



# DIGEST

## *Around and About*

County librarians have conducted 26 library information and story telling segments for the locally produced "Romper Room" television series for children. The program received this year's Los Angeles area Emmy Award for "Children/Youth Programs—Series Independent Stations" category. It is estimated that each library story telling segment was viewed by more than 250,000 children and adults in Los Angeles County, other parts of Southern California and the Far West . . . .

The Public Guardian's office helps to meet the basic needs of over 2,000 elderly, physically handicapped and mentally disabled individuals. Guardian Circle volunteers help fill the voids in these lives and lessen the loneliness with companionship. If you can help, call Joan Vitale at 974-0400 . . . .

For \$1.50 you can now visit both the Page Museum and County Museum of Art at La Brea Park. The common admission for children, students and senior citizens is 75¢. Admission to either Museum individually remains \$1.00 for adults and 50¢ for children, students and senior citizens. It is anticipated that the reduced rate will increase attendance at both facilities and prove especially attractive to senior citizens and young families with children. The feasibility of extending a common admission fee to other County cultural facilities is now being considered . . . .

County employees can now authorize direct deposit of salary warrants to their credit union or bank by contacting their department payroll clerk. Normally funds can be withdrawn promptly on pay day . . . .

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**NOVEMBER**

**1981**

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## **NEW COUNTY RETIREMENT PLAN ENROLLMENT PERIOD SLATED TO OPEN**

Beginning Monday, January 4, 1982, and ending Thursday, March 4, 1982, general retirement employees will be given a ONE-TIME-ONLY opportunity to transfer to the new non-contributory retirement program.

Those employees who transfer to the new plan will be covered by its provisions beginning March 5, 1982 resulting in an average increase in take-home pay of some 7.5%. In addition, they will receive a refund of all their past contributions plus interest AND will receive credit in the new plan for their past creditable service including prior public and/or military service.

Refunds will be made during the period between April 15, 1982 and June 1, 1982. All employees will receive with the December 23, 1981 payroll warrant a packet from the retirement board which will include a statement indicating the amount of money they have in the system, a transfer form and a detailed comparison of the benefits of the current plans and new Plan E.

### *Overview of New Plan*

The new program provides a monthly benefit at age 65 and after 35 years of service, which in combination with social security equals 70% of the average of the employee's three highest years of salary. In addition, the plan provides a 50% survivor's benefit, and those who transfer to the new program will be covered by a Long Term Disability Program that in the event of total disability will provide 60% of salary until age 65, at which time the retirement program benefits would begin.

Finally, those employees under the new plan will be covered by \$10,000 of life insurance fully paid for by the County.

An employee is automatically eligible (vested) after ten years of service to receive benefits under the new plan and may opt for an actuarially reduced benefit as early as age 55.

## **County Employees Give More Again This Year**

Under the co-chairmanship of Supervisor Ed Edelman and William Robertson, Executive Secretary, Federation of Labor, the Los Angeles County Charitable Giving Program set a new mark in contributions this year. Employee participation was up 8.1% from 1980.

Projected for Brotherhood Crusade is  
*(Continued on page 2)*

### **EMPLOYEE SURVEY ON BACK PAGE**

We are reproducing the Los Angeles County Employee Survey Form on the back page of this issue for the convenience of Digest readers who might not have had the opportunity to respond. The page may be filled out and sent through County mail.

# Around and About

(Continued from page 1)

Members are now being sought for the Los Angeles County Secretarial Council organized in 1969 to further an exchange of ideas and information within the secretarial profession in order to enhance the professional image of the County. Contact Nola Diemel at 974-4115 or Cindy Allen at 226-8101 for further information . . . .

Anthony Quinn has donated one of his sculptures to the East Los Angeles Library. September 12, 1981 was declared Anthony Quinn Day in Los Angeles County by the Board of Supervisors in recognition of his many contributions to the East Los Angeles community and of his great talent as an actor, artist and writer . . . .

First Interstate Bank of California has donated \$250,000 to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The contribution is for the Museum's Capital Campaign and will be used for a gallery honoring First Interstate Bank. The Museum's Campaign raises funds to expand the facilities, increase endowment and acquire works of art . . . .

## QUESTIONS ABOUT COUNTY OPERATIONS

Most County employees have been asked questions about the County which they are unable to answer. These questions often come from friends, neighbors and youngsters in the family. When you have questions you can not answer easily, why not send them to the Digest? Interesting questions with straightforward answers will appear in a Question and Answer Column.

County of Los Angeles

### DIGEST

EDITORIAL BOARD

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## Charitable Giving Exceeds Previous Year

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\$280,154—for United Way/AID \$1,341,003—for a total of \$1,621,157.

Los Angeles County employees are now the second largest group of charitable givers in the public sector. When we take into consideration the innumerable firms in the private sector, along with public employees, County employees rank third in the Southland.

Department management and County labor representatives on the Charitable Giving Task Force helped to assure the program's success by providing program direction. Twenty-five departments now exceed the 50% employee participation mark — two and one-half times the number last year.

Departments reaching or passing that goal are: Affirmative Action Compliance Office, Animal Care and Control, Building Services, Chief Administrative Office, Civil Service Commission, Collections, Consumer Affairs, County Clerk, County Engineer-Facilities, Data Processing, Employee Relations Commission, Flood Control District, Human Relations Commission, Mechanical, Military and Veterans Affairs, Personnel, Public Social Services, Purchasing and Stores, Regional Planning, Registrar-Recorder, Road, Senior Citizens Affairs, Small Craft Harbors, Treasurer-Tax Collector and Weights and Measures.

For the first time, four departments reached the 100% participation mark—Affirmative Action Compliance Office, Human Relations Commission, Military and Veterans Affairs, and Treasurer-Tax Collector.

A special award, "The Department of Distinction," will be given to the department which is judged to have conducted the most creative, best organized and most effective campaign. This will be a part of the Countywide awards program scheduled to take place in late November.

Each department will be placed in one of four groups based upon departmental personnel size. In each group, awards will be given to the department that achieved the highest employee participation, and to the department that achieved the greatest participation increase since the 1980 campaign.

## Group Formed To Assist County In Productivity Plan

Seventeen representatives of business, labor and the academic community have as their mission to advise the Board of Supervisors and the Chief Administrative Officer on productivity improvement and to develop a five-year productivity plan.

These business and labor leaders and academicians compose the Productivity Advisory Committee chaired by Elio R. Rotolo, Vice-President of Industrial Engineering, Security Pacific Bank. The Vice-Chairman is Dr. Arthur W. Guttenberg, Professor of Management of the University of Southern California.

William Robertson, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Los Angeles Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, and Joseph Wetzler, Chairman of the Coalition of Los Angeles County Unions, are ex-officio members of the committee.

The first major effort of the committee was to sponsor with the Chief Administrative Office a productivity improvement seminar for all County department heads and their key staff. Over two hundred County managers attended this one-day event on September 30, 1981.

The major purpose of the seminar was to introduce County managers to ways employed by private industry to develop productivity improvement programs. The seminar participants received information on how large industries such as Northrop, Hughes, Honeywell, Lockheed and Westinghouse are approaching productivity improvement.

Each department is appointing a productivity manager to coordinate productivity improvement projects within the department. On December 4, 1981 the Productivity Advisory Committee will begin to receive and review productivity improvement plans from each County department. The committee will review each of these plans and make its recommendations to the departments and the Board of Supervisors.

This effort is particularly important in that in unprecedented ways the County is having to deal with diminishing resources. Federal and State grants and assistance have been dramatically reduced this year. This trend is likely to continue as efforts to bridle government spending accelerate.

Improved productivity can be an im-

(Continued on page 3)

# Thirteen County Departments Given National Recognition

Each year the National Association of Counties (NACo) gives awards "in recognition of distinguished and continuing contributions to the course of strong, efficient, modern County Government in America."

This year Los Angeles County received twenty awards for outstanding programs conducted by thirteen County departments.

Supervisor Deane Dana accepted these awards on behalf of the County at the NACo annual meeting in July and acknowledged Department Heads responsible for the programs at the October 27 meeting of the Board of Supervisors.

Names of the programs are engraved on a handsome plaque presented to the County by NACo. This year three plaques were required to list all twenty programs recognized as outstanding.

The programs awarded and the departments responsible for them are:

**ASSESSOR'S BUSINESS AUDIT PROGRAM**—Assessor; **Beaches Anti-Litter Program**—Beaches; **Building Services' Energy Conservation**—Building Services; **Developing Management Information System**—CAO; **Housing/Solar Retrofit Program**, **Housing Rehabilitation and Marketing**, and **Enforcing Contract Compliance**—Community Development; **Computerized Traffic Citation Records**, **Data Processing Backup System**, and **Data Processing Programs**—Data Processing.

**HARDCORE GANG CRIME PROSECUTION**—District Attorney; **Fire/Flood Emergency Response**—Flood Control District; **CALL: Library's Information and Referral**—Library; **Private Sector and Parks/Recreation**—Parks and Recreation; **San Fernando Valley Juvenile Hall Special Treatment Preplacement Program**. **Utility Worker Aide Program for Probation Camp Graduates**, **David V. Kenyon Juvenile Justice Center**, and **Central Placement Consultants Unit**—Probation; **Social Services Work Simplification**—Public Social Services; and **Police Department's Work Program**—Sheriff.

NACo is distributing case studies of Los Angeles County's achievement awards to counties throughout the country in order to "serve as examples of innovative programs."

# Contracting Out -- Myths and Facts

Most of us have heard the term "contracting out" and some think that it is (1) something brand new, and (2) that it is designed to lay off large numbers of County employees. Let's look at the facts.

In the first place, contracting out is not something new. It has been around a long time. For example, the County contracts for foster home and board and care services at a cost of approximately \$180 million a year.

Another \$200 million is spent on contracts with community-based, non-profit organizations and other government units for a variety of services in the fields of health care, manpower, housing, justice and services to the elderly.

It has always been practicable or economical to provide some technical and professional services through private firms or individuals. More than \$225 million per year is spent on these contracts. This is in addition to the some \$200 million paid for goods purchased by the County.

So we find that more than \$805 million is spent annually on contracts in these areas.

Since November 1978 the County has been permitted, when cost effective and feasible, to contract with private business for services previously performed by County employees. The purpose is to deliver a service at less cost, not to reduce the level or quality of that service.

To date, ninety-seven contracts have been awarded by the Board of Supervisors. The total value of these contracts is \$13.5 million and represents a savings of \$6.4 million from the cost before contracting out.

Careful safeguards have been set up to ensure that the awarding of a con-

tract not impair the County's ability to respond to emergencies, not result in the unauthorized disclosure of confidential information and not infringe upon the proper role of the County in its relationship with citizens.

The contract must comply with Federal and State regulations if funded from these sources. Contracts are relatively easy to terminate and to award to another bidder in the event of default or non-compliance.

What is not sometimes realized is that savings generated from these contracts have permitted a number of departments to maintain critically needed services while experiencing severe budget pressures. This is especially important to departments providing non-mandatory services which are at the end of the funding stream. Some County departments have found contracting to be an effective way to provide services to outlying areas or to provide hard-to-deliver services where there is a high level of customer dissatisfaction.

Contracting with private business has resulted in only fifty-two layoffs and three reductions since the program began three years ago. When layoffs cannot be avoided, the winning contractor may be required to give first hiring preference to affected County employees. In most instances, normal turnover and existing vacancies have made it unnecessary to lay off employees.

The savings resulting from contracting out are retained by the County and used to finance County services, including the continuing employment of employees who would otherwise have to be laid off. The \$6.4 million saved to date equates to about 300 jobs.

## Dr. Noguchi Elected To National Post

Los Angeles County Chief Medical Examiner-Coroner Thomas T. Noguchi is now President-Elect of the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME). All County and State Medical Examiners in the United States belong to the organization.

Dr. Noguchi will be installed as President at the NAME Annual Convention in November 1982 at Newport Beach. As President-Elect he will plan and organize for the national association.

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## Productivity Committee

(Continued from page 2)

portant weapon against inflation and reduced revenues, but it will take a concentrated effort on the part of all County employees to make productivity improvement a reality. In future issues of the Digest specific productivity programs will be highlighted.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEE SURVEY FORM

At the Board meeting held September 29, 1981, the Board of Supervisors, on a motion of Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, instructed that an employee survey form be developed and distributed to each employee in the County service with the October 25, 1981 paychecks. The primary purpose of this survey is to invite employee suggestions on methods of improving effectiveness and reducing the cost of County government. If you need additional space, please use additional paper.

1. Can you identify any areas in your department in which costs could be reduced through the elimination of unnecessary activities?

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2. Are there any areas in your department in which new technology, new procedures or processes, better organization, or improved motivation techniques can increase productivity?

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3. Do you have any recommendations which would help County government improve the quality of service to the taxpayer while, at the same time, maintaining or reducing current costs?

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4. Are there any other suggestions you have that can help County government reduce costs, improve productivity, or increase the quality of service within existing costs?

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NAME (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

CLASSIFICATION (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE MAIL COMPLETED SURVEY FORMS TO:

MR. JAMES S. MIZE  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET  
383 HALL OF ADMINISTRATION  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012