DATE:    February 14, 2011

TO:       Board of Supervisors

FROM:     Lew C. Bauman  
          County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT:  County Administrative Officer’s Report for the week of February 14, 2011

This is the weekly report by the County Administrative Officer.

This Week’s Topics: Information Technology reminds us there are important training options for employees, Monterey County’s wine industry is closer to economic recovery according to the Cooperative Extension viticulture farm advisor and Elections staff says it’s the luck of the draw for candidates in the upcoming May 3rd Special Election.

**Information Technology**

The PC Training Program was first established in 1983 when Monterey County acquired 25 IBM Personal Computers. Today, there are nearly 4,500 desktop and laptop computers in active use throughout County government. Information Technology contracts with a local provider, OfficeStar Training, to teach PC application classes. A list and description of approved classes may be found on the IT Training website, or by logging into the Learning and Development Network, the County’s learning management system for online enrollment in a variety of classes. County employees attending approved classes at OfficeStar incur no additional cost to their departments.

When belts and budgets tighten, training plans are sometimes placed on hold or dropped altogether. However, embracing training as a cost of doing business is really an investment in employee capability, competence, and confidence. Well-trained employees mean higher productivity and fewer costly errors, and therefore lower overall costs.

A list and description of approved classes and other information may be found at:

http://www.in.co.monterey.ca.us/itTraining
Questions or comments concerning the PC Training Program may be directed to: Jim Hashimoto, IT Training Coordinator, at 796-1439 or HashimotoJ@co.monterey.ca.us or Charlotte Josephs, Training Administration at 796-1464 JosephsC@co.monterey.ca.us

The illiterate of the future are not those that cannot read or write... they are those that cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.

~Alvin Toffler, American writer and futurist

Cooperative Extension

Last month, 200 wine industry professionals, including the Monterey County viticulture farm advisor, attended the annual Unified Wine and Grape Symposium in Sacramento.

During a session on the state of the industry in California, a comparison was made of the cost of acquisition/development and production for the major growing regions of the state. Although low spot market prices during last year’s harvest have made vineyard profitability a challenge for California grape growers, Monterey County is poised for a more rapid recovery than other growing regions due to the higher productivity and more efficient farming costs.

The Monterey County Cooperative Extension Viticulture program brings together local farm advisors and campus based researchers to assist area growers in the evaluation and adoption of practices that can improve productivity and profitability of the local wine grape industry, a major contributor to the county economy.

Elections

May 3, 2011 Special All Mail Ballot Election – Monterey Peninsula Water Management District vacancy: As reported last week, Elections was awaiting the results of the mandated random drawing of all letters of the alphabet as conducted by the Secretary of State. This drawing is applied to the last name of each candidate and determines the order of the names on the official ballot that will be designed. The results of the drawing reflected that the letter “L” was drawn before the letter “M”, placing candidate “Lewis” before candidate “Mancini.”

General Office: Last week, there was a meeting of the current Observer Panel, welcoming one additional member, an individual voter from the Salinas area who is interested in how elections are conducted. Topics of discussion included as a mission for the 2011 year, the May 3rd local election and vote by mail materials, the upcoming pilot project for AB 2023 that the Department will participate in with the Secretary of State and various other counties, and other election-related issues at the state level.
The Department is continuing to survey existing polling places to assess accessibility and mitigation needs, review and clean-up of the voter registration database, updating office procedures for future training of temporary employees and public access, and work with its Statewide Association with regard to current state legislation as well as ideas to amend existing law to help realize cost-savings in election administration. Elections is also awaiting information about a potential state grant to fund accessibility of polls as well as poll worker and voter education on that issue.

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