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# SPECIAL DISTRICTS

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A Publication of the California Special Districts Association



*Celebrating 50 years of service.*



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Corporate Banking  
Relationship Manager  
(916) 724-1214  
VanessaRyan@UmpquaBank.com


## **Trevor Mael**

Corporate Banking  
Relationship Manager  
(916) 774-3921  
TrevorMael@UmpquaBank.com

## **Dean Stephens**

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

March 26, 2019

**SDRMA Spring Education Day - Sacramento**

April 7-10, 2019

**Special District Leadership Academy - San Diego\***

May 21-22, 2019

**Special Districts Legislative Days - Sacramento**

June 23-25, 2019

**General Manager Leadership Summit - Newport Beach**

July 7-10, 2019

**Special District Leadership Academy - Napa\***

September 25-28, 2019

**CSDA Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase - Anaheim**

November 12-14, 2019

**Board Secretary / Clerk Conference - Monterey**

*\*Two Tracks: First-time and returning attendees*



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For editorial inquiries, contact Vanessa Gonzales, Communications Specialist at 877.924.2732 or vanessag@csda.net.

For advertising inquiries, contact CSDA at 877.924.2732 or advertising@csda.net.



**Neil McCormick**  
CSDA Chief Executive Officer

## Celebrating CSDA's 50th Anniversary!

This year marks a significant milestone for CSDA...50 years of service to special districts. Kicking off the year with this in mind provides a great opportunity to reflect on the significant work that has been done and imagine the opportunities

that lie ahead. You will see highlights celebrating CSDA's history and progress throughout this year in publications, on the website, and at our various events!

As we begin to celebrate CSDA 50th Anniversary, we have been looking back through old documents that have provided some great insight into the progress that districts have made throughout the years and the role CSDA has played in helping to support that progress.

CSDA was created in 1969 as a completely volunteer-run association with just a few individuals from districts who had a drive and vision to



have special districts be better represented, understood, and respected as core service providers throughout California. Fast forward through contracted management and service providers who helped CSDA make significant progress toward its mission, CSDA has now grown to a fully staffed, professional organization that is over 1,200 members strong.

One thing is clear from the beginning, CSDA was formed to serve as the voice and resource for all special districts in California and those

*continued on page 6*

## CSDA Board and Staff

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JOEL BAUER, SDA, PRESIDENT, *West Side Cemetery District*  
JEFFREY HODGE, SDA, VICE PRESIDENT, *Santa Ynez Community Services District*  
ELAINE MAGNER, SECRETARY, *Pleasant Valley Recreation & Park District*  
RYAN CLAUSNITZER, SDA, TREASURER, *Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District*  
GREG ORSINI, PAST PRESIDENT, *McKinleyville Community Services District*

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VINCENT FERRANTE, *Moss Landing Harbor District*  
PETER KAMPA, SDA, *Saddle Creek Community Services District*  
JO MACKENZIE, *Vista Irrigation District*  
NOELLE MATTOCK, *El Dorado Hills Community Services District*  
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FRED RYNESS, *Burney Water District*  
ARLENE SCHAFFER, *Costa Mesa Sanitary District*

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## 2019 Professional Development Catalog

Be sure to check your mailbox for the 2019 Professional Development Catalog. In it, you'll find information on all of the workshops, webinars, on-demand webinars, and conferences currently offered by CSDA. You can also view all professional development opportunities on the CSDA website under "Learn." Highlights for 2019 include:

- "Board Member Best Practices" Workshop in each of CSDA's 6 Networks
- "Essential Communications for Every Special District" in each of CSDA's 6 Networks
- New workshops include:
  - CEQA 101 and 201
  - Prevailing Wage Basics and Beyond
  - Online Compliance and Transparency Made Simple
  - Personalized Professional Media Training
- New webinars include:
  - Election Law Compliance: The Rising Tide of CVRA Claims
  - Achieving Transparency Isn't as Hard as It Seems
  - Fiscal Year End Planning
  - Performance Management: A Change Agent
  - Drilling Deep to Develop Groundwater Sustainability

## \$60,000 in Scholarship Funds Available for 2019

Need help paying for CSDA workshops, webinars, conferences or even a district website? The Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF) is committed to helping special districts obtain current and relevant continuing education and increasing transparency among California's special districts. To that end, SDLF is offering \$60,000 in scholarship funds for special districts, directors/trustees, and special district staff for 2019. Visit [SDLF.org](http://SDLF.org) for details and to download an application.

### CEO'S MESSAGE CONT.

core principles hold true through today.

In fact, you can see it carry-through in the vision and mission statements that the CSDA Board of Directors updated just a few years ago:

#### VISION STATEMENT

CSDA is the essential statewide network of all special districts.

#### MISSION STATEMENT

CSDA is the voice for all special districts, providing members with the resources necessary to best serve their communities.

Clearly, the cornerstone of the significant progress that has been made throughout the years is the hard work of dedicated individuals from districts (board members and staff) that have volunteered and invested their time and expertise into making CSDA what it is today.

We are grateful for the support of these volunteers and our members as they truly are CSDA.

This year, the CSDA Board of Directors will be meeting in June to update our 3-Year Strategic & Staffing Plan and we want to hear from members on what you would like to see happen in CSDA's future... maybe even the next 50 years!

A member survey will be going out in April, so please take a few minutes to let us know how best we can serve you!

▪ GET MORE VALUE FROM YOUR AUDIT ▪

“

How do our practices compare with other districts?

”

We'll show you what other districts do right. What to avoid. And what it takes to be among the best.

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## District NetWorks. What Network is Your District In?

The heart of District NetWorks consists of district leaders – like you – inspiring and catalyzing action and collaboration in their own communities. District NetWorks help special districts connect and take action on any issues that concern your district, locally or statewide.

The 18-member board consists of three directors from six networks in California.

### NORTHERN NETWORK

- Ralph Emerson**, Garberville Sanitary District
- Greg Orsini**, McKinleyville Community Services District
- Fred Ryness**, Burney Water District

### SIERRA NETWORK

- Pete Kampa, SDA**, Saddle Creek Community Services District
- Noelle Mattock**, El Dorado Hills Community Services District
- Ginger Root**, Country Club Sanitary District

### BAY AREA NETWORK

- Stanley Caldwell**, Mt. View Sanitary District
- Ryan Clausnitzer, SDA**, Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District
- Chad Davisson, SDA**, Ironhouse Sanitary District

### CENTRAL NETWORK

- Joel Bauer, SDA**, West Side Cemetery District
- Sandi Miller, SDA**, Selma Cemetery District
- Tim Ruiz**, East Niles Community Services District

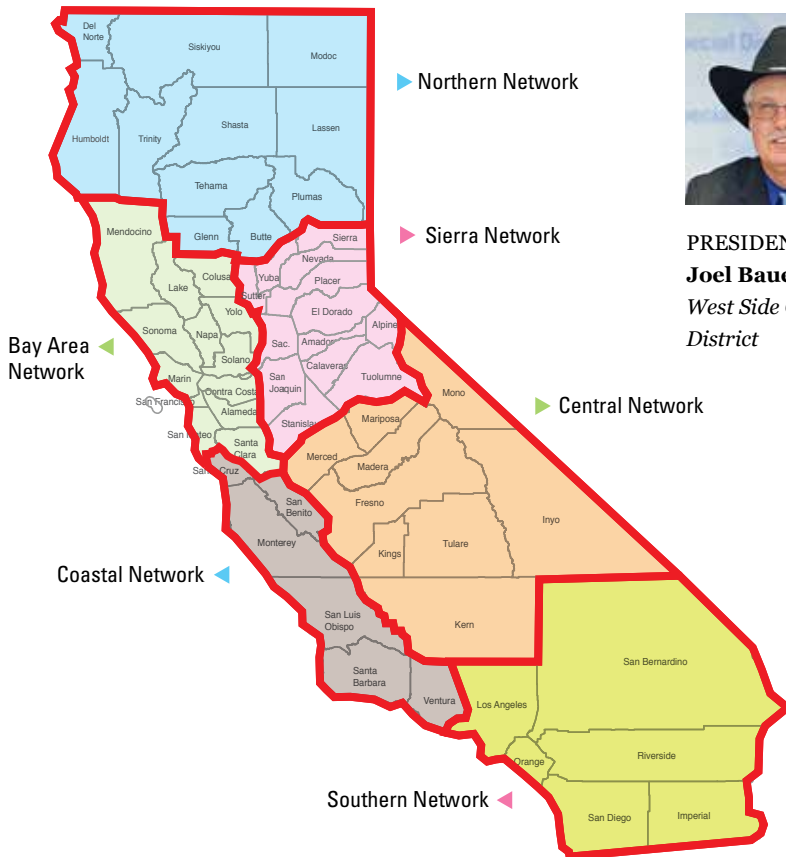
### COASTAL NETWORK

- Vincent Ferrante**, Moss Landing Harbor District
- Elaine Magner**, Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District
- Jeff Hodge, SDA**, Santa Ynez Community Services District

### SOUTHERN NETWORK

- Jo MacKenzie**, Vista Irrigation District
- Bill Nelson**, Orange County Cemetery District
- Arlene Schafer**, Costa Mesa Sanitary District

## Executive Committee



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**Joel Bauer, SDA**,  
*West Side Cemetery District*



**VICE PRESIDENT**  
**Jeff Hodge, SDA**,  
*Santa Ynez Community Services District*



**SECRETARY**  
**Elaine Magner**,  
*Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District*



**TREASURER**  
**Ryan Clausnitzer, SDA**,  
*Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District*

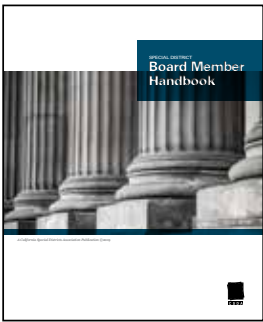


**PAST PRESIDENT**  
**Greg Orsini**,  
*McKinleyville Community Services District*



## A Simplified, Cost-Effective Way to Meet GASB Reporting Requirements

In coordination with CSDA, the California School Boards Association (CSBA) offers Governmental Accounting Standards Boards Statement (GASB) Alternative Measurement Method (AMM) to assist members in complying with GASB 74 & 75. Special districts with less than 100 plan members may be eligible to use this approved, cost-effective, and simplified method for calculating costs and obligations related to post-employment benefits. CSBA's GASB Reports AMM allows smaller special districts to be compliant for a fraction of the cost of a full valuation. For information on this alternative method, visit [www.gasb45amm.com](http://www.gasb45amm.com) or contact Andrew Exner at 707.210.4560 or [aexner@csba.org](mailto:aexner@csba.org).



### Updated Board Member Handbook and CPRA Manual Now Available

Hot off the press!  
Two of CSDA's most popular publications

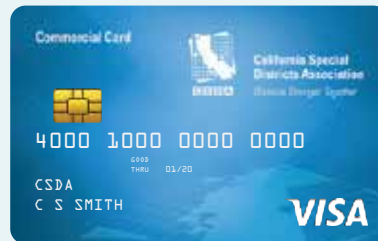
have been recently updated and are now available in our Bookstore. The Special District Board Member Handbook is perfect for introducing newly elected officials to the world of special districts or for keeping seasoned board members current on their roles and responsibilities. Topics include roles and responsibilities, accountability, ethics laws, the Brown Act, and more.

The California Public Records Act Compliance Manual provides a summary of the California Public Records Act and guidelines to fulfilling CPRA requests, including compliance tips for easy reference and a special section on disclosure of electronic records.

These publications and many others are available in hard copy or electronic download. Visit CSDA's online Bookstore for details.

## CSDA Affiliated Chapters

- Alameda County Special Districts Association
- Butte County Special Districts Association
- Association of San Bernardino County Special Districts
- Central Valley Local Chapter of CSDA
- Contra Costa Special Districts Association
- Gold Country Regional Chapter
- Humboldt Area Chapter
- Independent Special Districts of Orange County (ISDOC)
- Kern County Special Districts Association
- Plumas County Special Districts Association
- San Diego Chapter of the CSDA
- San Luis Obispo County Chapter of the CSDA
- San Mateo Chapter of the California Special Districts Association
- Santa Barbara County Chapter of the CSDA
- Santa Clara County Special Districts Association
- Special Districts Association of Monterey County
- Special Districts Association of Riverside County Chapter
- Ventura County Special Districts Association



### Over \$29 Thousand in Cash Back to Members

Participants of CSDA's Commercial Card program received rebates totaling over \$29,000, with some

agencies receiving more than \$2,000 cash back.

Especially designed for CSDA members and administered by Umpqua Bank, the CSDA Commercial Card program provides online reporting tools, greater security over employee spending, and enhanced rebate opportunities.

Fleet program benefits are also available. Not yet a program participant? Contact member services for more information.



# Goleta Sanitary District Brings Dinosaurs to Life with Jurassic Plant Tour

The Goleta Sanitary District (GSD) held its Jurassic Plant Tour Open House on September 23, 2017 to the delight of 1100+ visitors. Guests arrived through a gate built in front of the District’s regular entrance designed to look like the ominous gates welcoming visitors to Jurassic Park from the film of 25 years ago.

The Goleta Sanitary District is not known for dinosaurs of course, but for its collection and treatment of wastewater. In fact, most people do not think about what happens once they flush water away from their home. But the story of water on Earth is as fascinating as the story of the dinosaurs. The Jurassic Plant Tour Open House was an attempt to engage and entertain visitors about that water—the same water that’s been on Earth since the before the time of the dinosaurs.

The biennial Open House event has taken place at the District since 1951, but last year was the first time that it featured the dinosaur theme. General Manager Steve Wagner explained, “We were brainstorming ideas for the theme and someone thought of dinosaurs. We knew we had a hit on our hands as children and adults alike have been mesmerized by the story of dinosaurs and by the Jurassic Park film series.” He went on to elaborate, “connecting the concept of dinosaurs and One Water was our goal: encouraging guests to see how the District treats wastewater replicating natural processes, and how the water cycle recycles all of the water on Earth over and over again to give them a better understanding of the impact they make, and how they can help protect the environment for the ancestors of the dinosaurs and all creatures.” According to Washington State University’s science education project Ask Dr. Universe, “The water in your glass may be the same water dinosaurs drank, but it’s also the same water that’s going to keep life on our planet in the years to come.” ([www.askdruniverse.wsu.edu/2016/04/10/drink-water-dinosaur-days/](http://www.askdruniverse.wsu.edu/2016/04/10/drink-water-dinosaur-days/))

In addition to learning about the water cycle, visitors enjoyed free lunch, themed to match the event, either Dino Dogs or Paleo Pizza, visited educational stations, made water cycle bracelets, took a walking tour of the plant, played



in the dinosaur-themed bounce houses, or took the Adventure Tour, featuring an escaped T-Rex. At the education stations participants collected stamps, which when completed entitled them to be entered in a prize drawing. This incentivized the learning and made it more fun. The theme took shape through various vignettes constructed to immerse visitors in the water resource recovery facility overrun by dinosaurs and an escaped T-Rex. On the Adventure Tour visitors passed swimming brachiosaurs (in settling basins), a triceratops munching on some grass, a nest of dinosaur eggs, a breached containment area, an overturned jeep, large piles of Dino Doo, created from biosolids, (available free of charge to guests), an aviary (chemical storage facility) filled with pteranodons, and more. The project required all staff members to participate and encouraged all departments to decorate their information stations with themed décor. The artistic talents of many of the staff were impressive! The event appealed to all ages and was focused on whole-household participation.

The District partnered with the local Audubon Society to help tie the dinosaur

theme to modern day birds of prey, and to demonstrate the variety and richness of birds found on the water resource recovery facility grounds. The Audubon Society held a photo contest, displayed pictures of the winning entrants at their booth, and had demonstrations with live birds of prey, the modern day ancestors of dinosaurs.

The District was able to offset expenses for the event by reaching out to vendors to sponsor items including the lunch for visitors, the attractions including the bounce houses, and the educational souvenir goodie bags handed out to all parties. The budget was set at \$27,500, the District raised over \$10,000 and spent just under the budget, with a net cost of \$17,300.

The Goleta Sanitary District also captured important information from its visitors, collecting data at a check-in station and conducting surveys at the end of their visits. The results indicated that about 75% of the visitors were first-timers. The District was also able to establish that survey respondents learned quite a bit about the activities of the District too: most doubled their

*continued on page 12*

knowledge between the time they entered the facility and the time they took the survey. Guests also remarked that they enjoyed interacting with staff and learning directly from them. All members of the Goleta Sanitary District’s 35 staff and five Board members, as well as 15 community volunteers were involved in the event, which included the planning, design, booth staffing, and parking.

Goleta Sanitary District will repeat the Jurassic Plant Tour theme next year and is looking forward to welcoming even more visitors. The date will likely be in September or October 2019. “The challenge for next year,” says General Manager Wagner “is to make it even better than last year. We hope to add some new scenes in the Adventure Tour, and who knows, they may have perfected cloning by then and we’ll have some live dinosaurs at the event!”

The District believes event like the Jurassic Plant Tour Open House are wonderful opportunities to meet the citizens they serve and to transform them into advocates for the work they do. As recently as last month, staff reported that local residents visiting the GSD booth at the Goleta Lemon Festival shared their experience at the Open House and asked when the next one will take place. Management Analyst and Open



House Event Coordinator Laura Romano said, “We think next year will have even larger attendance than 2017. Now we just need to figure out where to park them all!”

For more information about the Jurassic Plant Tour event contact Laura Romano, Management Analyst at [lromano@goletasanitary.org](mailto:lromano@goletasanitary.org) or call 805-967-4519.

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## ***“because I said I would”***

*By Alex Sheen, Founder of because I said I would, SDRMA Spring Education Day keynote speaker*

California Special Districts introduces 2019 SDRMA Spring Education Day Keynote Speaker Alex Sheen presenting “because I said I would” on March 26, 2019 in Sacramento. Alex believes that every individual has the strength to become a person of their word. In this session, Alex shares his insights and actionable ways to become better at fulfilling commitments. He inspires others to become more accountable to their promises through compelling and real-life examples from the *because I said I would* movement.

I’ve been asked a lot about the best way to keep promises. In fact, someone recently called me a thought leader or expert on the subject. While my (recent) life’s work has entailed developing best practices for keeping one’s word, the basis for how one does this was better exemplified by my father...

My father was an average man. He was no war hero. He never wrote a book. He never ran marathons. He was a pharmacist. No recognition. No fame. But for everything that made my father “average” and “every day,” there was one thing he did exceptionally well. He kept his promises. My father was a man of his word. On the morning of September 4th, 2012, my father died of small cell lung cancer. I was asked by my family to give my father’s eulogy. In those final resting words, I chose to speak about my father and how he treated his promises. Too often we say things like “I’ll get to it” and “tomorrow.” One day there is no tomorrow. The promises we make and keep

and those we choose to dishonor define us and this world. I would title this speech *because I said I would*.

On that day, I handed out for the first time what I would call “Promise Cards” to help remind people of the importance of our commitments. All you do is simply write a promise on the card and use it as a symbol of your honor. At the time, I offered to send 10 promise cards to anyone anywhere in the world at no cost to them. As of January 2019, *because I said I would*, the non-profit organization, has distributed 10.3 million Promise Cards around the world.

**I look forward to sharing this message and the power of a promise with you on March 26, 2019!**

*-Alex Sheen  
Founder of because I said I would*

## SDRMA Spring Education Day – March 26, 2019

SDRMA hosts Spring Education Day to provide free training and information relating to Employment Practices, Contracting for Indemnification, Catastrophic Loss, Workers’ Compensation, and many valuable MemberPlus Services™. SDRMA members who attend the Education Day are eligible to earn credit incentive points (CIPs) to reduce their annual contribution for both Property/Liability and Workers’ Compensation Programs. To register for the 2019 SDRMA Spring Education Day, visit [www.cstda.net](http://www.cstda.net).



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## Employee Housing

### **Marcus Coronel, Board Member**

*Coachella Valley Cemetery District*

Does anyone provide district-funded employee housing on site? In our cemetery district we own three houses that are occupied by three of our six full-time, permanent employees. The employees do not pay anything to live onsite nor is their compensation adjusted for the benefit. I would really like to get insight into other special districts' practices on the issue.

### **Colleen Trask, Finance Director**

*McKinleyville Community Services District*

We have a house on one of our properties. One of our employees lives there. Under contract, he provides security and inspection services in exchange for reduced rent. He writes us a monthly report on the property's condition. We deduct his rent from his payroll. Every so often, we re-evaluate the fair market value of both rental and security services. So far, they have remained on par. Otherwise, I believe we would have to add the value of the rent reduction to his taxable compensation.

### **Erik Christeson, General Manager**

*Kirkwood Meadows Public Utility District*

Our district provides housing, but charges employees rent. Since we are a remote district with limited housing (8 units), we provide a housing credit to any employees that live in Kirkwood, regardless of whether they live in district or non-district housing. We are in the process of reviewing our rental rates and you can see the various analyses in our recent the Board and Finance Committee packets at [kmpud.com](http://kmpud.com).

### **Jeff Beatty, Finance Manager**

*Mammoth Community Water District*

Unless on-premise housing meets a district operational need, you probably need to regard the value of the housing provided to your employees as a taxable fringe benefit. IRS Publication 15-B will provide guidance. MCWD has a unique housing environment: most housing units are second homes and frequently rented on a short-term basis. Consequently, the availability of appropriate housing is a significant hurdle for attracting and retaining employees. The district owns four condominium units that are available to meet the housing needs of new and existing employees, and we charge rent which approximates the market rate for Mono County.



Haven't visited CSDA Communities yet and want to learn more from member discussions? Visit CSDA Communities home page at [communities.csda.net](http://communities.csda.net) for more information!



*CSDA Disclaimer: This section is not intended to be legal advice. Members should always seek legal counsel. The information contained here is for general reference purposes only.*





*From left to right: Director Sheldon Hough, General Manager Ed Muzik, Director Sarann Graham, Vice-President Roger Mayes, President Dan Munsey, and Director Bob Stadum.*

## Hi-Desert Water District 2019 Elected Officers Make Donation to Local Boys and Girls Club

The December 12th Board meeting marked the first meeting held by Hi-Desert Water District’s Board of Directors with newly elected officers President Dan Munsey and Vice-President Roger Mayes. At the meeting, Director Sarann Graham, was honored with a donation to the Boys & Girls Club of the Hi-Desert for her service as the 2018 Board President. Each year, members of the board nominate and elect a president and vice-president. Traditionally, the outgoing president receives a plaque to honor his or her service during the year. This year in lieu of a plaque for outgoing President Sarann Graham, a donation of \$50.00 was made to the local Boys &

Girls Club. “It’s been an honor serving as your water district president,” said Hi-Desert Water District Director Sarann Graham. “I’ve served as president in the past, but this year was truly a memorable term. We’ve received such an overwhelming response of support from our community during this past year, which has made serving as your president truly a pleasure.” At a previous meeting, three of Hi-Desert Water District’s (HDWD) incumbent Directors were sworn into office to serve another four-year term. This year marked the second consecutive election that was held by the District’s Board of Directors with no opposition.



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*CSDA Member*



1977 Conference Committee.



1970s

# Pieces OF THE Past



1976



CSDA Legal Council Jim Krieger.

2019 marks California Special Districts Association's 50th Anniversary! Throughout the year, CSDA is celebrating our history, our members and service. In this exclusive 2019 anniversary section of the *California Special Districts* magazine, we will be featuring interviews with past presidents, long-time members and friends of CSDA along with other "Pieces of the Past."

Kicking off this first issue of our golden anniversary year, *California Special Districts* magazine interviewed CSDA Past President Harry Ehrlich, SDA, and long-time member and past CSDA Board Member Jack Curtis. Harry Ehrlich, SDA served as president of the California Special Districts Association for two terms in 1997 and 1998 and served on the CSDA board from 1994 to 2003. He was honored to be a recipient of the prestigious William Hollingsworth award. Our other interviewee, Jack Curtis, served on the CSDA board from 2003 to 2013. He notably attended the first CSDA Annual Conference 50 years ago!

## Past President Highlight

### Harry Ehrlich, SDA

BOARD PRESIDENT 1997-1998

#### Tell us about your district and your experience with CSDA?

I have been an active member of CSDA for over 25 years. I started following CSDA as a staff member for Olivenhain Water District in San Diego County, then got involved at the chapter level in 1993. The next year I was elected to the board for CSDA. Over those years, I interacted with elected officials and staff of special districts over San Diego County and all over the State. Some of the most worthwhile and positive interactions were with our CSDA members – learning from them and sharing their situations, their successes and some of the problems. That is one of the major benefits of CSDA that has affected me over the 25 years. I grew a lot in experience, learned a lot, and was able to contribute what I could and grow along with CSDA and our member agencies, consultants and associate members.

I served on the CSDA Legislative Committee for 15 years, was representative to the Commission on Local Governance that was set up by the Legislator in 1999. In 2000, I testified for CSDA on the role and importance of special districts; about two years later, I testified to the Little Hoover Commission. They were looking at specific issues on reserves; I testified on behalf of CSDA. I also worked on a committee on Prop 1A regarding the reallocation of property tax funds. This was a reaction to having legislation that took away and reallocated property taxes, instead of recognizing the important role of local control.

During my time as CSDA president (1997-1998), I was the Deputy General Manager of Olivenhain Water District. I started there in 1992 and retired in 2006. Our district was very involved with CSDA on the chapter level and as a member of SDRMA for insurance



Harry Ehrlich (left) with David Aranda.

at the time. Since retiring, I became a consultant and have been an associate member of CSDA for the past ten plus years. Being involved with the Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF) as a presenter, earning my Special District Administrator (SDA) certification and providing input to different districts through the State has been a great experience. The last two years I have been an elected board member on the Borrego Water District Board in San Diego County.

#### What does CSDA mean to you and your district?

The primary benefits that CSDA has brought to me and my district are resources, advocacy and learning. CSDA has been an invaluable resource for resolving issues and consulting with districts. CSDA has been the advocate in Sacramento on issues of statewide significance to special districts. Through CSDA, I have learned from our members and representatives throughout the State from their experiences and how to deal with different issues and governance. CSDA has provided a variety of knowledge about different kinds of services for board members and staff.

#### Is there a special story or memory with CSDA that stands out to you?

There have been so many memorable moments and experiences with CSDA, as a member, chapter member and board member. My wife

has always been very supportive and an important part of me being a government official and an effective public servant. My most memorable moment was being awarded, to my surprise, the William Hollingsworth Award at the CSDA Annual Conference. That is the highest award that a special district board member and staff member could receive for excellence in governance. The Board of Directors of my district were there; my wife was there. It was very humbling and very emotional for me because it wasn't just about me. It was for all the staff members and board members I have worked with over the years. Anything I achieved was just a measure of each excellent team member that made the successes of our organization.

#### As an active member and past president of CSDA, is there any wisdom or advice you would give to CSDA members?

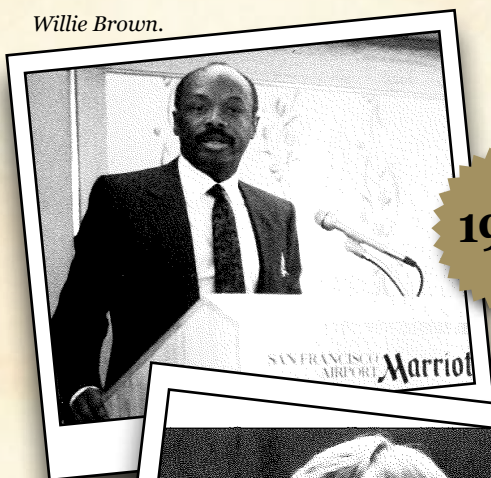
I am humbled and proud to be part of CSDA for over 25 years and counting! CSDA members are in good hands with good leadership. CSDA brings forth a wealth of knowledge and experience you can learn from. There is a great need for development of the people that will take over the reins. Utilize CSDA resources and encourage new members to take advantage of them. There are numerous, invaluable resources on the CSDA website and from the interactions with the CSDA field coordinators who travel to the districts throughout the State. At the State, chapter and local level, there is vast knowledge to learn from those who have gone ahead of us. Champion new ideas for greater effectiveness for our customers and our constituents.

I have watched the membership increase from about 400 members to now over 1,200 members of a

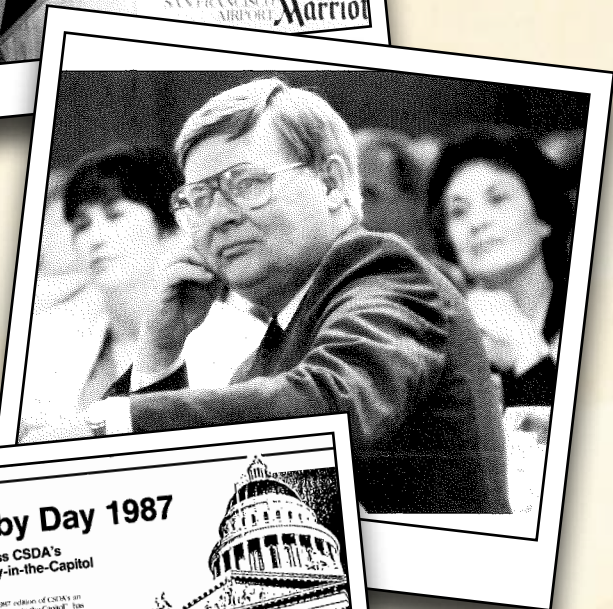
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**Member Highlight**

Willie Brown.



**1980s**



**Lobby Day 1987**

**Don't miss CSDA's 1987 Day-in-the-Capitol**

The next edition of CSDA's annual "Day in the Capitol" has been scheduled for Monday, June 10, on the state's Capitol. A session on budgeting techniques and strategies will kick off the event with the industry of the day as the speaker by special district representatives in the Capitol hall in personal meetings with many of the state's top district officials. At the conclusion of the legislative message there will be a keynote session on streamlining the state and the district's revenue.

While CSDA's legislative Advocacy Right Here represents CSDA's concerns before the Legislature on a daily basis, CSDA's Day in the Capitol is certainly the most important opportunity for special districts to personally make their presence felt in Sacramento. The Senate and Assembly members will identify our most visible members with whom our representatives will be sharing the legislative message that will be coming to the voters most vital to the success of independent special districts in California.



**1987**



great variety. The strength of CSDA is its diversity of special districts from all over the State. As special districts, we strive to be as excellent as we can be. There is no perfection in organizational theory. Do the best you can do every day. Represent your customers and hopefully make their lives just a little bit better by your service.

**Jack Curtis**

Jack Curtis is a resident of Ojai, California, and currently serves on two boards. This will be his 40th year as a Director on the Ventura River Water District (VRCWD) board and his 18th year as Director on the Ojai Valley Sanitary District board. Jack has been active in the Ojai Valley community for many years; he has served on numerous local boards and organizations. He is one of the founding Directors of the Ventura County Special Districts' Association (VCSDA) and the Association of Water Agencies (AWA) representing County Water Districts and is a past member of the Ventura County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Jack served as a Director on the California Special Districts Association from 2003-2013.

**How did you originally get into special districts?**

In 1962, I moved my family down to Ventura County because the dryer climate was better for my daughter's health with her bad case of allergies. That winter, a friend of mine who knew my background in construction, showed me the septic tanks in the area and the sewage that was running into the street. We knew something had to be done. Two of my friends and I spoke with the board of directors of the Meiners Oaks Sanitary District. This was a brand-new district that didn't have their system yet; they were going to put sewers in but were still working on getting their bonds. When they put their boundaries in for the bonds, the area where I lived was an open ground that housed 385 homes. It couldn't be changed so it was left out. We needed to figure out a way to get it in. The District's board of directors said that if we could get petitions and get the majority of people to sign them, they would sponsor an election to annex that area to the district. So, the three of us went out on the weekends and spoke with the residents until we finally got enough petitions. We had an election and won the election by 13 votes, so we got included in!

There was a gentleman in our area on the Meiners Oaks Sanitary District board who got elected to be the treasurer tax collector for the County of Ventura. He couldn't serve on both boards, so they asked me to take his place on the District board at the end of 1968. Shortly after this time, CSDA held its first conference. As a new board member, our board sent me to this conference to learn how to be a special district board member, so I went and got my first indoctrination into special districts. I was very interested in it, and really liked it.

In 1975, I went to work for the Meiners Oaks Sanitary District where I was previously a director for 6 years; I advanced and ended up as the general manager. In 1985, we consolidated to the Ojai Valley Sanitary District. There were four separate small agencies in the valley there: the Ventura Avenue Sanitary District, the Oak View Sanitary District, the Meiners Oaks Sanitary District and the City of Ojai. We had one treatment plant. The Oak View Sanitary District built the plant and others bought capacity into it. It was a continual hassle working with them. Back in those days, when districts were being formed and brand new there was a lot of animosity between districts – many were trying to grab areas from the other districts or agency.

1978, I was appointed to fill a vacancy at the Ventura River Water District board and have been on that board for 40 years. I retired in 1996 and have been on LAFCO, the Ventura Regional Sanitation District, a past Director of the California Special District Association, and the California Association of Sanitary Districts, as well as a past president and director of the Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County.

### **You attended the first CSDA conference. What was that like?**

It was nothing like what we have now. I'd say there was no more than 100 people, if that. There was no keynote speaker, awards, or exhibit hall. It was primarily a breakout session structure, a total business meeting going class to class. We could go into a room and there would be at most ten people there. The beauty, especially for the newer people like me, was that it was more intimate where you could talk with each other and hear them. You were hearing from all these other people with the same issues. At that time, many of these special districts were being formed. It was a movement within the State; as more housing was being built, the requirements for water, sewer and gas were expanding. 1969 was a year of flooding in California. Traveling to the conference was an adventure as there were many road closures due to the flooding. It rained the entire time during the CSDA conference!

### **What was so special about your district and how it served constituents?**

I am very proud of my district's accomplishments in the area. We provided sewer and water ongoing and gave people the best bang for their buck. Special districts do just that; they work on a lower budget and provide a specialized service. City councils are involved with every facet of the operation of the city like the library, the recreation, etc. Most people sitting on those boards have only a certain knowledge of how things happen; many don't understand what it takes to run something. A special district typically provides one service, so they concentrate on that and can do a much better job. I'm a special district person. I believe in special districts.

### **What does CSDA mean to you and your district?**

CSDA has provided the information that a small district especially needs. It is a resource for small districts to get questions answered for what they must do. There are many small agencies like cemetery and fire districts that don't have the wherewithal to meet all of the demands. With all the new regulations, the process of doing business has gotten so technical and expensive they can't keep up. The work that CSDA does for its members by informing them of the laws being passed in Sacramento and what we must fight for or support is crucial. Through the Special Districts Legislative Days, we got to go up to the Capitol to speak face to face with our legislators. Through CSDA, special districts have a voice that is stronger together. As a member, committee member and particularly at the board of directors' level, I really enjoyed working with the people at CSDA. Happy 50th Anniversary, CSDA!



1995



*Celia Ruiz  
and Sherry  
Sterrett.*

1990s

*Belinda Bunac, Kit Carter, & Catherine Smith.*

Ralph Heim.

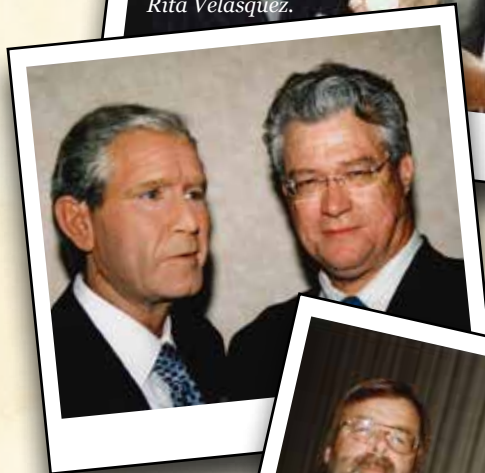


2000s



Rita Velasquez.

Harry Eurlich



2010s



Bill Miller.

2001



### CSDA Anniversary: Celebrating 50 Years of Service Throughout 2019!

We will be celebrating CSDA's history, accomplishments, and members through 2019. We thank you for allowing us to serve you for these 50 years and look forward to continuing our efforts into the future. If you have CSDA stories, photos, or historical documents, please send to Communications Specialist Vanessa Gonzales at [vanessag@csda.net](mailto:vanessag@csda.net).



# SHOW YOUR DISTRICT'S COMMITMENT TO BEING OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE.

SDLF



**SPECIAL DISTRICT  
LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION**

The **District Transparency Certificate of Excellence** was created to promote transparency in the operations and governance of special districts. There are no fees for this certificate and districts will be recognized for two full years.

Earning the certificate is a tangible acknowledgement of transparency efforts. Demonstrate to your constituents and other stakeholders your district's commitment to being open and accessible to them.

# MOVERS & SHAKERS

**Ronald Sullivan**, who represents the Perris and Menifee area, was selected as the new President of Eastern Municipal Water District's (EMWD) Board of Directors on Wednesday, January 16, 2019. Sullivan has served on EMWD's Board of Directors since January 2003 and most recently served a two-year term as Vice President.

**Stephen J. Corona**, a local farmer and business owner, was sworn in as Eastern Municipal Water District's newest board member. Corona was elected in November by the residents of Division 2 – the Temecula and Murrieta areas – to a four-year term that will run through 2022.



Vincent Dino

Palmdale Water District (PWD) Board Director **Vincent Dino** won re-election in Division 5 for his four-year term that will end in 2020. Director Dino, who is the current Board president, is a retired Journeyman Electrician who has lived

in Palmdale since 1993. He served on the Palmdale Planning Commission for eight years, including two terms as chairman. "I am very honored and humbled to once again have the opportunity to represent my division," Director Dino said.



Don Wilson

Palmdale Water District (PWD) Board of Directors elected **Don Wilson** to represent Division 2 for the four-year term that will end in 2020. Director Wilson, who grew up in Simi Valley and has lived in Palmdale since 1987, is new to

politics. He is a retired Foster Farms retail sales rep, who also has experience in restaurant and hotel management. In November 2017, he was appointed to the Palmdale School District Personnel Committee Board. "I've always been interested in politics," Director Wilson said. "I believe this is a wonderful way to be involved in my community. I am excited to be a part of the PWD Board."



Jose Vergara

The El Toro Water District (ETWD) Board selected Director **Jose Vergara** to serve as president of the Board. Jose Vergara has served on the board since 2012 and has over 40 years of professional experience.



Mark Monin

The El Toro Water District (ETWD) Board selected **Mark Monin** to serve as the vice president of the Board. Vice President Monin has served on the Board since 2015 and his expertise in fiscal responsibility spans over 36 years in the investment management industry.



Kathryn Freshley

Newly elected director **Kathryn Freshley** was sworn into office at the December 20, 2018 El Toro Water District (ETWD) Board meeting. Ms. Freshley has over 40 years of professional experience in executive management, engineering, business/strategic planning and financial control systems.



Mike Gaskins

Newly elected director **Mike Gaskins** was sworn into office at the December 20, 2018 El Toro Water District (ETWD) Board meeting. Mr. Gaskins is a Vietnam Veteran and has over 40 years of professional experience as a civil servant.



Karen Holman

Former Palo Alto Mayor **Karen Holman** was sworn-in as a new director on the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Board. She was also selected as board vice president for 2019.



Zoe Kersteen-Tucker

Moss Beach resident **Zoe Kersteen-Tucker** was appointed to fill an open board seat on the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's Board. Kersteen-Tucker, who was selected as board secretary, is serving the remaining two years of the term.





Pete Siemens



Yoriko Kishimoto

The incumbent directors were also sworn-in to the Midpeninsula Regional Open

Space District's Board for 2019, with Director **Pete Siemens** chosen as board president and Director **Yoriko Kishimoto** chosen as board treasurer.



Jo MacKenzie

The Vista Irrigation District (VID) board of directors elected **Jo MacKenzie** as its president for 2019 at its annual organizational meeting. MacKenzie has served on the board of directors since

December 1992. This will be the eighth time she has led the board since being elected. MacKenzie represents division 5, which includes northeast and southeast Vista, north Twin Oaks Valley and the Bennett area in the city of San Marcos.



Richard Vasquez

The Vista Irrigation District (VID) board of directors elected **Richard Vasquez** as its vice-president for 2019 at its annual organizational meeting. Vásquez, who has eighteen years of service on the VID board,

represents division 2 which encompasses the area north of West Vista Way and west of North Santa Fe Avenue in Vista.

MacKenzie and Vásquez are joined by directors **Marty Miller** (division 1), **Paul Dorey** (division 3) and **Patrick Sanchez** (division 4) to form the Vista Irrigation District (VID) board of directors.



Bert Mims

The Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District is pleased to announce the hiring of **Berta Mims** as Assistant General Manager-Administration. She will oversee Finance, Office Management,

Human Resources, Information Technology, and Environmental Resources, as well as communications, grants and legislative functions.



From left to right: Past President Division V Director Donald Dear; Secretary Division III Director Carol Kwan; President Division IV Director Scott Houston; Vice President Division III Director Gloria Gray; and Treasurer Division I Director Harold Williams.

At the January board meeting, the West Basin Municipal Water District board of directors elected **Scott Houston** to serve as its board president and **Gloria D. Gray** to serve as its board vice president for 2019. Directors **Harold Williams** and **Carol W. Kwan** were named board treasurer and board secretary; respectively Director **Donald L. Dear** was named immediate past president.

Also appointed during the January board meeting were West Basin Executive Manager of Finance **Margaret Moggia** as Deputy Treasurer and Administrative Services Manager and Executive Assistant to the General Manager **Julie Frazier-Mathews** as Deputy Secretary.



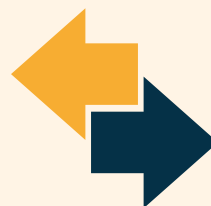
S. Lane Lewis

At the January 8, 2019 North Tahoe Public Utility District Board of Director's meeting, the Board recognized former Director **S. Lane Lewis** for twenty-nine (29) years of service to the North Tahoe Public Utility District and the North Tahoe community. S. Lane Lewis was elected to the North Tahoe Public Utility District Board of Directors in November 1989 and served for twenty-nine (29) years, making him the longest-tenured Director to date for the District since its incorporation in 1948. Mr. Lewis served sixteen (16) terms as President of the Board.



Adam Ly

Palmdale Water District (PWD) is pleased to announce the hiring of **Adam Ly** as its new Assistant General Manager. He has 22 years of experience in both the public and private sectors of Southern California's water industry. Most recently, Ly worked in water quality and business opportunities for Liberty Utilities California, a Downey-based private utilities company that services Arizona, Texas and California cities, including Apple Valley and Compton.



**Do you have Movers and Shakers in your districts, both new and old, to highlight?**

Send to Communications Specialist Vanessa Gonzales at [vanessag@csda.net](mailto:vanessag@csda.net) for consideration in this section.



# Partnering with Community-Based Organizations to Increase Community Engagement

Special districts often share that the residents they see participating in their public meetings are just a narrow slice of the whole community and don't reflect the majority of residents. To address this challenge, many local agencies use a strategy of nurturing relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs) to engage a broader cross section of their communities. The important benefits they cite from these partnerships include the ability to:

- Expand education and outreach capacities so more residents are aware and informed
- Balance the voices of the most involved advocates with perspectives representing a larger subset of the community
- Reduce misperceptions, mistrust and contention
- Identify broader community-based resources and recommendations
- Develop communication channels that keep people informed over time
- Enhance the cultural competency of engagement plans, and increase the ability of special districts to ensure their content is both relevant and accessible to community stakeholders

**HOW TO GET STARTED**

**Clarify Purpose** - Understanding which demographic and geographic audiences you hope to reach is a good starting point for deciding which community-based organization(s) will be the most effective partners. It is also important to identify the purpose and what type of education and/or input is desired. The best way to determine the right fit is by having an exploratory discussion to assess how the group's focus matches the audiences, topics and activities the special district is contemplating for engagement.

**Determine the Parameters of the Partnership - Common examples of CBO partner tasks include:**

- Expand awareness of upcoming public engagement opportunities
- Co-host public input sessions in centralized locations more familiar to community members
- Help staff understand the community's current level of understanding about an issue so materials can be tailored to provide the appropriate level of background and context
- Help adapt information about the issue into language and formats that make sense to nontechnical experts and people with varying levels of education
- Translate information into various languages and provide bilingual facilitation if appropriate
- Recruit attendees and provide any needed support, such as transportation and childcare
- Help with reporting back to the community about how their input was used in the final decision and ways that they can stay involved and informed



**Create the Right Conditions** - When forming a working partnership, as with developing any relationship, there is no “one size fits all” option for initiating communications, developing effective plans, or building trust. However, it is important to make sure there is adequate dialogue in advance between the agency and the CBO to determine the mutual interests of the partnership. In addition, it is helpful to clearly define roles and expectations for the district and the CBO.

**Navigate Common Pitfalls** - Partnerships tend to work well if they are based on mutual goals, clear communication and trusting relationships. But many times partnerships hit rough patches. Here are a few examples of commonly reported pitfalls and helpful practices to enhance the likelihood of success.

Common Pitfalls	Helpful Practices
Unrealistic expectations of the CBO partner — not enough time or resources allocated for robust engagement.	Start early, establish shared understanding about what is feasible, and consider using a network of multiple CBOs.
A perception that local agency decision-makers do not fully understand or respect the diversity of ideas presented by the new community voices.	Involve decision-makers in crafting the goals for the community engagement and clearly articulate what kinds of input they will be receiving and can listen for. Manage expectations in advance to ensure clarity by all parties.
Partnership agreement is too vague. It's unclear who has responsibility for which part of the process.	Create a formal agreement that includes a clear set of responsibilities and outcomes for both the CBO and the local public agency; revisit as needed throughout the planning process.

*continued on page 28*



**RESOURCES TO LEARN MORE**

For additional resources on how to get started, increase outreach and engage the unique demographics of your community, visit [www.ca-ilg.org/engagement](http://www.ca-ilg.org/engagement).

In addition, Institute for Local Government (ILG) recently developed a new Framework – called TIERS – to assist local governments with planning and executing public engagement efforts. ILG will be holding a training on this Framework on April 25-26. To learn more and access the full framework, visit [www.ca-ilg.org/TIERS](http://www.ca-ilg.org/TIERS) or contact [publicengagement@ca-ilg.org](mailto:publicengagement@ca-ilg.org).



**Erica Manuel  
Named Executive  
Director of  
Institute for Local  
Government**

CSDA is proud to support the Institute for Local Government and congratulates their new Executive Director Erica Manuel. We look forward to continuing our work on behalf of all special districts and local government.

Erica Manuel

joined the Institute for Local Government (ILG) as their new executive director on January 22.

Manuel has over 15 years of experience as a leader in the public and non-profit sectors, including as manager of community, economic development and education at the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), the 6th largest utility in the nation and the largest special district in California. In that role, she directed all community development, education, and customer engagement activities for the electric utility serving Sacramento County. Manuel designed and implemented programs to address strategic priorities and employed proactive and diverse stakeholder engagement to reinforce an inclusive approach to decision-making and governance. She also has a strong background in strategic planning, corporate communications and media relations.

“I am humbled by the opportunity to lead the Institute for Local Government during this exciting time of change for the organization,” said Manuel. “I share the Institute’s dedication to supporting local leaders in fostering sustainable, vibrant and healthy communities and look forward to this exciting opportunity.”

The Institute for Local Government is a non-profit affiliate of the League of California Cities, California Special Districts Association and California State Association of Counties.

The Institute’s mission is to promote good government at the local level with practical, impartial and easy-to-use resources for California communities ranging from sustainability to education, ethics and public engagement.

“Over the past few years, CSDA has successfully partnered with ILG to build awareness of the impact of special districts in local communities. We welcome Erica and are excited to build on our recent momentum as we continue to work together,” says Neil McCormick, chief executive officer, California Special Districts Association.

For more information, visit: [www.ca-ilg.org](http://www.ca-ilg.org).

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## **LCW** LIEBERT CASSIDY WHITMORE

Liebert Cassidy Whitmore is a full-service employment and labor relations law firm that has served California special districts for nearly 40 years. With 90 attorneys and five offices across the State, Liebert Cassidy Whitmore is able to effectively communicate and represent all their clients across California. They consider themselves fortunate to have their interest matched by having built their practice in one of the most dynamically evolving areas of the law; one that challenges attorneys to constantly stay on top of the ever-expanding legislative, administrative and court decisional law. Liebert Cassidy Whitmore's passion for servicing the needs of their clients in their specialized area of practice remains as true today as it did in 1980.

For more information about Liebert Cassidy Whitmore, please visit [lcwlegal.com](http://lcwlegal.com).

## **SDLA**

**DON'T MISS THE LIEBERT CASSIDY WHITMORE SESSION AT THE UPCOMING SDLA CONFERENCES**

### **Propelling Your District Forward in Challenging Situations**

This session will highlight five key areas that elected and appointed public officials may face during their career and strategies for handling these issues and avoiding missteps.

*See page 13 for SDLA dates and locations.*



## Placentia Library District – Library of Things (LOTs)



The roles filled by the Placentia Library District over the last 100 years have changed dramatically, mainly due to rapid innovation and technological developments. The Library is a place for education and self-help opportunities, it transforms lives through literacy, and it changes communities by supporting community and civic engagement. It is a place that welcomes everyone equally, offers visitors a place to stay in touch with their families, friends, and business associates while encouraging users to contribute back to their communities.

In 2017, the Library started one of its most innovative programs, the Library of Things (LOTs).

The Library of Things movement is emerging in communities around the world. Libraries across the world are giving people access to a huge spectrum of items, from board games, party supplies and tennis rackets to saws,

kitchen appliances, turntables, clothing and tents, without the burden of ownership. The Library of Things movement challenges people to rethink whether we need (or want) to own goods we rarely use. It also brings people together around a shared vision and reduces wasted resources.

With non-traditional collections becoming more pervasive, community-specific, imaginative and innovative, the Library is constantly looking for ways to fill the gaps in community services and add value with its collections. The Placentia Library's LOTs program was developed directly from the community's input from the community's Facebook group, the Placentia Buzz. The Library is a partner with the Placentia Buzz, which continues to promote and advance the Library's LOTs collection.

According to PEW research conducted in 2016, over 65% of people surveyed said libraries

help them grow as people and 49% think libraries help them focus on things that matter in their lives. At the Placentia Library District, we agree wholeheartedly; hence, the creation of the LOTS collection. We understand that by offering the LOTS collection, people will flourish, whether it's exploring the art of flying a drone with their grandchildren, learning to play the violin for the first time before committing oneself to the expensive purchase, or discovering our planet through the many STEAM kits. These experiences will resonate with people as they look for opportunities to understand and connect with the next generation. The LOTS collection not only helps people to grow, it also flourishes the people's innovation, imagination, and inspiration.

The Placentia Library District is responding to the community's evolving needs, and their needs are beyond what people typically think of libraries, which is books. In response to these needs, the Placentia Library District began its Library of Things (LOTS) Collection June of 2017. The LOTS collection was funded with seed money from the Placentia Library Friends Foundation and sustainable through the Library's general fund. The collection reflects how this program was made and tailored based on the needs and feedback of the evolving needs of the local community.

Borrowers can check out one LOTS item at a time for up to two weeks. All LOTS items are free and require a Placentia Library District card to check out. Borrowers must be 18 years old or older and read, understand and sign the Agreement before an item can be checked out. Borrowers must return the LOTS item to a library staff at the Information Desk and must review LOTS item in the presence of staff to confirm the LOTS item is complete



and undamaged. Within 48hrs library staff will test the LOTS item to confirm it is functional. If the LOTS item is NOT functional, the borrower is solely responsible for the LOTS item and will be billed for reasonable repair or replacement costs associated with damage or/and neglect or abuse

Since its beginning there have been over 300 check outs, local news coverage for the innovative nature of the program, and such a high demand for the items that we plan to expand our collection for the next fiscal year. The expansion is to ensure shorter waitlist times and reflect patron input as to what they would like to see in the larger collection of items.

*continued on page 32*



#### THE LOTS COLLECTION INCLUDES:

- Drones
- Fiddlestix Lacrosse Set
- Solar Backpack
- Virtual Reality Glasses
- Nintendo Switch or NES
- Binoculars
- Musical Instruments
- Cornhole Bean Bag Toss
- Kitchen Aid Mixer
- Snow Cone Machine
- Bluetooth Speaker
- Popcorn Machine
- Sewing Machine
- Projector
- Bubble Machine
- Fujifilm Instax Instant Camera
- Akaso EK7000 4K Action camera
- Dinosaurs S.T.E.A.M. Kit
- Geology S.T.E.A.M. Kit
- Money S.T.E.A.M. Kit
- Butterflies S.T.E.A.M. Kit
- Building S.T.E.A.M. Kit
- Bugs S.T.E.A.M. Kit
- Human Body S.T.E.A.M. Kit
- Ocean Life S.T.E.A.M. Kit
- Astronomy S.T.E.A.M. Kit
- Ellison Die Cut
- Garden Growing Kit

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The library is no longer just a place to check out books. It's expanded its scope of services and has become a valuable resource for those living on a tight budget. The sharing economy, the concept of leasing products and services rather than owning them, has picked up a lot of followers in recent years, and for

many of the things that our patrons find ourselves using perhaps once or twice or things they would like to test out before making a purchase, LOTs is the solution. The World Economic Forum's prediction that by 2030 all products will have become services, confirms what the Placentia Library District believes is

the importance of the sharing economy and that with our LOTs collection, we are helping patrons save money through a sustainable and community-driven solution, which everyone can appreciate.

With the expansion of LOTs and prevalence of the sharing economy model, the increased reliance on public libraries will have a significant impact on the services and programs the Placentia Library District provides to its community. One thing for sure is the Placentia Library District will remain open and its collection, remain sustainable and accessible to its patrons for a more positive patron experience.

The Placentia Library District looks forward to having more impacts on our patrons, whether through its LOTs collection or the excellent customer service. There's LOTs more to come.



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# Practical Tips for Negotiating Today’s Complex IT Services Contracts

By Richard Pio Roda, Principal, Meyers Nave

## **Software as a Service (SaaS): The New Way Public Entities Purchase Software**

Instead of purchasing software that must be installed, maintained, updated and serviced on their own in-house IT equipment, public entities are now licensing software on a monthly, quarterly, or annual subscription basis from a software vendor who centrally hosts it in the 21st century cloud. Known as Software as a Service (SaaS), it is also sometimes referred to as “on-demand software.”

SaaS vendors typically manage a public entity’s applications, data, runtime, middleware, servers, storage, network and operating systems. The tremendous costs, headaches and problems of owning software are shifted from the public entity to the vendor and factored into the subscription fee. While the SaaS model provides great daily operational relief to public entities, it introduces a new set of issues that must be proactively addressed with SaaS vendors. Below

is a checklist of the most critical contractual issues along with practical tips for favorably negotiating them into a SaaS agreement.

### **DATA BREACH AND DATA SECURITY: LIABILITY, INDEMNITY, AND NEGLIGENCE**

Responsibility for security and privacy related compliance cannot be outsourced to a software service provider. The SaaS agreement should describe the vendor’s security practices, such as an explanation of the technical, organizational and administrative controls and safeguards used by the vendor for hosting and processing customer data when delivering the software service. The subscriber should ensure that security standards are reflected in contractual clauses and monitor performance of service providers to the security standards.

Issue	Factors to Consider	Negotiating Tip
Liability	SaaS vendors generally will not accept consequential damages liability, which is defined as foreseeable financial damages arising from a data breach, because such damages are likely to greatly exceed the amount the customer paid and the vendor received.	Persuade the SaaS vendor to accept liability for direct damages from a data breach up to an agreed upon limit based on overall value of the contract or a multiple thereof, e.g., 1.5x or 2x the amount the vendor is expected to be paid over an agreed upon time period.
Indemnity	Focus on third party claims because risks may be different depending on the SaaS contract or service. Focus on the allegation, not who is at fault, i.e., “caused by” v. “related to” or “arising out of.”	Persuade the vendor to narrow the indemnity.
Negligence	SaaS vendors should accept some consequential damages liability when the data breach results from the vendor’s own gross negligence or intentional misconduct.	Persuade the SaaS vendor to include a clause addressing the vendor’s liability for its own causal omissions or commissions. Also, cyber-liability insurance is available to protect against those risks which a party is unable to contractually allocate to the other side.

**UPTIME COMMITMENT**

The SaaS application should be available and usable to the same degree it would be if installed in an on-premises computing environment.

Issue	Negotiating Tip
<p>The SaaS vendor should agree to make the application available and accessible at least 99.5% of the time 24x7x365.</p> <p>Excludes routine maintenance outages (only during non-peak usage hours) and events outside the vendor’s control, such as Internet outages and equipment failures not within the vendor’s environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obligate the vendor to provide fee credits if it fails to meet the availability commitment.</li> <li>• Include a “three strikes” termination clause, e.g., if the vendor fails to meet the availability commitment on three separate occasions during a two month period, it would constitute a material breach.</li> <li>• Customer is entitled to terminate and receive at least a prorated refund of unused fees paid in advance.</li> </ul>

**APPLICATION PERFORMANCE WARRANTY**

The agreement should state that the SaaS application will perform “in all material respects” (or “substantially”) in accordance with its applicable specifications or documentation, which could be without limitation as to time such as when the customer is paying on an annual subscription basis.

*Note: Vendors may limit the warranty to some period of time after either the commencement of the agreement or after discovery of the defect. 90 days is typical and considered reasonable.*

Issue	Negotiating Tip
<p>The remedy for a vendor’s breach of the performance requirement can be limited, e.g., termination of the agreement if the application’s performance does not meet the warranty and the vendor cannot correct it.</p> <p>Obtain the right to a refund given the hardship and expense associated with researching, selecting and switching to an alternate vendor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiate refunds:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) At least the entire service period’s fees.</li> <li>(2) A prorated refund of the unused portion of the subscription license fee for the remainder of the term or service period.</li> <li>(3) A refund for a portion of the fees paid prior to termination.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Expand the vendor’s overall maximum liability to the total amount paid over the contract period, which is common in traditional installed software license agreements.</li> </ul>



**NEED ASSISTANCE WITH YOUR IT PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS**

*This checklist is designed to help public entities avoid potential pitfalls in today’s cloud-based IT equipment and services procurement contracts. Meyers Nave Principal Richard Pio*

*Roda prepared this checklist and is available to provide advice and counsel for drafting, reviewing, negotiating and/or managing IT equipment and services contracts.*

*Please contact Rich at rpioroda@meyersnave.com or 510.808.2000. This checklist does not constitute legal advice.*

*Readers should consult legal counsel for assistance with IT equipment and services contracts. © 2019 Meyers Nave Riback Silver & Wilson, PLC*



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# LAFCOs & Involuntary Dissolutions and Consolidations – Strategies for Responding and Staying Engaged

*By Gary B. Bell and Matthew T. Summers, Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley, PC*

Across the state, Local Agency Formation Commissions are increasing their oversight of special districts and have even initiated or pursued involuntary dissolutions or consolidations of several districts. District Boards and Managers should be prepared for this possibility and consider strategies to respond to these efforts.

Local Agency Formation Commissions (“LAFCOs”), created under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act, are tasked by the Legislature with ensuring orderly growth and rational organization of local governments. Special Districts have not been an area of focus for some LAFCOs. That changed following a 2017 Little Hoover Commission report that called on LAFCOs to complete municipal service reviews for all special districts to specifically identify candidate districts for involuntary dissolutions or consolidations.

Every five years, each LAFCO must complete a municipal service review and evaluate the sphere of influence for every

special district. (Government Code, §§ 56425 & 56430.) This includes reviewing the scope and quality of services provided by the district and how those services integrate into the community and other agencies’ services. Districts are well-served to participate in this process, as it provides an opportunity to demonstrate to LAFCO and other observers the strength and depth of the district’s programs and stewardship of its financial resources.

Recently, several LAFCOs and counties have taken up the Little Hoover Commission’s charge and initiated involuntary dissolutions of special districts, including healthcare

districts lacking hospitals and fire protection districts with volunteer firefighters. Civil grand juries have also sparked several involuntary dissolution attempts, citing perceived inefficiencies. It begins with a concern that a district is not serving its community well. A proactive approach to help avoid this, besides providing high quality services, is to try to ensure that residents and community members understand which agency provides those services. Websites, board meetings, and community events all are opportunities to improve direct connections between a district's residents and its services, board members, and staff. Resident support is critical for a district fighting an involuntary dissolution, as sufficient resident protests can block a dissolution.

An involuntary dissolution formally begins in two ways. First, LAFCO itself can adopt a resolution initiating a dissolution. (Government Code, § 56375.) A LAFCO initiated proposal must stem from a municipal service review or other evaluation of local governments and their organization. In the resolution, LAFCO must find involuntary dissolution or consolidation will cause lower or similar costs of providing public services and will promote greater public accountability and stewardship of taxpayer resources. (Government Code, § 56881.) Effective participation in the municipal service review process and strong special district representation on the LAFCO, for those counties with special district representatives, can avoid surprise resolutions initiating dissolutions.

Second, a county, city, or other local government can adopt a resolution of application, asking LAFCO to approve the involuntary dissolution. (Government Code, § 56654.) The resolution must include a comprehensive plan for providing services via successor entities.

(Government Code, § 56653.) The other agency must provide at least twenty-one days' notice to LAFCO and the affected agencies before adopting the resolution. (Government Code, § 56654.)

Next, the affected agencies, including the county and any other proposed successor agencies, negotiate a property tax exchange agreement. (Revenue and Taxation Code, § 99.) Under this section, the county assessor and county auditor-controller provide information about existing property tax allocations and revenues to the affected agencies. The County is then empowered to negotiate with those agencies to determine how the agencies will exchange property tax revenues among themselves. However, when "a jurisdictional change would affect the service area or service responsibility of one or more special districts, the board of supervisors shall, on behalf of the district or districts, negotiate any exchange of property tax revenues." (Id., § 99, subd. (b)(5).) If the affected parties cannot agree, then the dissolution cannot proceed. (Greenwood Addition Homeowners Ass'n. v. City of San Marino (1993) 14

Cal.App.4th 1360, 1377.) However, the county resolution binds a special district, so the district has no veto, unlike a city. (Revenue and Taxation Code, § 99, subd. (b)(5).)

Once the property tax exchange agreement is approved and any remaining elements of the application are complete, LAFCO must issue a certificate of filing and set the matter for a public hearing within ninety days. (Government Code, § 56658.) LAFCO has broad discretion to approve or reject the dissolution. (Government Code, § 56881.) If approved, LAFCO may impose terms on a broad range of subjects listed in Government Code section 56886, including how a district's assets should be distributed; whether any special fees, assessments, and taxes it imposes will continue; how its employees will be treated; and how and by whom successor services will be provided to the public. (Government Code, § 56886.)

LAFCO approval is not the final step. Instead, LAFCO approval sets the stage for a protest hearing. During this noticed, public hearing, LAFCO accepts

*continued on page 38*



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written protests against dissolution by voters and property owners in the District. The rules for the protest hearing vary depending on who initiated the dissolution. The default rule is written protests by 25% of voters or 25% of landowners owning

at least 25% of the area’s assessed value force an election to confirm the dissolution in inhabited areas. (Government Code, § 57077.1, subd. (b).) However, a special statute designed to ease district dissolution requires a majority protest by 50% of voters to force an election if an affected local agency, such as the county, initiated the dissolution and it follows a prior LAFCO determination under Government Code sections 56378 (special study), 56425 (sphere of influence change), or 56430 (municipal service review). (Government Code, § 57077.1, subd. (c).) If the protest threshold is met or exceeded, then the dissolution is dead; if not then LAFCO may dissolve the district without an election. This special statute is one of the key reasons districts need to be vigilant in participating in LAFCO service reviews, to prevent misinformation and avoid early determinations that could facilitate easier dissolutions.

Districts should expect more oversight and scrutiny by LAFCOs in the future, through municipal service reviews and possible dissolutions and consolidations. Districts wishing to prevent the possibility of an involuntary dissolution have several tools available to stay engaged with their community and their local LAFCO. Most important, visibly providing high-quality services to their residents helps ensure that communities understand the value of their special districts and the benefits of locally elected control of services and associated revenues — creating a basis to call on those residents to submit a majority protest to stop the dissolution. Participating in LAFCO, including by working with LAFCO staff during municipal service reviews and by serving on the commission to ensure a special district vote regarding the proposal, allows districts to ensure their voices are heard in the process. However, once a dissolution or consolidation is confirmed through the protest procedures or an election, challenging the LAFCO decision in court may be an uphill battle, steep to climb.

For more information, please attend CSDA’s webinar on April 3, 2019 at 10AM, “Cradle to Grave: Special District LAFCO Involvement.”

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## First Shipment of Subaru Automobiles Arrives at the Port of Hueneme – Bringing New Business & New Jobs

The Port of Hueneme welcomed its first shipment of Subaru automobiles imported from Japan this weekend. The Port's customer, Wallenius Wilhelmsen Solutions (WWS), secured the new automobile brand coming to Hueneme as part of the organic growth happening within the industry. "WWS has been a long-time customer of the Port, and we will continue to work with them to increase opportunity for growth. The more our customers see these growth opportunities, the more good paying jobs we see being created for our local residents," stated Oxnard Harbor District President Mary Anne Rooney. These new Subaru imports will create 35 new full-time and 25 new part-time local jobs.

WWS is the processor of various automobile OEMs (original equipment manufacturers) importing through the Port of Hueneme including: Mitsubishi, Volvo, Land Rover, BMW, Mini Cooper, Rolls Royce, Nissan, Toyota, Maserati, Jaguar, Aston Martin, and now Subaru. "We welcome Subaru to the Port of Hueneme and are delighted to have them as a customer at our vehicle processing center in Oxnard, California." Said Ted Boudalis, Senior General Manager of Strategy & Operations for WWS. This new business coming through Hueneme will give WWS greater access to serve the local markets of Southern California, Nevada, and New Mexico.

The new Subaru automobiles will be processed at the WWS facility on Hueneme Road at Edison Drive. Processing includes: pre-delivery inspection, labeling, accessory installation, port modification, mechanical/warranty repair, paint and body repair, and rail loading. The WWS Oxnard facility currently employs over 250 employees, and will grow to over 300 employees to with the additional Subaru imports.

CEO & Port Director, Kristin Decas stated, "These new Subaru autos are more than just additional cargo. They represent growing investment in our local community, increased economic opportunity for our local residents, and additional good-paying jobs." WWS has been a customer at the Port of Hueneme for over 27 years. WWS, along with the Port's various other customers, generate over \$93 Million in state and local tax revenues which go toward supporting local schools, fire and police departments, social and health services, city streets, and city governments. Oxnard Harbor District Commissioner Jess Ramirez concluded, "As a special district, our focus is on providing our region a trade gateway to the rest of the world. These new Japanese automobiles are a great example of how interconnected our world truly is. We are grateful to be a hub for WWS, and are committed to working with them to grow their business in our community."

# Are You Missing a Policy for Taking Positions on State Legislation?

The legislative year is in full swing with members of the Legislature and the Governor already discussing important topics affecting special districts, including issues regarding property tax allocation, impact and connection fees, a state “water tax,” accessory dwelling units, and many other critical issues for special districts. CSDA will soon be asking for your help through Calls to Action on the most important bills, so now is the time to make sure you are prepared.

Special districts have the authority to lobby the State Legislature, other agencies, and individual decision makers on legislation and other matters of interest to the district, and to share your position with legislators directly through letters of support or opposition. Throughout the year, CSDA will send out a Call to Action to all special districts regarding a specific bill or issue that significantly impacts the special district community. The Call to Action is a chance for your district to register its support or opposition to legislation that impacts your services.

To make sure your district is ready to respond to a Call to Action in the fast-moving legislative environment, make sure that your district has adopted a Legislative Advocacy Policy, governing the process your agency must go through to register your support or opposition to an issue of interest to your district.

If your district has not adopted a Legislative Advocacy Policy yet, visit the Take Action page of the CSDA website at [csda.net/advocate/take-action](http://csda.net/advocate/take-action) for a FREE copy of CSDA’s Legislative Advocacy sample policy, which can be used by your district as a policy template.

The Legislative Advocacy sample policy is also one of the many resources included in the CSDA Sample Policy Handbook available through the CSDA bookstore.



## Governor Newsom’s First Budget Protects Property Tax, Calls for Water Tax, and Studies Developer Fees

On January 10, Governor Gavin Newsom unveiled his first state budget proposal and, in doing so, announced plans regarding redevelopment agency (RDA) successors, the water tax, and developer impact fees.

Within Governor Newsom’s budget proposal, he plans to improve Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) rather than reestablishing RDAs that divert property taxes from special districts and other local governments. Governor Newsom’s plan would remove the 55 percent voter approval requirement for EIFDs to incur debt and pair them with federal Opportunity Zones.

In describing his EIFD proposal, Governor Newsom stated, “Bringing back redevelopment, I looked at it. We are putting more money now than when we killed redevelopment. Thank you Toni Atkins and that transaction fee; thank you to the new bond; thank you to the Cap-and-Trade program; thank you to the billion dollars I just announced. And, we are doing it in a way that doesn’t take money from the education system that requires us to backfill. And, we are doing it in a way that doesn’t take money from the counties if we did reestablish redevelopment. I think EIFDs can achieve the same or even greater result.”

Asked if he was closing the door on more expansive redevelopment proposals, Governor Newsom stated, “With our enhanced infrastructure



financing and these opportunities on overlays, I think we'll have more than enough to convince people that this is a legitimate successor agency to redevelopment as we have known it."

Governor Newsom's budget also seemingly embraced a statewide water tax to fund access to safe and affordable drinking water. According to the Governor's Budget Summary, the administration is looking to take the same approach proposed last year by SB 623 (Monning), potentially placing the burden of tax collection on local agencies already strained by other state mandated programs and services.

The Governor's budget proposal includes \$4.9 million General Fund one-time spending for the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Food and Agriculture to take initial steps toward implementation of the new Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Program. The Governor followed his call for a water tax with a visit along with his cabinet at the Monterey Park Tract in Ceres. There, he participated in a roundtable discussion with members of the community who are paying for water that is unsafe to drink.

Although not explicitly discussed within his proposed budget, at his press conference, Governor Newsom also announced he would convene a task force on developer impact fees. He exclaimed, "These impact fees are out of control; they are usurious. They are driving up the cost of housing, and I just want folks to know I want to tackle that. And, to the extent we have to go to the ballot on that, that's something we are at least open to do."

More broadly, Governor Newsom announced significant one-time expenditures in health and education. Calling his budget one that seeks "discipline" while building a strong financial foundation, Governor Newsom announced a total budget of \$209 billion, a 4% increase over the prior year, with general fund spending totaling \$144 billion (a 3.6% increase). Additions to the state Rainy Day Fund will bring the balance to \$15.3 billion in 2019-2020, gradually increasing to \$19.4 billion by 2022-2023.

Other notable items in the Governor's budget proposal include:

- \$13.6 billion dedicated to paying down the state's unfunded liabilities, including an "unprecedented" \$3 billion supplemental

contribution to pay down the state's liabilities within CalPERS.

- \$25 million for mutual aid to support local governments in their pre-deployment work in response to emergencies.
- \$50 million one-time spending for local grants and to immediately begin a comprehensive, statewide education campaign on disaster preparedness and safety.
- \$31.3 million to back-fill wildfire-related property tax revenue losses for cities, counties, and special districts.

With a new administration in the Governor's Office, CSDA will continue to closely monitor the budget process for relevant issues related to special districts. You can find a full summary of the Governor's Budget Proposal at [ebudget.ca.gov](http://ebudget.ca.gov). Legislators will conduct Budget Sub-Committee Hearings over the coming months, with the Governor's May Revise due out in mid-May following analysis of the April tax receipts. The budget, which must be passed by a June 15 Constitutional deadline, takes effect July 1.

To keep up with the latest breaking budget and legislative news affecting special districts, sign up for the Advocacy News blog at [csda.net/advocate/advocacy-blog](http://csda.net/advocate/advocacy-blog).



Look for the updated Take Action brochure, designed to equip district leaders for grassroots advocacy and public outreach, at upcoming CSDA events, conferences, or when speaking to your public affairs field coordinators.

## TAKE ACTION

The California State Legislature has reconvened for the 2019-2020 Legislative Session and Governor Gavin Newsom was sworn in as our 40th Governor. As legislators are working on new legislation, make every day an opportunity to increase awareness and understanding for special districts.

### SPRING

- Attend Special Districts Legislative Days in Sacramento on May 21-22, 2019
- Respond to CSDA "Calls to Action" on priority legislation by submitting letters of support and opposition
- Check for legislative updates on the Take Action page of the CSDA website at [csda.net/advocate/take-action](http://csda.net/advocate/take-action)
- Promote the upcoming Districts Make the Difference Student Video Contest with the updated timeline for 2019

## EMPLOYER LIABILITY: EMPLOYEES USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE



In California, employers are generally liable for damage caused by an employee's accident when that employee uses their personal vehicle for business purposes. The "going and coming" rule excludes liability for the employer if the accident occurs when the employee is commuting to and from work. An employer may be liable, however, for accidents occurring during an employee's commute when the "vehicle use exception" applies. The "vehicle use exception" applies where (1) the possession and use of the vehicle is required by the employer, or (2) the possession and use of the vehicle provided a benefit to the employer. In either of these two scenarios, the employer compels the employee to submit to the risks inherent with motor travel and should thus share in the liability.

On June 18, 2018, the Court of Appeal in *Newland v. County of Los Angeles* effectively narrowed the application of the "vehicle use exception." The *Newland* court held that the County of Los Angeles could not be held vicariously liable for a motor vehicle accident that occurred when a deputy public defender (Prigo) was driving home from work. The employee attorney regularly needed to drive between various Los Angeles courthouses for hearings, and would frequently use his personal vehicle to visit crime scenes and meet with

incarcerated clients. In spite of this, the court held that the two "vehicle use exception" requirements to the "going and coming" rule had not been met.

While the county did not require their deputy public defenders to obtain a personal vehicle to perform their jobs, they required attorneys to have a valid California Class C driver's license or the ability to use alternative transportation to commute to work. Prigo frequently had to attend hearings at branch courthouses throughout Los Angeles County. There is not a reasonable means of public transportation between the Norwalk Courthouse, where he worked, and the branch courthouses, so he would drive his personal vehicle. In February 2013, Prigo left to go home for the day and stopped at a nearby post office. When turning into the post office, he hit a car and injured the driver.

The trial court ruled that the central issue in the case was whether Prigo was required (either expressly or impliedly) to use his personal vehicle to perform the duties of his job for the county, and the jury found that he did, thus imputing liability to the county. The Court of Appeal reversed the trial court's decision, holding that there was not enough evidence that Prigo was driving his car within the course and scope of his employment when the accident occurred. As Prigo was commuting home from work when the accident occurred, the "going and coming" rule applied. To defeat that presumption, one of the two prongs of the "vehicle use exception" would have needed to apply: (1) the county required Prigo to use his car to drive to or from work, or (2) the county benefited from Prigo making his car available during the work day. Neither applied in this scenario.

The court ultimately held that even though Prigo used his car throughout the work day, there was no evidence

that Prigo was required to drive a personal vehicle to perform his duties. Furthermore, Prigo was always made aware of the dates which he had hearings or meetings at other locations, and he did not need his car with him at all times for unexpected travel. On the date of the accident, he did not have any job duties scheduled for outside his office. Furthermore, there was no evidence that the county received any benefit from Prigo's use of his car or relied on Prigo's ownership and use of a car.

In its opinion, the Court of Appeal held that the doctrine of respondeat superior does not render an employer vicariously liable simply because it controls an employee's actions. Rather, liability attaches to the employer because the employer somehow creates "inevitable risks as a part of doing business." Given the court's decision that neither prong of the "vehicle use exceptions" applied, despite Prigo's heavy and frequent use of his vehicle for job-related duties, liability is less likely to be imputed to employers in the future for tortious conduct occurring during a work commute.

### ***Lessons for Employers:***

- Although the *Newland* case represents a victory for Los Angeles County, its facts are very specific and may not apply to other accidents.
- Employers should develop policies addressing work-related driving and ensure that they carry appropriate levels of liability insurance for employees who drive in the normal course of business.

### **Is Commute Time Compensable?**

California employers often struggle with the distinction between travel time and commute time. When an employee

is required to travel for work, that time is treated as “hours worked” and must be paid. The time an employee spends commuting to work, however, is generally unpaid. But there are some exceptions to that rule, such as when the employer requires that an employee use a company vehicle to commute.

Is travel time spent in an employer-provided vehicle loaded with equipment and tools under an optional and voluntary Home Dispatch Program compensable? The California Court of Appeal finds it is not.

In a recently decided case *Isreal Hernandez, et al vs. Pacific Bell Telephone Company*, the Third Appellate District Court issued a decision on this.

Plaintiffs brought a class action on behalf of Pacific Bell technicians, alleging the class was not paid for the time they were under Pacific Bell’s control, because they were not paid for the time they were transporting equipment and tools in a company vehicle to and from the first and last jobs, and for the time required to safeguard the equipment and tools. The Complaint alleged failure to pay minimum wage, failure to pay wages timely, and unfair business practices. The parties filed cross motions for summary judgment. The trial court granted Pacific Bell’s motion for summary judgment and denied Plaintiffs’ motion.

The Court of Appeal stated the Industrial Welfare Commission (“IWC”) defined “hours worked” to mean “the time during which an employee is subject to control of an employer, and includes all the time the employee is suffered or permitted to work, whether or not required to do so.” The two phrases of the definition “time during which an employee is subject to control of an employer” and “time the employee

is suffered or permitted to work” establish two independent factors that define “hours worked.” The time that an employee is “suffered or permitted to work” includes time the employee is working but not under the employer’s control, such as unauthorized overtime, provided the employer has knowledge of it.

Regarding the “control test,” the Court of Appeal found that commute time in an employer-provided vehicle is not compensable when the employee is not required to use that transportation. Employers do not risk paying employees for their travel time merely by providing them transportation. When requiring employees to take certain transportation to a work site, employers subject those employees to employer control by determining when, where, and how they are to travel. Travel time is compensable under these circumstances.

Here, the Court found that the standard of “suffered or permitted to work” is met when an employee is engaged in certain tasks or exertion that a manager would recognize as work. Mere transportation of tools, which does not add time or exertion to a commute, does not meet this standard. The Court of Appeal affirmed the trial court judgment granting summary judgment to Pacific Bell, and finding that commute time under the voluntary HDP is not compensable as “hours worked” under the “suffer or permit to work” test.

Consult with legal counsel anytime an employee is involved in an accident that causes injuries or damage to third parties, even if that accident occurs during an employee’s commute.

*For additional questions, contact SDRMA Chief Risk Officer Dennis Timoney at [dtimoney@sdrma.org](mailto:dtimoney@sdrma.org) or call Dennis at 800.537.7790.*

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# Building the Isla Vista We Deserve

*By Jonathan A. Abboud, General Manager, Isla Vista Community Services District*



**F**or those who do not know Isla Vista yet, we are a small beach town (300 acres) surrounded by the Pacific Ocean on one side and the University of California Santa Barbara on the other side. 95% of our population of 15-17,000 rents and 80% attend college. Most of the non-students are lower income Latino families.

After a 46-year long struggle for self-governance, we passed Measure E in November 2016 with 87% of the vote. Measure E established the Isla Vista Community Services District and represented the first-time people in Isla Vista had the chance to even vote on broader representation and local control since the 1970s when we formed the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District.

Unfortunately, along with the passage of Measure E we failed to pass Measure F, our 8% utility user tax and only dedicated revenue source, by only securing 62% of the vote. This gave us a conundrum, we had a public mandate to enact policy but no means to do so. Nevertheless, the District came into existence in March 2017 and with some assistance from private donors and our County Supervisor, along with an already established financial commitment of \$200,000/year from UC Santa Barbara on a per-project basis, we hit the ground running. By the close of 2017 we launched two services - management and programming of a previously vacant community room and stationing unarmed student service officers on busy Friday and Saturday nights dubbed the

“Safety Station.” We also hired legal counsel, a former Gaucho & Isla Vistan, at a discount rate and an interim general manager (me) for also a discount rate.

With some credibility established we turned to securing revenue. Since the District’s principal act had been written with a robust community process, we decided to do the same for developing our ballot question. We held community forums to discuss service needs and potential costs and conducted an extensive door to door survey. This gave us the necessary insight and information to develop a strong ballot question that reflected community priorities for eight service areas. Finally, while more expensive,

we chose the June 2018 ballot rather than November one, to allow the focus to be on the tax rather than State and national issues. Past this point, the District no longer was involved in the tax, dubbed Measure R, per state law, but those of us involved in the District ran the campaign in our own private time and not in our official capacities.

We faced ardent opposition from landowners and property management companies - who really didn't face any financial downside to the tax since they'd promised to pass it on to residents. Instead, they worried about losing power in Isla Vista and the grip they'd

held since creating our town 60 years ago. While we highlighted the services to be provided if the tax passed, we didn't only focus on the technical aspects because we thought that contributed to our 2016 loss. We made our campaign for Measure R focused on "Taking Back Our Isla Vista" and putting the power to improve the community in our own hands.

The tax passed with 83.96% of the vote and we finally got to work putting together a locally developed budget to improve our community, with our dream of self-governance finally realized. 🍷

***Since the District's principal act had been written with a robust community process, we decided to do the same for developing our ballot question. We held community forums to discuss service needs and potential costs and conducted an extensive door to door survey. This gave us the necessary insight and information to develop a strong ballot question that reflected community priorities for eight service areas.***

## CSDA Finance Corporation Recent Financings

In 2018, the CSDA Finance Corporation facilitated financings for 19 special districts, with amounts totaling more than \$53 million. A few examples include:

**El Dorado Hills Community Services District**  
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**Greenfield County Water District**  
Arsenic Remediation - \$4,800,000

**Cordova Recreation and Park District**  
Aquatic Center - \$5,435,000

**Mt. View Sanitary District**  
UV Disinfection System - \$6,000,000

**Semitropic Water Storage District**  
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# Scholarship Award Presentation Held for Winner of Special District Video Contest

On Monday, January 14, Districts Make the Difference held an award presentation for Heath Dunbar, a student from La Costa Canyon High School in Carlsbad. At the event, Heath received his \$2,000 scholarship for winning first place in the 2018 Student Video Contest.

Held at the Leucadia Wastewater District, the presentation included a showing of Dunbar's video, "Special Districts Make the Difference," which provides a creative overview of special districts and the important services they provide to thousands of Californians.

The annual video contest challenges students to create a 60-second video highlighting the many ways special districts make a difference for communities. To win the contest, Dunbar competed in a month-long online voting period against four other videos and received the most votes from the public.

CSDA Past President and Vista Irrigation District Board Member Jo MacKenzie was at the event and presented Dunbar with his scholarship award. In honoring Dunbar, MacKenzie stated, "I am happy to be part of the celebration recognizing Heath and his accomplishment. Seeing students like Heath learn more about their local special districts and earn a scholarship for their creativity and video skills is what the board of directors envisioned when we launched Districts Make the Difference over three years ago. We look forward to the student video contest every year."

In addition to the scholarship award presented by Districts Make the Difference, Carlsbad Mayor Matt Hall also participated in the event. Mayor Hall congratulated Dunbar and presented him with a certificate for his achievement. A representative from the office of State Senator Pat Bates was also at the event to recognize Dunbar and present him with a certificate.

Several other local officials attended the event, including Leucadia Wastewater District Board President David Kulchin and Board Members Elaine Sullivan and Don Omsted as well as San Diego Chapter of CSDA President Tom Kennedy.



Left to Right – Back Row: Trisha Hill, Leucadia Wastewater District; Jo Makenzie, CSDA Board Member; Richard Duffey, Leucadia Wastewater District; Tom Kennedy, CSDA San Diego Chapter President; Matthew Phy, Office of Senator Pat Bates Senior District Representative; Don Omsted, Leucadia Wastewater District Board Member

Left to Right – Front Row: Elaine Sullivan, Leucadia Wastewater District Board Member; Heath Dunbar, contest winner; Matt Hall, Mayor of Carlsbad; David Kulchin, Leucadia Wastewater District Board President; Cheryl Dunbar; Ed Dunbar

Students throughout California participated in the 2018 contest. Dunbar faced tough competition to be selected as one of the five finalists. Initial entries were scored by CSDA officials based on four criteria: accuracy and effectiveness, creativity and originality, production quality, and entertainment value. The five videos with the highest overall scores competed in the month-long period of public voting.

The 2019 Student Video Contest will have a slightly different timeline. The submission period will open on May 1 and run through September 30. Look for more news about the adjusted schedule and encourage your local chapter to participate. Promotional materials will be available for districts and CSDA chapters. The video contest is a great opportunity to engage with students in your community and promote the important work and essential services your district provides.

To learn more about the contest and watch the 2018 winning videos, visit [DistrictsMakeTheDifference.org/video-contest](http://DistrictsMakeTheDifference.org/video-contest).



## Did You Know?

Districts Make the Difference has a Facebook and Twitter account and we are always looking for interesting articles and events to feature. Make sure to follow Districts Make the Difference at [www.facebook.com/yourCADistricts](http://www.facebook.com/yourCADistricts) and [www.twitter.com/yourCADistricts](http://www.twitter.com/yourCADistricts) so we can see what your district is doing.



### Mark Twain Health Care District Sponsors New Exercise Program

In recognition of National Falls Prevention Day, the Mark Twain Health Care District (MTHCD) introduced a new exercise program to encourage senior residents throughout the county to stay active.

The program, called Stay Vertical Calaveras, is sponsored by Mark Twain Health Care District, Your Health, Our Mission – since 1946. “Through community collaboration, we serve as the stewards of a community

health system that ensures our residents have the dignity of access to care that provides high quality, professional and compassionate health care.” For more information, visit [www.mthcd.org](http://www.mthcd.org).

The kick-off of the new program will highlight the multiple opportunities throughout Calaveras County to join a free exercise class and keep community members active. Exercise demonstrations and refreshments will be available.

The classes will focus on Tai Chi and strength training for low impact exercise to help with flexibility, balance and stability for fall prevention. Other benefits achieved from these classes are enhanced mental capacity, help with arthritis pain and promotion of deep breathing, the release states. One in four Americans aged 65-plus falls every year, the release states.

According to the National Council on Aging, falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older Americans. Falls are costly – in dollars and in quality of life, however, falling is not an inevitable part of aging.

Through a gentle exercise program to increase strength and balance, a person can substantially reduce their falling and save their life. 🐾



### Become a Part of Public Engagement

CSDA created the campaign with you in mind and we encourage you to utilize Districts Make the Difference as a tool to help with your public outreach and engagement. On the campaign website, you will find valuable tools, and free marketing materials designed to help you connect with your communities. It is through such outreach that we hope you will be able to actively engage the general public in our collective efforts to further create a positive environment for special districts.



A public outreach campaign supported by the California Special Districts Association to provide information about special districts, descriptions on how they serve communities, and compelling content. Visit us at [districtsmakethedifference.org](http://districtsmakethedifference.org).



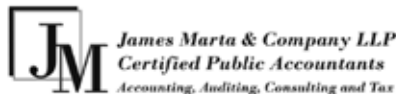
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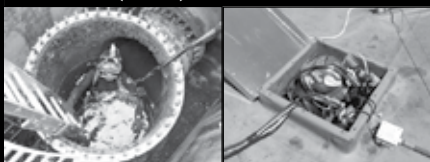
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for details.



## Your Community. Your Services. Your District!

*We are happy to announce the launch of our new public outreach campaign, Districts Make the Difference.*

This campaign is centered on the concept that special districts go beyond providing important services to their communities. They make a difference in the lives of their residents and help our state thrive. The goal is to bridge the gap between special districts and the essential services that millions of Californians value.

The first step is to visit [DistrictsMakeTheDifference.org](http://DistrictsMakeTheDifference.org). This new website features a simple-to-use toolkit filled with public awareness videos, web banners, posters, factsheets, and other materials that can be easily downloaded.

*Follow, like, subscribe, share!*





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