DATE: March 21, 2011

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Lew C. Bauman
        County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: County Administrative Officer’s Report for the week of March 21, 2011

This is the weekly report by the County Administrative Officer.

This Week's Topics: A grant received by Monterey County Probation will fund new services for youth leaving Juvenile Hall; the District Attorney’s Office begins an informational series on workers’ compensation fraud; news from Elections on upcoming ballots and Natividad Medical Center’s Farmers’ Market has a spring debut.

**Probation**

Monterey County’s Probation Department was awarded $150,000 from the Community Clinic Initiative to develop and implement a re-entry program and transition center for youth leaving the Wellington M. Smith, Jr. Juvenile Hall.

The purpose of this program is to provide youth the support they need to navigate family, school, work and social relationships as they return to their community after serving their commitment at the Juvenile Hall.

The Probation Department, in collaboration with the Health Department and Monterey County Office of Education, already has a
successful re-entry program at the Youth Center. The funding provided for the Juvenile Offenders Community Health Services (JOCHS) will enable the team to model a similar program, adding Department of Social and Employment Services to the collaborative to assure youth are able to reopen their Medi-Cal eligibility or to apply if eligible.

The program is currently in its planning phase and implementation is scheduled for next fiscal year.

**Elections**
May 3, 2011 Special All Mail Ballot Election – Monterey Peninsula Water Management District vacancy: Preparations continue. Last week, ballots were mailed to eligible military and overseas voters. Materials for all other eligible voters will be available on Monday, April 4, which is the 29th day prior to the election and the date by law that election officials can begin to offer voting. This week, Elections is preparing and testing voting equipment and ballot tabulation machines. At least two central tabulation machines and two accessible touch screen voting machines will be prepared for use during Early Voting, as provided by state and federal law.

**General Office:** The Department continues to monitor the state budget crisis and the potential for a statewide special election this summer. The longer the delay, the larger the risk to conducting a successful election due to lack of poll workers, polling places, and the availability of ballot printing materials. Additionally, California counties will find it difficult to provide financial resources to conduct such an election. Monterey County’s share of the May 2009 Statewide Special Election was nearly $850,000; a special election in 2011 could cost Monterey County more than $900,000.

Last week, the Registrar and the Department’s Registration and Outreach Program Manager were speakers at a meeting held by Tea Party Patriots of Monterey County. Topics covered were a general overview of the Elections Department including program areas, elections conducted, and legislation affecting administration; maintenance and validation of the voter registration database and administration of elections, focusing on validation of voters, vote by mail ballots, precinct materials, and the canvass of the vote. Also included in the discussion were opportunities for public participation.

The Department also met with the Observer Panel, covering topics such as the May 3 all-mail ballot election materials, voter registration, turnout statistics and youth outreach.

**District Attorney**
Workers’ Compensation is a no-fault system that benefits both employees and employers. It benefits workers by providing medical care and other benefits when they are injured on the job. It benefits employers by offering protection from civil lawsuits for job-related injuries.

Fraud within the workers’ compensation system is a problem that costs billions of dollars each year. The District Attorney’s Workers’ Compensation Prosecution Fraud Unit is
committed to the investigation and prosecution of this type of fraud. Workers’ compensation fraud is a crime and there are many types of fraud within the workers’ compensation system.

The District Attorney’s Workers’ Compensation Prosecution Fraud Unit consists of one full-time prosecutor, two full-time investigators and one secretary. The prosecutor reviews, files and prosecutes the cases in court. The investigators conduct sting operations, initiate investigations from referrals and conduct further investigations on documented case referrals that are submitted to the unit for prosecution. The unit investigates and prosecutes cases involving applicant fraud, employer fraud, premium fraud, provider fraud and employers who do not carry state mandated workers’ compensation insurance.

District Attorney Dean D. Flippo is committed to making the workers’ compensation system work for those who need the benefits from a work-related injury.

“The area of workers’ compensation insurance is important due to the growing cost of insurance,” explains Flippo. “Confidence is restored in the workers’ compensation system for employers, employees and the community at large by halting the flow of fraudulent claims, fraudulent medical billings and employer premium fraud by prosecuting the abusers.”

The District Attorney’s Office will be contributing a series of articles to the CAO Weekly Report over the next six months on the various types of investigations and cases handled by the Workers’ Compensation Prosecution Fraud Unit. The articles will also provide public service information and warnings for employers, employees and the general public on issues that can be very costly to consumers.

Natividad Medical Center

Wednesday, March 23rd marks the grand opening of the Natividad Medical Center Certified Farmer’s Market. The market will be open every Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. outside of Building 200 – Outpatient Services.

Shoppers will find fresh quality fruits and vegetables (many certified organic), beautiful flowers, organic eggs and unique gifts from small-scale family farmers and local independent businesses. When you shop at the Natividad Medical Center Certified Farmers’ Market, you are supporting local California growers.

The Certified Farmers’ Market is part of Natividad Medical Center’s ongoing commitment to promote wellness and healthy eating among hospital staff, patients and their families.

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