

DISTRICT 5 NEWS

March 2003

Greetings-

District 5 News is a monthly e-newsletter dedicated to keeping the people of Alameda County's District 5 informed about local, state, and federal issues. We hope District 5 News is a useful and engaging source of information about the issues that concern you most. Enjoy.

-Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson, 5th District.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

No One Will Be Left Behind

The United States may be a county of rugged individualists, but we are all in this financial crisis together. Unfortunately, our President's focus seems to be elsewhere. President Bush is actively preparing for war against Iraq. Most media outlets have followed his lead. Record deficits nationwide in 47 states (\$169 billion according to the Office of Management and Budget), the District of Columbia and the federal government have failed to capture and maintain the media spotlight.

The No Child Left Behind Act has benefited from the relentless focus on the impending war with Iraq. Alarming provisions in the measure are just beginning to surface:

- All public high schools are now required to provide military recruiters with contact information for all students. A spokesman for the Department of Education says the requirement "help[s] recruiters share information for potential military opportunities for young Americans."
- The Boy Scouts of America organization is guaranteed access to public school facilities despite discriminatory practices against gay men;
- Public school students have the opportunity to transfer to better performing schools, if their current school has failed them academically. There are no arrangements for student transportation to the new school, or how students left behind at failing schools will be educated.

Does The American Consumer Sponsor Terrorism?

Recent TV ads have tried to link recreational drug use and driving SUVs to international terrorism. The ads produced by the Partnership for a Drug Free America imply that American drug users directly finance terrorism and the murder of law enforcement officials and judges in other countries when they buy drugs. The Detroit Project, sponsor of the SUV ads, counters that fuel for gas-guzzling SUVs is purchased from countries whose governments support terrorists financially or allow them to operate within their territory.

The commercials are problematic and maybe inaccurate, but they bring up an interesting

point. Do we support terrorism by the way we spend our money? If so, how? One way terrorism festers is through repressive, non-democratic governments. In the last 50 years, through covert operations of the CIA, foreign policy, and private investment, our tax dollars have been used to overthrow or suppress democratically elected governments in the following countries: Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Iran, and Iraq.

CALIFORNIA

Stay Tuned

California's economy is still one of the largest on the planet, but we are not immune from financial peril. The State budget crisis we are experiencing today is only the beginning of a financial nightmare that will haunt us for years to come. In fiscal year 2001-2002 the Golden State had an awe-inspiring surplus of \$4.6 billion and now we face a debilitating deficit hovering in the \$35 billion range. The Energy Crisis of 2000-2001 has yet to be resolved and California may owe millions to the same companies that brought us rolling blackouts.

As the State limps forward to cut \$20 billion from the budget, how will we maintain the quality of life for this and the next generation of Californians?

ALAMEDA COUNTY

Go To The Source

Alameda County like the rest of California and the nation is in a dire financial situation. In this economic climate, it will be an ongoing challenge to find the financial resources necessary to fulfill the County's mandate. This dismal financial reality also presents the people of Alameda County with unique opportunities.

At the federal, state, and local level, the same people will be hardest hit in these tenuous economic times: Children, the elderly, and the poor. It is time for government and the community at large to think creatively, work collaboratively, and learn from the mistakes and successes made by others. There are three things we can all do right now to make change in our local communities:

1. Volunteer with an organization that provides services to the most vulnerable people in our community (children, the elderly, the homeless);
2. Start or join a community garden project. Community gardening is an effective way to lower food costs and grow pesticide free fruits and vegetables. Gardening is also a hands-on method for enhancing reading, writing, and math skills for children;
3. Learn more about the way government works. When citizens are informed and become involved in community and neighborhood issues, they are better able to participate in the democratic process. The integrity of our society is maintained by a well-informed and empowered citizenry.

COMMUNITY CORNER

In each edition of the District 5 News we highlight Alameda County based organizations.

Mandela Farmers' Market. On Saturday, April 5, farm fresh produce comes to West Oakland. At the corner of 5th Street and Mandela, across the street from the West Oakland BART station, area residents will be able to purchase fruits and vegetables grown by local farmers. Sponsored by Oakland Butterfly and Urban Gardens (OBUGS), Mo Better Foods, the People's Grocery, and City Slicker Farm, the Mandela Farmers Market will bring high quality food to West Oakland every week. The market will be open from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. For more information, please call Dana at 510-465-4660.

Public Authority for In-Home Supportive Services. In-Home Supportive Services provides Medi-Cal eligible people with disabilities, the blind, and elderly with home care workers so they can remain safely in their own homes. The Public Authority for In-Home Supportive Services was created by a vanguard of the disability rights movement to advocate for those who use IHSS services. The Public Authority also maintains a registry of home care workers and has an advisory board of 11 people, 6 of which use IHSS services. For more information about the Public Authority, please click on the link, <http://www.ac-pa4ihss.org>

The next edition of District 5 News is coming in April. We appreciate your [feedback](#).

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