



THE JACOB JOURNAL

A Newsletter from Vice Chairwoman Dianne Jacob

June 2008

Child Rescue Efforts Gain Ground

Jacob says two critical programs succeed in bringing children to safety

Serving the Cities of:
El Cajon
La Mesa
Lemon Grove
Poway
Santee

Serving the communities of:
Agua Caliente
Allied Gardens
Alpine
Barrett
Blossom Valley
Bostonia
Boulevard
Campo
Canebrake
Casa de Oro
Crest
Cuyamaca
Dehesa
Del Cerro
Descanso
Dulzura
Eucalyptus Hills
Fernbrook
Flinn Springs
Granite Hills
Grantville
Guatay
Harbison Canyon
Jacumba
Jamul
Julian
Lake Morena
Lakeside
Mount Helix
Pine Hills
Pine Valley
Potrero
Ramona
Rancho San Diego
Rolando
San Carlos
San Pasqual
Santa Ysabel
Shelter Valley
Spring Valley
Tecate
Tierra del Sol
Vallecitos
Wynola

Serving the Indian Reservations of:
Barona
Campo
Cosmit
Cuyapaipa
Inaja
Jamul
La Posta
Manzanita
Mesa Grande
Santa Ysabel
Sycuan
Viejas

Lakeside parents, along with rest of the region, were horrified when a young boy retrieving a baseball near the banks of the San Diego River was accosted by a registered sex offender who'd been lurking in the area's overgrown brush.

Thanks to fast acting bystanders who heard the boy's cries, the attack was thwarted and the offender arrested. To prevent future incidents, the Sherriff's Department, Supervisor Jacob, County staff and property owners along the river joined forces to clear brush, build a fence and rid the area of transient encampments.

Still, what happened in Lakeside is a terrible reminder of the harm that can befall children, through no fault of their own. On the flip side of that fear, however, is better protection.

Two extremely important programs are working round the clock to rescue kids from dangerous environments. Wireless AMBER Alerts and the County's Drug Endangered Children Team already have proven their worth, but their continued success depends on the participation of every San Diegan.

Some people don't like getting text messages on their phones. But what if the next message you get on your cell phone

helped save a life?

Statistics indicate that the first three hours after a child abduction are the most critical. That crucial three-hour window can make the difference between recovery and heartbreak.

That's where Wireless AMBER alerts come in. And that's where you come in. The County is asking every San Diegan to sign up to receive Wireless AMBER alerts on their cell phone and be a part of that critical three hour window.

Everyday in America, some 2,185 children are reported missing. That's 2,185 families experiencing the worst kind of fear; one family right this very second.

Thanks to technology, we are no longer powerless to help those families. We can

link our cell phones to create a regional network of concern.

The system is simple. Cell phone subscribers can text AMBER followed by their 5 digit ZIP code to 26237. Or, enroll online at: wirelessamberalerts.org. The next time local law enforcement issues an AMBER Alert, you'll receive information that may help bring a child to safety. You won't be charged for receiving the alerts.

Since 1997, Amber Alerts have been credited with the safe recovery of 377 children nationwide, according to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Supervisor Jacob has no doubt that San Diegans can help increase that

What if the next message you get on your cell phone helped save a life?



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that number by taking part in this simple and potentially life-saving effort.

Like wireless AMBER alerts, the County Drug Endangered Children's program, known as DEC, in making tremendous inroads to save kids from harm.

DEC was recently praised by the nation's Drug Czar, John P. Walters, who joined Supervisor Jacob and other officials to celebrate the program's 10th anniversary. On average, about 19 children each month are rescued by the specialized DEC team.

The cornerstone of DEC is the partnership between law enforcement and social services. Officers call the DEC program when children are found in homes raided for suspicion of drug use or sales. A social worker immediately reports to the scene to

address the needs of children and investigate for possible abuse and neglect.

If children are removed from the home, they are transported to a medical facility for thorough examination and tested for meth and other drug exposure.

Of the 2,276 children rescued from the DEC program to date, 180 tested positive for drugs; 95 of those tested positive for meth. Of the 95 children who tested positive for meth, 66 were under age 6.

Often, losing their children is the impetus for parents to kick their drug addiction.

The DEC program depends, in

part, on the public to help identify drug homes, especially homes where children may be present.

You can help rescue a child from danger by calling the Meth Hotline at 1-877-No2Meth. You can remain anonymous and, as in the case of Amber Alerts, you just may help save a life.



DEC Works: Federal Drug Czar John P. Walters and Supervisor Jacob listen as Latisha Herrera explains how DEC helped save her children from the world of meth addiction.



Clear Message: Viejas and Ewiiapaayp tribal council officials, the U.S. Forest Service and Supervisor Jacob to announce details of new fuel break near Alpine.

Many Hands Clear Brush in Alpine

Alpine residents learned firsthand during the Viejas fire of 2001 and again during the Cedar fire of 2003: fire doesn't respect boundaries. It doesn't discriminate between federal land, private property and sovereign tribal land.

The Viejas and Ewiiapaayp Indian tribes certainly know this and have teamed with the U.S. Forest Service and the Greater Alpine Firesafe Council to create an important fire break south of Interstate 8, near Willows Road.

With the Forest Service identifying areas to clear, the Firesafe Council reaching out to property owners and the tribes providing crews to remove dangerous brush, the alliance is working to protect Alpine, and the whole region, from the next wildfire. The 95-acre fire break will

cross a patchwork of lands owned by the Ewiiapaayp tribe and private property owners. Experts say the single most effective way to slow the spread of future wildfire is to better manage brush and the new fire break should serve as a important reminder to all property owners of their responsibility to create defensible space around homes and other buildings.

New Engines for a Safer Summer

It will be another dry summer and fall, and San Diego County will contend with the ever-present threat of wildfire. This year, eight new, four-wheel drive fire engines will help protect the county's most rural and mountainous unincorporated areas.

The new engines, bought by the County of San Diego through its County Fire Enhancement Program, cost \$3 million, and were paid for using money from the County's General Fund and Community Development Block Grant funds.

Engines will go to the Julian Fire Protection District; Ocotillo Wells Volunteer Fire Company; Rural Fire Protection District—to be stationed in Harbison Canyon, Jacumba and Lake Morena—; Ranchita Volunteer Fire Company; and Shelter Valley Volunteer Fire Company.

The eighth, a County reserve engine, will be used by Cal Fire in Warner Springs. The engines will replace an aging fire fleet, and provide agencies a reliable vehicle for structural and wild land fire protection, as well as medical aid calls.



Rollout:
Supervisor Jacob gives keys to new fire engines to Backcountry fire agencies.



COUNTY HAPPENINGS...

Collins Tapped as New Chief of Staff

A familiar face is Supervisor Jacob's new chief of staff: Jeff Collins, former deputy chief of staff and longtime policy advisor.

After serving as an intern to former California Governor Pete Wilson, Collins joined Supervisor Jacob's staff in 1996. He quickly ascended the ranks from administrative assistant to field representative to policy advisor. In 2003, he became a senior policy advisor and in 2007 he was named deputy chief.

Collins distinguished himself by crafting landmark legislation to improve fire protection and emergency medical services in the region.

Collins is a graduate of the University of San Diego and an avid hockey player. He and his wife, Ana, are first-time parents of a two-month old, Sean.

County Finances Stable in Uncertain Time

The County is celebrating having received the highest rating possible from credit rating agency Standard and Poor's on the planned issuance of Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes, also called TRANs. TRANs are a vehicle for short-term borrowing used to meet seasonal cash flow needs.

The excellent rating translates into lower costs of debt for the County and an overall savings to taxpayers.

The S&P rating comes on the heels of an earlier announcement from national rating agency Moody's, which gave the County its highest rating for the short-term notes and recognized the County's strong liquidity and stable cash position.

The ratings are an important achievement for the County in the current climate of economic uncertainty arising from a significant State budget deficit and slowing property tax and sales tax revenues.



West Nile Virus season is starting early this year and the County is encouraging residents to be aware of the potential for increased West Nile Virus activity. Visit www.SDFightTheBite to learn how to protect your family. West Nile Virus is a virus that is spread to humans through the bite of infected mosquitoes. It may cause flu-like symptoms but it not spread through human-to-human contact.

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June 08

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