

August 6, 2009



A Message From Supervisor Ken Yeager

COUNTY PROGRAMS DEVASTATED BY STATE BUDGET CUTS

On July 28, Governor Schwarzenegger signed a revision to the State Budget for the fiscal year that started on July 1. The Governor and the Legislature bridged a \$24 billion hole in their previously adopted spending plan because revenues were lower than expected. They achieved this through a series of cuts, borrowing, and accounting gimmicks.

The actions of the Legislature and the Governor will greatly impact Santa Clara County. A large portion of the County's funding comes from the State government, especially for the health and human services that the County delivers to its residents. Just a month after the County adopted its budget, the Board of Supervisors will be forced to consider more cuts for this fiscal year.

The most troubling cuts of this budget will deny vital services to our residents. A whopping \$175 million has been removed statewide from the Healthy Families program that provides affordable health insurance to low-income children. Thousands of children will lose health coverage in this county alone.

By cutting \$80 million in funding for child welfare services, the State will also lose \$44 million in matching funds from the federal government. The full effect is a loss of \$124 million for programs that protect abused and neglected children. Child welfare workers will be lost and their caseloads will increase. The ability to investigate allegations of abuse and reunite families will be greatly decreased.

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program provides domestic services and supervision for seniors and persons with disabilities. IHSS affords residents independence while saving money by keeping them out of hospitals and nursing homes. A \$263 million cut means that formerly eligible clients will lose their services. IHSS service providers will also lose their jobs.

One of the largest and most immediate impacts to Santa Clara County is the State's decision to forcibly borrow \$1 billion from counties. Although the law requires this money to be repaid in three years, our county alone will have to contend with an additional loss of \$42 million this year.

In signing the budget, the Governor also cut \$60 million from the pool of money that covers counties' costs for administering CalWORKS, the State's welfare-to-work program. Paired with a loss of \$60 million in federal matching funds, caseworkers will lose their jobs and there will be long waits for residents seeking service.

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In the arena of public health, deep cuts were made to programs combating domestic violence and teen pregnancy. All of the state funding for HIV/AIDS prevention and education was wiped out as well.

Finally, Coe Park is still in danger of closing. Although our local parks staff are assessing whether the County can feasibly take over operations, it and 100 other parks statewide may soon become inaccessible to the public.

The County is still in the process of fully determining the impacts the budget solutions will have locally. At our August 11th meeting, the Board of Supervisors will hear the details and begin discussing solutions. County departments will spend September identifying further budget cuts, and the Board will adopt new cost saving measures in October.

Fortunately, the Board set aside \$63 million in addition to our normal budget reserve to help mitigate these cuts. Unfortunately, it will not be enough to fully blunt them.

Some projections predict that the State will face at least another \$7 billion budget gap next year. Furthermore, some of the solutions crafted this July may fall apart due to legal challenges and sketchy economic predictions. There is a very real possibility that we will be going through this process again in just a few months.

I will keep you informed as the news continues to unfold. As always, I encourage you to contact my office if you have any concerns or are interested in additional information. You can reach me at 299-5040 or via e-mail at Supervisor.Yeager@bos.sccgov.org.

OBESITY COSTS BILLIONS OF DOLLARS

A study recently released by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy reveals that obesity and weight-related problems cost the State of California \$41 billion a year. The costs in Santa Clara County alone are over \$2 billion. As we are embroiled nationally in a debate on healthcare and government finances are melting down statewide, we must do more to address this grave concern.

A national study by RTI International shows that obesity now accounts for 9.1 percent of all medical spending. That number represents a doubling in spending on obesity-related ailments such as diabetes and heart disease since 1998. The cost of excess weight nationwide has reached \$147 billion a year.

At the County, we unfortunately need to learn how to do more with less money. In April, my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors agreed to explore my proposal to create a data-driven, comprehensive health agenda for the County.

Studies show that that obesity levels decrease with increased education. A health agenda that weaves together this and other data will help the Board determine how to prevent and treat the diseases from which our residents suffer in the most effective and cost-efficient manner possible. In an era of dwindling funds, it will help us prioritize as well.

NEW SEGMENT OF SAN TOMAS AQUINO/SARATOGA CREEK TRAIL OPENS



On July 10, I was happy to be part of the opening of a new segment of the [San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail](#). The new segment is approximately 1.25 miles in length, extending from Scott Boulevard to Monroe Street along the west bank of the San Tomas Aquino Creek, with under crossings at Central Expressway, Walsh Avenue, and the Caltrain railroad tracks.

Upon completion of the entire trail, bicycle and pedestrians will have a continuous recreational trail that

extends from the San Francisco Bay Trail near Highway 237 to Prospect Road in San Jose. The 12-mile trail will traverse approximately five miles of Creek corridors and seven miles of local streets and will connect with parks, open space facilities, employment centers, transit systems and residential areas.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Take Flight for Kids

What: Valley Medical Center Foundation presents a program to show young people of all ages and abilities that the sky is literally the limit to reaching out and overriding their perceived limitations. Approximately 75 private airplane pilots will provide free, 15-minute airplane rides for up to 750 passengers, including young people with disabilities, childhood illnesses, and special needs, and their family and friends. In addition to the flights, a concurrent activities festival is scheduled, complete with up to 200 nonprofit groups and vendors of assistive technologies, visits from clowns and face painters, free food and refreshments for participants.

When: August 8, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Where: Reid-Hillview Airport, 2500 Cunningham Ave, San José

More Information: Visit www.takeflightforkids.com.

Music in the Glen

What: The Kiwanis Club of Willow Glen presents this summer concert series featuring music from The Hitmen (Funk/Soul/Disco/Latin). Bring a lawn chair or blankets for seating. Food sales benefit Willow Glen Elementary School and local charities. Pets not allowed.

When: August 13, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Where: Willow Glen Elementary School, Corner of Lincoln Ave. and Minnesota Ave., San José

More Information: Visit <http://www.kiwanisclubofwillowglen.com/public/index.aspx>.

Guadalupe Community Garden Opening Celebration

What: Join the City of San José and the Friends of Guadalupe River Park and Gardens in celebrating the grand opening of the city's newest and greenest community garden. There will be a formal ribbon cutting at 3 p.m. followed by a public celebration. The Guadalupe Community Garden is a state-of-the art design with 33 raised beds, including four especially built for handicap accessibility. There will be cooking presentations, tastings, educational workshops, and activities for kids. Free parking is available, but guests are encouraged to consider riding their bicycles or taking public transportation.

When: August 14, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Where: Corner of Walnut St. and Asbury Street, San José

More Information: Visit www.grpg.org/CommunityGardens.shtml or call 298-7657.

Free Electronic Waste Recycling Event

What: County residents are invited to take advantage of this opportunity to bring any unwanted and outdated electronics such as computers, monitors, TVs, stereo equipment, copiers and cell phones that they have wanted to get rid of but haven't had the chance. Household hazardous wastes such as paint, motor oil, etc. are not accepted at this event.

When: August 22, from 9 a. m to 2 p.m.

Where: San Jose City College - Parking Lot, 2100 Moorpark Ave., San José

More Information: Call 943-9943 or email info@earthcarerecycling.com.

This is an informative newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on issues that I am working on, local updates, events in District 4, and County resources. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please send an e-mail to jim.weston@bos.sccgov.org with the subject: Remove me from your mailing list. To receive a text-only version of the newsletter, please send an e-mail to jim.weston@bos.sccgov.org with the subject: Text-only version of the newsletter. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send an e-mail to jim.weston@bos.sccgov.org with the subject: Add me to your mailing list.