

West County Newsletter

JULY 2008



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A message from Supervisor John Gioia



Partnerships Make a Big Difference In Challenging Times

I'm sure you've read about the current financial challenges facing state and local governments. Unfortunately, due to a decrease in revenues, the County is required to make budget cuts affecting some vital programs. We didn't want to make these cuts, but they were necessary in order to balance our budget.

These difficult financial times require creativity and greater collaboration in order to maintain important services. We're rising to this challenge here in Contra Costa County.

My office has collaborated with other county departments, government agencies, and community organizations to open two new youth centers in West Contra Costa County. Both of these centers will have programs designed to support young people in ways I hope will help prevent violence.

The **Young Adult Empowerment Center** in North Richmond has recently opened and will offer free employment training, career development, mentoring, and leadership training to prepare young people ages 16 to 24 for well-paid, meaningful jobs. It will also have recreational opportunities to keep youth physically fit and help develop teamwork.

The **RYSE Center** has been developed by youth and will open this fall in central Richmond offering a range of programs including media training, educational support, employment development, and health services.

There are brief updates on these two centers in this newsletter. Both of these projects are opening this year despite challenging financial times. Many individuals, community organizations and public agencies worked to develop these centers.

These efforts demonstrate that with collaboration and creativity, we can expand services during challenging times. These centers also help fulfill one of my major goals -- to fight violence with prevention strategies focused towards youth.

We want to help prepare our young people for positive life options, so the negative options won't be so tempting.

Providing young people with access to all the necessary resources and opportunities to become successful will guarantee a bright future for them and our community.

- John Gioia

Groundbreaking Carbon Fee Imposed

“The Air District is the first agency in the United States to impose a fee on the greenhouse gas emissions of pollution facilities.”

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District recently approved a new "carbon fee" on carbon dioxide emissions in the Bay Area to help pay for the costs of the Air District's climate protection work.

As the Pew Center on Global Climate Change has noted: "The scientific community has reached a strong consensus regarding the science of global climate change. The world is undoubtedly warming, and the warming is largely the result of emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from human activities.

The fee will apply to all industries and businesses that are required to get air quality permits from the Air District for their air emissions. The fee, 4.4 cents per metric ton of greenhouse gas emissions, will generate about \$1.3 million per year.

This money will be used to help pay for the Air District's efforts to fight global warming, which include an inventory of greenhouse gas sources, and research on ways to reduce emissions.

Supervisor Gioia, who voted for this proposal as a member of the Air District's Board of Directors, believes it may serve as a national model for federal or state agencies to fight global warming.

Most facilities have very small greenhouse gas emissions and will be assessed \$1 or less annually. Higher fees will be assessed on the largest producers of greenhouse gases, including oil refineries and power plants, and other industrial and commercial pollution facilities.

The Air District is the first agency in the United States to impose a fee on the greenhouse gas emissions of pollution facilities. This groundbreaking carbon fee will be featured in a PBS Frontline episode airing this Fall.

\$3 Million in Grants for Local Efforts to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District recently awarded \$3 million to fund 53 local projects that will significantly reduce the Bay Area's carbon footprint.

A carbon footprint is the amount of carbon dioxide emitted into the air from a place, like a house or business; or an activity, such as driving to work, or taking a vacation.

Carbon dioxide is a type of greenhouse gas, which gets trapped in the earth's atmosphere, warming the climate. Motor vehicles and industry are the primary sources of carbon dioxide, but there are numerous other producers, including agriculture and air travel.

Grant recipients include programs promoting the use of hybrid cars, bike riding, car-sharing, and retrofitting machinery or vehicles to reduce emissions.

This \$3 million represents the largest single source of funding available for climate protection projects in the Bay Area, and makes the Air District one of the top funders of climate protection activities in the country. Supervisor Gioia, who sits on the Air Board, is a strong supporter of these efforts.

Julian Zaragoza out of the hospital: Rehab continues at home



Julian Zaragoza takes a moment to play helicopter with his father, Donaldo Argueta Rodriguez, in their new Richmond home.

Julian Zaragoza, who was burned over 70% of his body, faces a long rehabilitation, including several surgeries. His twin brother, Francisco, was killed in the December 20th blaze. In spite of the tragedy, Julian's spirits are remarkably upbeat after five months in the burn unit at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose.

The 5-year-old boy badly burned in a pre-Christmas fire in North Richmond is out of the hospital and recuperating in Richmond.

The Zaragoza family lost everything in the fire, and are rebuilding their lives along with their son.

Supervisor Gioia established a trust fund for Julian. His family is deeply appreciative for the generous support of the community. For more information, contact Luz Gomez in Supervisor Gioia's office at 510-374-3231.

**The Argueta Rodriguez Fund
Mechanics Bank
3170 Hilltop Mall Road
Richmond, CA 94806**

To make a contribution send a check to:
The Argueta-Rodriguez Fund
at the Mechanics Bank,
3170 Hilltop Mall Road,
Richmond, 94806.

“The Zaragoza family lost everything in the fire, and are rebuilding their lives along with their son.”

Residents of East Richmond Heights and Bayo Vista Consider Funding a Sheriff Deputy

The Board of Supervisors recently authorized the County to cover the election costs of placing a measure on this November's ballot for a parcel tax to fund a resident sheriff deputy for the unincorporated communities of East Richmond Heights and nearby Bayo Vista.

The measure is the result of years of work between Supervisor Gioia, the Sheriff's Department, and residents.

The decision on whether to place this measure on the ballot must be made by early August and will depend on the level of community support that is shown.

The parcel tax, which would require a 2/3 majority vote of registered voters in the two communities, would pay for one full time officer. Currently, the annual cost of a 40 hour a week deputy sheriff and a vehicle is approximately \$200,000.

That comes out to about \$108 annually for a single family household.

The resident sheriff deputy would focus on crime specific to the East Richmond Heights and Bayo Vista neighborhoods as well as quality of life issues and other community priorities.

For additional information about this effort, go to the community's website at www.wcrnag.com or call Terrance Cheung, Supervisor Gioia's Chief of Staff, at 510-374-3231.

Doctors emerging from bankruptcy: Looking for CEO



The saga of the struggling Doctors Medical Center took a positive turn this year with a plan to emerge from bankruptcy. The plan is scheduled to be approved by the Bankruptcy Court this August.

Thanks to a financial rescue plan that includes hospital restructuring and cost-savings as well as outside financial support, the hospital will be sustainable without having to go to voters for new taxes.

Supervisor Gioia played a major role in implementing the turnaround plan in his role as chair of the Joint Powers Authority Board that oversees the

hospital.

The hospital is now recruiting a new CEO to take over the helm and will soon be replacing its top interim management team with a permanent one.

Doctors filed for bankruptcy in 2006, prompting a major effort to save the hospital. It's one of two full-service medical facilities in West Contra Costa. The other is Kaiser Hospital in downtown Richmond.

The rescue plan includes an infusion of \$51 million over the next three years from a variety of sources including the state and federal government, Kaiser Permanente, and John Muir Hospital. In addition to cash, several cost-savings measures were put into place.

Doctors Hospital plans on making several capital improvements over the next few years to modernize its equipment and facility, including boosting its renowned cancer center.

Planning For Recreational Programs in Montalvin Manor

Plans are in the works for a new family recreation program in Montalvin Manor.

Supervisor Gioia's office is working with the Hilltop YMCA and the Contra Costa County Public Works Department and Redevelopment Agency to bring a range of recreational activities to Montalvin Manor, including sports and arts.

The programs, which will be provided by the YMCA, will be held in two locations -- at the Montara Bay Community Center and at Montalvin Park.

For more information, including schedules and application information contact: Luz Gomez at (510) 374-3231.

Permanent Home for RYSE Youth Center

The for-youth, by-youth RYSE Center is steadily moving from idea to reality, with summer construction plans for a new permanent home.

The existing building at 205 – 41st St. in Richmond will be substantially remodeled this summer and will be ready for the center's opening this fall.

The center, a collaborative effort of Supervisor Gioia's Office,

County agencies, the City of Richmond, young people, and community partners such as Youth Together, has offered a few activities including movie and poetry nights. Full-scale programming will start when the building is remodeled in the fall.

The RYSE Center will have media arts, health education, and employment and educational support.

One of the main goals of the center is to provide new opportunities for youth leadership and development.

For more information call Kanwarpal Dhaliwal in Supervisor Gioia's office at 510-374-3231.

Young Adult Empowerment Center Opens

North Richmond has a new center to help prepare young adults for meaningful employment.

The Young Adult Empowerment Center (YAEC), located at 50 Silver Avenue, offers job and life skills training, including resume writing, computers, and career planning.

The center is geared for youth 16 to 25, but will serve anyone interested in its services. Classes are free.

The center is a collaborative project of Supervisor Gioia's Office, several Contra Costa County departments including the Redevelopment Agency, the Workforce Development Board, the Housing Authority and the County Library, as well as Contra Costa College and non-profit community partners.

The underlying goal of the center is to help steer youth toward well-paid and satisfying employment. For more information, contact the center's coordinator, Derek Lott at 510-374-3895.

Picture This!

Julian Zaragoza with his family and supporters at a March news conference in San Jose.



Transportation advocates attend a May rally at AC Transit .



The Contra Costa County Grand Jury tours West County with Supervisor Gioia.



Supervisor Gioia speaks at the YAEC Grand Opening and ribbon cutting.



Office Staff

Terrance Cheung
Chief of Staff
 El Sobrante Liaison
 East Richmond Heights Liaison
 Cynthia Harvey
Office Manager/Scheduler
 Luz Gomez
Deputy Chief of Staff
 North Richmond Liaison
 Montalvin Manor/Bayview Liaison
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 Joan Carpenter
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 RYSE (Youth Center) Coordinator

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 e-mail: dist1@bos.cccounty.us
 Office Hours: Monday – Friday
 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon
 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Our Website:

<http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/dis1>

Other Elected Officials

House of Representatives:

Congressman George Miller, III
 (District 7)
 (510) 262-6500 - Richmond Office
 (925) 602-1880 - District Office

Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher
 (District 10)
 (925) 932-8899 or
 (925) 757-7187 - District Offices

State Senate & Assembly:

Senator Tom Torlakson
 (District 7)
 (925) 602-6593 – District Office

Senator Don Perata
 (District 9)
 (510) 286-1333 - District Office

Assemblywoman Loni Hancock
 (District 14)
 (510) 559-1406 - District Office

Assemblyman Mark DeSaulnier
 (District 11)
 (925) 372-7990 - District Office

Commission & Volunteer Opportunities

Interested in community issues? Want to get involved? The County has numerous citizen boards that advise the Supervisors on a range of issues. For a complete list of openings check the county's website at www.co.contra-costa.ca.us. Click on Board Advisory Body Information. Applications are available online, or through our office. There are current openings on:

Mental Health Commission

Karen Shuler, 925-957-5149

El Sobrante Municipal Advisory Council

Terrance Cheung, 510-374-3231

El Sobrante R-9 Committee

Advises the board on park and recreation issues in the El Sobrante valley.
 Terrance Cheung, 510-374-3231

Youth Commission

Joan Tomasini, 925-646-5940.

Mobile Home Advisory Committee

Debbie Gorman, 925-313-4310

Regular Public Meetings

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Meets at 9:30 am every Tuesday at the County Administration Building, 651 Pine St, in Martinez.

El Cerrito City Council

Meets at 7 pm on the first and third Mondays of every month at the El Cerrito Community Center, 7007 Moeser Lane, El Cerrito.

El Sobrante Municipal Advisory Council

Meets at 7 pm on the second Wednesday of every month at the El Sobrante Library, 4191 Appian Way, off San Pablo Dam Road.

Kensington Municipal Advisory Council

Meets at 7 pm the last Tuesday of every month at the Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington, in Kensington.

Montalvin Manor Redevelopment Advisory Committee

Meet at 6:30 pm on the second Thursday of every month at the Montalvin Elementary School on Christine Drive.

North Richmond Municipal Advisory Council

Meets at 5 pm the second Tuesday of every month at 515 Silver Avenue in North Richmond

Richmond City Council

Meets at 7 pm every first and third Tuesday at Richmond City Hall, 1401 Marina Way South, Richmond

San Pablo City Council

Meets at 7 pm on the first and third Mondays of every month at City Hall, 13831 San Pablo Avenue, Maple Hall, Building Two, San Pablo.