

County DIGEST



FEBRUARY 1997

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

When Fourth District Supervisor Don Knabe attended his first meeting as the newest member of the Board of Supervisors, he wasn't occupying the only new seat. That same day, Third District Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky became Chairman of the Board and began his third year as the leader of the County's Third District.

During his first meeting as chairman, Yaroslavsky recounted the many team effort accomplishments of the Board during the past two years, including its efforts to bring the County back from the "brink of insolvency."

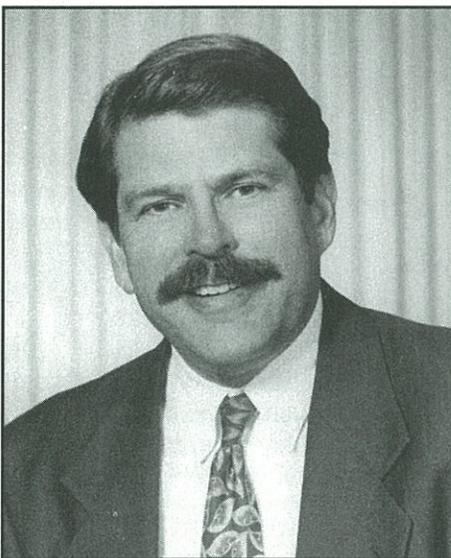
"Even though the financial community has taken the County off of the credit watch, we still have a structural financial problem," said Yaroslavsky. "We have to think and rethink the way we do business here, but with greater acceleration, if we are going to live within our means."

Yaroslavsky praised Sheriff Sherman Block for the "innovative and courageous thinking" which led to the opening of the Twin Towers jail facility. He challenged each department to "take a critical look at itself regularly to make sure that it is spending its resources prudently and wisely."

Yaroslavsky commended County efforts to increase the public's access to its departments, services, and Board proceedings through televised Board meetings and the creation of Internet sites in County departments and all of the Board offices.

One of Yaroslavsky's top commitments as Chairman is to strengthen County services for children. Shocked by the startling increase in the number of children living in poverty, violent neighborhoods and suffering from child abuse and malnutrition, Yaroslavsky vowed to

SUPERVISOR ZEV YAROSLAVSKY: MR. CHAIRMAN



there is a direct nexus between the location of the sale of firearms and gun violence. It's just plain as day," he said.

Yaroslavsky praised the County's 80,000 employees who "go to work everyday, either risking their lives or to save somebody's life or to reconstruct somebody else's life."

"These employees have made an inordinate sacrifice in the last few years," he said, citing a lack of pay raises, increasing case workloads and the decreasing ability to provide services effectively. "They should know that they are appreciated by the Board and by a lot of people in this County."

improve conditions for the County's youngest population through his involvement in the Children's Planning Council.

"Nothing enrages me more than to see a child suffer," he said. "This is unacceptable in the richest country in the world and in the biggest county in America."

Yaroslavsky plans to propose a comprehensive set of gun legislation that will address strict licensing on the sale of all firearms in the County's unincorporated areas where gun dealers are "finding fertile ground" for sales.

"In a Health Services study being released in February, it is shown that



YAROSLAVSKY, CENTER, SERVES AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.



PROFILE: LORIN PETERSON, THE DIGEST'S FIRST EDITOR

Relaxing in his room at a retirement center in Hollywood, 81-year-old Lorin Peterson recalled the creation of the four-page County employee newsletter called the County DIGEST. As he leafed through a heavy blue binder filled with faded back issues, he explained how it began with a lunch date in 1966 with Gordon Nesvig, the County's first director of personnel. Nesvig was searching for a writer to pen a piece about the County for a national



LORIN PETERSON, THE FIRST EDITOR OF THE COUNTY DIGEST.

government magazine and hired Peterson to write it. Peterson then was working as a newswriter at KABC Radio News, but was ready for a change. During lunch, he told Nesvig, "Why don't you have an employee newsletter? You have 55,000 employees and no one communicating with them."

Nesvig agreed, and Peterson became the first editor of the County DIGEST, written from the perspective of management speaking to the employee. Peterson remembers its simple beginnings when a typewriter was still the reporter's tool of choice.

"I wrote stories sitting at my typewriter and then sent them out to a local printer for typesetting and printing," he says. "I did all of the writing and was the only reporter and editor."

The first issue appeared on January 10, 1968. Its first run of 11,000 copies was distributed free to County employees in all departments, a tradition that has continued to this day. On the back page appeared an article entitled, "It's New, It's Free — the DIGEST," in which Peterson wrote:

"Any enterprise that has 55,000 em-

ployees scattered over hundreds of square miles and handling everything from brush fires to ballot-counting to baby clinics is bound to have trouble letting its left hand know what its right hand is doing. That explains the appear-

ance today of Volume 1, Number 1 of the County of Los Angeles DIGEST."

Peterson was part of an editorial board, led by L.S. Hollinger, the former Chief Administrative Officer; Nesvig; and Robert J. Schroeder, D.V.M., then president of the County Management Council.

Peterson wrote the County DIGEST every other week from his fifth floor office at the County Hall of Administration.

During the first year of his 11-year tenure, Peterson reported on County milestones such as the creation of several new employee unions, the renaming and merger of County departments

(the Pound Department became Animal Control, the Road Department became Public Works and the Registrar and Recorder merged, among others) and the construction of new County buildings such as the Criminal Courts Building. County salaries included \$755 to \$940 per month for a senior public health nurse and \$385 to \$476 per month for a custodian. In 1968, voters were introduced to the "new" punch-card ballot system (still in use) and computerized ballot results.

Peterson served as editor until 1979, when he retired from County service. The following year, photos and simple graphics began to appear in the County DIGEST, when the editorship was passed to the Chief Administrative Office's Public Affairs staff.

He was married for 38 years to Joyce Peterson, a City News Service reporter who covered the "County beat."

The Petersons' son, Thair, followed in their footsteps and is a writer, covering local government and community news at the Press Telegram in Long Beach.

In 1988, Peterson suffered a stroke and went to live in a retirement center near his Hollywood home. Although his name stopped appearing as editor more than 18 years ago, he was glad to find out that the DIGEST is still being produced to keep employees informed.

"I'm surprised it has gone on this long, but I'm glad it has," he said. "It was a good little publication. I liked doing it."

CDC EMPLOYEES RAISE FUNDS

Running through the streets of Monterey Park recently were employees of the Community Development Commission (CDC) — as participants in the CDC/McCaslin Business Park 5K Run for the Fun(d). The event netted \$6,000 for eight student scholarships awarded to public housing residents.

Pauline McCaslin, managing general partner of McCaslin Properties, and four CDC employees formed the scholarship selection committee. This year, the group hopes to raise \$10,000 for new scholarships at their event set for May 3, 1997. For more information, call Sam Lucchese at (213) 890-7106.

LUCKY WINNER

Mary Villafior, a utilization review nurse with the Department of Health Services Quality Improvement Program, was the winner of two tickets to this year's American Music Awards held in January at the Shrine Auditorium. According to Villafior, it was "an eye-popping event," as she and a guest were seated near the stage and watched with excitement as music industry superstars came onstage to present or receive awards. This is the second year in a row that the DIGEST office was able to obtain these tickets, compliments of Dick Clark Productions and the County's Film Permit Office. Congratulations, Mary!

SARAH AMOS: INNOVATIVE PROGRAM SAVES COUNTY \$9,000,000 ANNUALLY

With her two grown sons in attendance, Sarah Amos, supervising deputy probation officer, was honored by the Board of Supervisors as the January 1997 County Employee of the Month.

A 30-year County employee, Amos is an expert in Probation Adult Investigations. She is currently responsible for the daily supervision of an Adult Supervision Unit. This unit has more than 4,500 active cases.

"I feel you probably get the whole view of the criminal justice system from the Probation Department because you have interaction with all facets beginning with the police on through the courts," Amos said.

As an investigator in 1986, Amos developed the innovative "14-day Adult Investigation Program." This program cuts in half the amount of time needed to process an adult investigation resulting in a cost savings to the County of \$2,000,000 the first year and \$9,000,000 each year thereafter.

"I was working in the Compton Court and the department was experiencing lots of problems. At my supervisor's advice I went to speak with a judge," Amos said. As she recalls, Amos spent an entire day waiting to see someone. At 5:00 p.m., a judge was told that Amos was waiting to see her to solve some problems. I remember she leapt off her bench, threw off her robe, ran down and tried to pull a desk into the courtroom. She said they needed someone who could act as a liaison with the Probation Department," Amos said.

Comparing notes, Amos identified travel time and setting up interviews with defendants as obstacles and suggested that they be allowed to use the courthouse interview rooms. "It worked out that as soon as somebody pled, I would call and write down the specifics, someone came out from Probation and the investigation began right then and there," Amos explained.

One of her key responsibilities is the "Partners for Probationers Project." The



goal is to develop partnerships with local colleges to provide student interns who would assist deputy probation officers. The services provided by the interns would help further protect the community and assist in the successful reintegration of the offender into society. Amos is currently working with California State University, Dominguez Hills, in implementing this project.

Amos holds a bachelor's degree in English from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She is an avid reader, subscribing to two daily newspapers and eight magazines.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

AMOS IS CONGRATULATED BY
CHAIRMAN ZEV YAROSLAVSKY.

FEBRUARY RETIREES

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after 30 or more years of service to the people of Los Angeles County:

ASSESSOR: Pete Cabalse

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES: Sandra D. Bose, Hazel L. Jones, Ben W. Nuckolls, Byford J. Singleton, Harriet O. White

COUNTY COUNSEL: Gordon W. Treharne

DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Maria R. Hernandez, Sheldon L. Levitin, Kenneth C. Wullschlegler

FIRE: Carl D. Allen, David E. Baisley, James E. Billesbach, George W. Boss, Giovanni T. Braida, Joseph D. Cappel, Rune M. Eriksson, Lawrence W. Harter, David L. Lemm, Robert A. Mundt, Jack L. Schrock, Calvert A. Stephens, Robert A. Weinberger

HEALTH SERVICES: Joan I. Abernathy, Catherine J. Beard, Patricia K. Blinn, Ann E. Cavitt, Margo Derry, Maureen A. Lorge, Marilyn Monsanto, Roy G. Price, James E. Sundheimer, John G. Welty, Curtis W. Williams, Pete J. Zenzola

INTERNAL SERVICES: James McDonald, Jr., Sanford M. Mosley, John G. Ogg, Melesio Perez, Jr.

MENTAL HEALTH: Jean M. Gaignard, Jean M. Thomason

MUSEUM OF ART: Ronald B. Bratton

PROBATION: Donald H. McGruder

PUBLIC LIBRARY: Marjorie A. Hamilton, Dellalee Hopkins, Lilly C. Loo

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Betty A. Banks, Artie N. Brown, Amy H. Higa, Jean V. Preston

PUBLIC WORKS: James Atkins, Ann C. Carpenter, Bruce G. Hubbard, Lupe R. Santiago, Thomas E. Stallcup, Donald Wood

REGIONAL PLANNING: Richard W. Frazier

SHERIFF: Larry D. Bodenstedt, George C. Boswell, Stanley A. Burrus, Tommie C. Campbell, Robert L. Cohen, Patricia A. Craig, Heinz J. Cuvelier, Patrick O. Devaney, Richard S. Dew, Jr., Dianna C. Estes, Edward Hall, Jr., Robert A. Havercroft, Harold S. Hayman, Gunars Heine, Wendell T. Henson, Harold J. Hoffman, Freddie J. Huggans, Donald E. Ingersoll, Charles E. Jackson, Terrence H. Keenan, J.R. Martin, Gerald W. Minnis, Ruth E. Minnis, Joseph F. Obek, Johnny S. Ponce, Merlyn R. Poppleton, Robert Quinonez, Howard Rechtschaffe, Colin P. Reilly, John A. Rondina, Curtis R. Royer, Gary R. Schoeller, Jerry A. Smith, Mark M. Squiers, Kenneth C. Sutherland, Hearese Thompson

SEE "RETIREES," PAGE FOUR

DIGEST NOTES

LEARN ABOUT HIV/AIDS: All County employees are invited to attend the free eight-hour basic HIV/AIDS course, "Learn the Facts About AIDS: A Workshop," conducted periodically by the Department of Health Services Office of AIDS Programs and Policy. Increase your knowledge, understanding and sensitivity about HIV infection and AIDS; correct misconceptions and diminish your fears. Be better equipped to provide more effective human services. Pre-registration is required. To pre-register and receive training information, call Charles Staton at (213) 637-8405. For other information and questions, call Teresa Level at (213) 637-8416 or Alan Wu at (213) 637-8417.

ANOTHER KIND OF NET: Welfare recipients seeking education or training programs on their own are eligible to receive funding to cover child care expenses while they are in training through the Department of Public Social Services' (DPSS) **Non-GAIN Education Training (NET) Program**. Currently, the Belvedere District Office handles over 1,800 cases to help clients obtain employment that will pay wages above the poverty level. Eligible clients must complete their training and education within two years to obtain child care funding.

VITAL RECORD FEES CHANGE: Need a copy of a birth, death or marriage record? A change in State law which took effect on January 1, 1997 reduces the fees charged by the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk to obtain copies of these records. The new fees are \$18 for birth records, \$8 for death records and \$12 for marriage records. For more information on obtaining these records, call (562) 462-2137 (formerly the "310" area code), or mail your requests to Birth, Death and Marriage Records, P.O. Box 53120, Los Angeles, CA 90053.

THE RESULTS ARE IN: On December 11, 1996, General Members of LACERA voted to elect Richard Shumsky to the office of Second Member, Board of Retirement, and Simon Russin to the office of Second Member, Board of Investments. In addition, Retired Members of LACERA elected Norm Johnson to the office of Eighth Member, Board of Investments. Bob Stotelmeyer was elected to the office of Eighth Member, Board of Retirement. All four terms will expire on December 31, 1999.

RETIREES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE)

SUPERIOR COURT: Joyce E. (Gonzalez) Bordarampe, Barbara S. Jackson, Charles B. Stratford

Congratulations to the following employees who are retiring after serving the County for 25-30 years:

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES: Pearl M. Dobson, Ligaya Meneses, Victron Tolliver

COMMUNITY AND SENIOR SERVICES: Jose Martinez, Sharon A. Sanchez

DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Robert F. Kuhnert, Duane R. Mueller

FIRE: Victor E. Caldwell, Kendall J. Carter, Ted F. Clair, Philip D. Gibbs, Ronald B. Gordon, Edward W. Hale, Richard W. Jordan

HEALTH SERVICES: David Aguayo, Georgia Bondsmanson, Helga Breaux, Mary F. Day, Thomas Hooper, Ruth L. Hughes, Galia Karapetian, Barbara K. Lee, Katherine M. Mar, Leonard Mullins, Natividad Odal, Maria Pita, Marie G. Powell, Jeanne M. Reems, Margaret Ruiz, Ofelia Sanchez, Nicanor J. Torres

INTERNAL SERVICES: Russell M. Koppel, Phyllis C. Marine, Anwar Z. Tadros

MENTAL HEALTH: Bobbie D. Nauls, Fathy I. Sedky

PARKS AND RECREATION: James Guild

PROBATION: Gilbert F. Gonzales, Ruth R. Leebhoff

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Sobhi Elias, Irene Navarro, Janice Pettus, Janet Schaeffer, Karen R. Slezingeris, Rachel Sotillo

PUBLIC WORKS: William L. Ford, Felismino Marques

SHERIFF: Brian K. Billing, Harry L. Budds, Jr., Edgard B. Edwards, Berle Y. Fraser, Noel M. Freedman, Fidel Gonzales, Robert J. Hanley, Ernest L. Helbing, Jr., Thomas R. Hunt, Curtis W. Jackson, Richard J. Koprowski, Linda A. Lee, Manuel E. Reyes, William E. Roman, John H. Sisk, Herman Small, John R. Withers

SUPERIOR COURT: Abraham Gorenfeld, Helen Gutierrez, Mary K. Malloy, Sally Martine, Susan Rittschof

TREASURER/TAX COLLECTOR: Dwaine M. Noble

AMOS:

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

Always interested in employee morale-building, she is chair of the Probation Employee Enhancement Recognition (PEER) Committee. With participation by all levels of staff, PEER's grassroots approach for recognizing employee excellence culminated in a banquet last November where the department recognized its "Best of the Best."

When asked to comment on the rewarding aspects of her work, Amos said "recognizing that this is the biggest community protection agency in the country, I find it rewarding to give back and share some of my experiences with some of the people just coming into the department."



Members of the Board

Zev Yaroslavsky
Chairman
Third District

Gloria Molina
First District

Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Second District

Don Knabe
Fourth District

Michael D. Antonovich
Fifth District

Michael J. Henry
Director of Personnel

Sandra A. Hoodye
Community Liaison/Ombudsman

Staff
Kristina T. Hajjar
John S. Mina

Department of Human Resources
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 588
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 974-2611
fax (213) 680-2450