

KALEIDOSCOPE

VENTURA
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL
COUNTY

Newsletter

Management Growth Thru Communication, Training and Personal Development

President's Message...by CHRISTY MADDEN

Hard to believe that fall is here and the holidays are just around the corner! Much has happened with the Council since our last issue, so I'd like to share some of our salient accomplishments.

First and foremost, we've launched the Ventura County Management Council's new web site, found at <http://www.vcmanagementcouncil.org>. Now, you can retrieve information about the Council in one place - meet the Board of Directors, review the Bylaws, register for education classes, print out membership forms, volunteer for subcommittees, etc., etc. Because this information is on the world-wide-web, you can even access from home! The web site is designed to give you greater entree to the organization and thus have a stake in its success.

The Council also sponsored two very successful events over the past month - the first a wonderful welcome reception luncheon for Supervisor Linda Parks. The sixty plus attendees enjoyed great food, camaraderie, and

received a wealth of information about our newest member of the Board of Supervisors. Look for article about the event elsewhere in this newsletter and learn a little known fact about a member of her family.

**First and foremost,
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new web site...**

On September 30th, the Council sponsored a terrific event with David Rabiner - motivational speaker extraordinaire. Although there is an article about the event, I'd like to

expound on a few of his messages - ones that ring true with the Council's core values.

A key message of Mr. Rabiner's presentation highlighted our human need to be "fused". Fused individuals, as opposed to those who are principled, do things with not only an expectation but also have a need to be recognized and acknowledged. While many of us strive to be principled - to do things just because they are the right things to do - few of us are so selfless that we don't need a motivator to do them. Whether it is money, fame, recognition or acceptance, in truth we all need to be validated. Surprising to many, money is not the primary source of validation when it comes to one's career.

Being validated - whether by a direct supervisor, one's peers or the customers that you serve, is critical to one's job satisfaction. While as individuals we may not be able to control the financial compensation packages for our employees, we can have a direct

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Management Council Board of Directors

Board Officers

Christy Madden, *President* CEO
 Mazie Chauvin, *Vice-President* HR
 Don Hansen, *Treasurer* Treasurer
 Roberta Rodriguez, *Secretary* . . Clerk of the Board
 Linda Vesper, *Historian* HR

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 Ron Coons PWA
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Board Members

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 Vickie Lemmon Public Health
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 Mark Novak Sheriff's Dept
 Virginia Randolph Retired
 Gal Robinson BOS
 Matthew Taylor HSA
 Johnny Johnston, Ex-Officio CEO

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

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and dramatic impact on their happiness. Not validating someone's accomplishments can in fact be viewed as an invalidation of that individual. This is especially true if you haven't made recent deposits into that individual's "emotional" bank account.

As a supervisor (or a parent, for that matter) it is important, according to David, to make frequent deposits – through sincere and genuine words of praise, recognition, or personal communication – into the "emotional" bank accounts of those you care about. Without that, people are less willing to listen when you want to correct, enhance, or improve their performance. In essence they think, "If you don't care enough to see my strengths, why should I care what you think my weaknesses are."

Interestingly, he made the distinction between managers and supervisors: managers engender compliance from their employees, while supervisors lead. I would expect that where you find leaders within your organization, you find validators. Validating our peers, celebrating the successes within our organization and promoting leadership growth are paramount to the Council's objectives. Thus, we encourage your attendance at the second annual Management Council Awards program that will be held at this year's holiday party on December 11th! ◀

SPOTLIGHT


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4. *What "guiding principles" have you found to be relevant in what you do?*

It's funny you should ask that. Our executive management team has just reformulated our "guiding principles." There are six: 1) Be client-centered; 2) Be strength-based; 3) Provide a seamless experience; 4) Build community capacity; 5) Emphasize prevention and early intervention; and 6) Advocate for social justice. There is so much I could say about these principles, where they came from, what they mean. Maybe another time. Suffice it to say they have profound implications for how we work and what we are working for. I am very proud of them. They represent in some ways, the sum of a lifetime's work, the great potential of my team and Agency, and the fulfillment of the American dream for all in Ventura County.

5. *How do you perceive your role in County Government in the current environment?*

I am an administrator, not a policy maker. My job is to effectively and ethically execute the policies of the Board of Supervisors, and the State and Federal government. To do this, I utilize my expertise in social welfare programs and social policy issues to advise policy makers. But my biggest role is to lead the Human Services Agency to deliver the highest quality social services we are capable of in the context of the broader helping community and political environment. That means full compliance with laws and regulations and setting up healthy, mutually beneficial partnerships with other governmental, non-profit, and faith-based organizations. But most of all it means believing in the unlimited potential and capacity of our employees for good and setting up organizational systems and processes that maximize the achievement of that potential. It's a great place to be. ◀



KALEIDOSCOPE
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If you have a contribution or suggestion for an article you would like considered for inclusion in the next edition of Kaleidoscope, please contact the Editor, Christy Madden, at CEO Loc #1940, by FAX at 654-5106, by phone at 654-2679 or through the County e-mail system.

Spotlight on: Ted Myers

by Matthew Taylor

1. *Hello Ted, can you tell me a little bit about yourself?*

I was born in San Jose, California, but my family moved around a lot. Oregon (three times), Minnesota, Georgia, British Columbia. My father was a professor of educational psychology, so we lived in great college towns like Eugene, St. Paul, Athens, Victoria. My teenage years were spent in Corvallis, Oregon. I miss the forests, but I love the sun of California. My priorities were competitive swimming, having fun, and school—in that order. First thing I did after graduating from high school was move to Chico, California (Chico State had a great swimming program. They were number one in NCAA Division II to be in 1976.)

But a funny thing happened there at the party capitol of the nation (according to Playboy magazine). I met this girl, Nancy, and all my priorities changed. Nancy was terrific. We were married the summer after our sophomore year, so I got serious. Nancy had known from the time she was five that she wanted to be a teacher. Over the course of the next few years, I also got in touch with my life's calling—helping people who were suffering emotionally and in their family relationships.

We ended up going to UC Santa Cruz, where we lived in married student housing. I grew my hair long, studied Psychology. It was great. After a false start in a Ph.D program at the University of Michigan, we moved back to Southern California and I began working in the child welfare and counseling field. I ended up getting a Masters degree in Counseling

Psychology from Loyola Marymount, working during the day at schools in Glendale and El Monte. I eventually went to work for the Department of Children's Services in Los Angeles County. We moved to Ventura, where I went to work for the Public Social Services Agency as a Children's Services Social Worker. I promoted to supervisor in 1988 and later decided to return to school, obtaining a second Masters in Public Administration from CSUN in 1996.

Nancy and I have three daughters: Christine, 21, is a senior at UCLA studying Anthropology and preparing for law school. Brittany, 17, is a senior at Camarillo High School, playing tennis and hoping to go to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Alyssa, 12, is a 7th grader at Las Colinas Middle School studying hard. All three are good souls and we are proud of them.

2. *I know there are some very exciting things happening in your agency, can you share some of them with us?*

One thing about the Human Services Agency—it is never boring. We are always up to something. Sometimes it is due to a change imposed from the outside, like a new law or regulation, but most of the time it is self-initiated. The staff in our Agency is always looking to improve and provide better services. It “juices” folks to do good things for people in need. I mean, look at our programs: Food Stamps, Medi-Cal



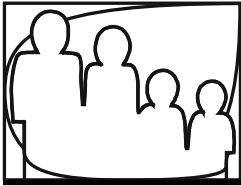
Administration, Homeless Services, Veterans Services, Employment Services, Child Protective Services and Adoptions, and Adult Protective and In-Home Services, Senior Nutrition for the elderly. It's incredible.

One of the first things I did upon assuming my role as Agency Director was initiate an organizational assessment. It seemed like a good time to take stock of where we were and where we wanted to go. The process is challenging, partly because we are such a large organization (over 1100 employees), but also it is always hard to look in the mirror. Our eye naturally turns to the blemishes, which is why it is so important to stay positive and affirming all the good things.

3. *What are some of the biggest challenges your agency is facing?*

The biggest challenge we face is to ask clients and partners and stakeholders what they think of us—and then incorporate their feedback into how we can do things better. We have traditionally assumed that people will not tell us positive things about our services, whether from pain or embarrassment. We also assume, because of our professional commitment to continuous improvement, that we are doing a great job. So we don't ask. I think it is critical to know what customers think and feel about our services, and my guess is the vast majority of our clients will say some very positive things. But they will also give us some constructive suggestions for improvement!

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Social Doings

Mark Your Calendar – Don't Miss This Event

Join the Ventura County Management Council for the most popular event of the year!

We will be hosting our annual Holiday Party and Second Annual Awards Ceremony on Thursday, **December 11, 2003 from 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.** at the Wedgewood Banquet Center, 5880 Olivas Park Drive, Ventura.

Cost for this exciting event will \$25.00 for non-members, \$18.75 for Supporting Members, and the best deal of all \$12.50 for our Sustaining Members.

Yes, it is time for our 2002 award win-

ners to share their honor and recognition with the 2003 award winners. As you may recall, the 2002 winners were: Monica Nolan, Integrity; Sandi Wells, Superior Customer Service; Danita Crombach, Mentoring; Linda Shulman and Ken Clayman, Doing More With Less; Lyn Krieger, Innovation; Barbara Fitzgerald, Excellence in Public Service; and Sue Hughes, Humanitarian. Tom Berg, Director of the Resource Management Agency, received the coveted "Good Government Award" – an honor bestowed by the CEO.

Please come and join your fellow colleagues in honoring the 2003 "Winners" and "Nominees" in this year's categories of Integrity, Superior Customer Service, Mentoring, Innovation and Humanitarian

awards.

Further, you won't want to miss finding out who will be honored by John Johnston, County Executive Officer, with the "Ventura County's Good Government Award."

The food promises to be outstanding and the entertainment is not to be missed. Again this year your colleagues will entertain you with their hidden talents and creativity – it will be an evening of fun, laughter, and touching moments as we celebrate ourselves as dedicated public servants.

This event will prove to be an exciting and uplifting experience – so DON'T miss it. Registration information will be available shortly! ◀



Note this... Congratulations are in order:

We would like to extend our congratulations and wishes for many years of success to the following County Management staff on their recent promotion or appointment.

- John Nicoll, the newest Chief Deputy Executive Officer, heading up the Industrial Relations – Risk Management Unit.
- Shelly Oliver, on her promotion to Assistant Director of Hospital Nursing at Ventura County Medical Center.
- Jeannie Hord, on her appointment to Office Assistant IVC in the CEO-Human Resources Division.
- Carol Chapman, on her appointment to Program Administrator I at the Ventura County Library Reading Program For Adults, which is a free tutoring program offered to adults that need help with reading.

If you know of someone that has been promoted or appointed, please let me know, so we can honor him/her. Contact Shelah Harris at county email with the information.

Address Updates

If you know of any email, brown mail, or name changes of staffing, please contact Shelah Harris with the correct information. It is really a challenge trying to maintain a current mailing list of over 700 management personnel, and your help is truly needed and appreciated. I can be reached at shelah.harris@mail.co.ventura.ca.us. Thank you so much.

EVENTS

Management Council Welcomes Linda Parks

By Vicki Lemmon

Who said "Remember! Only YOU can prevent forest fires." (hint: note the bear). Answer at bottom of page.



Kathy Brown, Chief of Staff, Senior Aide

Area Assignments: Supervisor's schedule, County Counsel, District Attorney, Fire Protection, Foster Care, Grand Jury, Healthcare, Human Services, Military, Probation, Public Defender, Sheriff's Department

Jan Osterhaven, Administrative Aide

Area Assignments: Newbury Park, Ventu Park, Oak Park, Airports, Agriculture, Animal Regulation, Development Permits, Flood Control, Libraries, Harbor

Elizabeth Crawford, Administrative Aide

Area Assignments: Bell Canyon, Lake Sherwood-Hidden Valley, Malibu-Yerba Buena Environmental issues, Air, Water, and Soil Pollution, Hazardous Waste, Landfills, Ventura County Wetlands

Al Adam, Administrative Aide

Area Assignments: Lynn Ranch, Santa Rosa Valley Assessor, Auditor, Budgets, General Service Agency, Tax Collection



Trivia Answer: The voice of Smokey the Bear was Linda Parks' father! ◀

State of the County

Our CEO conducted two State of the County addresses over the past couple of weeks. He started both presentations with a big "thank you" to the County managers. The County's credit rating had been reduced several years ago but due to "our fine work", Moody & Poores is now considering restoring our rating. They have been impressed with how the County has managed its affairs – while the rest of the State's economy is "in the tank", we've managed to maintain programs within budget without the interruptions of layoffs, etc. According to Mr. Johnston, it couldn't have been done without the support and efforts of the County's unrepresented employees.

Despite this good news, however, the State will be transitioning to a new administration within the next month or so. With the transition it is impossible to anticipate the impact to counties, but Mr. Johnston did discuss the following issues currently impacting our local budget:

1. The anticipated earnings rate on the pension fund has been lowered from 8½% to 8%, resulting in the need to contribute an additional \$12 million to remain fully funded;
2. Ventura County receives \$35 million in Vehicle License Fees, representing 71% of all discretionary revenue in our budget;
3. The state has passed federal fines on to the counties – the County's share of these penalties is \$1.3 million;
4. The election cost the County approximately \$800k – costs not included in the current budget.

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EDUCATION

A "Power" Morning for County Managers

By Lane Holt

Management Council members who attended the September 30, 2003 seminar with David Rabiner enjoyed a half-day of highly condensed but highly effective management training. The seminar, entitled "How to Succeed, Stay Sane, and Have Fun at Work," was fast-paced with a great deal of humor and inflection. During the four hours, Mr. Rabiner covered such subjects as:

- Work within your circle of influence - "The law of control simply means that we feel good about ourselves to the exact degree to which we feel in control of our own lives."
- Exercise the power of choice - "Accept, change or leave"
- The need for validation and the principles of validation - "Whenever we do something for validation and we do NOT get validated, we see it as an invalidation."
- Choose your attitude - "If you can't change your situation, change your attitude."
- Set goals - "Dreams, Stretch Goals and Disciplines"



During the course of the seminar, Mr. Rabiner also provided a short test, which represented a modified Myers-Briggs personality-based instrument. This nine-question test, constructed by Dr. Tony Alessandra, was given to the participants of the seminar, with resultant scores in the categories of Relater, Thinker, Director, and Socializer.

The morning's participants were asked to stand according to their category, and, from a cursory review, the brief quiz appeared to be fairly accurate. If the test does prove to be generally accurate, the Management Council members were presented with a remarkable instrument that took less than ten minutes to complete and score. In any case, the purpose of the test and Mr. Rabiner's subsequent discussion was to "See people as different, not difficult."

The above subjects, as well as the whole seminar, fall within the general area of "Managerial Self-Actualization," where the basis of Self-Actualization theory begins with Dr. Abraham Maslow. In this regard, Mr. Rabiner did mention the Maslow Hierarchy of Needs, a significant influence in modern management training. From the concepts of Self-Actualization on a personal perspective, American management has, in the year 2003, adapted these concepts to the workplace. Mr. Rabiner's presentation on September 30th is a fine adaptation of these classical concepts to modern day managers. Highly Recommended. ◀

STATE OF THE COUNTY
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Other topics of interest included a discussion of: vacation buydowns (this is a vested benefit – the CEO will not support reductions in this benefit without reductions across the County's ranks); transition to the new PeopleSoft payroll system (paying in "real time" necessitates a one week delay in issuance of checks [not reduction in the number of checks issued]), work furloughs (back pocket option to reduce budget – saves about \$1 million per day in salaries/benefits for non-24/7 staff); and the pending lawsuits against the County over Ordinance 4088 (first of three suits to go to trial October 24th).

Some interesting facts were revealed at these meetings: of the County's \$1.2 billion budget, a mere \$57 million is "discretionary" (meaning that the balance is earmarked for mandated or targeted programs and can't be used for anything else). Of that \$57 million, about \$22 million goes for central government – the bulk of the remaining \$25 million leverages substantial state and federal revenues. For example, in the Human Services Agency, it is estimated that for every \$1 the County contributes, another \$9 is raised from other sources. In summary, the budget process promises to be difficult at best for the coming year.

The Management Council will sponsor another series of State of the County events in January or February, at which time there will no doubt be a detailed discussion of next year's County budget. Watch your e-mail and the Council's web site for information about this and other upcoming events. ◀