



District 5 Newsletter

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The District 5 e-newsletter is designed to keep the residents of Alameda County's Fifth District informed about important issues in our communities. The Fifth District includes the cities of Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Piedmont, and the West Oakland, North Oakland, Rockridge, Grand Lake, Fruitvale, and Dimond District neighborhoods.

Contact me with your feedback by e-mailing dist5@acgov.org or by calling (510) 272-6695.

Ballot Box Budgeting is Not the Answer

The anticipated state budget is looming with severe cuts to local government which will devastate those who are least able to protect themselves. Further complicating the issue is the Safe Neighborhoods Act, an initiative that was

written by Senator George Runner and will be on the November Ballot.

The Safe Neighborhoods Act, sometimes referred to as the "Runner Initiative" would sig-

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Acute Tower Replacement Project Highland Hospital

On Tuesday, July 1 the Alameda County Board of Supervisors unanimously certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the replacement of Alameda County Medical Center's Highland Hospital Acute Care Tower. The new Acute Care Tower will be a 160 bed facility and the project will cost an esti-

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Preparing for Back to School

See Story on page 3

Ready to Learn Free
FUN FAIR

Saturday,
October 4th, 10am to 1pm
Rosa Parks Elementary School
920 Allston Way (@8th St)
Berkeley



Alameda County
5th District

Clifford will be
giving away books!

© Clifford The Big Red Dog trademark by Scholastic Entertainment, Inc



Ballot Box Budgeting ...

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nificantly increase the funding going to local public safety programming (Police, Fire, Sheriffs, District Attorneys, and Probation Departments). The Legislative Analyst for the State of California projects that the initiative increases the allocation projected in budget year, 2009/2010 for Public Protection Programs from \$600 million to \$965 million; an increase of \$365 million or close to 61%. According to proponents of the initiative, 71% of the proposed new funding goes to law enforcement, juvenile probation and adult probation, while 29%, goes to education, prevention, rehabilitation, technology and victim/witness protection programs.

The process of "ballot box budgeting" (essentially mandating funds for a specific service through the initiative process) is a reflection of some of the complexities of our modern day democracy.

Alameda County Public Safety programs have lost millions of dollars over the past 10 years. Yet numerous other County Departments have taken serious hits as well. The point is, The Safe Neighborhoods Act locks in \$956 Million for public safety programs at the state level and requires increased funding in the future to keep up with the pace of inflation, the Legislative Analyst estimates \$100 million a year. As a result, if passed, the legislature will have significantly less to spend in all other program areas which will most likely result in a reduction to health care and social services which county residents desperately need. A significant majority of



our population is concerned about public safety, a lesser amount of people are willing to increase funding for public safety while jeopardizing other significant services.

The process of "ballot box budgeting" (essentially mandating funds for a specific service through the initiative process) is a reflection of some of the complexities of our

modern day democracy. The initiative process was designed so citizens could bypass the legislature, when it is stagnant. Yet the initiative process is now being used by anyone who can afford to pay for professionals to collect ballot signatures, to put forward a piece of legislation which they think is best. The process also allows the

Legislature and the Governor, to sidestep difficult decisions, which they are elected to make, and put the issues on the ballot, under the guise of wanting to hear directly from the people. Finally, proponents can paint the issue with broad strokes, playing to people's hopes and fears without talking about details.

Ballot box budgeting is something which we all need to approach with caution.

The initiative process is a valuable tool in today's democracy, yet it is not a regular alternative to the legislative process. Many of the issues that make it to the ballot for consideration are originated by a small, often well financed group whose views are aligned with a minority of the electorate. The complex issues of legislation, budgeting and developing funding for programs is most often best left to the Legislature. As citizens the best thing we can do is clearly let the legislature know what our positions are, and hold their feet to the fire to implement a budget that reflects the priorities of the citizens.

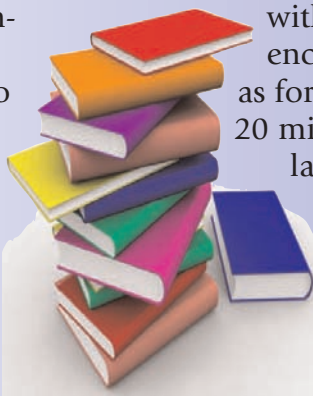


Preparing for Back to School

Starting school—whether it is pre-school, day-care, or elementary school —means an adjustment for everyone in the family. Even once bed times are established, morning routines are set, and homework patterns are created, it is important to keep a focus on healthy and happy kids to ensure a successful year. Here are few things that will the family with getting for school:

Making the First Day Easier — Remind your child that they are not the only student who is a bit uneasy about the first day of school.

Teachers know that students are anxious and will make an extra effort to make sure everyone feels as comfortable as possible. Point out the positive aspects of starting school: It will be fun. They'll see old friends and meet new ones. Refresh their memory about previous years, when they may have returned home after the first day with high spirits because they had a good time. If possible to ease some of the anxiety, drive your child (or walk with them) to school and pick her up on the first day.



Keep Reading Fun — Reading is the basic survival skill in today's information society.

Reading at home should not be associated with homework — children should be encouraged to read for enjoyment as well as for school. Children should read at least 20 minutes a day and make it part of a regular routine. Instilling the love of reading in children not only enhances essential literacy skills, but has been proven to have a positive effect on all areas of childhood education.

For free books contact the Children's Book Project in Oakland (510) 238-2301

Immunization — One of the most important steps a parent can take to maintain their child's health is to immunize them on schedule against deadly, preventable diseases. Each year, children miss the first day of school because they do not have the immunizations needed to enter a particular grade. According to Center for Disease Control, students in the United States between the ages of four and six need at least two boosters, including the fourth dose for polio and the second dose for measles, mumps and rubella. For more information on childhood vaccines and how to prevent them contact:

Alameda County Immunization Assistance Project (510) 267-3230
Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) hotline (800) 232-2422 or <http://www.cdc.gov>.

American Academy of Pediatrics website at <http://www.aap.org>.

With those few tips hopefully your children will experience a healthier and happier transition back to school.



Highland Hospital ...

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mated \$682 million. The certification of the FEIR is a critical step in the largest public works project Alameda County has ever undertaken.

After the 1994 Northridge earthquake the State imposed very strict building standards in the form of Senate Bill (SB) 1953 for hospitals. The original state statute said that all acute care hospitals (facilities that house patients that need overnight care) needed to be retrofitted by 2008 but as 2008 approached the State realized that only 97 of California's 436 acute care hospitals met the standards. As a result in December 2007 Governor Schwarzenegger signed into law an extension of the deadline to 2013 with the option of extending to 2015 if construction is started by 2013.

The FEIR generated a great deal of public interest especially regarding the unavoidable impacts of the project. My office and the County received valuable, detailed comments and suggestions from a cross section of concerned individuals, government bodies and non-profit organizations.

"We really appreciate the assistance of Mr. Carson's office and the support of County staff in facilitating the discussion of this project and improvements to it," says Naomi Shift, board member of the Oakland Heritage Alliance, during the public comment segment of the Board meeting. As the comments came in it became obvious that in order for the Project to be the most bene-

Highland Hospital is one of California's nineteen public hospitals and provides a critical service to the community as a safety net for all people who need medical care regardless of ability to pay, insurance or immigration status.

ficial to the community it was essential to bring all of the interested parties to the table to collaborate on incorporating the comments and suggestions into the FEIR and ultimately the Project.

Due to the comments received at the meetings we had with County staff, community members and

organizations a number of modifications were adopted as part of the FEIR, most specifically regarding historic resources and construction noise impacts of the project.

One measure that came out of the efforts of the historical advocates and

the County is the commitment to pursue a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the historic structures and landscapes that are retained on the Highland campus.

Highland Hospital is one of California's nineteen public hospitals and provides a critical service to the community as a safety net for all people who need medical care regardless of ability to pay, insurance or immigration status. Highland

Hospital serves Northern Alameda County as a Level II Trauma Center for critically injured patients, maintains 24 hour availability of all essential specialties (e.g. general surgeons, orthopedic surgeons, and neurosurgeons), personnel and equipment and is the busiest Emergency Room in the East Bay with 75,000 visits annually. Alameda County is proud to be home to one of the few remaining public hospitals and the replacement of the Acute Care Tower is essential to the livelihood of our public hospital.



Highland Hospital's 1927 building

Photo Source: Alameda County Medical Center Website

Cornerstone Project New Graduates Showcase Finished Projects

In an atmosphere of joy, bewilderment and pride, nine graduates of the Cornerstone Foundation for Educational Advancement (CFEA) presented their finished projects and received their Certificates of Completion from the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE) in a ceremony marked with “ooohs and aaahs” last July 3rd.

The nine graduates were split into three teams — Team CWA, Team JDM Builders and Team East Bay Construction Company — and they each proudly presented their finished project, complete with technical drawings and 3-D models. Each team conceptualized, designed and created the architectural specifications for their project. Two teams, Team CWA and Team JDM Builders, constructed a single family home. One was a five-bedroom house with a swimming pool in the backyard and the other was a three-bedroom with provisions for handicap access. Team East Bay Construction Co., winner of the competition, designed a Recreation and Study Center with a central courtyard and incorporated concerns about safety. For example, the play area was located away from the street side of the building so

children are protected from the traffic on the busy street.

The CFEA program, in partnership with the ACOE and the Probation Department, was established five years ago by CFEA Founder Wayne Perry. It allows youth who are attending Alameda County's Camp Wilmont Sweeney go through a rigorous 12-week training program.

Sheila Jordan, Alameda County Superintendent of Schools opened the graduation ceremony and acknowledged that the Cornerstone Project “which offers hope and opportunity to young men who have had neither in their lives.” She then said the project “would not be possible without the support of Wayne Perry and our other partners. Cornerstone is more than learning about architecture. Our students gain life skills and experience personal growth, as well,” added Jordan. The Program teaches the students about zoning laws, civil engineering, drafting and architectural rendering. Aside from the practical job skills, the youth also learn to “hone their critical thinking skills; learn how to work as a team; and learn how to be problem-solvers,” concluded Jordan.

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Team CWA presented their Oak Street Project - a single-family house with the overview drawing (photo on left) and the constructed model (above).



Team JDM Builders', Recreation and Study Center project won the Most Creative Award. Shown here are the technical plan (left) and the constructed model (right).

Cornerstone Graduates...

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"I am so proud of these kids," said Perry. "Think of it this way - not all who start, finish," he remarked. The group can typically start with 15 to 30 kids. In this group, only nine graduated. "That makes them really special," commented Perry.

In addition, he added, "These are young people that have unique great potential to achieve anything they want in life. They have bright minds, dreams and visions to accomplish goals that are larger than their surroundings appear to offer them. Cornerstone helps young people (and not so young) to develop the knowledge

and skills to bridge the gap between great potential and great success."

When asked what they will do now that they have graduated, "I think I will go and attend Community College and earn a degree," said one. Another said, "I think I want to learn more about being in business," and another said, "I don't know - I like wearing this suit, though."

Clearly, the proud graduates are looking towards a future that they otherwise may not have realized they could have until they finished this program. Programs like these give our youth the opportunities and support systems they desperately need at a critical juncture in their lives. Call it a "safety net," if you will. They fell through the cracks - and they made their amends when they were sent to Camp Sweeney. As they are transitioning back into society, we want to make sure we gave all that we can - in helping them improve their job skills and mind set - to prepare them for the varying challenges of being responsible citizens in their community and with their families. While success at the Cornerstone Project is one barometer of our ability to help our youth, we cannot rest on our laurels. There are many other young people out there who need our guidance and assistance.



Proud leaders of the Cornerstone Project. (from left) Postoria Aguirre (CFEA Workshop Instructor), Wayne Perry, CEO and founder of the Cornerstone Foundation for Educational Advancement (CFEA), Jacki Fox Ruby (Trustee, District 1), Felix Elizalde (Trustee District 4), V. Toni Adams (ACOE Director of Special Programs), Sheila Jordan, Alameda County Supt. of Schools and Crystal Martin (CFEA Workshop Instructor).

Planning & Caring For Aging Loved Ones

The number of people age 60 and over in California has grown rapidly throughout this century. Our State's elderly population is expected to reach 12.5 million by 2040, an increase of 232 percent from 1990. Beginning in 2010, 1 in 5 Californians will be over 60 years of age. Alameda County's over 60 population will be growing exponentially larger and faster than the state as whole. Of Alameda County's 129,076 elderly residents, approximately 10,000 live below the federal poverty line. The increasing costs of medical care and prescriptions compound poverty among seniors; thus, informing and

arming the adult caregivers of this population with helpful resources is vital for the future health of our communities.

In March 15, 2008, our office sponsored the "Planning and Caring for Aging Loved Ones." An event whose purpose is to educate relatives and caregivers of older adults, it featured several workshops on available resources and information essential to planning for legal responsibilities, housing, health, prescriptions and safety for aging adults. While we cannot totally recapture all the valuable information shared and gathered at that event, I encourage all of you to visit our website

<http://www.acgov.org/board/district5/> and click on the "Planning & Caring For Aging Loved Ones Website" on the left side of the page.

The site gives a host of resources on issues very relevant to senior needs, like long term care, housing, legal advocacy, driver safety, disability, caregiving and other topics. The information line of the Alameda County Area Agency on Aging 1-800-510-2020 is one other valuable resource you can connect to for issues that may not be found on the website. You can also call our main office number 510-272-6695, if you need further assistance.

Recent Community Events In District 5



Temescal Street Fair, held June 7th



Held at San Antonio Park, June 27th



July 4th Parade in Piedmont

Get Involved - Boards and Commissions

District 5 residents are encouraged to get involved in Alameda County Boards and Commissions. Boards and Commissions were established to help the Board of Supervisors deal with the myriad of duties and responsibilities of local county government. These Boards and Commissions are created by State or Federal law, County ordinance or by an action of the Board of Supervisors and provide forums for citizen input and accessibility to county government. The Board relies on these groups to advise them on a wide-range of issues affecting their constituents, and to assure that they are responsive to community needs.

There are more than 30 Boards and Commissions that require an appointment by a member of the Board of Supervisors. The Boards and Commissions are responsible for reviewing a wide range of policy issues and program areas to serve the best interest of Alameda County residents.

We are currently accepting applications from residents in the Fifth Supervisorial District who are interested in serving on a countywide board or commission.

The box below contains a list of boards and commissions that have vacancies:

ART COMMISSION / 1 VACANCY

Encourage the performing arts, artists, architects, landscape architect designers, art patrons and institutions of art to assist in the development and enrichment of our County through the performing arts and works of art.

Meeting Time: 4:00pm, 2nd Wednesday of each month at 1401 Lakeside Dr., Rm. 1107, Oakland.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMISSION / 1 VACANCY

Promotes and protects the interest of Alameda County Consumers.

Meeting Time: 4:00 p.m., 2nd Thursday of each month at 1221 Oak Street, Oakland.

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION / 1 VACANCY

Promotes social justice and social equity among Alameda County residents.

Meeting Time: 4:00p.m., 1st Wednesday of each month at 2000 San Pablo Ave, Oakland

MEASURE A OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE / 1 VACANCY

Oversees the Countywide 1/2 cent sales tax to fund health care services that was passed by voters in 2004.

Meeting Time: 9:00-11:30 a.m., 4th Friday of the month at 1000 San Leandro Blvd., San Leandro

PARKS, RECREATIONAL, HISTORICAL COMMISSION/ 1 VACANCY

Advises the Board of Supervisors on beaches, parks, recreation and historical activities.

Meeting Time: 3:30 p.m., 1st Thursday of each month at 2950 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland.

If you are interested in serving on any board or commission, please send a resume and cover letter to:
Alameda County, District 5
Attention: Mina Sanchez
1221 Oak Street, Suite 536, Oakland, CA 94612
Fax: (510) 271-5151
Email: mina.sanchez@acgov.org

If you want to receive our e-Newsletter on a regular basis, please sign up on our website: www.acgov.org/board/district5