

San Diego Newsline

Downtown San Diego news — the budget, public safety, business, and the civic life of America's Finest City

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COUNTY

Luck Flows Both Ways! Spin for a Discounted Adoption Fee



Illustration

Consider this your lucky month if you’re looking to adopt a pet. County Animal Services is putting fate in your hands with its own Wheel o’ Fortune for pet adoptions. Give the wheel a spin to see your discounted pet adoption fee. This promotion runs through all of March.

The adoption fee can range from free to \$17, puppies and kittens excluded, at both the South Shelter in Bonita and the North shelter in Carlsbad.

“In our opinion, the luck flows both ways with this deal. The person and the pet both gain an enduring friend,” said Vaughn Maurice, County shelter director.

Walk-in hours are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday at the South Shelter, 5821 Sweetwater Road in Bonita and the North Shelter, 2481 Palomar Airport Road in Carlsbad.

All adoption fees include spaying or neutering, a microchip, updated vaccinations and a one-year dog license for those in the service area.

To adopt, you just need a photo identification card. Adoptions are on a first-come, first-served basis.

Pets who have been at the shelter for 30+ days

Not ready to commit? Try fostering a pet to see if it is a good fit, or just to give him or her a break from the shelter environment. All supplies such as food, leash, and bedding, are provided. Plus, fostering helps pets get comfortable in a home

environment, increasing their chances of adoption.

Want to help in other ways? The shelter always welcome foster families, volunteers, and pet food donations! Call (619) 767-2675 or visit the Animal Services main website to learn more.

Come spin the wheel, find your perfect match, and let luck lead you to your new best friend.

County of San Diego news release · Mar 4, 2025



Illustration from a photo by Edward O'Connor (hober) · Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0

COUNTY

Voter Information Pamphlets Go Out to Registered Voters for District One Special Primary Election

Voter information pamphlets are on their way to over 376,000 registered voters in the County of San Diego’s First Supervisorial District for the April 8 special primary election .

The Registrar’s pamphlets contain information on voting options, election deadlines, candidate statements and more. It also includes a sample of what your official ballot will look like. Additionally, voters can find a list of official ballot drop boxes and vote centers inside their voter information pamphlet or online at sdvote.com .

Voters may also look up their pamphlets online with the View Voter Information Pamphlet (Sample Ballot) tool at sdvote.com.

If you signed up to get your voter information pamphlet electronically, you should have received an email giving you the same information and a link to your pamphlet.

Voters who want to be among the first to see their pamphlet every election can sign up to receive all future pamphlets electronically. Voters who take this option will no longer receive a paper copy in the mail but will get an email when the pamphlet becomes available online.

Registered voters in District 1 will receive a ballot in the mail the week of March 10. The official ballot packet will include an “I Voted” sticker, voting instructions and other important election information.

The person elected will fill the district’s vacant seat for the remainder of the current term that ends in January 2029. If no candidate receives a majority vote at the April 8 election, the top two vote-getters will move on to the special general election on July 1. Only those who live in the district can vote in the election.

District 1 runs from the Pacific Ocean to the Otay and San Miguel mountains in the east, and from Barrio Logan in the north to the U.S./Mexico international border on the south. The district includes the cities of Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, National City and some communities within the City of San Diego, including Barrio Logan, East Village, Golden Hill and more. It also includes the unincorporated areas of Bonita, East Otay Mesa, Lincoln Acres, Sunnyside and La Presa.

If you’re not sure if you reside in District 1, you can look it up at sdvote.com .

Learn more about voting in the District 1 special primary election at sdvote.com or call (858) 565-5800 or toll free at (800) 696-0136.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 28, 2025

DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

Courts · Transit · Public safety

COUNTY

Fire Chief Motivates Young Men to Pursue First Responder Careers

Sixteen young men who are part of a joint County Probation and Fire training program dove into history to find inspiration from trail blazers in first responder careers.

Three of the youth presented display boards featuring men and women who served in prominent roles in fire or law enforcement.

San Diego City Fire Chief Robert Logan, who is the City of San Diego's third African-American fire chief, met with two Fire Fuel program academies of young men, and a group about to begin a third academy, to tell them about how he arrived at his career. The academies are a structured training program where in-custody youth learn skills for fire fuel and vegetation management.

“I came from humble beginnings,” Logan said. “I always wanted to be a firefighter. I always wanted to help my community.”

Logan told the group he was a hard worker, but he came to realize that what he lacked was education. To address that, he earned his associate’s degree. While in college, Logan says, he was surrounded with other like-minded people who wanted to improve themselves. When he earned his first degree, he liked how that felt. So, he decided to earn a bachelor’s degree. Not long after attaining that goal, Logan applied to get his master’s degree with a goal of a 4.0 grade point average (GPA). This decision would change his life.

Later in Logan’s firefighting career, when the fire chief job opening was posted, the description said that the ideal candidate would have a master’s degree. Even though others of higher ranks applied for the chief position,

Logan got the position because of his experience and education.

Supervising Probation Officer Eduardo Calderon said all the students in the Fuel Crew training program are enrolled in online or in-person college courses.

One youth will be getting his associate’s degree in communications from a local community college in May with a 3.9 GPA. He said he found it inspiring to hear that Chief Logan had taken the same steps in education that he was now focused on.

Although the young man said the Fire Fuel program is great, he signed up for the academy “just to build character and take what I’m learning in this program and apply it to another avenue.”

And he has done that. The youth was accepted at five different universities. He’s already decided to attend one outside of the county that has a support program for formerly incarcerated

students.

Other students are more serious about fire service. One youth wants to pursue it as a career. In listening to Logan, what really resonated with him was the part about how the people you spend time with influence your life choices.

“Being in here, I’ve noticed that we all have the same focus and we’re all here just to better our lives,” a youth said. “It has inspired me to be more disciplined and focused in my other (outside) life.”

Calderon said no one is considered for the program unless they are a high school graduate and have met the minimum expectations of their case-plan. All the youth are cleared for community service, and they do other projects unrelated to fire service, like helping pack and distribute food in the community.

San Diego County Fire Capt. Chris Capossere, who teaches the program

coursework, has seen significant transformations in the youth in the program. He said he sees participants develop better communication skills and that they are well-positioned to apply leadership skills in the jobs they are trying to accomplish.

From the first academy, one youth was referred to the Ventura Training Center, an 18-month fully sponsored fire training program. Another is being sponsored through his training process at a local fire department, Calderon said. Two more were accepted at a California Department of Corrections firefighting program.

“It’s about educating ourselves, and educating others, which is what you did here. You are setting examples for others to come,” Probation Chief Tamika Nelson told the group. “I’m very proud of you.”

County of San Diego news release · Feb 28, 2025

BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy



Illustration

BUSINESS

From the Desk of Veronica Perondi – March 2025

2025 is flying by and we’re already rounding out the first quarter of the year.

As I reflect on the recent Influence program, it provided me unique opportunity to witness the power of different perspectives coming together, breaking silos, and fostering connection. Being part of the conversations, hearing from the leaders who are navigating both the challenges and opportunities and connecting with others who can help be part of the solution is what LEAD is about. Our collective potential is limitless when we connect and learn from one another.

I’ve been reading Good Power by Ginny Rometty, and many of her insights have deeply resonated with me. She writes about how leaders can use their power for good, driving meaningful change not just for themselves or their organizations, but for the many. A key takeaway for me is the emphasis on learning, how a willingness to develop new skills at every stage of life is invaluable. This growth mindset is essential for leaders who aim to make a lasting impact.

Another idea Ginny shares, that I believe, is the understanding that positive change is rarely achieved alone. Trying to effect meaningful progress requires collaboration. We need others, diverse voices, experiences, and talents, to bring about the positive outcomes we seek. This belief is at the heart of what LEAD San Diego offers. Our programs provide opportunities to connect, learn, and gain a competitive

advantage by stepping outside of the silos we can so easily find ourselves in.

Community leadership programs like LEAD help individuals harness their own “good power” by connecting with others who share a drive for continuous learning and positive change. Together, we create networks that not only advance careers but also strengthen our region through shared knowledge, collaboration, and understanding.

With that in mind, I’m excited to share that nominations for the 2025 Visionary Awards are now open! The Visionary Awards recognize individuals whose leadership helps others see the world in broader and more creative ways. To me, being a visionary leader means supporting others to envision possibilities they may not have seen on their own. It’s about encouraging innovative thinking, embracing diverse ideas, and connecting people and

resources to create real, positive change.

I encourage you to think about the visionary leaders in your own networks. Who inspires you to see the world differently? Who is driving change that benefits many? Let’s celebrate those who are using their leadership and power for good, those who remind us that leadership is ultimately about lifting others and creating a community where everyone can thrive.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Mar 5, 2025

BUSINESS

ECS Moonlight Ball: Together Under the Stars

ECS invites you to the Moonlight Ball —an unforgettable evening of celebration and impact. Join us for a night of fine dining, live music, and exciting auctions, all in support of ECS’ mission to uplift our neighbors in need.

This annual gala is a

chance to be part of transformative change. Every ticket purchased, auction bid, and donation directly supports ECS programs that address San Diego’s most pressing challenges, including homelessness, mental health, substance use disorders, and early childhood education.

Your generosity empowers ECS to touch the lives of over 10,500 clients and families each year. Together, we can create lasting change and build a stronger, more vibrant San Diego community.

The Moonlight Ball: Together Under the Stars will take place on Saturday, May 17 at 5:30 pm at the Hyatt Regency La Jolla at Aventine, located at 3777 La Jolla Village Drive San Diego, CA, 92122.

Purchase your ticket today and be part of this meaningful night. We can’t wait to see you there!

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Feb 26, 2025

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THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

Opinion — the views of the writers named, not news reporting

COMMENTARY

California Mayors Must Act Swiftly on Fiscal Reforms, Moorlach Argues

John Moorlach, senior fellow and director of the Center for Public Accountability at the California Policy Center, warns that major cities face ballooning deficits and calls for immediate transparency, spending cuts and structural changes.

California’s largest cities are teetering on the edge of fiscal collapse, according to John Moorlach, senior fellow and director of the Center for Public Accountability at the California Policy Center.

Los Angeles Controller Kenneth Mejia has warned that the city is nearing a “fiscal emergency,” a situation worsened by recent wildfires, Moorlach writes. San Francisco, San Diego and Oakland also show severe financial strain.

In its 2021 report, San Francisco ranked 98th out of 100 Bay Area cities with an unrestricted net deficit of \$3.1 billion. By the year ending June 30, 2024, that figure had improved by one-third to \$2.1 billion.

San Diego, which placed

last among its 18 neighboring cities in 2022 with a \$2.3 billion unrestricted net deficit, reduced the shortfall only slightly to \$1.9 billion in 2024.

Los Angeles ranked 65th out of 88 cities in its county in 2022 with a \$5.2 billion deficit. That position deteriorated to \$5.8 billion in 2024, the only one of the three cities moving in the wrong direction, Moorlach reports.

Oakland ranked lower than San Francisco in 2021 at 100th place with a \$2 billion unrestricted net deficit and later recalled its mayor in November.

Moorlach argues that these cities’ struggles should come as no surprise to readers of The Epoch Times, which publishes rankings of California cities in various regions once audited financial statements become available. Many of the state’s reports, however, are delinquent by years rather than weeks or months.

The first urgent step, according to Moorlach, is for cities to produce timely financial reports for taxpayers. California State Senator Steven Choi (R-Irvine) has introduced Senate

Bill 595 to make fiscal reporting a priority. If a city cannot operate like a normal city, its council should vote to disincorporate and hand operations to the county board of supervisors, he writes.

At the root of the problem, Moorlach contends, is that these cities are run by public employee unions, who fund the campaigns of those campaigning for the city councils and then receive higher salaries and benefits in return. The status of “union towns” is “the biggest conflict of interest in this liberal and Democratic-controlled state,” he states.

Voters must elect “brave leaders” willing to impose fiscal discipline, the former Orange County supervisor argues. He points to the County of Orange, which after filing Chapter 9 bankruptcy developed a ten-year strategic financial plan, and to Newport Beach, which established fiscal priorities that have been followed for many years including a 30-year facilities plan, a finance committee, a 25 percent general-fund reserve, and a target date to eliminate unfunded pension liabilities.

Sound practices include

being transparent and timely with finances, setting up an emergency fund, paying off debts, paying cash for capital assets to avoid bond interest costs, and having qualified individuals keep the agency accountable, according to Moorlach.

Strong councils must then inform union negotiators what funds are truly available for raises, especially since improved defined-benefit pension formulas automatically increase contribution requirements, creating what he calls “a nasty vice grip.”

The resulting massive unrestricted net deficits stem primarily from unfunded pension and other post-employment benefit liabilities, Moorlach explains.

He presents three key options for the cities. First, they must “cut the credit cards and cut expenditures,” possibly by creating a local version of the Department of Government Efficiency and making swift staffing reductions. Moorlach recalls laying off 1,000 employees as Orange County Board of Supervisors chair in 2008 during the Great Recession.

Second, cities should seriously consider Chapter 9

bankruptcy but only with a credible plan to tackle pension and other unfunded liabilities. He cites Stockton’s elimination of its retiree medical plan, which removed \$500 million from its balance sheet, and recommends shifting to a shared-risk defined-benefit model like the one used successfully for decades in Wisconsin.

Third, except for San Francisco which already operates as a county, cities should weigh disincorporation—dissolving municipal government and letting county supervisors assume control.

Moorlach concludes that most financial troubles result from mismanagement, misjudgment or misfortune, and that too many of California’s 482 cities have suffered from prolonged mismanagement. With so many properly run cities as examples, the others “have got to stop making excuses and get serious about addressing their self-inflicted deficits,” he writes.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Feb 28, 2025

ABOUT THIS PAPER

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downtown San Diego first — City Hall, the Gaslamp Quarter, East Village, Little

Italy, Barrio Logan and the waterfront — and the county around it. Every item names

its source; read the originals and our standards at sandiegonewslne.com.

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