

**December 2016**

## MCAG BIDS FAREWELL TO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARJIE KIRN

Executive Director Marjie Kirn recently announced that she will be leaving MCAG at the end of the year after more than 25 years with the agency. Marjie accepted the position of Executive Director for Santa Barbara County Association of Governments.



Marjie started her career in transportation at the Transportation Alternatives Department at UC San Diego organizing carpools. She joined MCAG in 1991 and since that time has been involved in a wide range of projects and activities including planning highways, pursuing sales tax measures, constructing bus stops and initiating Merced County's One Voice legislative effort. In 2000, Marjie was the lead in starting the Yosemite Area Regional Transit System, a multi-county bus system that serves Yosemite National Park. In 2004, Marjie managed the Partnership for Integrated Planning project, a transportation planning process that included an unprecedented public outreach effort. She also led the first ever eight county San Joaquin Valley Blueprint project in defining a 2050 vision for the valley.

Marjie was appointed Executive Director of MCAG in 2012 and in that time has provided direct leadership over the region's countywide public transit system, regional waste management services and transportation planning activities. During her tenure, the agency has celebrated many great accomplishments including the completion of the Highway 99 Plainsburg and Arboleda Interchange Projects, the first phase of the Atwater-Merced Expressway and the Bradley Overhead Project. Her leadership brought cost-savings to the landfill, improvements to transit operations and expanded services to YARTS.

Marjie concludes her MCAG career with perhaps the greatest achievement yet—the passage of Measure V, a half-cent sales tax dedicated to transportation in Merced County. With this success, the Merced County region will have local resources to address much needed transportation projects over the next 30 years.

Please join the MCAG staff and Governing Board in thanking Marjie for her years of service to the agency, and for her unwavering commitment to the Merced County region. Best of luck in Santa Barbara!

# THANK YOU MERCED COUNTY FOR PASSING MEASURE V WITH OVER 70% VOTER APPROVAL!

## YARTS ONLINE RESERVATIONS

The YARTS online reservation system pilot project for the Hwy 140 corridor has had worldwide success since its launch in October 2016. YARTS has received over 540 reservations which include visitors from China, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Canada, South Africa, India, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom!

Feedback from travelers, tourism agencies and park partners have been overwhelmingly positive. YARTS plans to have online reservations available for all corridors for the Summer 2017 service available by January 2017 at [www.yarts.com](http://www.yarts.com). For more information about reservations or general questions about YARTS, contact Cindy Kelly at (209) 723-3153 x 315 or [cynthia.kelly@yarts.com](mailto:cynthia.kelly@yarts.com)

## MCAG'S NEW DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Please join the MCAG team in congratulating Stacie Dabbs on her recent promotion to Deputy Executive Director. Stacie served as the Public Information Officer for two years prior to accepting her new position. Prior to joining the team at MCAG, Stacie spent 5 years as the Associate Director at the Office of Community and Economic Development at Fresno State where she managed several valley wide initiatives such as the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, Smart Valley Places and the San Joaquin Valley Housing Collaborative. While she moved back to Merced to join the MCAG team in 2014, she first came to Merced in 2004 to serve as Policy Advisor to former Congressman Dennis Cardoza. Stacie earned her BA in Political Science from Fresno State and her Masters in Public Administration from CSU Stanislaus. She is from the small farming community of Firebaugh with family roots in Dos Palos and Mendota. She is the mother of a strong-willed three-year-old daughter and soon-to-be mother of a baby boy, expected to arrive on Christmas day.



## DIRECTORS SPOTLIGHT:

### DEIDRE KELSEY, JOHN PEDROZO, HUB WALSH AND JERRY ANTONETTI



With 2016 coming to a close, MCAG would like to thank four outgoing Directors who have dedicated their time and efforts to the agency for many years: Directors Deidre Kelsey, John Pedrozo, Hub Walsh and Jerry Antonetti.

With 20 years of service on the MCAG Governing Board, Director Deidre Kelsey is a long-standing public servant in Merced County. Born and raised in Visalia, Kelsey moved to Snelling in 1977. After attending Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, she settled on the family cattle ranch in Merced Falls and began her life in civic engagement when she was appointed to the Snelling Municipal Advisory Council in 1978. Kelsey joined the Merced County Planning Commission in 1990 where she served until she was appointed by Governor Pete Wilson to a vacancy on the Merced County Board of Supervisors in August 1995. Now a five term Supervisor, Kelsey has represented District 4 on the Merced County Board of Supervisors with steadfast commitment and dedication. She is also ending her tenure on the MCAG Governing Board as the outgoing Chairperson. Thank you, Chair Kelsey, for

your years of leadership and many contributions to MCAG and the communities you've served.

Director John Pedrozo is a third generation Merced County resident having been born and raised in Merced. He attended Merced High School, and later Merced College. Pedrozo was elected Merced County Supervisor in 2004. His list of civic activities is extensive and in addition to serving as Merced County Supervisor for District 1, he has also served on the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council, San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority Board, Merced County Dairy Advisory Committee, Public Safety Committee, as an alternate for CSAC and NACO, and as a representative for the Area Agency on Aging. Director Pedrozo resides in Merced with his wife, Kelly. Together they have 3 children, five grandsons and 1 granddaughter. Thank you Director Pedrozo for your years of service to MCAG and the Merced County region.



Director Hub Walsh came to Merced in 1967 after living his early years near several Air Force bases around the country. He attended Merced High School and Merced College before transferring to UC Berkeley where he received a B.A. in psychology and sociology. After graduation, Walsh completed a tour of duty in the United States Army and earned a Masters Degree in Social Sciences from Pacific Lutheran University. Following his service in the Army, he returned to Merced and earned his Masters in Business Administration from California State University, Stanislaus. In 1995, he was elected and served two terms on the Merced City Council, and two terms as Mayor of Merced. He was elected to the Merced County Board of Supervisors in 2008 and has since served in a number of roles including the CSAC board, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Board, as Chair of NACO's Veterans and Military Service Committee, and on the YARTS board. Director Walsh resides in Merced with his wife, Rita. They have two children and three grandchildren.

Thank you, Director Walsh, for more than 25 years of service to Merced County and for your selfless service to our country.

Director Jerry Antonetti was born and raised in Dos Palos, California. In 2007 he filled a vacant position on the Dos Palos City Council and was re-elected in 2008 and again in 2012. He was selected by fellow Councilmembers to serve as Mayor Pro Tem and in November 2013 Antonetti was elected to serve as Mayor. His administration has been focused on sound finances, balanced budgeting and strong support for law enforcement, business development, water system improvements and recreation. He has served on the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Selection Plan Committee and the Mayor's Selection Committee. Director Antonetti resides in Dos Palos with his wife Paula. They have three children and three grandchildren. Thank you, Director Antonetti, for your many years of service to MCAG and the Dos Palos community.



# December Meetings & Community Events:

- 12/2 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting
- 12/14 Technical Review Board Meeting
- 12/15 Governing Board Meeting, County Admin Bldg
- 12/15 MCAG Holiday Open House, MCAG Office
- 12/23-12/26 MCAG/Transit Offices closed
- 12/30-1/2 MCAG/Transit Offices closed

## ATWATER

- 12/2 Christmas Parade 7:00 PM (Broadway)

## LOS BANOS

- 12/2 Christmas Parade 6:00 PM
- 12/3 Breakfast with Santa 8:30 am to 11:00 am, Los Banos Community Center
- 12/6 Los Banos Downtown Association - Christmas Evening Downtown

## DOS PALOS

- 12/1 Christmas Parade 6:00 PM

## MERCED

- 12/3 Operation Toy Drive "Stuff The Bus" 7 am to 3 pm, Walgreens at G Street & Olive Ave
- 12/3 Jingle Bell Run for Toys for Tots
- 12/3 Merced Christmas Parade 3:00 pm, Main Street
- 12/8 Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities Workshop 10 am to 3:30pm, Merced College Business Resource Center

## LIVINGSTON

- 12/2 Lighted Parade & Gift Fair 5:00pm to 9:00pm, Main Street

On-going: Ballet/Jazz and Kempo Karate Classes available in Livingston. For more information, please visit the City of Livingston website at [www.livingstoncity.com](http://www.livingstoncity.com).



## OPERATION TOY DRIVE "STUFF THE BUS"



The Bus once again partnered with the Merced County Sheriff's Office and Merced County Human Services Agency for Operation Holiday Toy Drive to benefit children in Merced County.

The Bus spent Saturday, December 3rd located at the Walgreens parking lot on the corner of G and Olive in Merced collecting donations of new, unwrapped toys from the public.

Cash donations, as well as, new coats and blankets were also accepted. For those who are interested in donating but were unable to make it to the toy drive, barrel sites are located throughout the county.

"The Bus was very excited to participate again this year" said Transit Manager Rich Green. "One of the great things about this event is that all of the donations stay local for kids in our communities," Green said.

"Being able to bring a smile to a young person's face and fill their hearts with joy through a small act of service, such as giving gifts, makes all the difference" said Sgt. Delray Shelton, Merced County Sheriff's Office .

All donations will benefit children in Merced County. For more information about the toy drive, please contact CJ Jones with Merced County Human Services Agency at (209)385-3000 x 5285.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM WORKSHOP

The San Joaquin Valley Housing Collaborative is hosting an Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities (AHSC) Program workshop on December 8, 2016 from 10:00am - 3:30 pm at the Merced College Business Resource Center, 630 W. 19th Street, Merced. The workshop will focus on familiarizing jurisdictions and organizations with the AHSC program and identifying ways in which valley communities can apply for program funding. For more information contact Jenna Chilingerian at [jennac@csufresno.edu](mailto:jennac@csufresno.edu) or (559) 278-6119.

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