

NEWS

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

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The County of San Bernardino: 2012 in Review

JANUARY

Open Government – As part of the county’s ongoing effort to make government more open and accessible, the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors added a search function to its agenda system, allowing the public to search for words in board agendas, contracts and reports dating back to June 25, 1996. The new feature allows the public to easily research matters that have come before the Board of Supervisors, such as seeing when and how often the county has done business with certain contractors or taken action on a particular subject. The new agenda search can be found at <http://cob-sire.sbcounty.gov/sirepub/>.

Access to Benefits – The County’s Transitional Assistance Department assisted in forming a consortium of community and faith based organizations in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties around the topic of improving awareness of and access to CalFresh benefits. The consortium consists of members from TAD, Catholic Charities, Public Health, Superintendent of County Schools, Inland Empire Health Plan, Community Action Partnership, 211, Office on Homelessness, Behavioral Health, Riverside County Department of Public Social Services, Molina Healthcare, Inland Valley Hope Partners, the Way World Outreach, and numerous other organizations. The consortium holds bimonthly meetings and has united around the following five overarching concerns: Unique Populations, Hunger Issues, Simplification of the C4Yourself online application, Policy/Legislative Clarification, and suggested changes and Marketing & Media Strategies.

Government Reform – On January 10 the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to reduce the benefits to Board members by nearly 40 percent, making board member compensation comparable to Riverside, Orange, and San Diego counties and saving taxpayers more than \$240,000 a year. “At a time when we are asking all of our staff and all of our departments and all of our programs to do more with less, at a time when our residents and taxpayers are running their households and their businesses and their lives with less, it is incumbent on us as elected leaders of this county to show

that we can do more with less, too,” said Supervisor Janice Rutherford, who proposed the cuts. Supervisors eliminated several types of benefits, including their retirement pickups, contributions toward 401(k) and 457(b) savings plans, and medical expense reimbursements.



Supervisor Janice Rutherford

Dr. SWAT – Arrowhead Regional Medical Center emergency room physician, Dr. Michael Neeki, serves in a new, medically-related venture with the Inland Regional Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team. As a physician specially trained in SWAT, Dr. Neeki adds a new element to local law enforcement capabilities.



Dr. Neeki

ARkStorm – The San Bernardino County Museum on January 25 hosted a free public lecture by world-renown seismologist and disaster expert Dr. Lucy Jones about the ARkStorm Scenario, which describes catastrophic flooding resulting from a month-long deluge. The ARkStorm Scenario explores the resulting impacts to our social structure and can be used to understand how California’s “other” Big One can be more expensive than a large San Andreas earthquake.

Gang Injunction – On January 20, San Bernardino County District Attorney Michael A. Ramos announced the filing of a lawsuit seeking a gang injunction in the City of Rancho Cucamonga against the criminal street gang “Cucamonga Kings.” This injunction, with the cooperation of the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department, will restrict any gang activity, and will subject members to arrest if they engage in conduct within the Safety Zone. “For decades, the people of Rancho Cucamonga and the surrounding communities have had to sit back and suffer numerous crimes at the hands of these local terrorists. Not on my watch,” said San Bernardino County District Attorney Michael A. Ramos. “We look forward to working with the Sheriff’s Department in ending this gang’s

criminal activity and making it possible for the members of this community to live their lives free of fear and violence.”

Honored Scientist – Kathleen Springer, Senior Curator of Geological Sciences at the San Bernardino County Museum in Redlands, traveled to Washington D.C. to be honored for her efforts with regional colleagues in earthquake education and outreach. Springer joined a delegation from California’s Earthquake Country Alliance (ECA) to accept an award from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA. Springer has long been a leading voice in encouraging earthquake preparedness and safety throughout the Inland Empire. The San Bernardino County Museum is southern California’s ECA Earthquake Education and Public Information Center, or EPIcenter. In this capacity, the museum annually leads the local community in the ECA’s cornerstone activity, the “Great California ShakeOut”, a statewide earthquake drill initiated in 2008 involving millions of participants each year all across California. Springer was honored with a similar award at the National Earthquake Conference in Memphis, Tennessee in April.



Kathleen Springer

FEBRUARY

ArrowCare – ARMC, in conjunction with other County of San Bernardino health departments, introduced a low-income health program called ArrowCare, providing comprehensive health care to thousands of county residents. The program serves as a bridge to health care reform and provides a patient-centered “medical home” model of care that strengthens the relationship between patients and their health care providers.

The Lisa Project – Children’s Network coordinated The Lisa Project’s three month exhibition in San Bernardino County at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, The Mall of Victor Valley, and Victoria Gardens. The Lisa Project was an interactive multisensory exhibit that tells the story of child abuse from a child’s perspective. The goal of bringing The Lisa Project to San Bernardino County was to raise awareness of child abuse and help illustrate that it is our collective responsibility to protect the children in our community. From January through March 2012, more than 5,100 people experienced The Lisa Project with the majority reporting they were much more aware of child abuse and neglect after experiencing the exhibit.



The Lisa Project

MARCH

Help for the Homeless – A combination of funding for new and renewed project grants awarded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provided the County of San Bernardino more than \$7 million to furnish transitional and permanent housing, as well as other supportive services, to homeless individuals and families who might otherwise be living on the streets.

Family Health Center – ARMC opened a new and larger Westside Family Health Center, which was expanded from 12 exam rooms to 21 and from 7,000 square feet to 15,000, and is housed in a new co-location health care facility in Rialto. ARMC and the County of San Bernardino opened the co-location facility, the first of its kind in the area, to provide patients with access to multiple services from ARMC and the County's Public Health and Behavioral Health departments.

APRIL

TAY Center – The Department of Behavioral Health cut the ribbon on a new building for the Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Center in San Bernardino. The new facility includes a 14-bed crisis residential facility. The One-Stop TAY Center also has a multipurpose room that can serve as an auditorium, a training kitchen, recreation room, resource center and a media education room. The construction has implemented practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions to provide an environmentally friendly facility. The building was designed and built using strategies aimed at improving performance across all the metrics that matter most: energy savings, water efficiency, CO₂ emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

ePro – Online access for businesses looking to provide products and services to the County of San Bernardino made a giant leap forward with the County Purchasing Department's launch of the new online Electronic Procurement Network system. ePro is a major technological advance that increases the speed, efficiency, cost savings and reporting capabilities of the County's acquisition processes. ePro's state-of-the-art system offers web-based vendor registration, bid notification, online solicitations, and electronic purchase orders. The easy-to-use system also gives County vendors the ability to respond to bids online, adjust proposals prior to the closing date as often as needed in response to addendums or market changes, upload certifications and bid documentation, and attend bid openings remotely. "Implementation of the ePro system will provide a faster and more efficient platform from which to manage purchasing countywide while reducing costs for both the county and suppliers," said Laurie Rozko, the County's Director of Purchasing. Access is available through the County Purchasing website at: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/purchasing/eprocurement/eproguide.aspx>

Hesperia Health Center – The Department of Public Health opened the Hesperia Health Center as a Federally Qualified Health Center. The Health Center will increase access to medical services, and patients can receive health screenings, referral services, immunizations, management of acute and chronic diseases, and preventive health education. “One out of four High Desert residents is without health insurance, and is unable to receive affordable preventive health care services,” Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt said at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. “The FQHCs provide a safety net for residents to access medical services without impacting emergency rooms and other local resources.”



Opening of the Hesperia Health Center

Restaurant Roundtables – The Division of Environmental Health Services hosted a series of Industry Roundtables in April and October for owners, managers and staff from various food facilities throughout San Bernardino County. Environmental Health Managers and Supervisors were available to answer questions and food facility operators learned about the most frequent food violations in San Bernardino County and their impact on public health.

New DA Website – The San Bernardino County District Attorney announced the launch of a new website. The overall design and user experience is a significant departure from the previous site. Not only do users have access to current news, but the site also provides a “Frequently Asked Questions” section and quick access to various services by way of an “Action Center” located on the home page.

MAY

Vision Goals – The Countywide Vision took a major step forward on May 2 when the Board of Supervisors and the San Bernardino Associated Governments Board of Directors approved the first two regional implementation goals developed through the Vision process, targeting cradle-to-career success and the creation of a business-friendly environment. The goals emerged from meetings between experts and stakeholders representing the elements of the Countywide Vision and were honed by city, town, and county leaders during the annual City/County Conference in March. Element leaders met throughout 2012 to set a course for achieving the goals through collaboration with residents and other stakeholders.

National Mental Health Month – During May, the National Mental Health Month, the Department of Behavioral Health celebrated the theme “Do More for 1 in 4” as a call to action to help the one in

four individuals who are living with a diagnosable, treatable mental health condition and/or substance abuse issue.

Budget Award – For the sixth year in a row, the County of San Bernardino was honored for producing one of the best government budget documents in North America by once again receiving the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. To receive the budget award the county had to satisfy nationally recognized guidelines for effective budget presentation. These guidelines are designed to assess how well an entity's budget serves as a policy document, a financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications device. The County of San Bernardino's award-winning budgets can be viewed on a newly created County Budget website: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/cao/budget/>



ARMC expanded its Breathmobile service to the High Desert, with added sites in Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, Phelan, Victorville and Trona. ARMC's two Breathmobiles provide pediatric asthma care management at sites throughout the County of San Bernardino.

Wellness through Art – A Consumer Art exhibit was held May 1-31, 2012 at the County of San Bernardino Government Center. Focusing on "Wellness" through art, various modes of artistry from local talent living with mental illness were displayed at the County Government Center for the entire month of May. One of the highlights of the exhibit was on May 8, when many of the artists participated in the Meet the Artists and Wellness Expo. The artists made themselves available to the public to talk about the inspiration for their art, as well as how they use art in the recovery process. In addition, community agencies were on-site to promote traditional and alternative ways wellness can be achieved.



JUNE

Vision-based Budget – On June 15 the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved a balanced, forward-thinking \$4 billion County budget based on achieving the Countywide Vision. “We stayed focused on our priorities to provide quality services and support public safety countywide,” said Board of Supervisors Chair Josie Gonzales. The 2012-13 Budget was \$28.8 million less than the 2011-12 budget, closed a projected \$33.2 million shortfall, and accomplished this while setting aside \$16.3 million for contingencies and reserves. The budget also put the County on track to eliminate a five-year gap of \$91.5 million by including \$40.3 million in savings.



Early Voting conducted by the County Registrar of Voters was a hit, especially with first-time voters.

Inspiring Students – ARMC and the UC Riverside School of Medicine formed a partnership enabling local high school and college students to shadow several ARMC doctors as part of a student pipeline program designed to develop physician leaders and strengthen interest in the field of medicine. The partnership helps to accomplish one of the goals of the County of San Bernardino’s Vision Project: partner with all sectors of the community to support the success of every child from cradle to career.

Geologic Map – San Bernardino County Museum geologists working in the deserts north of Las Vegas published the most detailed geological map of the region ever created. Funded through the Las Vegas Office of the Bureau of Land Management and released through the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, the map of the upper Las Vegas wash – including the famous Tule Springs paleontological site, where excavations half a century ago first established the geologic context of Ice Age fossils found there – was the culmination of more than a decade of careful fieldwork and laboratory analysis. The map (“Geologic Map of the Gass Peak SW Quadrangle, Clark County, Nevada”) is available to the public online (map: <http://www.nbmgs.unr.edu/dox/m175.pdf>, text: http://www.nbmgs.unr.edu/dox/m175_text.pdf).

Homeward Bound – In an effort to increase awareness regarding the thousands of homeless animals that are available for adoption at County operated animal shelters, Animal Care and Control launched “Homeward Bound Project Adopt” in 2012. This expanded marketing effort included the establishment of a Facebook page to update residents regarding the many positive outcomes that occur for pets and people within our County.



The County's Animal Care & Control Division, with ongoing consistent support from the Board of Supervisors, staged events throughout the year to promote the adoption of pets from County animal shelters. The biggest of these events was the first-ever "Homeward Bound – Mega Pet Adoption Event" at Yucaipa Regional Park on Father's Day weekend. This event sponsored by the Animals aRe First Fund (ARFF) along with the Humane Society of San Bernardino Valley and the Yucaipa Animal Placement Society (YAPS), placed 163 pets. Look for the 2nd Annual Homeward Bound Mega Pet Adoption Event to be held in June 2013.

Video Tribute – The San Bernardino County District Attorney announced the launch of a three-minute video honoring the lives of peace officers who have died in the line of duty. The video contains footage from the Annual Peace Officer Memorial ceremony held at the San Bernardino Police station May 31, 2012. "Let us take time to honor our fallen officers, those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of public safety," said District Attorney Mike Ramos. "We will never forget. We will always remember our heroes."

JULY



The County Museum restored a number of damaged markers at the historic Agua Mansa Cemetery and created new interpretive exhibits in the chapel building.

West Nile Virus – The Division of Environmental Health Services conducted presentations to over 800 K-8th grade children in Fontana about how to protect themselves and their families from West Nile Virus (WNV). These presentations were conducted during the peak of the WNV season and in areas where WNV was most prevalent. Health Educator Amanda Gaspard is presenting to the children.



Visitors to the San Bernardino County Museum in Redlands enjoyed Rockin' at the Grove, the museum's July 2012 vintage dance event, and Train Days, our annual celebration of trains, and riding the rails.

AUGUST

Achievement Awards – The County of San Bernardino once again distinguished itself among the nation's counties, winning 15 Achievement Awards for 2012 from the National Association of Counties. Only nine of California's 58 counties were honored in 2012, including Riverside County with two awards.

Dialing for Dollars – Among the NACo award winners was the County Department of Child Support Services for its collaboration with the Transitional Assistance Department on the Dialing for Dollars program. Dialing for Dollars utilizes participants in the Welfare-to-Work program to place phone calls to non-custodial parents with delinquent child support accounts, requesting that payment be made to bring delinquent accounts current. Since the program started, workers have made 169,400 calls and have collected more than \$621,000 in child support payments. As a result of the work experience obtained in this program, 50 percent of these Welfare-to-Work participants have secured permanent employment. Child support collections have increased significantly over the last few years. In spite of the economic downturn, collections have increased by \$11 million in annual collections during the past four years. During 2012, distributed collections increased by 4.3 percent, totaling approximately \$170 million. The child support program includes five federal performance measures which track the extent to which child support agencies are effectively and efficiently managing their caseloads. The department has shown significant improvement in each measure in recent years, and received the State child support Director's Excellence award for exceeding all State-established performance goals in 2011.



The Division of Environmental Health Services also received a 2012 NACo Award for the Development of a Mobile Website to increase public accessibility to Environmental Health Services. This award was presented by the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors and received by Dean Holsonbake, Jim Nichol and Ray Britain.

AUGUST

Vision Achievement – The Countywide Vision Water Element Group unveiled the region’s first-ever water inventory showing that more than enough water will exist to meet the needs of San Bernardino County residents and businesses through 2035 only if water users step-up conservation efforts and the public and local government leaders are willing to invest in projects that will store and protect additional water supplies. The project marked a historic degree of cooperation between separate, independent water agencies, which was honored with the Building Industry Association Baldy View Chapter 2012 Good Government Award.



Board of Supervisors Chair Josie Gonzales, County CEO Greg Devereaux, and Water Element Group members Celeste Cantu and Kirby Brill accept the Good Government Award.

Animal Adoption Challenge – The Animal Care and Control Division was one of 50 animal shelter systems who participated in the ASPCA – Rachael Ray 100k Challenge during the months of August, September and October 2012. During this national competition, animals returned to their owners increased by 25 percent, private adoptions increased by 17.5 percent, and rescue group placements remained consistent when compared to the previous year.



Stroke Center – ARMC, which developed the County of San Bernardino's first primary stroke center, received a two-year stroke center recertification from the Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program. This designation demonstrates that ARMC has achieved the highest national standards to provide the best care available for patients suffering a stroke.

SEPTEMBER

Prison Realignment Summit – The San Bernardino County Reentry Collaborative (SBCRC) hosted a Partnership for Safer Communities Summit on September 20 at the San Bernardino Hilton. The

purpose of the summit was to provide information to the public, law enforcement and policy makers on national, state, and local levels about the re-entry efforts brought forth by the collaborative to make San Bernardino County communities safer. Dr. Maxwell Ohikhuare, Health Officer; Dr. Teresa Frausto, Medical Director, Department of Behavioral Health; Veronica Kelley, Deputy Director, Department of Behavioral Health; and Gary Madden, Director, 2-1-1 San Bernardino County represented the Data, Gaps and Resource for Reentry Population Panel and discussed the health care needs of the reentry population and the gaps that exist in accessing services. Phyllis Morris, Interim Director, Public Defender; Michelle Scray-Brown, Chief Probation Officer; Robert Fonzi, Undersheriff; and Michael Fermin, Assistant District Attorney represented the Public Safety Panel and discussed some of the ways to protect our neighborhoods and reduce recidivism.



Public Defender Phyllis Morris, Chief Probation Officer Michelle Scray, Undersheriff Robert Fonzi, and Assistant District Attorney Michael Fermin.

Project of the Year – Cucamonga Basin #6 in Upland received the Project of the Year award from the Inland Empire Chapter of the American Public Works Association. The basin is truly a multi-purpose facility that provides flood protection for thousands of residents in the cities of Upland and Rancho Cucamonga. The basin also provides recreational use via the system of trails open to the public.



Cucamonga Basin #6

Recovery Happens – More than 1,000 participants received resources and education at Recovery Happens Month Events hosted by the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) and its contracted Alcohol and Drug Service (ADS) partners. DBH and its ADS partners are proud to continue the tradition of observing September as Recovery Happens Month in celebration of National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. 2012's theme was a call to action, "Join the Voices for Recovery, It's Worth It." Recovery Month promotes the societal benefits of treatment for substance use and mental disorders, celebrates people in recovery, acknowledges the contributions of treatment providers and promotes the message that recovery, in all its forms, is possible. Furthermore, Recovery Month spreads the positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, that prevention works, treatment is effective and people can and do recover.

OCTOBER

National Fossil Day – The San Bernardino County Museum celebrated National Fossil Day on October 17. Museum paleontologists and geologists showcased recently discovered fossils from the Tule Springs area north of Las Vegas as well as from Joshua Tree National Park. Museum visitors got up-close and personal with fossilized remains of extinct mammoths from the Ice Ages. Mammoths were the official mascots for National Fossil Day in 2012 and represent a huge proportion of the Museum's paleontology collections. County Museum scientists were eager to participate, since mammoths have proven to be critical discoveries in multiple ongoing paleontologic investigations. Extensive fieldwork in the upper Las Vegas Wash has produced abundant and well-preserved fossil remains of Columbian mammoths, *Mammuthus columbi*, that date to the Pleistocene Epoch, or "Ice Ages".

Domestic Violence Awareness – At a press conference in October 2012 held in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month and 17-year-old murder victims Tania Villalobos and Willie Wiltz, District Attorney Michael Ramos and San Bernardino Police Chief Robert Handy reaffirmed their commitment to fight domestic violence. Ramos and Handy stood at the gravesite of Tania Villalobos, who was murdered by her husband, Alejandro Hernandez Villalobos, in 2010, as the result of a domestic violence dispute in the City of San Bernardino. In July 2011, Alejandro Villalobos was found guilty of murder and sentenced to 50 years in state prison. In 2011, the District Attorney's Office filed 3,062 misdemeanor and felony domestic violence cases in San Bernardino County. Nine of those cases involved murder. In order to further educate the public about domestic violence, the District Attorney's Office and the San Bernardino Police Department have also partnered with the Mexican Consulate of San Bernardino to produce a 15-minute educational video focusing on myths in the Hispanic community regarding domestic violence.

One Million Served – In a little more than a year since it opened, the Transitional Assistance Department's (TAD) Customer Service Centers have assisted more than 1 million customers. There are two Customer Service Center sites, one in San Bernardino and one in Hesperia. There will soon be a small satellite Customer Service Center unit in Ontario. The Customer Service Center handles all the customer calls for continuing CalWORKs (cash aid), CalFresh (formerly Food Stamps), and Medi-Cal cases. The Eligibility Workers who work at the Customer Service Center work with a "One and Done" philosophy and attempt to complete all the casework related to the phone calls. Tori Fredieu, the Eligibility Worker who handled the 1 millionth call was surprised with a cash prize that was donated by the TAD Director and Center Deputy Director. The TAD Customer Service Center continues to be a model for other counties to follow. The center has hosted visits from 15 California

Counties, the State of Kansas, USDA Food and Nutrition Services, California's Health Benefit Exchange Board, and various San Bernardino County departments.



TAD Director Nancy Swanson, millionth call EW Tori Fredieu, and CSC Deputy Director June Hutchinson.

Great California ShakeOut – Millions of Californians participated in the Great California ShakeOut, the largest earthquake drill in history, which happened at 10:18 a.m. on October 18, 2012. The ShakeOut is organized to inspire Californians to get ready for big earthquakes and practice how to protect themselves when it happens. The educational epicenters of ShakeOut-related activities were held at the San Bernardino County Museum in Redlands as well as in the high desert at the Victor Valley Museum. During this educational and fun-filled event, students participated in the Drop Cover and Hold On Drill, joining nearly 9.4 million Californians in the largest earthquake drill in the world. They were also treated to an Earthquake Preparedness fair, complete with emergency equipment, emergency responders, and earthquake preparedness educational activities.

NOVEMBER

Adoption Event – On November 14, 2012, at the Ontario Convention Center, approximately 77 foster children formalized their adoption. Children and Family Services facilitates approximately 200 adoptions per year. The Annual Adoption Event honors both the children and their adoptive families, as they legally become one. The families legally united in ceremonies performed by San Bernardino County Judges: Honorable Gregory S. Tavill, Honorable Barbara A. Buchholz, Honorable Cheryl C. Kersey and the Honorable Christopher B. Marshall. Every year, CFS renews and strengthens its commitment to keep siblings together. All of the children at the event were living with their caregivers, relatives or prospective adoptive parents for some time. There were sibling sets consisting of two (2) to six (6) children adopted together into their permanent families. There were children of all ages joining families.



Probation Achievement – The County Probation Department’s efforts to cope with State Prison Realignment were hailed as one of the top programs in the state by the California State Association of Counties and one of the top programs in the country by the National Association of Counties. October 2012 marked the first full year of Assembly Bill 109 operations for the County Probation Department. AB109 had the effect of realigning certain offenders who had not been convicted of serious, sexual, or violent felonies from state to county jurisdiction. For the Probation Department, this meant that a projected 6,700 additional offenders may fall under probation department jurisdiction. In response to state prison realignment, the department hired and trained 107 additional officers, added several probation units and programs, and opened three adult day reporting centers countywide, all of which contributed to a reduction of the overall county recidivism rate from 82.5 percent to approximately 7 percent.



The County promotes its regular pet adoption efforts and campaigns during its monthly television segment on NBC affiliate Telemundo 52. Pictured above is Cynthia Turk, Health Education Specialist, along with her four-legged companion "Amigo", a 3-year-old Chihuahua mix, informing viewers about the many homeless pets available at County animal shelters. This segment aired on Tuesday, November 20, 2012.

Senior Outreach – The CalFresh Senior Outreach Partnership is a collaborative effort between the San Bernardino County Transitional Assistance Department and the Department of Aging and Adult

Services. This program provides dual services of education and application assistance to the senior population of our County. Nutrition is essential to the health and well being of our senior populations. This partnership informs seniors of the CalFresh program and assists them in applying for nutritional assistance. Aging and Adult staff visit Senior Centers, Assisted Living Facilities, Community Centers and other facilities/agencies to assess the needs of seniors, including their nutritional needs, and assist senior citizens in completing CalFresh applications. After one year of this project, participation in CalFresh by seniors had increased 25.6%. DAAS and TAD jointly won two awards in 2012, a NACo Achievement Award and a CSAC Merit award for their "CalFresh Senior Outreach Partnership" project.

Community Center – County Preschool Services also received a 2012 Challenge Merit Award from the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) in recognition of the partnership between the PSD and City of San Bernardino in a joint venture to re-open the Nicholson Park Family and Community Resource Center. The center provides a wide array of classes and tutoring for children and adults and other vital services to the community.

Trauma Center – ARMC's trauma center was verified for a third time by the American College of Surgeons (ACS), a unique distinction that demonstrates it has met the highest national standards for the treatment of injured patients. ARMC's trauma center remains the only trauma center in the County of San Bernardino verified by the ACS.

DECEMBER

New Supervisors – Supervisors Josie Gonzales, Robert A. Lovingood and James C. Ramos began new four-year terms on the Board of Supervisors following Oath of Office ceremonies at the County Government Center on December 3. "We now have a board that can communicate, that can discuss, that can disagree, and can arrive at a consensus by which thought has been processed and opinions have been shared and that the conclusion will be of benefit to the people," Supervisor Gonzales said.



New Supervisors Robert A. Lovingood and James C. Ramos

New Sheriff – On December 18, the Board of Supervisors unanimously appointed Assistant Sheriff John McMahon to fill the unexpired term of Sheriff Rod Hoops, who plans to retire on December 31. The appointment was supported by the county's police chiefs and other law enforcement leaders, officials from communities that contract with the Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services, and other community leaders and groups.



Sheriff John McMahon

Political Reform – Under a contract unanimously approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 18, the state Fair Political Practices Commission will enforce the County of San Bernardino Campaign Finance Reform Ordinance, which goes into effect on Jan. 1. The county is the first local government agency to contract with the FPPC for enforcement of a local reform ordinance. The revolutionary concept of utilizing the FPPC stemmed from the need to find a cost-effective and objective means of enforcing the ordinance, free from the possibility of local influence or political bias. Other counties have expressed an interest in following San Bernardino County's lead.

Homes for Pets – The Animal Care and Control Division of the Department of Public Health increased dog and cat adoptions by 8% in 2012 (from 7,538 pets placed in 2011 to 8,142 pets placed in 2012). County operated animal shelters currently have one of the highest pet placement/live release rates at 63.5% and one of the lowest euthanasia rates at 35% when compared to the other shelters in the region. Other pet dispositions amounted to 1.5% as of December 18, 2012.

Sabre-Toothed Cats – The San Bernardino County Museum announced it had found sabre-toothed cat fossils in Las Vegas, a first-of-its-kind discovery that makes headlines across the nation. "We're ecstatic," exclaimed Kathleen Springer, Senior Curator for the San Bernardino County Museum and lead scientist for studies in the upper Las Vegas Wash. "We've been saying for years that these critters were out here, somewhere. It was just a matter of time until we found one." The new discoveries date to approximately 15,000 years ago, according to radiocarbon analyses. "We're establishing a tight radiocarbon chronology for the entire Tule Springs region," says Springer, "and that work allows us to place individual fossils into our temporal framework. This is essential for understanding how living communities responded to environmental changes through time."

