Emergency Services Marks Tsunami Awareness Week

While the Monterey County community marked the third anniversary of the Tsunami event along the California coast earlier this month on March 11th, the County’s Office of Emergency Services (OES) made plans to test its Tsunami readiness during National Tsunami Preparedness Week, which was this week, March 23-29.

On Wednesday, March 27th, OES tested its new telephone notification system – the alerting system that reaches public safety agencies and partners in the event of a tsunami warning. This is a critical first step, as it brings key agencies together quickly on the phone, no matter what time of the day or night, for a conference call to get the latest information on the situation, gain consensus on what actions are needed, determine resources and needs, among other key points.
During the ‘mock’ emergency notification, agencies such as fire, sheriff, police, parks, harbors and non-profit agencies were contacted by phone and instructed where to call in for a large scale conference call. Agencies representatives called in and with OES, practiced going over a list of actions that would be taken if the situation were real such as evacuation plans, weather service information and public emergency messages.

This alerting system and call plan is one of the key features of the County’s tsunami ‘playbook.’ The playbooks was developed to aid emergency managers with a decision algorithm in evaluating what emergency protective actions would be needed based on the characteristics of the tsunami event and provide a common operating procedure.

“The playbook incorporates local factors of tides, storm surge and local conditions to give a more accurate prediction of run-up and inundation,” explains Sherrie Collins, OES Manager. “As an emergency manager this tool is invaluable. When you have to make critical decisions at 2:00 am, the playbook takes you step by step through that decision process. It eliminates the guess work. We all see the same facts and recommendations from the NWS and scientists that built the modeling.”

Prior to the tsunami event in 2011, the county already had a Tsunami Incident Response Plan, but after the 2011 event, the plan has been upgraded and expanded to create more built in actions. You can check out tsunami information, plus browse many other aspects of emergency preparedness at the OES webpage: http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/oes/

Social Services Department Honors Staff Achievement

Twice a year, the Department of Social Services (DSS) recognizes employees for outstanding achievement in leadership and customer service, as well as those who act as a mentor, role model and most outstanding team effort.

The department’s spring 2014 Employee Recognition event was held March 20th. A total of 32 employees were honored during the event, which is the culmination of a nomination and selection process.

Pictured at the recognition ceremony (L-R) Supervisor Simón Salinas, Alex Soltero (Role Model honoree), CAO Lew Bauman, Marlene Ramirez (Customer Service honoree), Supervisor Fernando Armenta, Supervisor Lou Calcagno and Social Services Director Elliott Robinson.
Here is a list of the honorees:

**Customer Service:**
Marlene Ramirez, EW I
Araceli Vazquez, OA II
Judy Perez, E&T III
Josie Camarena, SSA II

**Leadership:** Annette Press, EW Supervisor

**Mentor:** Donna Lopuch, EW II

**Role Model:**
Alex Soltero, EW I
Rosie D. Aviles, EW II
Lisa Smith, EW II

**Team**

**Salas Team:**
Roberto Uribe
Dorothy Avita
Donna Lopuch
Julie Perales
Tamara D. Ulferts
Tracy Brown

**CMIPS II Implementation Team:**

**Team Leaders:**
Irene Cole
Cora M. Guerrero
Terry D. Bishop Peterson
Patricia Schmidt
Cristina Moyer
Sylvia Ballantyne

**The SuperUsers:**
Cindy Avelino
Edna D. Evangelista
Teobaldo A. Esparza
Ronald E. Lee
Suzanne Moreno
Jeri Partida
Armando Ramirez
Janie Reed
Joshua Schwin
Beatriz Torres Ortega
Allison Yant

(L-R) Sylvia Ballantyne (Team honoree), Irene Cole (Team honoree), Janie Reed, Josie Camarena (Customer Service honoree), Allison Yant (Team honoree) and Christina Moyer (Team honoree).
Natividad Medical Foundation Gives and Receives

At the Natividad Medical Foundation’s Annual Meeting Celebration earlier this month, it was a day of giving, receiving, art and culture.

The Agricultural Leadership Council (TALC) presented the Foundation with a $350,000 check, bringing TALC's total contributions to date to more than $1.1 million.

"TALC is proud to support Monterey County's safety net hospital, a crucial resource for agricultural workers and their families," said John D'Arrigo, President and CEO of D'Arrigo Bros. Co. of CA, who founded TALC in 2010. "Over the past five years, farm families and the agricultural community have joined forces to truly change lives and save lives by raising funds to purchase more than 70 pieces of critical medical equipment and fund medical interpreting services for Natividad."

Then it was the Foundation’s turn to bestow its 2014 Hero Award to Driscoll's and J. Miles Reiter, Driscoll's Chairman and CEO, founding members of The Agricultural Leadership Council (TALC), in recognition of Driscoll's $107,700 in gifts to support cross cultural initiatives, including a $75,000 donation earmarked for the launching of Indigenous Interpreting+, a new interpreting service specializing in indigenous languages offered by the Foundation.

The day’s festivities continued with music, dancing and art. Indigenous Oaxacan music, food, dance and craft displays were sponsored by Comerica Bank. The hospital also unveiled its latest art exhibitions: “California History - The Mission Trail,” paintings by the Monterey Bay Plein Air Painters Association, and “42 Wildflowers,” featuring photographer Arturo Bejar.