

KALEIDOSCOPE

Newsletter



Management Growth Thru Communication, Training and Personal Development

President's Message... by Christy Madden

Happy New Year – it is with great enthusiasm that we bring in our new year. Following on the heels of our tremendously successful holiday party, where we honored thirty four individuals for their outstanding contributions as public servants, we usher in what promises to be an exciting year of events, activities, and learning opportunities for our members.

Recapping some of the highlights for 2006, we sponsored a progressive dinner cruise, a trip on the Fillmore & Western's margarita train, the Flower Power bus trip to Lompoc, two members' barbeque events, quarterly State of the County presentations with the CEO, and a luncheon with Dan Walters of the Sacramento Bee. We also reinstated the monthly Brown Bag events which have proved to be very popular as attendees have an opportunity to learn first hand about County operations and programs. The composition of the Board of Directors was also expanded, and now includes representation from the following agencies: County Executive Office, Board of Supervisors, Airports, Public Works Agency, Fire, Probation,

Sheriff, Human Services Agency, General Services Agency, ISD, Treasurer Tax Collector and the Health Care Agency.

For 2007, the Board intends to expand the depth and breadth of educational offerings to our members. As reported in the last newsletter, we're in the final stages of plans to bring John Avlon to our area. Mr.

“Wishing you a productive, happy, and balanced New Year.”

Avlon has written a book on Centrism in government; our re-elected Governor was recently referred to as a Centrist in a local paper. This is a topic that is also sure to be prominent in the upcoming presidential elections. Other events to watch out for include, a welcome reception for our new Supervisor Mr. Foy, a walking tour of Santa Cruz Island guided by botanists from the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens (with

an option for kayaking after the walking tour), a whale watching trip in the Spring and a jaunt to Laughlin or Las Vegas. Of course we'll continue with our regular Brown Bag events held on the first Wednesday of each month (see article elsewhere in this newsletter).

It's going to be a year of transition too, as more and more of our seasoned employees retire from the County. Hundreds of years of experience and knowledge have already left, or plan to leave in the next couple of months – this Council continues to explore ways it can facilitate and/or participate in the enhancement and development of skills for our current and potential members to maintain the high standards of public service. If you have any suggestions or recommendations about how we can best fill that role, we want to hear from you. Just send us a note to the Management Council mailbox in GroupWise or call anyone on our Board of Directors.

We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and activities! Wishing you a productive, happy, and balanced New Year. ▲

Management Council Board of Directors

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 Ron Coons, *Co-Secretary* PWA
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 Dennis Scamardo GSA
 Betty Huff RMA
 Johnny Johnston, Ex-Officio CEO
 Larry Kennedy HSA
 Sandra Chance Airports
 Jeff Burgh Probation
 Geoff Dean Sheriff

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Christy Madden	Editor

AND THE AWARD RECIPEINTS ARE . . .

Oh my what a pool of talented, enthusiastic, and committed public servants our panelists had to pick from for this year's awards program. While all of our nominees are to be commended and recognized for their accomplishments, the following individuals were selected as this year's recipients:

INNOVATION: Joyce Wilde

As Manager of the Ventura County Law Enforcement Crisis Intervention Team, Joyce helps law enforcement officers deal with some of the potentially most dangerous situations faced by those in public service - threatened suicides, death threats, and other criminal and/or confrontational actions by mentally ill individuals. Created just five years ago, the training program is credited with reducing by more than half the number of persons with mental illness fatally shot by law enforcement personnel.

Through an intensive forty hour training academy, police officers and others in public safety learn how to better deal with the mentally ill and others with developmental disabilities, brain injuries, and Alzheimer's Disease - without resorting to the use of force. First responders are taught how to assess crisis scenes involving the mentally ill, so as to respond in a fashion that is both effective and compassionate.

More than half of all law enforcement professionals in our County have already taken the training, including graduates from every County sheriff station as well as every one of the six independent City Police Departments. In addition to successfully de-escalating numerous crisis situations and reducing the necessity of use of force, the program has also resulted in reduced jailing of the targeted populations and less post-traumatic stress on the law enforcement officers themselves.

Not one to sit on her laurels, Joyce has recently joined in on a countywide attempt to develop a plan to significantly reduce homelessness in Ventura

County! Realizing the original team was focused almost entirely on "health" professionals and County sheriff representatives, Joyce has taken the initiative to include other critical stakeholders, reaching to include folks from the Court System, County Probation, and city public safety, all of whom had not previously been at the table.

All who know her agree Joyce is passionate about her work, striving to develop new and innovation ways to solve social problems. Joyce is all about results - and her magnetic personality and passion is all about making it happen.

INTEGRITY: Christopher Cooper

Christopher Cooper is a man who stands his ground and does not back down. He believes in doing what's right rather than what's expedient, and of being a good shepherd to county assets. He proved it again this year.

Chris was Project Manager for the relocation of Ventura County's former El Rio facility to the brand new Saticoy Operations Yard. A land developer had been interested in the El Rio property, and following a successful contract negotiation had agreed to displace the entire County facility along with all its county department occupants to an equal or superior facility, AT NO COST TO THE COUNTY. Making sure the "NO COST" part of the deal was satisfied was Chris' job.

As might be expected with such a major undertaking, issues soon came to a head, particularly regards to conflicts between what was best cost-wise for the developer as compared with what was best for Ventura County. It was Chris who, on numerous occasions, made sure the County's interests were served.

One example of Chris' following through and standing firm involved the new fuel tanks purchased by the developer to replace the old fuel tanks at El Rio. When Chris became aware undersized tanks had been acquired and already scheduled for installation at the new site, he immediately insisted the

County would not accept tanks that had any less capacity than those that were being replaced. After several not always pleasant meetings, Chris' persistence paid off. The developer conceded and ordered tanks with the proper capacity. Had it not been for Chris' integrity, focus on mission, and excellent advocacy the ending result could have been a financial disaster for the county, instead of the very successful project outcome.

And for those that like to put a price on these sorts of things, be aware the original Developer cost estimate for the Saticoy Operations Yard was \$13 million. The final cost, all paid by the developer, was \$44 million! Every little \$31 million helps!

MENTORING: Judy Rivera

Based on the views of many folks over in the Human Services Agency, when you look up "Lead by Example" in the dictionary and you will find a picture of Judy Rivera! She is not only deeply committed to her staff, her organization, and their mission, she is routinely described as smart, energetic, fun, instinctive, humble, trustworthy, upbeat, and, oh yes, always stylish!

Judy currently serves as the Deputy Director of Children and Family Services in the Human Services Agency, a demanding and critical area of County public service. Fortunately, she is the kind of Director who inspires her staff to excellence. Based on observations of folks who both work with her and for her, Judy has been deliberate and thoughtful in terms of building a strong, enthusiastic, and energetic management team.

Her emphasis on the importance of supervision and taking the time to truly "coach" and lead staff has had a trickle down effect, as several of those she directly supervised report having taken her good example in their own supervision of their individual line supervisor teams, who in turn are better able to lead and mentor their line staff.

It is said over in Human Services that

Judy Rivera always “does the right thing, the right way, for the right reason,” and challenges her management team to do the same.

Let us all learn from her example, and let us join together in congratulating Judy as this year’s winner of the Mentoring Award.

SUPERIOR CUSTOMER SERVICE:

Pamela K. Lindeman

Pamela Lindeman has a challenging job: She oversees customer service, enrollment, and claims adjudication for the County’s Health Care Plan. As such, she is responsible for making a lot of people happy, including folks who at the time they contact her may not be feeling all too well! By all accounts she excels in this by consistently going the extra mile to ensure that Plan members’ questions and issues are addressed to their satisfaction, both fully and expeditiously. She is widely known for representing the Health Care Plan in a friendly, positive style; Pamela treats each member’s issues as if they were her own.

Remember, of course, that Pamela is in effect an Insurance Representative. But how many insurance reps do you know who are known for championing the client over the insurance company? Pamela has that reputation. How many will contact physician offices personally to help gain access to the right specialist? Pamela does this routinely.

How many intervene to help schedule a surgery or speed up an appointment time? Pamela does this all the time.

Pamela delights in assisting members in understanding their benefit coverage. She always listens empathetically, and ensures members receive the services and treatment they deserve. This is especially critical when a member patient is very ill – Pamela takes the time to make sure they know their benefits and their options.

In a word, Pamela Lindeman is passionate about providing the best service possible to all Ventura County Health Care Plan members.

MOST THANKLESS JOB:

Jackie Cohen

Jackie Cohen is the County’s Claims Manager, responsible for handling claims and lawsuits filed against the County and its employees. As you can imagine, this is a position where it is virtually impossible to please everyone, and often times difficult to please *anyone*. This is a challenging position under the best of circumstances, and the last few years have not been the best of circumstances.

Due to illness and budget crunches, there have been both staff reductions and reorganizations in Risk Management. Throughout all the ensuing turmoil, in addition to dealing with all the people who are suing the County, Jackie at various times took on managing the insurance aspects of the Risk Management program, helped develop Annual Departmental Budgets, juggled to adjust to two rounds of layoffs plus three separate major changes to the Workers Compensation Program, helped coordinate actuarial and other financial studies, and participated actively in setting rates for her program and sometimes everyone else’s programs, while, WHEW, maintaining a sense of customer service, and – even more important – a sense of humor.

This is not to say Jackie single-handedly ran Risk Management in recent years – its dedicated staff all performed superbly – but she was the one that consistently stepped forward to fill leadership vacuums and make sure any potential gaps in services were quickly and effectively filled.

During times of uncertainty, Jackie helped guide the Risk Management Ship, many times behind the scenes. Such dedication is often carried out with little or no recognition. Not this year, however!

GOOD GOVERNMENT AWARD –

Larry Hoskins

Mr. Johnston bestowed this year’s good government award on Larry Hoskins from the Assessor’s office. CEO Johnston annually selects one outstanding employee who epitomizes dedica-

tion to excellence in public service, leadership, and innovate thinking. Mr. Johnston stated this year’s recipient also modeled long-term loyalty and perseverance in an often thankless but important job.

Mr. Johnston noted that during his 32-year County tenure, Mr. Hoskins has repeatedly received outstanding performance evaluations and commendations from supervisors and management. His unflagging efforts on behalf of Ventura County taxpayers and the elected officials he serves were seconded by Assessor Dan Goodwin, who accepted the award on his behalf at the Management Council’s annual awards banquet.

States Assessor Goodwin, “Larry is the epitome of an executive manager who strives for honorable public service. His unflinching perseverance, can-do attitude, honesty, and integrity are demonstrated continually when dealing with our staff, members of County management, and the public. His high code of ethics guides him to make difficult, and many times unpopular, decisions that are decidedly the right ones. In addition, he consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty to ensure his commitments to the public trust receive the utmost attention and accuracy. Larry’s strengths include an internal fortitude, combined with diplomacy and tact, to voice the contrarian viewpoint during policy setting discussions.”

Deputy Assessor Hoskins started with the Assessor’s Office in 1975, promoting six times while serving six elected Assessors. He was promoted to Deputy Assessor in August 2000 and currently oversees 55 employees in the Business Valuation Division comprised of Rural/Special Properties, Commercial & Industrial, Personal Property, and Mandatory Audits.

Hoskins graduated from CSU Northridge in 1972 with a B.A. in Political Science. He lives in Ojai with his wife, Barbara. They have two adult children and two grandchildren. ▲

Pictures are on page 4



Customer Service -from left
 Laura Hernandez, Kirk Norman, Norma Camacho,
 Tom Nikirk, (Pam Lindeman (recipient), Phil
 Settem, Paul Lorenz



Most Thankless Job -from - left Chuck Pode,
 Mike Powers (for Karen Schneweis- Schmidt),
 Jackie Cohen (recipient), John Lagomarsino,
 Christy Madden (for Nancy Bocovich), Kathleen
 Kellerhouse, Jessie Prater



Good Government Award
 from left Dan Goodwin (for Larry
 Hoskins), Johnny Johnston



Innovation- from left Meloney Roy, Peter Sheydayi, Barry
 Zimmerman, Jeff Pratt, Melvin Smith, Bruce Macedo (for Joyce
 Wilde - recipient), Steve Nelles, Sergio Vergas, Jim Delperdang
 (for Bob Gallagher), Butch Britt (for Chris Hooke)



Integrity -from left
 Chris Stephens (for Joe Clark), Elaine Augustine,
 Veronica Gonzalez, Chris Cooper (recipient),
 Butch Britt (for Rosanna Bati)



Mentoring-from left
 Tom Nikirk, Jack Phillips, Judy Rivera (recipient),
 Tom Lagier, Susan Heller, Masood Jilani

View the complete online photo album at
<http://www.vcmanagementcouncil.org/Gallery>



Spring Trip to Santa Cruz Island Update

by Virginia Randolph

Here is an update on the proposed Management Trip to Santa Cruz Island. We are looking at Monday April 9th (yes, it's a work day but it also just so happens to be prime whale watching season so take a day off for some R&R). We will leave from Ventura Harbor at 8:30 a.m. aboard one of the Island Packer boats, returning at approximately 5:00 p.m. Our destination will be Scorpion Anchorage at the east end of Santa Cruz Island, where, as reported in our last article, full Spring bloom conditions are anticipated.

Upon arrival Steve Junak, Herbarium Curator at the Santa Barbara Botanical Garden (SBBG), and Sally Isaacson, Director of Instruction & Curriculum, will offer guided plant/natural history walks in the morning and then head back to the beach. At this time you'll have the opportunity to continue exploring the Island on your own, or you can bring a kayak and paddle the afternoon away.

The trip price of \$68.00 per person includes SBBG guides and transportation by Island Packers. Of course our dues-paying members get a discount — sustaining members pay \$51.00 and supporting members pay \$61.20. You may

bring your own kayak or rent one from Channel Islands Kayak Center (984-5995 in Oxnard or 644-9699 in Ventura); rental rates are \$25.00 for a single kayak or \$45.00 for a double. All kayakers must pay a transport fee of \$12.00 for a single and \$18.00 for a double.

SBBG is excited about the opportunity to reach a new audience in Ventura. We hope you will be able to join us on this great day. Due to space limitations, you are encouraged to contact Christy Madden as soon as possible at 654-2679 or via e-mail to reserve your spot — you don't want to miss out on this wonderful opportunity. ▲

CORPORATE GAMES 2007 GOIN' FOR THE GOLD!!

If you haven't already, you'll soon be receiving information about this year's Corporate Games. Unlike the last three years, where the County of Ventura has played in several divisions (Probation and the District Attorney participated independently from the main County teams), this year we'll all participate together. In addition to representing the progress made as a County family, this new era presents perhaps our best chance to beat our nemesis Amgen and secure the perpetual trophy to grace the halls of County government over the coming year.

Teams will be formed in twenty six events, giving you an opportunity to find something to suit your skill and interest. Not particularly athletic and hate running? Why not try your hand at miniature golf, dominoes, or darts? Do you love the camaraderie of team sports? Why not try volleyball, softball, basketball or soccer?

Individual sports a little more your style? Then why not participate in the 5k and/or 10k run? There are some new and returning events this year too — frisbee golf is back, and a triathlon event has been added with mountain biking, swimming, and running. Of course there's always a need for tuggers to pull the rope in the mandatory tug-of-war competition. This event takes place on the final day at Harbor Cove Beach along with the adventure race (swimming, running and kayaking) and sand castle contest, culminating the month-long competition. There's live music, company organized barbeques and lots of festivities for the whole family.

As a Division AA team, the County is allowed a maximum of 3 teams per event (although historically we have been granted leeway for some events), and consequently there may be some friendly internal competition to determine which teams compete in the official Games for some of

the more popular events.

Unlike previous years, however, there is no cost to participate, so there's no excuse not to give it a try. For those who represent the County in the Corporate Games, we simply ask that you purchase a t-shirt with the winning 2007 Corporate Games County logo to identify you as a member of the County team. The participation fee this year is being underwritten once again by the Management Council who firmly believes in the benefits associated with teamwork, camaraderie, and sportsmanship associated with the Corporate Games philosophy.

Employees from all agencies, departments and positions are encouraged to get involved — so watch for the announcement for registration information, schedules, and event rules. There's never been a better time to participate as we "GO FOR THE GOLD"!



Don't miss Joyce Wilde from the Sheriff's Department, 2006 recipient of the Management Council's Innovation Award, as she introduces us to the Crisis Intervention Team Program. Bring or buy your lunch next door, and join us on February 7th at 11:30 a.m. in the Pacific Conference Room to learn more about this exciting and ground breaking program.

Put all of the future Brown Bag dates on your calendar — They are held the first Wednesday of every month at 11:30 a.m. (except for July). ▲

Visit:

<http://www.companycasuals.com/efxcountyofvta/start.jsp>

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.

<http://www.vcmanagementcouncil.org>