

DISTRICT 5 NEWS

The District 5 E-newsletter is designed to keep the residents of Alameda County's Fifth District informed about important issues in our communities.

FEBRUARY 2006



2006 LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

The Asian Community Collaborative, the County of Alameda, and the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) celebrated the LUNAR NEW YEAR at the Lake Merritt BART station. County officials, employees, community members, and friends enjoyed a dance of dancing, music, and food.



YEAR OF THE DOG

(For event photos, see page 4)

The **Fifth District** includes the cities of Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Piedmont and large portions of Oakland, namely West Oakland, North Oakland, Rockridge, and the Fruitvale and San Antonio districts.

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Contact us with your feedback:
dist5@acgov.org or call (510) 272-6695



To remove your name from our mailing list, please send an e-mail with the subject REMOVE to: dist5@acgov.org

Alameda is a Pilot County for the States Efforts to Reduce Disproportionate Minority Confinement

Anyone who walks through the County's Juvenile Hall or visits any of the County's diversion or intervention programs will notice the over representation of people of color in the youth criminal justice system. A look inside the numbers and going past the anecdotal observation reveals staggering figures when it comes to race, arrests and incarceration. Alameda County is one of three counties that have been selected by the state of California to receive a planning grant to develop strategies to decrease the number of people of color that are incarcerated. The nationally recognized National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) is providing technical assistance to the County in this process.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, African Americans make up approximately 9% of the youth in our County between the ages of the 10 and 17; according to the County's Probation Department African American Youth account to for 49% of the arrests and are arrested nearly six times more often than their white counterparts. Hispanics are 12% of the youth population between 10-17 yet account for 22% of the arrests and are arrested nearly twice as often as their white counterparts. African American youth are sent to Camp Sweeney (an unlocked facility for lower level offenders) two and a half times more often than white youth. Furthermore, African American youth are five times more likely to go to the California Youth Authority (CYA) than whites. Hispanics are almost three times more likely to be committed to CYA than whites. The California Youth Authority is the facility that houses youth who have committed the most serious offenses.

The planning grant allows our County staff to focus on data and key decision making points to address this issue. The data clearly shows that the number of arrests and sentencing are clearly the crux of the problem. Four committees (Data Collection, Decision Making, Resources and Youth and Community Input) started meeting at the end of 2005 and are continuing to assess this problem so appropriate recommendations can be made to the Board of Supervisors and the Chief Probation Officer. It is expected that an action plan will be developed by May of 2006 which is data driven in an effort to achieve a high level of success. Alameda County needs to take center stage as a leader in progressive policies as we do in other areas. The grave inequities in this area are unacceptable. I will continue to keep you informed on this issue as the work continues to unfold.

BUDGET UPDATE

It happens every January...the Governor releases his proposed State budget and the next few months are consumed with attempts by the Legislature to refine all the proposals.

Every January, I approach the "budget season" with cautious optimism. I take a guarded approach because every year the Governor reveals a bright and shiny new budget; and every year there are hidden aspects that hurt local government. These concealed features often mean a funding scheme that balances the State's budget by siphoning County property tax revenues. Naturally, these State raids cause serious reductions to County health and human services programs. Since 1992, we have lost a cumulative \$2.4 billion to the State in these ransacks.

This year, the proposed 2006-07 State budget is \$97.9 billion and almost surprisingly, it doesn't contain the kind of draconian hits counties have grown accustomed to over the years. There are less hits this year partially because of the improvement of the State's revenue situation, but this is also due to a voter mandate to stop these State raids. Proposition 1A, passed by the voters last year, offered the first ever protection of County revenues from State attacks; we are seeing the benefits of those protections in the 2006-2007 fiscal year for the first time.

Even though there have been substantial voter regulated changes, everything isn't peachy in Sacramento. What the Governor won't tell you this month as he crisscrosses the State selling his budget to the people, is that even with higher than expected revenues coming in, the State still has an operating deficit of \$6.5 billion, growing to \$9.7 billion in the year ahead.

He won't tell you that the independent Legislative Analyst believes that the Governor should use the current unexpected revenue increase to reduce outstanding obligations instead of ratcheting up ongoing spending.

The Governor also won't tell you that this year he plans to cut over \$198.9 million of CalWORKs funds, the State's welfare-to-work program and the program that provides employment services, childcare and social services for low income residents. He also won't tell you that the Administration does not plan to give counties future increases in the cost of doing business for CalWORKs. This means that every year counties will be paying a little more for administering the Medi-Cal and CalWORKs systems. We will be forced to take this cost increase from the programs themselves offering less service to more people.

As always, I welcome your input on how I should be pushing the legislature and the Governor to better represent the residents of Alameda County. Please share your thoughts with me at dist5@acgov.org. You can also e-mail the Governor directly by going through his webpage at <http://www.govmail.ca.gov/>

IMPORTANT CHANGE IN CALIFORNIA HAZARDOUS WASTE LAW

It is now **ILLEGAL** to dispose of batteries, electronic devices, fluorescent light bulbs and mercury-containing thermostats in your trash. These items are known as "universal wastes" and must be taken to a household hazardous waste disposal facility or recycled properly.

Hazardous wastes contain harmful chemicals, which, if put in the trash, are harmful to the environment and public health. Call us or visit the County's website with questions:

Alameda County Household Hazardous Waste Program

<http://www.stopwaste.org>

1-800-606-6606

OAKLAND FACILITY

2100 East 7th Street
Open Thursday — Saturday
Call 1-800-606-6606 for an appointment

Alameda County

Computer Resource Center
1501 East Shore Highway
Berkeley
Telephone: 510-528-4052

City of Berkeley

Transfer Station
1201 2nd Street (at Gilman)
Berkeley
Telephone: 510-981-7270

Community Conservation Center

669 Gilman Street (at 2nd)
Berkeley
Telephone: 510-524-0113

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

VISIT OUR NEW **COMMUNITY CALENDAR** SECTION ON OUR WEBSITE:

<http://www.acgov.org/board/district5/index.htm>



Here, you will find information on:

Community Events and Meetings

Board of Supervisors Meetings

Board of Supervisors Committee Meetings

VISIT OFTEN—AS CALENDAR IS UPDATED!

SCHOOL READINESS

School readiness has become a major priority in Alameda County. Our County continues to provide innovative programs that are created to assist our community in meeting the needs of preparing our children for learning. One of my goals is to keep the community updated about how to prepare their children for school.

Alameda County's population is estimated at 1.4 million people, representing an overall growth of 10.7 percent since 1990. Approximately one-fifth of the population is under 14 years of age (281,523 children), the age up to which child care is typically provided.

Child care, or a quality pre-school education, plays a crucial role in children's social and cognitive development. While child care quality is a critical issue for all children, it matters more for low-income children. Good child care is associated with psychologically and socially healthier children.

In our efforts to inform parents about quality child care and preschool programs for our youth, our office is hosting the "**School Readiness Fun Fair**" on **Saturday, March 11, 2006 at Beebe Memorial Cathedral in Oakland**. The event will be an opportunity for parents to receive information about programs and services that assist with the challenges of identifying child care programs and pre-schools; and facilitate with registering for kindergarten. Representatives from programs such as Every Child Counts, a program that targets ages 0-5 with support services; Bananas, a resource and referral agency; and the Alameda County Department of Social Services will be in attendance. In addition, there will be fun activities for children.



SCHOOL READINESS FUN FAIR

Saturday, March 11, 2006

10:00 am — 2:00 pm

Beebe Memorial Cathedral

3900 Telegraph Ave — Oakland

Join Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson, Every Child Counts, and key community-based organizations for a day dedicated to preparing children ages 0-5 to be healthy and ready for school.

*Learn about quality child care and pre-school programs
Register your children for kindergarten
Children's activities
Raffle*

This event is free and everyone is invited to attend.
Please contact Aisha Brown for more information: 510-272-6686 or aisha.brown@acgov.org



2006 LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

