

February 12, 2015



YEAGER TO LEAD COUNTYWIDE EFFORT TO CURB DIABETES

The development of type 2 diabetes among adults and children is growing at an alarming rate. In his State of the County address, Board President Dave Cortese called for a bold local initiative to stem the tide of this epidemic. Based on my track record for championing innovative public health programs, I was asked to lead an effort that can serve as a model for other jurisdictions.

I was honored to be asked to head up this effort. In the past, I spearheaded the creation of a first-in-the-nation law requiring restaurants to meet basic nutritional standards for kids' meals that offer toys. I also authored comprehensive nutritional standards to improve the nutrition of over 6 million meals served by the County each year and brought together a local partnership to install 100 water bottle filling stations in schools and public spaces. I am excited to break new ground in public health once again.

Type 2 diabetes is a chronic disease that affects 29 million people each year in the U.S. Individuals with diabetes are at significantly increased risk for heart disease and stroke. The disease is the leading cause of kidney failure, new cases of blindness among adults, and non-traumatic lower-limb amputations.

In Santa Clara County, 18 percent of adults have been told they are diabetic or pre-diabetic, and countless others could be at high-risk of developing diabetes. Valley Medical Center has more than 35,000 diabetic patients now, compared to 15,700 in 2011, representing a 123% increase in four years.

Diabetes care is one of the major drivers of increased health care costs. Care for diabetic individuals accounts for more than one in five U.S. health care dollars, with medical costs, on average, 2.3 times higher for patients with diabetes than those without the disease. However, research demonstrates that prevention programs can be effective in achieving significant health impacts and savings.

Unfortunately, California ranks last in the nation in terms of investment in diabetes prevention. That is why I am excited for the County to take a strong stance in this area. If an effective diabetes prevention program for patients of the local health care safety net system could be implemented on a large scale, the potential for financial savings is substantial.

Finding effective and affordable diabetes prevention strategies is critically important, particularly for low-income populations and communities of color who are at higher risk. An estimated 11% of Latinos and 10% of African Americans in Santa Clara County have been diagnosed with diabetes, compared with 8% of Caucasians. Our efforts will draw on the expertise of community leaders and organizations with culturally competent experience in diabetes prevention.

The growth in diabetes cases is linked to the rise of obesity rates in our community. Nearly 75% of health care costs go towards treating largely preventable chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. The risks for those diseases is greater when someone is overweight or obese. According to a recent study, 800,000 cases of diabetes would be prevented and \$82 billion saved if Californians lost an average of 5% of their body weight.

I know that Santa Clara County can meet this challenge. We are known for our bold public health programs. Let's work to ensure that every one of our 1.8 million residents has access to screening and care that will prevent them from getting beyond the pre-diabetes stage.

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 (408) 299-5040 or via email at Supervisor.Yeager@bos.sccgov.org.

URBAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM EXPLORED IN COUNTY

On February 10, the Board unanimously approved to study a proposal I put forth with Supervisor Mike Wasserman to create an Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone in Santa Clara County. Under a recent state law, local governments can now offer tax breaks to urban property owners who transform vacant or blighted lots into urban farms or community gardens. I am excited about the potential of this program to increase access to affordable and healthy foods for our residents.

As Santa Clara County has transformed itself from the Valley of the Heart's Delight into Silicon Valley, residents in the urban core find themselves further removed from the places where their food is grown. Since 1984, Santa Clara County has lost 45 percent of its farmland.

Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones have the potential to bring healthy food into neighborhoods where access to fresh produce is often lacking. These zones are another promising weapon in the fight against our obesity and diabetes epidemics. As an added bonus, it helps reduce blight while expanding economic opportunities.

An Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone would be a boon for local nonprofit organizations such as Veggielution, Garden To Table, and Valley Verde that have been cropping up all over our County. These organizations provide numerous benefits to our community, including hosting community gardens, teaching nutrition and gardening classes for low-income families, and harvesting ingredients for sale to local residents and restaurants.

The Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones Act, authored by San Francisco Assemblymember Phil Ting, provides tax breaks for landowners who use vacant, unimproved, or blighted lands for small-scale agricultural production and animal husbandry. If the owners agree to at least a five-year term, the tax value of the properties are assessed at a rate set by the State instead of its actual value. This lower rate creates significant savings on the annual property tax bill.

Similar to other property tax breaks, the loss in revenue would be spread between the County and other local governments. The amount would, however, be minimal. The cost would greatly outweigh the benefits to the community.

In addition to increased neighborhood access to green space and locally grown food, property values for local home and business owners may rise. A study in New York City found that within five years of a community garden opening in a lower-income neighborhood, property values increased by as much as 9.4% on homes within 1,000 feet of the garden.

The Urban Agriculture Incentive Zones Act applies to properties between 0.10 acres and 3 acres in size within the boundaries of an urbanized area. The entire property must be dedicated toward agricultural use. No dwellings are permitted on the property, and only pesticides or fertilizers sanctioned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Organic Program will be allowed.

A full proposal will come back to the Board for consideration in the next few months. If adopted, Santa Clara County would be among the first jurisdictions in the State to implement this program.

408K RACE TO THE ROW RETURNS ON MARCH 1

One of my favorite local races, the San Jose 408k Race to the Row, returns March 1. Now in its fourth year, this fun course takes runners through some of San Jose's most charming neighborhoods, including The Alameda business district and the historic Rose Garden, before an exciting Santana Row finish. A half mile kids' race is held after the main race is completed.

The race also features a cross-section of music entertainment from local radio stations at each mile. The final mile of the course—also known as the Mariachi Mile—features live mariachi bands greeting runners as they finish the race.

The San Jose 408k benefits the Pat Tillman Foundation, an organization that invests in military veterans and their spouses through academic scholarships. The race has raised over \$35,000 to date and is working to make this the biggest year yet.

The race is ahead of last year's sellout pace. To register or get more information, visit www.run408k.com. Organizers are offering 10% off the registration price with the code "district4".

CAMPBELL LIBRARY TEACHES RESIDENTS TO USE TECH DEVICES

The Santa Clara County Library District is dedicated to providing a wealth of resources to the public. In addition to offering thousands of books, our libraries have expanded in recent years to connect residents with new technology resources. Continuing this growth, The Campbell Library recently unveiled its new Tech Toolbar.

Located next to the library's Information Desk, the Tech Toolbar is a new service area dedicated to providing hands on tutorials for operating various electronic devices. Four devices are currently included in the Tech Toolbar: an iPad mini, Samsung Galaxy tablet, Kindle Fire and Kindle Paperwhite. Trained Tech Toolbar coaches are available to help people with their electronic devices and provide tips on how to download available materials.

The Campbell Library currently offers tens of thousands of free electronic resources, including books, music, magazines, and audiobooks. Anyone with a new tablet or electronic reader is encouraged to bring it into the library and learn how to engage with the library's many resources. With the Tech Toolbar, residents can explore, play, and sample these resources on various devices.

The Campbell Library Tech Toolbar is available on Mondays from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturdays: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. For more information, call the Campbell Library at (408) 866-1991.

COUNTY NEEDS INPUT ON WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

The County is committed to providing residents with meaningful navigation tools and information in common languages. This aspect of customer service, known as Multilingual and Wayfinding Signage, requires public input in order to be most effective for our diverse residents. To ensure this, the County Facilities and Fleet Department is encouraging members of the public to take an online survey related to the Multilingual and Wayfinding Signage Project.

The survey will help gather important data for the County to better understand its public wayfinding needs. It takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the survey, and the survey will remain open until Sunday, February 15 at 5 p.m. This survey is the best opportunity for members of the public to share their ideas with the Multilingual and Wayfinding Signage Project design team.

For more information and to take the survey, please visit:

<http://www.sccgov.org/sites/faf/cp/mp/fg/Pages/multilingual-survey-english.aspx>.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Twenty-Fifth National African American Read-In

What: In honor of Black History Month, the San Jose/Silicon Valley NAACP is hosting the annual African American Read-In at Horace Mann Elementary School. The goal of the event is to make the celebration of African American literacy a traditional part of Black History Month activities. Residents are invited to bring their favorite books by African American authors to share with students. Light refreshments will be provided, and participants are required to RSVP at ZNobles@sjusd.org.

When: Friday, February 13, at 8:30 a.m.

Where: Horace Mann Elementary, 55 North 7th Street, San Jose

More Information: Call (408) 535-6237 ext. 33115.

New Year Flag Raising Ceremony

What: Vietnamese American Communities of Northern California are hosting the Freedom and Heritage Flag Raising Ceremony. This event will welcome the year of the Goat, 2015. All residents are invited join in celebration of Vietnamese heritage and the local Vietnamese American community.

Where: 70 W Hedding St., San Jose

When: Saturday, February 21 at 10:30 a.m.

More Information: Email cdnvqgbca@gmail.com.

Spring Walking Series

What: Join Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens for the six week Spring Walking Series. Step by step, participants will improve their health and enjoy the scenic paved trails along the Guadalupe River. Fitness instructor Kristin Strellis will teach proper stretches, toning exercises, and walking technique along the way. Varied fitness levels will be accommodated. The program costs \$30 for members and \$40 for non-members.

When: Saturdays beginning February 28, from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Where: Visitor & Education Center, 438 Coleman Avenue, San Jose

More Information: Call (408) 298-7657 or visit www.grpg.org.

Strong Girls, Strong Women Leadership Conference

What: The American Association of University Women and the Santa Clara County Office of Women's Policy present a leadership conference designed specifically for high school girls. The conference will include a private screening of a new documentary, as well as three leadership tracks for Strong Girls and two tracks for Strong Women. Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. Spanish translation will be available. Registration is free but space is limited. RSVP is required. To RSVP, visit

<http://StrongGirlsStrongWomen2015.eventbrite.com>.

When: Saturday, March 7 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Where: Mexican Heritage Plaza, 1700 Alum Rock Avenue, San Jose

More Information: Email OWP@ceo.sccgov.org or call (408) 299-5152.

Child Advocates of Silicon Valley Volunteer Recruitment

What: Learn about the joys and challenges of becoming a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for a disadvantaged youth. Potential volunteers will have the chance to hear directly about the advocate experience and connect with others that share an interest in becoming a mentor to a foster child.

When: Tuesday, March 10 from 6:15 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Where: Sobrato Center for Nonprofits, 1400 Parkmoor Ave, San Jose

More Information: Visit www.bemyadvocate.org.

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 hit the "reply" button and put the word "remove" in the body of the email. To receive a text-only version of the newsletter, please hit the "reply" button and put the words "text only" in the body of the email. To change the email address where you receive your newsletter, please hit the "reply" button and indicate the old and new email addresses in the body of the email. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send an e-mail to supervisor.yeager@bos.sccgov.org with the subject: "Add."