

THE RUTHERFORD Report

THE NEWSLETTER OF SECOND DISTRICT SUPERVISOR JANICE RUTHERFORD

March 2013



San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) partnered with multiple agencies to fund and manage the \$723-million widening of I-215 through San Bernardino.

Nothing astonishes men
so much as common
sense and plain dealing.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

SANBAG Opened Lines of Communication

San Bernardino Associated Governments, which is more commonly recognized by its acronym—SANBAG, is widely known as the transportation-planning agency for the County of San Bernardino and its 24 incorporated cities.

The agency led the construction of the 210 Freeway, and, over the years, it has partnered with Caltrans, the County, and cities to fund scores of other transportation

improvements, ranging from the \$723-million widening of I-215 through San Bernardino to about \$1 million to repave some mountain roads.

But, while transportation planning and projects have dominated most of SANBAG's 40 years in existence, roads were not the driving force behind the creation of the organization on February 20, 1973.

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Volunteer Not Shy About Getting Involved



About 30 years ago, Laura Dyberg and her husband began looking for a nice, safe community where they could raise their family.

The Orange County couple had planned on settling in Arizona until they visited a friend's cabin in the small community of Arrowbear in the San Bernardino Mountains.

"We said, 'Why should we move all the way to Arizona when we have everything right here?'"

The couple and their sons moved up to Arrowbear, and Laura began getting to know the people in her new community.

"As people will tell you, I'm not afraid to talk," Laura said.

After several years of commuting down the hill, Laura found a job organizing youth and adult sports programs for the Rim of the World Recreation and Park District.

Around this same time, a number of residents were very concerned about a company's plan to extract water from the mountain's fractured rock aquifers so it could be bottled and sold. Laura helped organize the community against the

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Behind The Buckhorn: A Tale of Disaster, Fate

In 1997, Mrs. Unruh was on her way back from a charity golf tournament in Palm Springs when she ran into a major traffic jam on I-10 in Upland.

Her passenger suggested a quick trip to Mt. Baldy to wait out the traffic.

“I was thinking, ‘Yeh, but it’s going to be three hours out of our way,’” said Mrs. Unruh, who only gives out her English honorific rather than her given name.

She was surprised when the drive to the mountain community only took about fifteen minutes, and, by chance, they stopped at the historic Buckhorn Lodge.

“I couldn’t breathe and I just got the chills,” she said. “It was fantastic!”

Mrs. Unruh and her friend drove back to Los Angeles, but her thoughts kept coming back to that charming, rustic lodge and its potential.

The pioneers who first ventured into San Antonio Canyon were probably thinking the same thing as they looked through the soaring oaks and pines up at Mt. Baldy. They thought they would find gold; their hopes did not pan out.

In 1894, a man named Frank Keyes built the mountain community’s first resort—Dell’s Camp. Visitors came, but growth was slow because horses or mules were the only way in and out of the canyon. A wagon road wasn’t completed until shortly after the turn of the century.

Camp Baldy, which would later be renamed The Buckhorn Lodge, opened in 1909. The lodge became a popular getaway for Southern Californians, but it didn’t reach its heyday until Foster and Ruth Curry purchased it in 1928.

The two had helped manage Yosemite’s then famous Camp Curry, which Foster’s parents had established, and they planned to transform Mt. Baldy into “The Yosemite of the South.”

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project, and, eventually, the County declined to issue the needed approvals to the business.

In 1997, after the Mill Creek Fire burned about 1,500 acres and caused nearly \$2 million in property damage, Laura helped organize about 600 volunteers to plant more than 3,000 trees in the Running Springs area. She also organized the Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council and later the Inland Empire Fire Safe Alliance, which would play even more prominent roles in educating residents about keeping their communities fire safe after the Old Fire scorched the mountaintop in 2003.

Laura was laid off of her job when the Recreation and Park District cut sports programs because of financial problems, but despite getting a pink slip, she continued organizing sport activities and events on her own.

“You can’t just tell 400 kids they can’t play basketball anymore,” she said.

Laura was one of the founders of the Pine Cone Festival in Twin Peaks, which Westways Magazine recently named one of its “5 worth the drive” events in Southern California.

“It’s a fantastic event that brings people from all over,” she said. “We had a gentleman who drove all the way from Fresno to enter his pine cone in the festival.”

Laura served as a member of the Arrowbear Park County Water District Board of Directors for about 10 years, and she currently serves as Secretary of the Rim of the World Recreation and Park District Board of Directors.

She also worked as a volunteer hotline operator for Domestic Violence Education Services (DOVES) for seven years.

“Many of them didn’t know where to turn for help,” Laura said. “My job was to talk with them and tell them where the resources are.”

In recent years, Laura has been active as Program Manager for the U.S. Forest Service Wildfire Prevention Volunteers. This group of eight volunteer teams assists during major incidents (fire info hot lines) and acts as ambassadors for the Forest Service at festivals, public events, ski slopes, mountain bike trails, and the air tanker base.

Laura said that she and her fellow mountain residents are lucky to live in a place with so many avenues to get involved at the community level.

“I couldn’t do this in Orange County; I couldn’t do this in Whittier,” she said. “You just don’t have the opportunities to make the connections that you do in this type of community.”

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Former Second District Supervisor Daniel Mikesell is credited with being the driving force behind SANBAG's creation. At the time, Mikesell was seeking a leadership position with the Southland's only regional planning agency: Southern California Associated Governments—also known as SCAG. When he wasn't able to secure the post in the Los Angeles-dominated organization, Mikesell lobbied to create the County's own sub-regional planning agency, said Wes McDaniel, who served as SANBAG's executive director from 1973 to 1996.

The original agreement between the County and its then 14 incorporated cities didn't even include the word "transportation." Instead, it called for the new agency to "serve as a forum for consideration, study and recommendation on countywide regional problems" and for it to "explore all practicable avenues for intergovernmental cooperation."

Pretty soon, mayors, council members, and County supervisors were meeting regularly to discuss issues that affected their communities.

"That kind of collaboration had not taken place on a monthly basis in the past," McDaniel said.

Public transit happened to be the first regional issue SANBAG tackled thanks in part to SB 325, the Transportation Development Act, which gave local governments the ability to impose a ¼-cent sales tax to fund transportation projects.

In response, SANBAG set out to create a public transit agency to provide bus service throughout the San Bernardino Valley.

Former Third District Supervisor Dennis Hansberger—one of SANBAG's original board members—recalled how the County's Public Works Directors, who helped organize the bus system, proposed using the name Inland Transit System. Then the agency could make clever use of the acronym with ads such as "ITS Convenient" and "ITS Going Where You Are."

In the end, SANBAG decided to go with the name recommended by a consultant—Omnitrans.

Transportation started to play an even larger role at SANBAG in 1976 when the agency was deemed San Bernardino County's transportation authority. That declaration came after lawmakers passed legislation creating the California Transportation Commission and allowing counties to develop their own transportation commissions.

"We had to be careful that we didn't lose the overall council of governments flavor in favor of just becoming a county-level transportation agency similar to Caltrans," McDaniel said.

The game-changing moment came about 10 years later when Santa Clara County became the first county in the state to convince voters to approve a local sales tax to fund transportation projects.

SANBAG set out to pass its own local ½-cent sales tax. The first attempt failed, but supporters regrouped, rebranded and succeeded in getting Measure I—a 20-year sales tax initiative—approved in 1989. Fifteen years later, voters overwhelmingly approved a 30-year extension of Measure I. The tax measure now expires in 2040.

Visit www.sanbag.ca.gov to learn more about SANBAG.

2nd District Trivia

Last Issue's Answer: Nobel Prize-winning scientist Albert Michelson accurately measured the speed of light by reflecting light beams between Mt. Wilson and Mt. Baldy, which are about 22 miles apart.

Question: What San Bernardino County city changed its name after learning that a northern California city shared its original name?

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Camp Curry featured 84 shaded cabins by the time Foster Curry died from cancer in 1932. Ruth Curry remarried and continued managing the camp, which suffered a setback when the casino across the street burned down in 1936. Curry and her new husband, silent movie star Edmund Burns, seized the opportunity and built a new, bigger casino called The Wagon Wheel. It featured a large dance hall, dining room, and a glass floor through which guests could view San Antonio Creek.

In 1938, a major storm spawned a massive flood that wiped out the newly built casino and all but ten of Camp Curry’s vacation cabins. A Democratic politician named Bill Sager purchased the remnants of the camp in 1948 and reopened it as the Buckhorn Restaurant.

Mrs. Unruh—the widow of former California Assembly Speaker and State Treasurer Jesse Unruh—purchased the

lodge a few years after that fateful trip to Mt. Baldy. Since then, she has been working to build its customer base.

The former Vegas starlet began performing at the lodge along with a local group called Mort Marker & The Buckhorn Boys. She upgraded the lodge’s outdoor patio, and she continues to improve the lodge’s nearly century-old cabins while preserving their rustic charm. Mrs. Unruh said the lodge and its mountain surroundings, including Mt. Baldy Ski Lifts, the Mt. Baldy Trout Pools, and dozens of hiking and biking trails, are just minutes away from the hustle and bustle of the urbanized valley below.

“When you start coming up to Mt. Baldy, it’s like another world,” she said.

Visit buckhornlodgemtbaldy.com to learn more about The Buckhorn Lodge.

Upcoming Events

March 2	The Lakeshore Learning Store will host craft Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 125 North Mountain Avenue in Upland. There is no cost to attend. Call (909) 985-9945 for more information.
March 2	The Fontana Youth Advisory Council will host a teen summit on bullying from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Jack Bulik Teen Center located at 16581 Filbert Street in Fontana. There is no cost to attend. Please call (909) 349-6900 for more information.
March 3	The 44s Band will perform at 9 p.m. at Grazies located at 1615 North Mountain Avenue in Upland. There is no cost to attend. Call (909) 981-2924 for more information.
March 5	The Steelworkers Auditorium will feature the History of Rock ‘n’ Roll at 6:30 p.m. The auditorium is located at 8437 Sierra Avenue in Fontana. There is no cost to attend. Call (909) 349-6978 or email arts@fontana.org for more information.
March 5	Blue Jay’s Governmental Affairs Committee meeting will take place from 8 to 9 a.m. at the Blue Jay Meeting Room located at 27236 Hwy. 189 in Blue Jay. There is no cost to attend. For more information, call (909) 337-3715.
March 12	The Steelworkers Auditorium will feature the Fiesta International at 6:30 p.m. located at 8437 Sierra Avenue in Fontana. There is no cost to attend. Call (909) 349-6978 or email arts@fontana.org for more information.
March 15	The Arrowhead Communities Chamber of Commerce announces the UCLA Mountain Bruins Pot of Blue and Gold Party from 6 to 10 p.m. located at The UCLA Conference Center, 850 Willow Creek Road in Lake Arrowhead. Cost to attend is \$65 per person. Please call (909) 337-2478 or visit uclaconferencecenter.com for more information.
March 16	The Foothill Family Shelter will host its E-Waste Recycling Event from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 1501 West Ninth Street, Ste. D in Upland. There is no cost to attend. Please call (909) 920-0453 or visit www.foothillfamilyshelter.org for more information.
March 23	Residents can get free assistance with their federal and state income tax returns from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Crestline Library.
March 26	The Steelworkers Auditorium will feature the Classical Dances of India at 6:30 p.m. located at 8437 Sierra Avenue in Fontana. There is no cost to attend. Call (909) 349-6978 or email arts@fontana.org for more information.
March 29	U.S. Congressman Paul Cook and Supervisor Janice Rutherford will host a breakfast event from 7 to 9 a.m. at the Lake Arrowhead Resort and Spa located at 27984 Hwy. 189. The breakfast costs \$15. Call (909) 387-9045 or email SupervisorRutherford@sbcounty.gov to RSVP.
March 30	Main Street Theatre Company Presents “The Phantom Tollbooth” on from 1 to 4 p.m. at Victoria Gardens located at 12505 Cultural Center Drive in Rancho Cucamonga. General admission is \$16 and senior/youth tickets cost \$14. Call (909) 477-2752 for more information.
March 30	Lake Gregory will host the 5th annual Egg Hunt and Duck Derby from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Lake Gregory Regional Park, 24171 Lake Drive in Crestline. There is no cost to attend. Visit www.lakegregoryduckderby.com for more information.

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.