

Change a Part of Past and Future for New SSA Director

It's a long way from the cornfields of Nebraska to the beaches of Orange County. For Dr. Michael Riley, the new Director of the Social Services Agency (SSA), the journey to the top post in the County's largest agency has been filled with more than a few twists and turns.

Dr. Riley was born and raised in Nebraska and his Cornhusker roots are often mentioned during his appearances before the Board of Supervisors. Starting out as a special education teacher working with children with learning disabilities and behavioral disorders, he did not foresee the career changes that would bring him to California. His first foray outside of education came while working at the nationally renowned Boys Town, where he became more involved in human services programs while working with group and foster homes. "I became more interested in social dynamics while working with families, looking at what at risk families have in common and what can be done to intervene," Dr. Riley recalled. At the time, Boys Town was moving away from a single campus and was expanding its teaching family model nationwide. Orange and Los Angeles Counties were selected for the Boys Town expansion, so Dr. Riley moved west to help set up the six programs developed in our area.

While still working for Boys Town in Southern California, the position of child welfare director for the County of Orange came open and several people encouraged Dr. Riley to apply. "It had never crossed my mind," Dr. Riley stated. "When I applied, I never thought I'd have a ghost of a chance. Low and behold, I got it." Dr. Riley's arrival at the County of Orange in 1997 allowed him to bring a new approach, or as Riley put it, "a different set of eyes" on how we approached working with families and at-risk kids. At the same time, then SSA Director Larry Lehman was anticipating major changes at the Federal level that occurred in 1997 with a shift that Dr. Riley compares to "turning an aircraft carrier around."

The major changes focused on mitigating risk factors and connecting families to community resources, not making them dependent on government for assistance. The effort to get the community involved resulted in the



Dr. Michael Riley is the new Director of the Social Services Agency.

development of the county's twelve Family Resource Centers and partnerships between County agencies. "We work with the Health Care Agency, Probation, the Sheriff's Department and others because in many cases we are talking about the same families." By reconnecting families to the community, SSA works to achieve its primary goal of keeping families together and helping them to be self-sustaining.

Just as change has helped to shape his career, there is more change on the horizon. Today's economic conditions have increased demand for services, with SSA now serving close to 400,000 people in Orange County each month. SSA is also planning for new challenges, such as the implementation of health care reform. "We have a limited idea of what that will look like," said Dr. Riley. "There are estimates that it could result in 80,000 to 100,000 additional clients for SSA by 2014." In October, SSA will implement a service center model for client interaction, allowing clients to handle many transactions over the telephone. "Service centers have reduced foot traffic to offices by 20% in other jurisdictions. We will continue to look at how we can use technology more efficiently and effectively to serve the growing number of clients." ■

Being a Reference Librarian Is “Kind of Like Playing”

As a reference librarian at Heritage Park Regional Library for the past 16 years, Patrick O'Halloran has fielded an ocean's worth of questions. Reference librarians must research nearly every type of question imaginable. From how to obtain a local business license to helping students find homework sources, reference librarians navigate and pick their way through online searches and text materials to find the answer. After all, someone needs to know.



Patrick O'Halloran has fielded every type of question imaginable as a reference librarian at Heritage Park Regional Library. He notes that being a librarian is “kind of like playing.”

O'Halloran didn't grow up dreaming of one day becoming a librarian. He attended Cal State University, Long Beach where he studied economics, but turned to working in the university's library for a part-time job with flexible hours. According to O'Halloran, he took to it like water. After a detour in nursing, O'Halloran found himself returning to library services and joining OC Public Libraries (OCPL) in 1994.

As the economy has suffered over the past few years, the number of business questions has proliferated as people have either turned to self-employment or are seeking a new career and need to polish their resume. Heritage Park Regional Library has even developed specialized monthly meetings to help community members with the myriad of questions that arise from starting a small business and developed handouts noting the many resources available for

help in opening a business. The library has also maintained three separate Internet searching classes and provides one-on-one computer assistance as needed.

“My favorite part of my job is the interaction with the public,” said O'Halloran. “This is more than just books and information. Whatever the question is, it is important to the person asking it. We are problem-solving and it is truly satisfying to help meet their needs.”

During busier times of the year, O'Halloran may receive three or four questions in the time it takes him to walk from the library's front doors to his desk. Those days go by quickly.

When asked about some of the more unusual questions O'Halloran has tackled, he thinks back to the online librarian-provider questions he sometimes covers where queries come in from all over the world. Two such questions involved the attaining of a crane permit in the United Kingdom and an individual in Europe trying to locate death certificates dating back to the time of The Plague.

The topic of greatest interest to O'Halloran now is the future. As electronic resources are gaining popularity and abundance, particularly e-books, the library industry will show its flexibility. “This profession is always in flux. While we may not be on the bleeding edge of adopting technology, we are aware of the marketplace and always monitor where it may go.”

The Heritage Park Regional Library has four full-time reference librarians, three handling adult resource questions and one handling children's queries. This library alone checked out more than one million items last year and is well on the way to exceeding one million this year. ■

Save the Date for the “Give for a Chance to Dream Again” 2010 United Way Leadership Breakfast

County employees are invited to attend the United Way Leadership Breakfast from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Thursday, September 23rd at the Hilton Irvine/Orange County Airport.

The event will feature keynote speakers Al De-Grassi, Senior Vice President of Plaza Bank and OC United Way’s Chairman of the Board, as well as Jenny Rodin, recipient of United Way-funded WISEPlace program.

Tickets cost \$30 pre-sale, \$35 at the door or \$300 for a table of ten guests. Seating is limited, so please be sure to RSVP by Tuesday, Sept. 14th with payment and registration. All proceeds benefit the United Way.

“Each year, the Orange County United Way campaign raises the awareness among Orange County employees about the virtues of giving back to the community and helping others during a time of unforeseen need,” said Steve Franks, Director of OC Community Resources and 2010 Campaign Chair. “This year, the economy has impacted many of our employees and members of the community through lay-offs, pay cuts, or through other types of financial hardship. A United Way agency may come to the rescue in one way or another.

Only through our donations whether large or small are we able to help those who have experienced some type of setback due to our local and global economy.” ■



2010 ORANGE COUNTY UNITED WAY LEADERSHIP BREAKFAST
September 23, 2010
Hilton Irvine Orange County Airport
18800 MacArthur Boulevard, Irvine, CA 92612
7:00am Check-In 7:30am Program

Pre-sale	\$30	Price of ticket(s) includes parking
At the door	\$35	
Table	\$300	

SPEAKERS:
BILL CAMPBELL
 ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, 3RD DISTRICT
STEVE FRANKS, COMMUNITY RESOURCES DIRECTOR
 ORANGE COUNTY EMPLOYEES 2010 CAMPAIGN CHAIR
DEBORAH KWAST PUBLIC DEFENDER
 ORANGE COUNTY EMPLOYEES 2010 CO-CHAIR
STEVEN J. SENTMAN, CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER
 ORANGE COUNTY EMPLOYEES 2009 CAMPAIGN CHAIR

KEY NOTE SPEAKERS:
AL DEGRASSI, PLAZA BANK, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
 CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, ORANGE COUNTY UNITED WAY
JENNY RODIN
 RECIPIENT OF WISEPLACE, A UNITED WAY FUNDED PROGRAM

GIVE FOR A CHANCE TO DREAM AGAIN

OC Community Resources

Fremont Canyon: Orange County’s Rugged, Urban Wilderness

OC Parks received quite a gift this summer, part of a National Natural Landmark and the first State Natural Landmark. On June 29th, the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to accept a gift of historic proportions – 20,000 acres of protected open space. The land was donated by the Irvine Company to the County for preservation and managed recreation.

The Irvine Ranch Open Space gift, part of the Irvine Ranch Natural Landmarks, is the largest single donation of land to the County in its history, increasing OC Parks’ parkland by 50 percent to a total of 60,000 acres. Conservation efforts on the

land will continue through an agreement with a nonprofit group called the Irvine Ranch Conservancy, whose mission is to preserve and protect the open space ecosystem and connect people to the land.

Southern California fosters a globally important ecosystem that thrives in a Mediterranean climate only found in five places in the world. As such, wild land in Southern California is vital since many of the diverse animals and plants found here are *only found here*.

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Among the 20,000 acre gift are miles of pristine – seemingly untouched – hills, cliffs and canyons. One such treasure is Fremont Canyon, a rugged, yet urban, wilderness area connecting the Cleveland National Forest to Irvine Regional Park in Orange. Fremont Canyon is known for its jagged cliffs and large plateaus, caves and arches formed out of granite and sandstone rock. Canyon views atop Lizard or Cathedral Rock are immense, while the familiar sounds of human existence cease. Instead, sounds of chaparral bear grass rustling in the breeze and the cicada insects are customary.

The area is also well known for the many endangered or threatened species of animals that live there. From coastal horned lizards and spade foot toads to golden eagles, grey foxes and mountain lions, the area hosts an entire ecosystem largely tucked away from human interference. Although mountain lions are predators, they play a vital role in the ecosystem by controlling the number of deer in the herds and are typically not aggressive towards humans.

Fremont Canyon, however, grows far more endangered plant species than animals. One such species is the tecate cypress tree. Fremont Canyon is the northern-most spot it is found. The cypress only grows in two other places in the world and dates back to the Pleistocene Epoch when woolly mammoths roamed the earth. A large stand of the

FREMONT CANYON SLIDESHOW: [CLICK HERE](#)



A portion of Fremont Canyon looking towards the Cleveland National Forest.

tecate cypress burned in the 2006 Sierra Peak Fire, yet the resilience of the land is allowing the remaining cypress to sustain themselves.

A native plant farm operated by the Irvine Ranch Conservancy is used for the collection and processing of native seeds from the area. The local seeds are then planted back into the soil to combat the non-native plant invasion that perpetuates after frequently occurring wildfires.

Orange County residents and visitors can access Fremont Canyon through docent led tours and activities. Visit www.irlandmarks.org for activities or www.ocparks.com for more information. ■

Protect your Pets Using AlertOC

Emergencies can happen at any time. A wildfire could spread or a flood could close the roads to your neighborhood while you are at work and your pets are at home. The County's mass notification system – AlertOC – is a lifeline to immediately learn of any required actions so that you may have a better chance to pick up your best friends if conditions permit.

AlertOC is Orange County's regional emergency notification system used by the County and 32 cities to notify residents and businesses during an

earthquake, flood or fire.

The best time to register your numbers to help protect your furry family members is now. September is National Disaster Preparedness Month, reminding us to look at our own level of preparedness and emergency plans. Registering your cell phones and e-mail addresses with AlertOC will increase your chance of being alerted when an emergency situation is impacting your neighborhood.

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By registering your daytime numbers, cell phones, text devices and e-mail accounts, you will receive timely notifications of emergency situations. AlertOC is also regularly updated with landline phone numbers. The County urges all residents and businesses, whether or not they have pets, to visit www.AlertOC.com to register their alternate numbers. ■

Just as is the case for humans, displacement can be distressing for pets. Create emergency kits for your animals with food, treats, medicine and a comforting play toy. Visit ReadyOC.org for assistance with creating emergency kits, as well as other essential preparedness information.



Get Ready to ShakeOut 10/21 at 10:21 a.m.

At 10:21 a.m. on Thursday, October 21st, County employees will join an estimated 5 million residents statewide who will drop, cover and hold on during the Great California ShakeOut earthquake drill.

The drill centers on the [ShakeOut Earthquake Scenario](#) a realistic portrayal of what could happen in a major earthquake on the southern end of the San Andreas Fault. Created by more than 300 experts led by Dr. Lucy Jones of the U.S. Geological Survey, the scenario outlines a hypothetical 7.8 magnitude earthquake originating near the Salton Sea, which would have the potential to cause major devastation to the entire region.

The ShakeOut has been designed to inspire participants to get ready for big earthquakes and to prevent disasters from becoming catas-

trophes. Outside of the workplace, individuals can make the most of the exercise by taking the opportunity to prepare their homes and families for emergencies.

For more information, please visit www.ShakeOut.org. ■



COOS Provides Networking Opportunities for Those Who Supervise

Have you heard of the County of Orange Supervisors (COOS)? No, not the Board of Supervisors, the group dedicated to providing continuing education opportunities for County staff who supervise other employees.

COOS has been around since the 1960's, has about 60 members and is open to anyone who supervises staff. COOS members meet once a month (third Wednesday) for lunchtime meetings that usually feature a guest speaker from within the County, private industry or from local

colleges. Speakers provide information on a range of topics including leadership, employee relations, communication, delegating, employee training, writing employee evaluations and interviewing. The COOS organization offers opportunities to network with other supervisors, gain insight into areas of County operations and exchange ideas.

If you'd like more information on COOS, please contact Valerie Oxford at valerie.oxford@ocpw.ocgov.com or by telephone at (714) 567-7808. ■

NASA Brings Mars & Stars to Carbon Canyon Regional Park

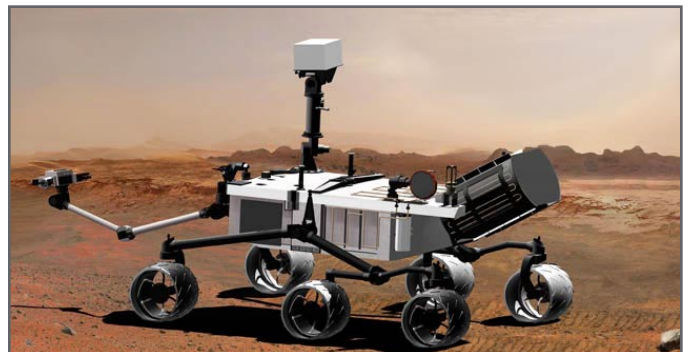
OC Parks welcomes NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) and OC Astronomers for the last in a series of educational programs showcasing missions to Mars, taking place Sept. 18th at Irvine Regional Park.

The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter mission that launched in 2005 and arrived in orbit around Mars in 2006 will be highlighted.

A JPL scientist will describe new discoveries and show images taken by the orbiter, including a scale model of the orbiter itself. The event is free to community members and will include

presentations by JPL scientists, children's crafts, and stargazing led by OC Astronomers.

To learn more, please visit www.ocparks.com. ■



Images of NASA Landers and Rovers will be on display at the Mars and Stars event Sept. 18th.

3rd Annual Angels for Animals Event Received Much Fanfare

Thirteen adoptable, adorable dogs along with their human caretakers at OC Animal Care visited Angels Stadium before the August 11th Angels game for the 3rd Annual Angels for Animals Fundraising Event.

Volunteers and staff members encouraged visitors to spend time getting to know some of the adoptable dogs at the shelter and provided

information about the shelter, including the importance of spaying and neutering pets. While OC Animal Care workers were busy promoting the animals available for adoption, wives of the Angels' players were selling mystery bags with autographed baseballs.

Funds raised from the sale of the mystery bags

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will benefit several Orange County shelters and rescue groups. Since the event, four of the featured dogs have been adopted. The remaining dogs have special signs on their cages letting the would-be adopters know about their big day at Angels Stadium. ■

ANIMAL CARE SLIDESHOW: [CLICK HERE](#)



From right: Tami Rosales holds Chibi Chan, Ryan Drabek with Ya Ya, along with Angels' Wives escorting Oreo, Sally & Scruffy stand on the Angels field just before the Aug. 11th game begins during the 3rd Annual Angels for Animals Fundraising Event.

CAPS+: A Team Effort

The first year-end closing of the County's financial records in the new CAPS+ Financial and Procurement System was completed successfully on July 31st. Closing the County's books without significant issues is an achievement any year. Closing the books successfully using a new financial system, however, is an exceptional accomplishment. It is a testament to the skill and dedication of not only the CAPS+ Team but all CAPS+ Users. Many people pulling together from throughout the County brought this project in on time, on scope, and under budget. Congratulations & thank you!

The CAPS+ year-end close processes were designed, developed, tested and implemented by County staff using expertise they acquired over the past three years on the CAPS+ Upgrade Project. Using County resources for the development of the majority of year-end processes saved the County over \$1.2 million in outside contractor fees. During these challenging economic times, saving money whenever possible was a primary factor in developing the project plan.

The CAPS+ Team continues to work on improvements. Since the implementation of CAPS+, 10 major reports have been redeveloped in a new user friendly format and are accessible in ERMI. At the request of the users, a new CAPS+ Data Warehouse was implemented in June 2010 that allows users to download queries onto their desktops in an Excel format with data that is current as of the prior business day. The team continues to look for ways to streamline and improve reports and processes to ensure financial and procurement transactions are recorded and reported properly.

The Auditor-Controller CAPS+ Team would like to thank all CAPS+ Users for making the implementation and annual close process a success. Without the dedication and professional integrity of the department users, the success of the CAPS+ project would not have been possible. ■



Get the 411 On OC Orange County Data Center

1. At 66,000 square feet, the Orange County Data Center is the County's largest information technology (IT) facility, and is home to some of the County's most critical applications (like the payroll system).
2. The facility was designed to withstand a substantial earthquake, and has built-in redundancy for critical components such as power and battery back-up. It is operated and managed by the CEO-IT team 24x7, 365 days a year.
3. The Data Center hosts 2,484 servers; 1,744 for about thirty non-County public, private and multi-national companies and 740 for the County of Orange. Servers are devices that run software applications or allow computers to communicate, store or process information.
4. Orange County's servers have gone "green" or the equivalent of removing 178 automobiles from the street.
5. An independent assessment by Hewlett Packard concluded that the Data Center's technology infrastructure is in the top third of public sector data centers.



To get more of the 411, [register online](#) for the Data Center Open House event, taking place October 7th.

Orange County Data Center

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Data Center Tour

Join us behind the scenes to see how the Data Center interconnects County Agencies to deliver critical services across the County.

Data Center Tour Registration

[RSVP Here](#)

Free Treat to Participants. Tours will be every hour on October 7, from 1 PM - 5 PM. Limited 15 people per hour.

Who we are and what we do

About the Data center

Established in 1992, the Orange County Data Center was built as a state-of-the-art computing and telecommunications facility. The OCDC provides services to the federal, state, county, local governments and commercial customers throughout the United States.

The Data Center is operated and managed by the CEO-Information Technology team 24x7, 365 days a year.

Need IT services or support?

Services

- Data Center Hosting Services
- Information Security
- Voice Services
- Network Support
- Applications and Data Services
- Enterprise Programs
- Project & Portfolio Management
- Help Desk

Would you like to talk to us?

Contact Us

Orange County Data Center
1400 S. Grand Ave.
Santa Ana, CA 92705

T: 714.834.2449
F: 714.834.7183

Email: servicedesk@ceoit.ocgov.com

[Map & Directions](#)

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Service Awards

For the Month of August

30 YEARS

Barbara Stocker
County Counsel

Elvira Reyes
Health Care Agency

Donna Krucki
OC Community Resources

Richard Davila
Sheriff-Coroner

Maria Lopez
Sheriff-Coroner

Marian Bruns
Social Services Agency

25 YEARS

Rita Segovia
Child Support Services

May Vang
County Executive Office

Maria Vargas
County Executive Office

John Anderson
District Attorney

Christine Caudill
Health Care Agency

Harry Cohen
Health Care Agency

Cheryl Destro
Health Care Agency

Kathaleen Hiller
Health Care Agency

Elena Yoshizumi
Health Care Agency

Michael Brajdic
OC Community Resources

Siraj Hussein
OC Community Resources

Kathy Jo Miller
OC Community Resources

Alan Tam
OC Public Works

Dick Harabedian
OC Waste & Recycling

Karen Daly
Sheriff-Coroner

Richard Dostal
Sheriff-Coroner

Claudio Fabris
Sheriff-Coroner

Paul Fuzzard
Sheriff-Coroner

Theodore Harris
Sheriff-Coroner

Mary Hong
Sheriff-Coroner

Janet Lonich
Sheriff-Coroner

Thomas Mangus
Sheriff-Coroner

Marilyn Tarvis
Sheriff-Coroner

Kevin Bigelow
Social Services Agency

Dorson Ishino
Social Services Agency

John Mannings
Social Services Agency

Linda Oyoung
Social Services Agency

Moon Hang Tran
Social Services Agency

Elizabeth Ramirez
Treasurer-Tax Collector

20 YEARS

Patricia Aguirre
Auditor-Controller

Casie Ha
Auditor-Controller

Tammy Demetry
Clerk-Recorder

Maria Berumen
Child Support Services

Christopher Miller
County Counsel

Rachael Vargas
County Executive Office

Donna Breker
Health Care Agency

Carmina Estrada
Health Care Agency

Virginia Nevares
Health Care Agency

Lynn Tang
Health Care Agency

William MacDonald
John Wayne Airport

Harry Huggins
OC Community Resources

Jose Morales
OC Community Resources

Andrew Wu
OC Community Resources

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20 YEARS CONTINUED

Guy Batterton
OC Public Works

Richard Pointer
OC Public Works

Joel Samonte
OC Public Works

Arthur Agbayani
Probation

Linda Barry
Probation

Edwina Donaldson
Public Administrator/
Public Guardian

Aurora Brinshot
Public Defender

Randy Dixon
Sheriff-Coroner

Bobby Earlywine
Sheriff-Coroner

Edward Espinosa
Sheriff-Coroner

Scott Fitch
Sheriff-Coroner

Richard Himmel
Sheriff-Coroner

Mark Jackson
Sheriff-Coroner

Yvonne Johnson
Sheriff-Coroner

Robert Mergen
Sheriff-Coroner

Tracy Morris
Sheriff-Coroner

Thomas Taylor
Sheriff-Coroner

Jeffrey Thompson
Sheriff-Coroner

Louis Viestenz
Sheriff-Coroner

Scott Webb
Sheriff-Coroner

Craig Wiggins
Sheriff-Coroner

Christopher Wilson
Sheriff-Coroner

Luz Aguilar
Sheriff-Coroner

Carlos Cano
Social Services Agency

Scott Dailey
Social Services Agency

Deanna Dang
Social Services Agency

Stephanie Dang
Social Services Agency

Danny Duong
Social Services Agency

Veronica Garcia
Social Services Agency

Debra Hensley-Cook
Social Services Agency

Tamara Higuera
Social Services Agency

Colleen Kelly
Social Services Agency

Patricia King
Social Services Agency

Hugo Melendez
Social Services Agency

Brett Nelson
Social Services Agency

Loanne Nguyen
Social Services Agency

Michelle Nguyen
Social Services Agency

Shirlene Ortega
Social Services Agency

Kim-Anh Pham
Social Services Agency

Maria Reidler
Social Services Agency

Tina Vo
Social Services Agency

Mary Helen Young
Social Services Agency



CONTACT US

COUNTY CONNECTION is distributed monthly by the County Executive Officer Thomas G. Mauk. The newsletter is published by CEO Community/Media Relations. Call 714.834.6203 or e-mail ask.the.ceo@ocgov.com with any suggestions and comments.

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