



CAO's Corner

By Susan S. Muranishi
County Administrator

Welcome to our first edition of Alameda County Community Connection, our redesigned community newsletter! We launched Community Connection to bring a fresh, more streamlined look to our newsletter, which we hope will appeal to our readers.

Community Connection will strive to provide you with important information about Alameda County's activities, along with interesting stories about our employees and departments. We hope you will enjoy this newsletter.

Your comments and ideas are always welcome. Please submit any and all comments to Guy Ashley at guy.ashley@acgov.org or call him at (510) 272-6569.

Quick-Thinking Crucial in Response to Niles Canyon Train Derailment

Alameda County Sheriff's deputies and firefighters take pride in always being ready to provide assistance in some of the County's loneliest and most remote stretches - even in the dead of night. The derailment of a commuter train in Niles Canyon on March 7 made it very clear why we are glad they're out there.

County public safety personnel led the emergency response to the incident involving nearly 200 passengers, which turned a routine rainy Monday evening into a composure-testing, adrenaline-surgic night shift they will never forget.

"That's a call that comes over the radio once in a lifetime," said Sheriff's Deputy Anthony King, one of the first emergency responders to reach the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) train that was knocked off its tracks by a landslide and sent tumbling into rain-swollen Alameda Creek.

It was quick thinking by King and his partner, Deputy Justin Brannon, which allowed emergency crews to reach the train and render aid to the passengers who experienced the nightmarish mishap. Because the ACE tracks run on the other side of the creek from Niles Canyon Road, crews first at the scene were perplexed about how to reach the derailed passenger cars. King even tried to wade across the creek, but his progress was halted by the frigid, fast-moving waters.

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12 Inducted Into Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame



Inductees for 2016 are, left to right, Tina Raine-Bennett, MD, MPH, Sarah Crowell, Marcia Blackstock, Stephanie Couch, Ph.D., Quinn Delaney, Suzanne Barba, Leora Feeney, Aloysia Rochon Fouché, Victoria Jones and Jacqueline Chen, Ph.D. Not pictured are 2016 inductees Gail D. Hunter and Lizbeth Hernandez Photo by Howard Hill

Twelve outstanding local women were inducted into the Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame at its 2016 Luncheon and Awards Ceremony on March 19. The event raised funds for organizations serving women, youth and families, as well as the "Leading the Way" Youth Scholarship Fund. The fund provided \$3,000 to this year's Youth Category inductee, Lizbeth Hernandez. This year's inductees were:

Victoria Jones, Business and Professions. Victoria is a Vice President with Clorox Corporation who guides the Clorox Foundation's grant-making to support strong, healthy communities.

Suzanne Barba, Community Service. Suzanne is a longtime community activist who supports important causes including good schools, healthy neighborhoods and first-rate health care in the County's unincorporated areas.

Sarah Crowell, Culture and Art. Sarah is Artistic Director of Oakland's Destiny Arts Center, which provides dance, theater and martial arts training to young people and aims to end isolation and violence in their lives.

Stephanie Couch, Ph.D., Education. Stephanie is Executive Director of the Institute for STEM Education at Cal State East Bay and is a driving force in efforts to raise the level of education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math in schools across the region.

Leora Feeney, Environment. Leora is a longtime volunteer with the Golden Gate Audubon Society whose efforts to save Alameda's tiniest endangered bird – the California Least Tern – convinced three federal agencies to create a wildlife reserve in Alameda.

Tina Raine-Bennett, MD, MPH, Health. Tina is a Senior Research Scientist and Staff Physician with Kaiser Permanente whose expertise in the areas of contraception and reproductive health has helped to improve the health outcomes of scores of women.

Marcia Blackstock, Justice. Marcia is the longtime Executive Director of Bay Area Women Against Rape (BAWAR), the first rape crisis center in America. Her work has led police, prosecutors and the courts to be more accountable to victims of sexual assault.

Aloysia Rochon Fouché, Non-Traditional Careers. Aloysia is a former school teacher who took over her husband's funeral home business following his death in 2001. She became one of the country's few female funeral directors and saved a cherished local business.

Quinn Delaney, Philanthropy. Quinn is the founder and President of the Akonadi Foundation, one of the Bay Area's few philanthropies focused on supporting racial justice. Her work to support youth in Oakland schools has helped transform many lives for the better.

Jacqueline Chen, Ph.D., Science, Technology, Engineering. Jacqueline is a Distinguished Technical Staff member at Sandia National Laboratories in Livermore and a pioneer in the study of advanced methods of combustion used in making engines more efficient.

Gail D. Hunter, Sports and Athletics. Gail is Vice President of Public Affairs and Event Management with the World Champion Golden State Warriors. She also is a pivotal player in efforts by the Warriors Foundation to help underserved youth across the Bay Area.

Lizbeth Hernandez, Youth. Lizbeth is a teenager whose tireless involvement is changing her home community of Oakland for the better. She has spearheaded efforts to support social justice, food justice and youth transitioning from the criminal justice system.



An Alameda County firefighter is photographed at the scene of a train derailment in Niles Canyon on March 7. The picture taken by Aisha Knowles of the Alameda County Fire Department was transmitted to news organizations around the world by the Associated Press.

County Leads Derailment Response

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King and Brannon found a nearby access road and used a pair of bolt cutters to pass through a security gate and gain access to the tracks. After sprinting several hundred yards, the deputies – joined quickly by colleagues from the County Sheriff's Office and Fire Department – were able to reach the front passenger car that lay partially submerged in the creek. They climbed through a rear access door, entered the car and helped those passengers who remained inside to evacuate. Best news of all – none of the train's passengers suffered life-threatening injuries, which one responder called a "miracle."

Sheriff Gregory Ahern said the incident reinforced the pride he feels about the high level of competence deputies show each day. "I am always amazed that they place the safety of others as a priority even before their own," he said. Scott Haggerty, President of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors said, "The professionalism and composure consistently demonstrated by our Alameda County public safety personnel, coupled with their innate ability to provide such a high level of care under extraordinary circumstances is truly top notch. I extend my deepest gratitude and commend each of the deputies and firefighters who responded to the incident."

Alameda County Fire Chief David Rocha said he also was proud of the well-coordinated response involving about 30 of his firefighters, as well as colleagues from several other fire departments. Emergency crews quickly activated the Alameda County Fairgrounds as a staging area for passengers to receive warmth and nourishment. From there, free bus rides were provided to the passengers to get them home. "Large-scale exercises like Urban Shield get their share of criticism, but an incident like this shows very clearly why we do all that training," Rocha said. "It works."



Three Grand Prize winners at Alameda County Apps Challenge 2016 were presented with a check for \$2,000 by Tim Dupuis, Alameda County Chief Information Officer and Registrar of Voters; District 3 Supervisor Wilma Chan; and County Administrator Susan S. Muranishi

Focus on Innovation: Apps Challenge Fights Poverty, Hunger

An estimated 140 people turned out on February 27th for the fifth in Alameda County's series of community hackathons. Alameda County Apps Challenge 2016 took a slightly different approach than its four predecessors - focusing on ideas for using technology to assist in fighting poverty and hunger in Alameda County.

A Grand Prize of \$2,000 was presented to the creators of "All in 4 CalFresh," a mobile app to help determine a person's eligibility for California's Nutrition Assistance Program, and to help community-based organizations to manage recipients' cases. Judges said the app was the day's Best Solution Supporting the War on Poverty.

The event was co-sponsored by the offices of Supervisor Wilma Chan and County Administrator Susan S. Muranishi. Participants said they were thrilled by the large turnout and by the many apps and ideas that emerged, innovations that can and will make a difference in fighting poverty and hunger.

Alameda County Board of Supervisors

Scott Haggerty, President, District 1; Wilma Chan, Vice President, District 3; Richard Valle, District 2; Nate Miley, District 4; Keith Carson District 5
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