

THE PIPELINE

News from the Ventura County Public Works Agency

June 2015

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From the Director's Desk

Jeff Pratt,
Public Works
Agency Director



Dear Friends,

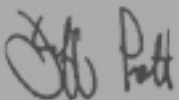
National Public Works Week is an event we look forward to each year, and this year's experience did not disappoint. On May 19, we welcomed over 500 students from local schools, as well as community members of all ages, to celebrate and participate in demonstrations, view displays, and more. The theme for 2015 is "Community Begins Here," and we would like to thank our VCPWA volunteers as well as the public for coming together to make our community shine.

At the board meeting on the same day, I announced the nominees and recipients of this year's "Employee of the Year" awards. Choosing the recipients is always a tough decision, because we have so many wonderful and valuable people working hard for the VCPWA. Congratulations both to this year's nominees and award winners.

This month we were also proud to honor John Pennington, Senior Inspector for Engineering Services, who retired on March 27 after more than 35 years of service. We will miss his expertise and strong work ethic but wish him a long and happy retirement!

Thank you all for your continued efforts and professionalism that remind me and our local citizens why Public Works is such an integral part of our community.

All the Best,



Jeff Pratt
Director



COMMUNITY BEGINS HERE A Lesson in Civics

Display booths, equipment demonstrations, students, and community members filled the Government Center on Tuesday, May 19 to join us in celebrating National Public Works Week.

In keeping with this year's theme "Community Begins Here," VCPWA volunteers directed hands-on stations to bring more public awareness to VCPWA and the important role the five departments within the Agency play.

More than 500 students from Mound and Pierpont elementary schools, Camarillo and Simi Valley high schools, and other local schools attended the event to learn from the hardworking men and women who maintain the Public Works infrastructure in Ventura County.

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NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK!



Students were able to ask questions and interact with Public Works employees during equipment demonstrations that included the remote-control skid steer, striping truck, large bucket truck, emergency response trailer, and snow plow. Members of the Watershed Protection demonstrated how they measure stream and water conditions, and the Transportation Department displayed the Kanan Shuttle. Students made their own road signs, took home California Poppy seeds, and chose from over 600 native plants to grow in their own garden. They looked through microscopes to check the quality of wastewater and cheered and waved at the unmanned aerial vehicle flying hundreds of feet above them.

A group of students also sat in on an active Board of Supervisors meeting where VCPWA employees were honored for their work in the community as well as stepping forward as First Responders in emergencies. The Board adopted a resolution in honor of National Public Works Week and VCPWA Director Jeff Pratt announced this year's "Employee of the Year" recipients: Lucy Taylor, Supervising Accountant III at Central Services; David Hazen, Water/Wastewater Services Supervisor, Water and Sanitation Department; and Jim O'Tousa, Engineering Manager II, County Geologist.

Throughout the day, students also stepped into real-life voting booths and walked out wearing "I voted!" stickers after participating in the VCPWA's Drain Renaming Contest to rename the Oxnard Industrial Drain and the J Street Drain.

Thank you to all of the staff and volunteers that helped put on another successful Public Works Day! **Community truly does begin here.**



CONGRATULATIONS to 2015's Employees of the Year recipients!

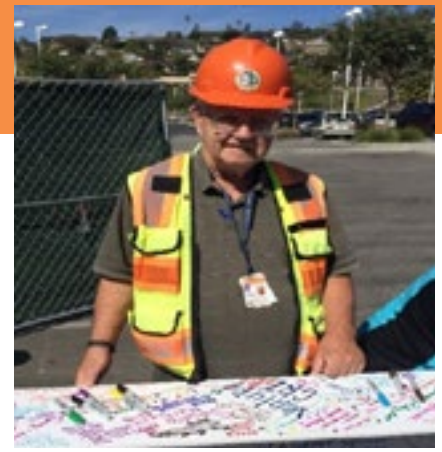


Jim O'Tousa · David Hazen · Lucy Taylor



Honoring 35 Years of Dedicated Service

JOHN PENNINGTON



On March 27, 2015, John Pennington retired from the County of Ventura after more than 35 years of dedicated and loyal service to the Public Works Agency. John joined the County of Ventura Public Works Engineering Services Department in 1980. Prior to starting work with the County, John had enlisted in the United States Navy in 1957 and served 23 years as a Navy Seabee. As a Seabee, John travelled the world from Vietnam to the North Sea to the Caribbean Islands, where he met and eventually married his wife Jean.

While a Senior Inspector for Engineering Services over the last 3 decades, John has been involved in almost every major capital project in the County. From Health Care facilities (In-Patient Mental Health Unit, the Fainer Building, the Electrical Service Building, the 5-story Replacement Clinic, to numerous remodels, and currently the Hospital Replacement Wing); the Fire District (Somis, Kanan, Rincon, Erringer, and Yosemite Fire Stations); Department of Airports (Oxnard Runway Refurbishment); Sheriff's Department (Todd Road Jail); Probation Agency (JJC Detention Facility and Courts); and the Public Works Agency

(Saticoy Operations Yard), John was the integral piece in making all of these projects a great success.

On March 5, 2015, John was honored by his co-workers, Supervisor Zaragoza, CEO Mike Powers, and many other Public Works employees, including four Directors of the Department that he had worked for over his career. John was honored for his loyalty, hard work, leadership, and his mentoring of many project managers, contract specialists, and inspectors over the course of 35 years. Then, on March 24, 2015, John received a Resolution from the Board of Supervisors commending him on his exemplary career and congratulating him on his retirement.

It is with mixed emotions that Public Works says good-bye to the "Silver Fox." His knowledge and expertise as well as his friendship will be sorely missed.

Education in Engineering – Foothill Technology High School

- On May 5, VCPWA Deputy Director, Engineering Services Chris Cooper gave an in-depth presentation to the students at Foothill High School on a career in engineering, his time as an engineer at VCPWA, and the various stages of construction within each project that VCPWA has managed.
- Chris held the students' rapt attention by relating the construction of a building to the human body and used projects like the Todd Road Jail Solar Array Project, Conejo Clinic in Thousand Oaks, and the VCMC Hospital Replacement Wing as examples. Students left the classroom with a better understanding of a career as an engineer and the different stages of construction that are used while working on a project.

Girl Scouts Get a Lesson in Wastewater during Plant Tour

Last month, local Girls Scouts Troop #60361 brought their green vests to see purple pipes as they toured the Moorpark Waste Treatment Plant to learn about wastewater. Thanks to Water/Wastewater Superintendent Augustine Godinez, the girls gained valuable knowledge on where wastewater comes from and travels to. They received insight on the different processes that wastewater must go through before being reused at places like golf courses and farms, including: Headworks, Extended Aeration, Secondary Clarifiers, BeltPress, Tertiary Filters, and Reclamation. Augustine also answered questions about the amount of water used daily and the presence of wastewater in our very own toilets, showers, and sinks at home.

Completed Project Creates Safer Route to School

The Transportation Department completed installation of a new traffic signal and bike lane at Rose Avenue and Collins Street, providing a safer walking route for school children coming and going to Rio Del Valle Middle School and residents of the El Rio neighborhood. The project was funded with a \$418,000 grant from the federal Safe Routes to School program. The grant included \$10,000 for a sheriff's deputy to teach the students about safe walking and cycling habits once a week for a year.

VCPWA hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, May 7, attended by Ventura County Supervisor John C. Zaragoza, Rio School District Superintendent Dr. John Puglisi, El Rio Municipal Advisory Councilmember Mike Barber, and Rio Del Valle Middle School Principal Joanne M. Davidson. Davidson said, "This road is symbolic of the smooth road that we are working together to provide our deserving students. On behalf of the students, thank you."



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