In addition, all affected workers received a check on October 18 covering the difference between retirement contributions made from July through August 31, 1979 and contributions that would have been made had the new rates been in effect during that period.

Mileage permittees will receive reimbursement checks on November 5 reflecting the new rates for claim periods ending after October 5, and another on November 15 covering the differences between the old and new reimbursement rates for claim periods from September 1 through October 5, 1979.

In addition, employees who have left County service recently can expect to receive checks on December 14 for the difference between the old and new salary rates for the period they worked between July 1 and September 30, 1979.

## Firefighters Praised

The Board of Supervisors has officially commended the action of firemen, airborne National Guard emergency services organization, governmental agencies, and others for their cooperative efforts in trolling blazes and minimizing damages during the recent major brush fires.

Chairman Kenneth Hahn, originator of the commendatory motion seconded by Supervisor Baxter Ward said there were more men and equipment committed to fighting the area's brush fires than at any time before and he expressed special recognition to County Forester and Fire Warden Clyde A. Bragdon for his leadership of the firefighting army locally.

At fires throughout the state, Chief Bragdon reported to the Board, there were as many as 7,000 firefighters from 32 states on the line at one point; and there was a statewide total of 604 engine companies, 18 fire crews, 75 bulldozers, 18 helicopters, 37 air tankers, and 62 other kinds of aircraft committed.

Meanwhile, the County Flood Control District is undertaking a preparedness program to combat landslides, and flooding when winter rains strike the now-dry watershed areas.

## Registrar Gears For Special Election

Usually, about 500 County employees work there. But, by Nov. 6, some 18,000 people will be on board.

November 6—election day. And the department on the "hot seat" is the Registrar-Recorder's Office.

The department, which relies on volunteers, temporary employees and other County agencies for the bulk of its election-day workforce, also is in the midst of preparing for next year's presidential primary and general elections.

This month, it will be conducting the statewide special election in Los Angeles County—four measures, two of which are sure to spark a hefty voter turnout. They are Prop. 1, the school busing amendment, and Prop. 4, the "Spirit of 13" initiative proposal.

In addition, 100 other jurisdictions are on the ballot for local contests. Included in that count are 13 cities, 11 community college districts, 66 school districts and 10 special districts, including the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, which is seeking a "yes" vote on Prop. A.

If all of the above weren't enough, the department has just moved its headquarters from an archaic, one-time piano warehouse at 808 N. Spring St., Los Angeles, to 5557 Ferguson Drive, City of Commerce, the former Fluor Corp. headquarters which years ago housed the Department of Public Social Services.

Registrar-Recorder Leonard Panish directs what is in fact the nation's largest election and county recorder operation (remember, New York City is comprised of five boroughs, and each is a county unto itself).

On the elections side, the names of some 3 million County residents are in the department's voter file. And the recorder operation, housed in the Hall of Records at Temple Street and Broadway, Los Angeles, maintains some 60 million real estate, birth, marriage and death records.

The department is nationally recognized as being a modern pacesetter in the fields of elections administration and recorder services.

But its roots go back to Old California—to the thatch-roofed huts and dusty streets of El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula, a settlement founded by 44 weary colonists in 1781.

That village went on to become the largest urban area in the West, a region centered around the nation's most populous County—Los Angeles County.

The County was formed in 1850, the year California became the Union's 31st State.

In 1850, the County Clerk, who then had charge of elections and recorder services, said that 311 persons out of a population of 3,530 voted in the first countywide election here. Only a relative handful of documents were officially recorded that year.

By 1873, the recording of real estate papers and other documents had reached such a pace that the office of the County Recorder was established. The Clerk, however, still had charge of election services.

Then, in 1912, the citizens of Los Angeles County ratified a Charter, in which the Registrar of Voters and the County Recorder were established as separate agencies.

About 250,000 County residents were eligible to vote that year, and the Recorder reported handling more than 150,000 document transactions.

In 1967, the Board of Supervisors, in a move to streamline administration and save tax dollars, merged the County's election and recorder operations into today's Department of Registrar-Recorder.

The County's population that year was in the 7 million range, some 3.1 million persons were registered to

vote, and more than 1 million documents were officially recorded.

Today, with the County's population still at 7 million, some 3 million persons are registered to vote and about 60 million documents are on file at the department's recorder division, which yearly logs in some 1½ million documents.

And on the elections side of the coin, the department finally is in a facility adequate for its operations to be consolidated.

Formerly, the elections operation worked out of four locations—the department's headquarters in Chinatown (to which it moved in June, 1940), an exhibit complex in Commerce it leased during major elections where votes cast on computerized ballots were transferred to magnetic tape, a service center in South-Central Los Angeles where election materials were prepared, and a warehouse in Vernon used for storage of election equipment.

Now, aside from headquarters, only the service center is used, and that just for warehouse purposes. (The department also has small branch offices in the Antelope Valley, East Los Angeles, the Florence-Firestone District, Inglewood, Van Nuys and Pomona.)

The Registrar-Recorder's Office occupies about 170,000 square feet of its new 268,000-square-foot home. The District Attorney's child support division is housed in the rest.

The new location, just 7 freeway miles from Civic Center, has space for parking for more than 1,000 cars. Only 10 minutes from its old location, the department—situated off the Santa Ana Freeway at Atlantic Boulevard—offers much more convenient access to the public.

And, with the November 6 election almost history and planning underway for 1980's ballot, thinking ahead to 1981 and 1982, well . . . .

## Shoes Can Be Dangerous

Female County employees are being cautioned against wearing the so-called "Candies" and step-in type of shoes which do not have a heel or ankle strap for support.

The warning comes from the Department of Personnel and is based on an informal study which found that these types of shoes have a correlation with injury-causing falls. The study was conducted by employees of the dispensary in the Hall of Administration.

During the six-month period from January through June 1979, the dispensary tabulated 47 injuries as a result of falls. Of these, 41 cases involved employees who were wearing shoes with solid plastic or wooden soles and heels, with no ankle support straps. Most were wearing the "Candies" shoes, the Department of Personnel reports.

One particular female fell *four* times within a ten-day period, and two others suffered two falls each, according to the report.

Although these shoes may enhance the appearance of the wearer, slipping off their platforms is apparently quite easy and could result in painful sprains and broken ankles, it was pointed out. Those who choose to wear them should be extremely cautious.

## Mailing List Update

Since several months have elapsed since the Digest was published regularly, we're sure that our mailing list may be a bit outdated.

We want it to be as current as possible so would appreciate hearing from offices that may be aware of relocations since our last mailings.

It will probably take a while to get the system going again and eliminate the bugs, but with the cooperation of our readers we hope to have our distribution system running smoothly as soon as possible.

One last word—you may remember that our press run is limited and a copy is not available for each employee. Where supplies are short, we ask that copies be passed along to a colleague. They'll appreciate your consideration.

## 11 Holidays Announced For 1980 Will Provide 5 Long Weekends

County holidays for 1980 have been announced by the Department of Personnel. Employees will be able to enjoy 11 days off, including 5 three-day weekends next year, which is a Leap Year. The 1980 holidays are:

New Year's Day	Tuesday, January 1
Lincoln's Birthday	Tuesday, February 12
Washington's Birthday	Monday, February 18
Memorial Day	Monday, May 26
Independence Day	Friday, July 4
Labor Day	Monday, September 1
Admission Day	Tuesday, September 9
Columbus Day	Monday, October 13
Veterans Day	Tuesday, November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 27
Christmas Day	Thursday, December 25

## County Managers Attend Fall Conference

Department heads and other key members of County management attended the two-day 24th Annual Fall Conference of the Los Angeles County Management Council held October 25 and 26.

About 190 persons attended the informative event in Oxnard where

## County Artist to Exhibit Works

Well-known County artist Frank Ackerman will be featured at an exhibit of 40 of his watercolors to be held from November 2 through the 27th at the Brand Library Art Center in Glendale.

A special preview and reception is scheduled from 8 to 10 p.m. on Friday, November 2.

The showing is the fourth that Ackermann has had at the Brand Library Art Center. He has exhibited in numerous galleries throughout the world and has won many prestigious awards for his work.

Watercolors to be exhibited at the November showing feature various locales including Alaska, San Francisco, the Renaissance Faire, Carmel, and several local scenes.

Also to be exhibited is a large transparent watercolor entitled "Carousel." First-edition prints of the work will be available.

Ackerman, who resides in Glendale, has been a County employee for over 23 years and currently coordinates the CAO's Graphic Arts unit.

panelists, representatives from aerospace, banking, computerization, transportation, discussed topics such as contract administration, car development, and organizational environment.

Theme of the conference, one two held each year, was "A Comparison of Management Perspectives Public and Private."

County participants included Administrative Officer Harry L. Hufford and Forester and Fire Ward Fire Chief Clyde A. Bragdon, the Council president.

Panel moderators were County Librarian Carol E. Moss; Raymond W. Loomis, assistant County Engineer; and Jason H. Williams, chief deputy director, Building Services.

County of Los Angeles

## DIGEST

EDITORIAL BOARD

HARRY L. HUFFORD  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Director of Personnel

CLYDE A. BRAGDON, JR.  
President  
County Management Council

Edited and published by  
Public Affairs Office, CAO

Editorial Office: Room 358, Hall of  
Administration, 500 West T  
Street, Los Angeles, CA 9001  
Telephone: 974-1311