

THE RUTHERFORD Report

THE NEWSLETTER OF SECOND DISTRICT SUPERVISOR JANICE RUTHERFORD

June 2011



“If you pursue good with labor, the labor passes away but the good remains; if you pursue evil with pleasure, the pleasure passes away and the evil remains.”

—Cicero

Saluting Mt. Baldy’s Volunteer Firefighters

The dedicated volunteers of the Mt. Baldy Fire Department know that seconds matter.

These individuals—many with families and full-time jobs—spend hours every month training and learning about various fire suppression, medical aid, and rescue techniques so they are ready to respond when the call comes on the pagers they carry 24 hours a day.

The nearest full-time San Bernardino County fire station is a little more than seven miles from Mt. Baldy on Euclid Avenue, and it can take 10 minutes or more for one of the

station’s engines to arrive on scene in the mountain community. The San Bernardino County Fire Department provides dispatch and other support for Mt. Baldy firefighters.

Mt. Baldy Fire Department firefighters can respond in half the time or less because they live in the community and can scramble to the local fire station quickly. The few minutes or seconds saved can make a huge difference for someone suffering a serious medical emergency such as a heart attack.

FIREFIGHTERS, PAGE 2

Moving from Politics to Policy

How do we make sure the days of political meddling and the self-serving use of tax dollars are over in San Bernardino County? The Board of Supervisors must lead the way in changing the way we do business, set appropriate expectations for county government and shift gears from politics to policy.

Our role as Supervisors is not to build political capital by doling out tax dollars to special events and pet projects, nor is it to micromanage County employees to ensure that our districts’ priorities are placed first in line, nor is it to feather our own nests by having an entourage of staff.

Our charge is to provide leadership and direction on policy and budget issues so that management can

implement our directives and goals throughout this massive and complex organization. Doing otherwise leaves County employees with conflicting directions that perpetuate the notion that some people can “pay to play.”

Cutting the Board’s \$2.25 million annual discretionary fund, which Supervisors approved on June 9, is one step toward changing the way Supervisors do business. While these tax dollars have supported some positive community programs and projects, they have also been used to build political empires, and have stood in the way of the Board working together to meet the County’s core responsibilities.

POLITICS TO POLICY, PAGE 3

FIREFIGHTERS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

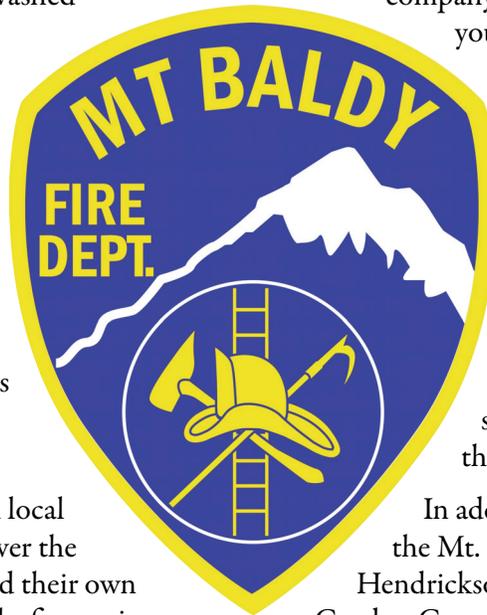
Quick responses can also help keep fires in check.

“If a house starts on fire, it can double every 10 minutes, and it’s out of control by the time engines can get up from down below,” said 81-year-old Mt. Baldy Fire Department Chief William “Bill” Stead, who grew to love the mountain community while spending time at his family’s summer cabin, which was completely washed away by the flood of 1938.

Mt. Baldy residents formed their volunteer fire department in 1953 when the mountain hamlet was home to several hundred fulltime residents. The community was provided fire protection by the U.S. Forest Service during summer months, but the station closed for winter when the risk of wildfire was less severe.

Residents struck a deal with the Forest Service to staff the idle fire engine with local volunteers during the off season, and over the years, the volunteer firefighters acquired their own fire engine, firefighting equipment, and a fire station thanks in part to the unfailing support of the Mt. Baldy community.

Every year the Mt. Baldy Fire Department raises thousands of dollars through events such as the annual Steak Fry and the Mt. Baldy Run to the Top—a 10k run



described by some as the most difficult foot race in California.

Nearly 40 volunteers organize and staff the Steak Fry fundraiser—which will take place at 3 p.m. on Saturday, June 25 this year. The event attracts hundreds of residents and visitors looking to enjoy some good food and good company in a beautiful mountain setting. If you’re interested in attending this

wonderful community event or if you’d like to donate something for their raffle, call (909) 982-1213.

The Mt. Baldy Fire Department is another great example of what people can accomplish when they see a need in their community, and I salute the volunteers both past and present who have worked so hard to serve and protect their neighbors and their beautiful mountain town.

In addition to Chief Stead, the members of the Mt. Baldy Fire Department include Graham Hendrickson, Chris Brookhart, Shawn Cate, Gordon Greene, John Larsen, Richard Wingate, James Bullis, Daniel Glick, Christian Klien, John Klopp, Mary McLeod, Cary Mitchell, Bob Strickland, Ron Thomas, Jami Waldrop, Chris Walker, Steve Williams, Kelly Wolff, Kyri FitzSimmons, Phyllis Nelson, Brian Glick, Chuck Althouse, and Tim Gardner.

The Role of Charity

As I’ve written about public virtues the last few months, a common theme strikes me: charity.

Often charity is simply defined as giving money or goods to a good cause or a needy person. Such charitable giving is necessary and welcome. There will always be people who have great physical needs, and reaching out to those people with temporal aid is an act of charity that should be embraced and encouraged. Perhaps you give to an annual fund drive, perhaps you gather up household goods to donate, perhaps you take food to those who have little.

There are people who have much wealth who become great philanthropists, sharing their wealth to advance important or noble causes. These people set up foundations that attract other like-minded donors and their pooled money can be used to address very large needs or tackle really big problems. Think of the Bill &

Melinda Gates Foundation setting their sights on improving world health and enhancing education.

So many foundations have billions to put into worthy projects, and we have many, many worthy projects in San Bernardino County. Unfortunately, our region fares poorly in competing for those foundation dollars. One of the key points I learned from the County’s recent Vision process—www.sbcounty.gov/vision - was this: on average, California counties received \$119 per year per resident. Our neighbor, Riverside County, gets only \$50 per year per resident. We in San Bernardino County, only see \$3 per year per resident.

Imagine the changes we could make in our schools, our neighborhoods, with our health and environment and arts, and so many other things, if we could simply get to Riverside’s figure! Now, imagine more than doubling that to the statewide average.

CHARITY, PAGE 3

POLITICS TO POLICY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

These expenditures have happened during an incredible economic boom and some worthy organizations have even become dependent upon them, but Supervisors squandered the prosperity and now, for example, we do not have a modern emergency communications system, an adequate property tax assessment computer program, or even a certified electronic voting process.

In addition to cutting this fund, the Board should also implement a policy that prohibits Supervisors from using County funds to promote themselves and build political legacies.

Supervisors have also agreed to end the practice of using discretionary funds to hire Board staff. Supervisors need aides to respond to constituent inquires, research policy issues, and serve as liaisons to the communities we represent, but in light of these difficult budget times, the Board must set the example by reducing staffing and working to do more with less.

As the 2009-10 Grand Jury pointed out, Board of Supervisors staffing increased 63% since 2004 while our

County population only grew by 5% during the same period. This dramatic staffing increase can't be justified, and it is time to reign in staffing and to be more transparent about the cost of our employees by making their benefits packages as well as their salaries readily available to the public.

Additionally, Board staff should have regular performance evaluations, and should be banned from being paid to do political work for any County elected official. Board staff members should be focused on serving constituents and the County, not on organizing their Supervisor's next fundraiser.

Shifting the Board of Supervisors away from politics and focusing on policy will take time and much more than these changes alone. We still need to tackle ethics reform, seek out new ways to engage the community and improve our transparency. All of these changes will work together to strengthen our County's productivity and prosperity and restore the public's confidence in their elected representatives.

CHARITY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

We have work to do to accomplish this, and by we, I do not mean the government. Certainly, government officials and departments have a role in this, but really, the business sector, private institutions, non-profit organizations and concerned citizens must step up. Together, we can increase our capacity, build our cooperation and leverage resources to attract more foundation dollars to our region. That will fix more problems than government ever can.

And while we're at it, let's seek to increase the other kind of charity: you know, the part about treating each other

well, about truly loving other people. If we can, each of us, live the Golden Rule a bit better, imagine how much better our neighborhoods and the world would be. Sometimes when time is short, traffic is heavy and nerves are frayed, we neglect the small kindnesses that would make someone else's day. Maybe that person we are nicer to will then be inspired to make a small donation that will help some foundation make a larger contribution that will help hundreds of more people.

2nd District Trivia

Last Issue's Answer: The exact meaning of the word "Cucamonga" is unknown. According to some sources, it comes from a Native American word—originally Kukumo-nga—that meant "sandy place" or "place of many streams." However, another theory reports the word meant "place of the light over the mountain."

Question: What was the name of the trailside inn that once occupied the area that is now home to the Sycamore Inn in Rancho Cucamonga?

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County Employee Suggestions Welcome

Employee suggestions and ideas can help any business or agency work more efficiently and effectively and better serve its customers. That's one of the reasons why the County of San Bernardino has offered an employee Suggestion Award Program since 1958.

Employees can earn monetary awards if their suggestion saves the County money, such as changing printer settings to save toner. Other suggestions that don't result in monetary savings, such as a way to improve workplace morale, can earn an employee a certificate of recognition. Suggestions can be submitted on the County's internal Internet service or via inner-office mail. The program is

run by the County Human Resources Department and is overseen by the County Administrative Office.

While employees may submit suggestions about day-to-day improvements to Human Resources, they should also feel free to present broader-reaching County policy suggestions to my office or to other Supervisors' offices.

Our sluggish economy will present many challenges as we try to move this County forward, and I welcome any suggestions employees have to make this County a more efficient organization that puts customer service as its top priority.

Upcoming Events

June 16, 2011	The Lewis Library and Technology Center hosts "Teen Game Night" from 4 to 6 p.m. on Thursdays. Teens are invited to play a variety of video games.
June 17, 2011	Market Night in Crestline is held from 4 to 7 p.m. on Fridays along Lake Drive in front of the bowling alley. Visit with vendors offering fresh produce and other goods.
June 18, 2011	The Upland Certified Farmers Market will take place from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in downtown Upland. This event occurs every Saturday at the same time and place.
June 18, 2011	Arrowhead Regional Medical Center will host free cancer screenings from 9 to 11 a.m. at 400 N. Pepper Avenue in Colton. Space is limited for this event so arrive early.
June 20, 2011	The City of Fontana will host a free movie—High School Musical 2—at Martin Tudor Park located at 11660 Sierra Ave. in Fontana. Don't forget to bring a chair and some popcorn. The show starts at 6 p.m.
June 21, 2011	The Crestline Library hosts "Mother Goose on the Loose"—an interactive storytime for children up to three years old—on Tuesdays at 10:35 a.m.
June 22, 2011	Crestline Connect will meet from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. at Billy Bears Restaurant. This group meets every Wednesday at the same place and time.
June 24, 2011	Bring the family along with food and lawn chairs to watch "Yogi Bear" under the stars at the baseball fields located at Lake Gregory. Call San Bernardino County Regional Parks at (909) 387-2461 for more information.
June 25, 2011	The Archibald Library in Rancho Cucamonga hosts Family Storytime at 11:30 a.m. on Saturdays. Parents and their children between the ages of 2 and 8 are invited to listen to a story and participate in various activities.
June 25, 2011	The 54th Annual Steak Fry and Raffle will be held from 3 to 9 p.m. at the Mt. Baldy Trout Pools, 6945 Mt. Baldy Rd., to raise money for the community's volunteer Fire Department. Tickets can be obtained from any Mt Baldy firefighter, or you can purchase them at the door.
June 26, 2011	Join Rancho Cucamonga Firefighters for the 14th Annual Car Show to benefit local burn survivors through the Firefighters Quest for Burn Survivors and the Burn Institute of the Inland Empire. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Red Hill Community Park.
June 28, 2011	The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors will meet at 10 a.m. at the San Bernardino County Government Center located at 385 N. Arrowhead Ave. in San Bernardino.

Dates and times are subject to change without notice. Please contact Supervisor Rutherford's office at (909) 387-4833 if you have any questions or suggestions for the Events Calendar. You can view information about more local events on Supervisor Rutherford's home page at www.sbcounty.gov/rutherford.