



DIGEST

DECEMBER 31, 1987

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Supervisor Dana Assumes Board Chairmanship

In assuming the 1988 Chairmanship of the Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Deane Dana expressed his goals and hopes for the County and its employees as:

A Message To Our County Family

"When so much of our time and energy is consumed with crises and problems, it's easy to forget just what Los Angeles County government has going for it.

That was brought home to me last week when Sheriff Sherman Block, at a department head meeting, observed that Los Angeles County has the most efficient and uncorrupt government in the nation.

We are, obviously, not without problems . . . major problems. But if we are indeed the most efficient and uncorrupt government in the country, we achieved that status in large part

"Los Angeles County is doing a great job! It's time we gave the departments an opportunity to show it — to the public and to people in Sacramento and Washington."

through the efforts of our departments and the people in them.

Therefore, it makes good sense for the Board, individually and collectively, to use those abilities. This would especially be true in dealing with issues that arise almost daily.

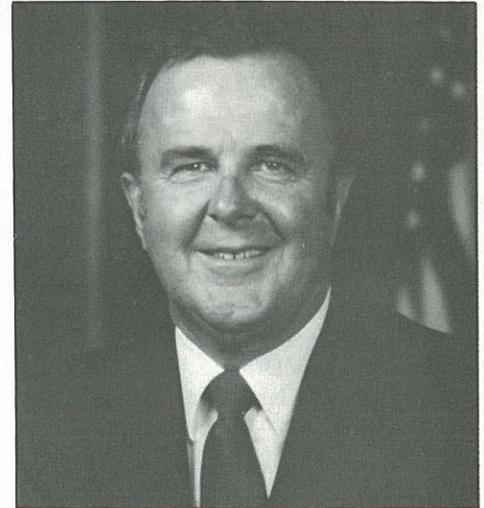
By involving the affected departments in advance of Board action, especially when we are responding to last minute issues raised by the media, we can set about finding solutions in a more timely and orderly manner.

I know the departments are willing, they have expressly said so. We should accept their help. In fact, we should expect it.

For the past decade, County government has been in an era of transition, of diminishing resources. A time when greater expertise, resourcefulness, and productivity has been a necessity, not merely a slogan.

The Board, over the past seven years, has developed and adopted the policies and actions needed to implement those types of changes.

Now it is time to draw upon the pool of departmental talents in tackling such problems as:



*Chairman of the Board,
Supervisor Deane Dana*

- The fast-approaching shortage of land-fill capacity;
- The homeless;
- The mentally ill;
- Health care and the trauma care network;
- Stable funding sources for the County;
- Jail overcrowding and backlogged courts.

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Employee Ideas Rewarded

The Department of Health Services (DHS) recently honored three employees with certificates of commendation for cost-saving and safety suggestions as part of their department's Suggestion Award Program.

Special Recognition Awards were given to Joanne Oltion, High Desert Hospital; Cynthia Barros, Health Services Administration, Contracts and Grants Division; and Allan Zirkin, Health Services Administration, Revenue Management.

Joanne Oltion received \$100 for her suggestion to purchase rechargeable equipment batteries. Rather than discarding ineffective batteries, substantial savings would accrue from using the same battery several times.

Concerned with potential serious injury when lights were out in a stairwell of the building in which she worked, Cynthia Barros suggested placing fluorescent strips on stairs and permanent back-up battery

lights on stairwells. She received \$25 for her ideas.

For his suggestion to re-ink expensive computer ribbons, Allan Zirkin received \$25. An inexpensive re-inking machine which requires no special skills to operate is used to permit additional use of the ribbon.



(From L. to R.) Robert C. Gates, Director, Department of Health Services; Joanne Oltion, Cynthia Barros and Allan Zirkin.

Productivity Leaders Honored

For his bold and innovative leadership as chairman of the County Productivity Commission, Thomas P. Sullivan was praised and presented a scroll by the Board of Supervisors recently.

Under his chairmanship in 1986 and 1987, many highly successful productivity programs flourished, including WorkSMART, the Productivity and Quality Awards Program, the Productivity Managers Network, the L.A. County-USC Student Intern Program, and the Productivity Investment Fund.

Sullivan was cited for working closely with County departments to identify and support High Visibility Productivity Projects to reduce the cost and improve the quality of County services to the public; and bringing positive publicity to the County through his support for the County's productivity accomplishments through numerous speeches and contacts in the community.

Additionally, he enlisted the assistance of numerous high-level private sector business

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(L. to R.) Susan Catania, Make-A-Wish Foundation; District Attorney Ira Reiner; Kiddy Rogers, Child Life Director, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center.



District Attorney's Office Answers A Wish

The holiday season was made a little brighter for a critically ill young man when the employees of the District Attorney's Office chipped in to buy him a Mac Plus computer.

The day before Thanksgiving, District Attorney Ira Reiner presented the computer to 17-year-old Ken at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, where he is a patient. His name was obtained from the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Suffering from recurring colon cancer, Ken wanted a computer to relieve the tedium of hospitalization.

The District Attorney's staff was especially touched by Ken's wish because of his particularly troubled life. However, despite his family problems and serious illness, Ken has maintained an "A" average in high school.

The District Attorney's Bureau of Public Affairs coordinating this effort had all participating employees sign a giant card in the shape of a computer.

Accompanying District Attorney Ira Reiner on this special delivery was Deputy District Attorney Bob Schuit who instructed Ken in the use of the computer.

Salary Settlement: Is Your Bargaining Unit Included?

Starting with the December 15, 1987 payday, approximately 3,000 employees began receiving an additional \$50 per month in their paychecks as part of negotiated settlement of successor Memoranda of Understanding.

The bargaining units involved are Automotive and Equipment Maintenance and Repair, Social Workers, Psychiatric Social Workers, Child Welfare Workers, and Agricultural Inspectors. Employees in these bargaining units will continue to receive an additional \$50 per month for four more consecutive months; a total of \$250. Also starting with the December 15, 1987 payday, another 500 employees in the Appraisers and Supervisory Appraisers Units received an additional \$250 as part of their negotiated salary settlement.

The difference in whether you receive \$50 per month for five consecutive months, or in one-time lump sum of \$250 was a choice the County offered to each individual bargaining unit listed above and was made as part of a final offer of settlement of your Memorandum of Understanding.

As the membership of other bargaining units ratify tentative negotiated agreements, similar \$50 per month lump sum settlements will become effective, however, for a reduced number of months.

A special thank you is owed to the personnel and payroll sections of each affected department, as well as to the Auditor's staff, who worked diligently to insure these changes did not delay the scheduled paycheck distributions on December 15.

Happy New Year!

Congratulations Retirees

To those employees who are retiring from County service, we add our traditional "Happy New Year" wishes to our wishes for a "Happy Retirement."

The following retirees, with more than 30 years of service are congratulated and we wish them well:

Children's Services: George D. Riggs

District Attorney: Kenneth F. Jeffers
Facilities Management: Bernice Ray

Forester and Fire Warden: Glenn E. Cutler, Willis D. Reynolds, Ted L. Williams

Health Services: Dolores Davis, Ladonna C. Shepherd, Verdie M. Williams

Probation: Leonard B. Parnell

Public Works: Alfonso Zamora

Sheriff: Harold Meyers, James R. Henry, George E. Hayes, Jr.

Best wishes are also extended to the following employees who are leaving after more than 25 years of County service:

Assessor: William L. Wells
Facilities Management: Joseph A. Rivet

Health Services: Ethel Finck, H. R. Franse, Maria Lage

Probation: Frank Stanlow, Barbara Virden

Public Social Services: Betty Neal
Sheriff: Kenneth O. Johnson, Thomas N. Taylor

Civic Center Evening Classes to Begin

East Los Angeles College Civic Center day and evening classes will begin on Monday, February 8, 1988. Registration is held directly in the classroom where enrollment packets will be available. The deadline for late registration is 3 p.m., Friday, February 26, 1988.

For further information contact East Los Angeles College, Academic Affairs Office, (213) 265-8723 Outreach Program or call CAO, 974-2614.



New Chairman Expresses Goals, Hopes for County

(Continued from page 1)

One of the first steps toward greater departmental involvement is, I believe, an acknowledgment by the Board that the County can no longer attempt to be all things to all people. The resources simply do not exist and overall service suffers.

That's not acceptable, not when the County's prime function is public service. We must maximize those services, meaning we need to reassess what we do.

To that end, I propose that we call upon each department to assess its services and establish a set of priorities. Not a wish list, but a shirt-sleeved set of priority public services it can provide within the resources available and that the Board can consider and approve.

Such a review and streamlining is in the public's interest. It can allow services to be delivered faster, more courteously, effectively, and efficiently.

I also suggest we take advantage of the skills and contacts of our departments as we work to convince our legislators that Los Angeles County is doing a great deal, and that our need for stable funding sources is real.

Los Angeles County is doing a great job! It's time we gave the departments an opportunity to show it - to the public and to people

"We must never lose our sense of public service."

in Sacramento and Washington. Too often our representatives don't know what we're doing. And the public we serve has been the loser.

While I am urging a greater role for our departments, I am mindful that they also have problems to overcome. One of those is reflected in the increasing number of constituent

complaints Board offices are receiving involving unresponsive and discourteous treatment.

It's essential that department heads develop methods to assure that every employee is aware of the importance of consistently courteous responses to constituent inquiries. We must never lose our sense of public service. Hands-on leadership is more important than ever.

As Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, it's my responsibility to see that society's general drift away from a philosophy that stressed good service to a get-it-done-any-way-you-can attitude is avoided.

This means we must work harder and together at motivating County employees to reverse the societal trend.

In closing may I wish a Happy and Prosperous New Year to all employees as together we progress towards these goals!"

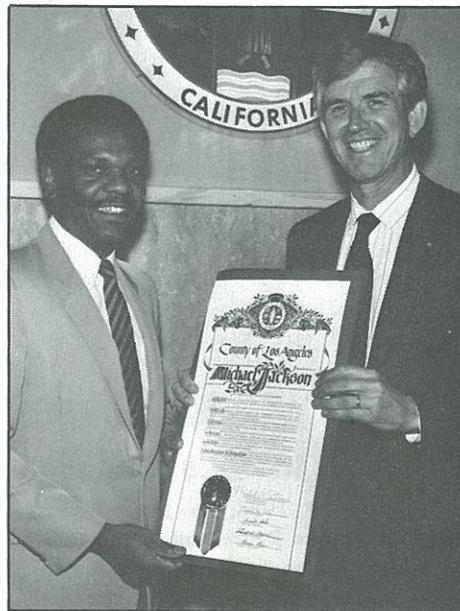
Productivity Leaders Pursue More Efficiency, Effectiveness

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orders in supporting the County's productivity initiatives.

Michael Jackson, who served the Productivity Advisory Commission by providing key staff and support services, was also given a scroll of commendation for his contributions to the Commission in its pursuit of a more efficient and effective County Government.

Michael assisted in mapping and implementing a comprehensive Productivity Improvement Program that has received national attention and acclaim. Through his initiative and organizational talents, the County's Productivity Internship Program has become a model program in the field of productivity management. He also provided invaluable assistance in helping to create and manage the Productivity Investment Fund.



Michael Jackson (L) and Thomas P. Sullivan

Anti-Gridlock Law to be Enforced

The ongoing Metro-Rail construction activity and equipment in the downtown area continues to necessitate traffic pattern changes which frustrate many impatient drivers. These frustrated drivers often end up blocking intersections, angering everyone.

Well, the State has decided to reclaim those blocked intersections, effective January 1, 1988 when the new anti-gridlock law takes effect.

As a result, law enforcement agencies will be much more aggressive in ticketing and prosecuting drivers who block intersections during signal changes.

Warning signs are being posted at key intersections and fines for first offenses at these locations can be as high as \$100 and up to \$500 on subsequent violations.

Such fines can result in expensive losses, including losses of travel time.

So, be aware of traffic flow in front and to the side of your car. If it is doubtful that you can get through an intersection before the signal changes, DO NOT ENTER THE INTERSECTION!

Jimmye Lou Thies Saves \$\$\$

In our December 15th DIGEST issue, Jimmye Lou Thies, the County's November Employee of the Month was cited for a number of outstanding activities, one of which was the detection of improper purchasing practices.

Jimmye Lou was commended for her involvement in what reportedly resulted in a \$90,000 settlement of three vendor law-

suits.

Imagine our excitement and "standing ovation" for Jimmye Lou when we discovered (Thanks Gene) that her diligence and dedication actually resulted in almost a million dollar settlement, \$900,000 to be exact, not the figure we previously reported.

Our 'hats off' to Jimmye Lou for doing an outstanding job!



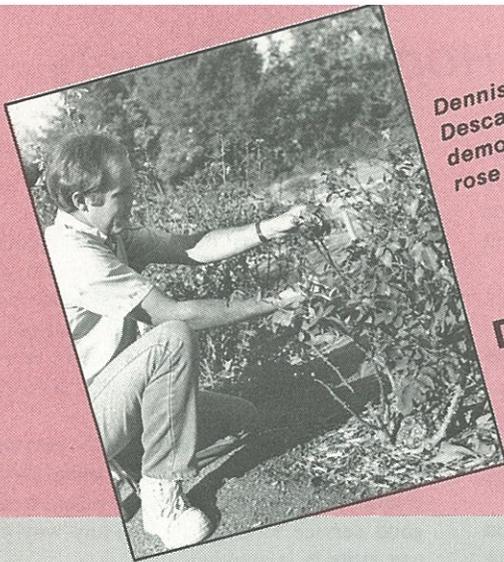
Employee/Composer's Works to be Featured

Two musical compositions by Dr. Theodore G. Twitchell, a County Medi-Cal Eligibility Worker, will be performed on January 30, 1988 by the 85-voice Torrance Municipal Chorus and the Torrance Symphony Orchestra.

This is the premier performance of "The Pride of Monticello" and the composition "The Gettysburg Address" has been performed by nine other symphony orchestras. Both will feature baritone soloist Robert Crockett and will be conducted by maestro David Forester.

LACERA Election Results

Congratulations to the reelected employee representatives to the Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association Board of Retirement and Board of Investments. Mr. Robert S. Kennard, an employee with the Office of the Assessor, was elected to serve as the Second Member on the Board of Retirement. Mr. Simon S. Russin, an employee with the Department of Health Services, was elected the Second Member representative to the Board of Investments. Both will serve for a three-year term expiring December 31, 1990.



Dennis Langsdale, of Descanso Gardens staff demonstrates proper rose pruning techniques.

Pruning Demonstrations Scheduled At County Gardens

Pruning, that essential gardening skill, looks so easy in the books. But when you confront a tangle of rose bushes or an overgrown tree, the branches don't look anything like the neat drawings in a pruning manual. It's one thing to understand that crossing branches must be removed, but quite another to decide which one — the top branch, the bottom one, or both? The best way to learn the difference between a scaffold branch and a watersprout is to watch an expert at work on an actual plant.

That's exactly what you can do during several pruning demonstrations in January at the County's public gardens.

At Descanso Gardens, on January 9, Superintendent George Lewis, the garden staff, and members of several rose growing hobby groups will spend the afternoon from 1-4 p.m. in the five-acre rose garden. They will demonstrate proper techniques to use on different types of roses as they shape up plants to promote a healthy burst of spring blooms. Bring your own shears for some well-coached

pruning experience on both old-fashioned and modern hybrid tea roses.

January 10 at South Coast Botanic Garden on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, the South Coast Rose Society will demonstrate rose pruning from 2-5 p.m. Besides hands-on experience, you can learn theory during a lecture and slide show also scheduled for the afternoon. Miniature roses, many of which are not yet available in commercial nurseries, will also be for sale.

If you lean more towards edible landscaping, come to South Coast Botanic Garden for a fruit tree pruning demonstration at 2 p.m. on January 17. First, Dr. Jean Natter will lecture on proper pruning techniques. Later, experts from the California Rare Fruit Growers club will show the different methods used when pruning apple, pear, peach, and apricot trees in the garden's fruit orchards.

The pruning demonstrations are contingent on good weather.

Retirement Information Fair

On January 20, 1988, the Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association (LACERA) will host an Information Fair from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Rooms 130, 140, and 160 Hall of Administration for all active and retired members.

During the event, staff will be available to answer questions regarding previous service, disability, selecting best dates to retire, retirement allowances, insurance, beneficiary designations, and any other topics that may be of interest. For questions which require research, questionnaires will be provided allowing time for research to be completed and members to be notified at a later date.

This Information Fair will serve as an informal opportunity for retired and active members to meet the staff of the Retirement Association, see our new quarters, and to find out how LACERA operates on behalf of its members. Refreshments will be served.

They are looking forward to seeing you there.

Attention Chess Players

2nd Annual County Employee
Chess Championship
Two Divisions - Open and Novice

Starts Wednesday, February 24, 1988, at 6 p.m.
in the Public Works cafeteria, 900 South
Fremont Avenue, Alhambra.

6 Rounds Swiss System
Register Now - \$3 Registration Fee
Trophies and Prizes

For information, call Department of Public Works
staff at the following telephone numbers:

Eddie Concepcion (818) 458-3925
Fred Ureta (818) 458-7094
Brian Scanlon (213) 738-2534
Joe Milanez (213) 226-8441

County of Los Angeles

DIGEST

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