Alberto R. Gonzales was sworn in as Attorney General of the United States on February 3, 2005, becoming the first Mexican-American to hold such a high position in the White House hierarchy.

Gonzales was born in San Antonio to poor Mexican farmworkers, living in a two-bedroom house without basic facilities. His migrant parents worked hard to give him opportunities.

He attended public schools and served in the Air Force from 1973 to 1975, then attended the Air Force Academy in 1976.

He is the first Mexican American to become attorney general.

Sinfonia Mexicana Presents Sensational Program

Commencing on the 20th anniversary of presenting outstanding Mexican symphonic, mariachi and popular music, Sinfonia Mexicana announced the first of a series of four concerts on March 12, 2005, featuring Trio Los Panchos and Mariachi Divas (back by popular demand), at the historic California Theatre of Performing Arts, 562 West Fourth Street, San Bernardino, starting at 7:30 PM.

The original Trio Los Panchos was formed in 1944 in New York with Mexican Jesus "Chucho" Navarro Moreno, Alfredo "El Guero" Bojail Gil and Puerto Rican Hernando Aviles. The group named themselves, in honor of the famous Mexican revolutionary, Pancho Villa.

Trio Los Panchos, in honor of the famous Mexican revolutionary, Pancho Villa

Trio Los Panchos debuted in New York’s Teatro Hispano and were instant hits with renditions of boleros, melodious vocal harmonies and the qualities of the requinto, a small high-pitched guitar developed and played by Gil. The requinto was integrated with every song and made the popular songs such as Sin Ti and Rayito de Luna greater hits. Trio Los Panchos’ stylist rendition of longtime popular Latin songs were quickly emulated by other well-known trios of that era.

Sinfonia Mexicana photo courtesy of Sinfonia Mexicana

Rialto School District’s Child Development Centers Accredited by NAECY

Rialto School District’s child development centers; Boyd, Casey, Garcia, Myers and Trapp earned accreditation and received the prestigious National Accreditation Award from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the leading national association of early childhood professional, after a two-year review process. Pictured above, (l to r) Robin Valles, director, Barbara Cervantes, teacher, Lida Etse, instructional assistant, Sandra Cummins, instructional assistant, Jessica Bravo, teacher, Bertha Gregory, instructional assistant, Michele Escalona, instructional assistant, Doris Arana teacher, Dolores Gonzales, instructional assistant, Maria Marte, apprentice, Marcella Castrejon, teacher, Melissa Wagenhoffer, apprentice, Lena Ramirez, instructional assistant, and Lynne Brunner, co-director. See article on page 7.

Sinfonia Mexicana photo courtesy of Sinfonia Mexicana

Trio Los Panchos photo courtesy of Sinfonia Mexicana

Mariachi Divas photo courtesy of Sinfonia Mexicana
On January 2003 when a group of concerned citizens informed the First 5 San Bernardino County Children and Families Commission that there were major administrative and fiscal problems in play. After months of investigation by the National Alliance for Human Rights (NAHR), a network of organizations and individuals committed to the preservation and assurance of human rights, despite the lack of transparency and cooperation by Commission staff, concluded that the Commission, which is responsible for providing services to children prenatal to age five in San Bernardino County, was failing miserably in fulfilling its mandate according to the California Children and Families Act of 1998.

The San Bernardino County Children and Families Commission was created as a result of Proposition 10, the Tobacco Tax Initiative, which was passed by California voters in November 1998. Proposition 10 established the California Children and Families Act and added a 50-cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes and tobacco products. Revenue generated from these taxes is required to be used to fund educational, health, and child care programs that promote early childhood development from the prenatal period to age five. Proposition 10 called for an independent commission to be established in each county to distribute funding to local community programs. The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors appoints and oversees the San Bernardino County Children and Families Commission.

Mr. Larkin’s resignation as director of the Commission is not occurring in a vacuum. The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors appointed Mr. Larkin, a person with no previous experience in children’s advocacy, as Commission director. Under his management, the Commission has suff ered devastating setbacks in the delivery of services to our community’s children.
COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT DELIVERS STATE OF EDUCATION ADDRESS
Continued from page 2

schools made AYP goals for 2004 - that's more than double the amount that made it for 2002, the first year of federal reporting.

Safer Schools and Facilities
The countywide Gangs and Drugs Task Force is undertaking a comprehensive effort to reduce gang activities in communities and schools. Last year, two school safety summits were held to facilitate more cooperation between law enforcement and schools.

A big part of school safety lies with adequate facilities. In the past 18 months, county districts have received $813 million from the state school facilities program. "With the high rate of growth that many of our county districts and schools face, the funding to maintain and build schools remains critical to students' success and safety," Fischer said.

Preparation for the Future
Three P-16 Councils have been established countywide to provide a seamless transition for the education of students from preschool through college. The P-16 Councils are collaborative efforts of 21 county school districts, six community college districts and three universities.

The P-16 Council is an innovation that State Superintendent Jack O'Connell has called to adopt statewide.

Other highlights:
The high school graduating class of 2006 faces the requirement of passing the California High School Exit Exam in order to receive their diplomas.

In county state preschool programs, $5.1 million in state preschool funds last year have provided for 40 classrooms serving more than 2,000 preschoolers and their families.

Preparation for the Future Education, Advancement Via Individual Determination, Smaller Learning Communities, Regional Occupational Programs and Virtual Hi-Tech High are giving students access to businesses and advanced technology, as well as preparing them for college and the workplace.

"We will continue our partnerships, be innovators and promote ideas to answer the call for high school reform," Fischer said.

Fischer also noted that county offices of education are being called upon to assume great financial oversight and Williams legislative requirements for districts.

"With these new responsibilities, we pledge not to lose sight of our tradition of service and our mission to keep students first and foremost. Our answer to this call is to support our districts so they can focus on the best educational outcomes for students," Fischer said.

"The future of our state depends upon our commitment to this agenda," Fischer said.

Congressman BACA CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL BIRTHDAY

Congressman Joe Baca held a birthday celebration at the Radisson Hotel, one of the most successful get-together bash ever held in the Inland Empire with over 400 political, civic, labor and community supporters (to l) Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi, Congressman Baca, Attorney General Bill Lockyer and David Lizarraza, TELACU. Photo by IEHN

DESSERT SIERRA PARTNERSHIP PROMOTES EARLY HEALTH AND CANCER DETECTION PROGRAMS

Cervical Cancer is preventable by having a yearly Pap Test. When found early Cervical Cancer is 100% curable! That is why it is important to have an annual Pap test.

The Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts provides FREE Pap tests to women age 25 or older who qualify. Call 1-800-511-2300. Languages include: English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean and Vietnamese.

Desert Sierra Partnership: Promoting Breast and Cervical Health (DSP) and the Cancer Detection Programs: Every Woman Counts are proud to support Cervical Cancer Awareness.

DSP covers the counties of Inyo, Riverside and San Bernardino. Call (951) 657-6565 x245 for more information.

ALBERTO GONZALES SWORN IN AS ATTORNEY GENERAL
Continued from page 1

Academy from 1975 to 1977.

After his discharge from the service, he enrolled at Rice University in Houston, graduating in 1979. Later, he attended the prestigious Harvard University law school, where he received his law degree in 1982.

Gonzales joined the prestigious Houston law firm, Vinson and Elkins from 1982 to 1995, later becoming a partner. In 1995, he was the Texas governor's general counsel, Texas secretary of state in 1997, Texas Supreme Court in 1999, and in 2001, became White House counsel.

During his term as White House counsel, several major controversial issues arose, one main issue being the antiterrorism policy he wrote in a 2002 memo which led the White House to decide it could waive antiterrorism laws and other international legal rights of terror detainees.

These issues were strongly presented by Senate Democratic senators during Gonzales' nomination process before the Senate Judiciary Committee. However, Democrats passed his nomination favorably by Gonzales' impressive family background and specifically in deference to their dispositive relationship with the previous Attorney General Ashcroft.

Reaction to Gonzales' appointment was mixed, with many Hispanics generally viewing him as a role model, especially for Hispanic youth, while others viewed his role as White House counsel as lacking (politically coinciding with Bush policy) in the areas of basic civil rights to prisoners of war and rights to legal counsel.

The Hispanic Congressional Caucus was non-supportive of Gonzales, primarily due to his lack of acceptance to speak to the powerful group. Other national Latino groups, such as the National Council for La Raza and LULAC were supportive, citing his strong educational background and rise to national prominence, but deerring to his political philosophies, not withstanding his personal beliefs.

In the Inland Empire, Hispanics' opinion coincided with the national consensus of Gonzales' background, political and personal beliefs.

Next Issue of the INLAND EMPIRE HISPANIC NEWS will be February 23rd

BEFORE YOU CHOOSE A CLUB, CHOOSE A DRIVER.

THANKS FOR DESIGNATING A DRIVER.
In a traditional ritual ceremony, Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic War Veterans Post 762 and Women Auxiliary members and guests participated in the recent 59th installation ceremonies of Post and Women Auxiliary officers at its clubhouse at 298 So. 'D' Street, San Bernardino.

Newly installed Post officers for 2005 included: Frank Romero, commander, Tony Montoya, first vice commander, Paul Alvarez, 2nd vice commander, Ed Gonzales, 3rd vice commander, Mario Montecino, adjutant/treasurer, Pete Martinez, officer of the day, Joe Vega, welfare officer, and Joe Fierro, chaplain.

Women Auxiliary officers for 2005: Sally Fierro, president, Ernestine Martinez, 1st vice president, Rosie Salas, 2nd vice president, Paula Montoya, 3rd vice president, Julie Ally, secretary/treasurer, Lourie Sanchez, ritual, Esther Montecino, historian/trustee, Lucy Zamora, trustee, and Gloria Rodriguez, chaplain. Sally Cortez, Arcelia Saenz, and Nellie Martinez were installed as new members.

Father Theodore Hutton, assistant pastor at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, San Bernardino, founded our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic War Veterans Post 762, in May 7, 1946, with support from the legendary Monsignor J. R. Nunez, pastor. There were 26 founding members from the parish, with Fidencio Mejia as its first commander.

Since its founding 59 years ago, the Post has been involved with the community, according to long-time member, Joe Vega. In addition to religious activities with the parish, the members have contributed Christmas baskets, and food baskets throughout the year to needy families. The tradition is to frequently visit fellow veterans at the Pettis Veterans Hospital, distribute gifts and other necessities; presenting scholarship awards to students at local schools; involvement with youth groups; and financial contributions to many worthy causes. The Vega family, father, Matias, mother Calistina, four brothers and two sisters, has resided in the City of San Bernardino since the early 1900's. Joe Vegas served in the Philippines during World War II. Many Post members and their siblings also have resided in the San Bernardino area for many decades.

Pete Martinez, active in military groups, stated that members were involved during the recent fires, visiting families at Norton Air Force Base, and have contributed to families during previous floods in the area.

Since its founding, the Women Auxiliary has been an influential and vital partner in the success of the Post's involvement in activities and projects. A major source of income for the Post was the food booth at the Annual Orange Show from 1947 to 1987. Volunteers operated the popular booth and strongly patronized by many in the community. "This was a major source of income for us, and we distributed those funds to many worthy causes," Martinez said.

For many decades, Post 762 has had a strong, solid base in its membership of veterans primarily residing in the West Side area of San Bernardino, with a small membership from adjacent communities. The majority of those veterans primarily served during World War II, with a smaller number from the Korean War. That base has consisted of families that have concentrated roots in the area for several generations with strong Catholic beliefs and traditional family values and traditions.

Those veterans from that era, namely World War II, have greatly diminished in numbers due to advanced age, illness, or death. Consequently, Post membership, similar to many other veterans groups, has had to carry the mission of serving veterans interest and their respective communities with lesser number of veterans involvement.

A strong core of Post members and the Women Auxiliary have challenged this barrier, according to Commander Romero, "We have continued our mission of serving the Catholic Church, veterans, and our community," he said.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic War Veterans 2005 Officers, (l to r): Frank Romero, commander, Tony Montoya, 1st vice commander, Ed Gonzales, 3rd vice commander, Mario Montecino, adjutant/treasurer, Pete Martinez, officer of the day, Joe Vega, welfare officer, and Joe Fierro, chaplain. Photo by IEHN

Catholic War Veterans-Women Auxiliary, (1 to r): Sally Fierro, president, Ernestine Martinez, 1st vice president, Rosie Salas, 2nd vice president, Paula Montoya, 3rd vice president, Julie Ally, secretary/treasurer, back row, (1 to r): Lourie Sanchez, ritual, Esther Montecino, historian/trustee, Virginia Garcia, member, Arcelia Saenz, new member, Lucy Zamora, trustee, Angie Romero, member, Nellie Martinez, new member, Chris-tina Granado, member, and Gloria Rodriguez, chaplain. Photo by IEHN

Federico Mejia, founding member and first commander of the Catholic War Veterans Post 762. Photo courtesy of the Catholic War Veterans.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Post 762, Catholic War Veterans charter. Photo by IEHN

CNS-778553#
Pete Martinez, the longest serving member (51 years) of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic War Veterans Post 762, Martinez is a strong supporter of the military and active in numerous military organizations, and has received many awards for his active involvement. Photo by IEHN

Pete Martinez has the single distinction of 51 years of continued membership in Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic War Veterans Post 762, serving in myriad of positions in the veterans group. Born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Martinez and his wife, Ernestine (Ernie), married 50 years, are well known in the community for their active participation in many worthwhile activities.

Martinez, a retired federal electronic engineer and retired businessman, is a strong military supporter, serving in the Army 82nd Airborne Division and the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team for 10 years (including serving in the Army 82nd Airborne Division and the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team for 10 years (ac-

tive and reserve), with two jumps in North Korea.

In civilian life, Martinez has continued to become actively involved in military-related activities, including: the 187th Airborne Association (held several positions, national and regional); 82nd Airborne National Association (Command Sergeant-Major-Raymond Verdugo Los Angeles chapter), Los Angeles Hispanic-American Airborne Association, Inland Empire Airborne Association; Alamo Silver Wings-San Antonio; recent appointment as Veteran Affairs Voluntary Service National Deputy Representative for the Catholic War Veterans of the United States.

His military awards include: Senior Parachutist Badge; Combat Infantry Badge; Jumpmaster Rated Parachute Badge; four Major Korean Campaign stars (one Spearhead Award); Good Conduct Medal; South Korean Service Medal; United States and South Korean Presidential Citations; Japan and Asiatic Service Medals, among others.

The Inland Empire Hispanic News congratulates Pete Martinez for 50 years of continued Catholic War Veterans membership, and comments his valued involvement in military and civilian activities, and support for veterans welfare.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic War Veterans Post 762 is in an enviable situation with a three generation membership of the Garcia/Granado families contributing their efforts toward the longstanding mission of helping veterans and community.

Virginia Garcia, 75, is an active member of the Catholic War Veterans-Women Auxiliary alongside her husband, Joe Garcia, who served in the Army during World War II from 1941 to 1946 in Germany. The couples, residents of Colton, had daughter, Christina and son Jerry.


Commander Romero said the Garcia and Granado families are an asset to the Post and have contributed many volunteer hours. Romero also stated that many couples in the Post have a history of service for many decades. "We appreciate every members contribution. This makes our work that much more worthwhile," he said.

Winter is here and SOUPS are ON!

Soups, an easy way to serve your family "5 a day"

Add frozen, canned or in season fresh vegetables to your soup recipes

San Bernardino County Department of Public Health, Nutrition Program

CITY OF INDO PREPARES FOR THE 2005 INDO INTERNATIONAL SALSA FESTIVAL, APRIL 2ND & 3RD IN OLD TOWN INDO

Hot Salsa Food, Hot Salsa Music and Hot Salsa Dancing, this festival is sizzling for the whole family this April.

The City of Indio and Kevaworks are organizing the third annual Indio International Salsa Festival (http://www.salasalsa.org - 760-837-7228) for the weekend of April 2nd and 3rd, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. in Old Town. Indio. Just think of all salsa all the time.

The Indio International Salsa Festival will include everything from artisans to merchant vendors with an extensive farmers market; community parade; a classic car show and midway carnival for the little ones; and of course, salsa dancing exhibitions and lessons with an unbelievable salsa food contest completed with entrants from all corners of the globe.

If you think you've got an ancient family salsa recipe you'd like to share with the world, we want you to join our contest and compete for cash, prizes and bragging rights. Bring the entire family down and join us for two days of fun and sun in Old Town Indio this April. Don't forget your dancing shoes and taste buds because its gonna be hot!
SINFONIA MEXICANA PRESENTS
SENSATIONAL PROGRAM

Continued from page 1

After becoming the toast of New York, Trio Los Panchos toured Mexico, playing in many famous nightclubs in Mexico City. Other tours included Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Puerto Rico, and Japan, becoming the most famous trio in the world.

After many years of touring, Aviles left the group and later formed Los Tres Reyes with the brothers Gilberto and Raul Puente. Other musicians throughout the years became part of the Trio Los Panchos. Aviles died in 1986 and Navarro died in 1993.

During their long musical career, Trio Los Panchos recorded 2,500 songs on 250 albums, selling millions, and appeared in 50 films. In 1998, Trio Los Panchos were honored with the Excellence Award at the Premio Lo Nuestro Awards in Miami.

Mariachi Divas, founded in 1999, is an all-female group making big waves in the Los Angeles scene. The group is composed of Mexican, Cuban, Samoan, Costa Rican, Panamanian, Japanese, Honduran, Swiss, and Anglo members. “Music is a way of uniting our cultural backgrounds, with a foundation in mariachi, and we have added musical elements to reflect our diversity,” stated founder and musical director, Cindy Shea.

Mariachi Divas have added varied instrumentation such as timbales, congas, bongos, cajon, tambora, percussion, tres and flute to their traditional mariachi instruments. The traditional mariachi music is blended with cumbia, cha-cha, and merengue, with a combination of Mexican traditional music, Latin, and many other variations pleasing to the young and old.

Mariachi Divas have played at the Arrowhead Pond, Universal Amphitheater, NAMMA Show, Fiesta Broadway, Los Angeles County Fair, Disneyland, and many other venues throughout California. The group performed for Sinfonia Mexicana’s Concierto Para Las Madres in 2004, and was an instant hit.

Ticket prices are $22, $27, $35 and $40, and can be purchased by calling the Sinfonia Mexicana business office at (909) 884-3228 or toll free 1-(866) 687-4284.

SILVERY SUCCESS
Supporters Stepped Out for Arte Público Press’s 25th Anniversary Gala

The ballroom of the InterContinental Hotel Houston was awash in bright colors and festive pinatas in honor of Arte Público Press’ 25th Anniversary celebration on November 13, 2004. The three hundred attendees were equally vibrant as they raised $110,000 in support of the acclaimed, non-profit press based at the University of Houston. Keynote speaker, actress and activist Lupe Ontiveros, commented on the significance of Arte Público’s achievements and the importance of the community’s support, saying, “Here’s where it all begins. They publish the works that eventually become the scripts for my movies and TV performances. They are so true to our culture as Latinos in the United States.”

Guests of the gala dinner enjoyed a delectable meal and a multimedia program showcasing the contributions of Latinos in the arts and in popular culture. Special guests included actress and activist Lupe Ontiveros and director and screenwriter Jesús Treviño. In a fitting tribute to both artists and Arte Público, Ontiveros read a selection from Treviño’s acclaimed short story collection The Fabulous Sindicole and Other Stories, published by Arte Público Press in 1995. Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Houston Mayor Bill White also contributed to the festivities, while Houston businesswoman and philanthropist Trinidad Mendenhall served as the Piñata Party Chairperson.

After dinner, the lights went down and guests danced to the music of local Latino band Mango Punch.

Arte Público Press is the nation’s largest and most established publisher of contemporary and recovered literature by U.S. Hispanic authors. Founded in 1979 and based at the University of Houston since 1980, Arte Público Press, Piñata Books and Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage project provide the most widely recognized and extensive showcase for Hispanic literary arts and creativity. For more information, please visit our website at www.artepublico.press.com.

Lupe Ontiveros, an award-winning stage, television and film actress, as well as a producer and community activist, is known most recently for her role as Juana “Mama” Solis in ABC’s Dangerous Housewives. She first received acclaim for her comedic/dramatic role as La Nacha in the Oscar-nominated film, El Norte, for which she gained international recognition. Ontiveros’ other film credits include Real Women Have Curves, As Good as it Gets, Chuck and Buck, Mi Familia, and Selena. Ontiveros produced Una vez al año para todas una vida, an award-winning educational film in Spanish that emphasizes the need for awareness regarding breast cancer among Latinas.

CO-FOUNDER OF THE UNITED FARM WORKERS OF AMERICA UNION TO SPEAK AT CAL STATE SAN BERNARDINO

SAN BERNARDINO, CA - Dolores Huerta, who with the late Cesar Chavez co-founded the United Farm Workers Union of America, will be the keynote speaker at the third annual Women’s Resource Center Activism Conference at Cal State San Bernardino.

The conference will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fed 12 at the university’s Charles and Shelby Oberbaugh Dining Room in the Upper Commons. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. The conference is free to students, staff, and faculty with CSUSB ID cards. The cost for the general public is $10 per person, parking at the university is $1.50 per vehicle. Those attending will also receive a free tote bag loaded with goodie bags.

Seating is limited to the first 200 people to arrive.

The conference will focus on women’s activism, and will feature three speakers in the first half of the event, including Huerta and student activist Angela Ashell. Workshops will follow in the second half. The conference is aimed at women who are interested in activism or support women as activists. Participants will leave the conference with the tools and techniques that will help them actively advocate for causes they care about and to make a different in their communities, organizers said.

For more information about the conference, contact Cal State San Bernardino Women’s Resource Center at (909) 880-7203.
The Rialto School District's Board of Trustees meeting room was filled with teachers, school aides and education specialists anxiously awaiting the announcement of a presentation of five elementary school state preschool programs with the prestigious National Accreditation Awards. A distinguished national designation presented by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Robin Valles, Director of the District's Child Development Department, in addressing the board, stated, "We are very proud to be accredited by NAEYC, and recognized for our commitment to reaching the highest professional standards. NAEYC accreditation lets families in our community know that children in our programs are getting the best care and early experiences.

Valles gave an overview of the accreditation process to the board and audience. NAEYC, a nationally leading organization of early childhood professionals, created the national accreditation program in 1985 to set professional standards for early childhood education and aid to families to identify high-quality childcare and early education programs. Each program in the nation strives to meet those standards.

The accreditation process extends over an approximate two-year period, conducted by independent professional validators and reviewed by a national panel, and includes criteria in 10 major categories, including parent, staff and administrative evaluations. There are 6,700 licensed child care facilities in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, and 16 NAEYC accredited facilities within a 25 mile radius.

The recognized school sites and personnel included: Boyd School - Marcella Castrejon, teacher, Irma Celaya and Wendy Summers, instructional assistants, Leticia Martinez and Melissa Wagenhofer, apprentices; Casey School - Dora Arana, teacher, Grace Urbe and Dolores Gonzales, instructional assistants, Kathy Golde, apprentice; Garcia School - Tina I. Sanchez, teacher, Lena Ramirez and Tonya Wilson, instructional assistants; Maria Gonzales and Monique Overstreet, apprentices; Myers School - Jessica Bravo, teacher, Bertha Gregory and Michele Escalona, instructional assistants, Antoinette Johnson, apprentice; School - Barbara Cervantez, teacher, Lidia Echu and Andres Castro, instructional assistants, Veronica Mayorguin and Sandra Cummins, apprentices.

More than 8,000 early childhood programs, serving three-quarters of a million children are currently accredited by NAEYA. By earning accreditation, Rialto's programs has become a leader in a national effort to raise the quality of early childhood education, and to help give all children a better start," said Mark Ginsberg, Ph. D., executive director of NAEYC.

For information contact Robin Valles, Director of Child Development Department at (909) 421-4201.

The County of San Bernardino
Department of Economic and Community Development
NOTICE OF HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Bernardino will hold a public hearing on March 1, 2005, in the Board of Supervisors Chambers of the Board of Supervisors, 385 North Arrowhead Avenue, First Floor, San Bernardino, CA. The purpose of the hearing is to consider the County’s 2005-2010 Housing, Community and Economic Development Needs Identification Report and 2005-2006 Citizen Participation Plan.

BACKGROUND Each year since 1975, the County of San Bernardino has qualified to receive federal housing and community development grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The funds are to develop viable communities by providing decent housing, suitable living environments and expanded economic opportunities, principally for low-and moderate-income persons. In 2002, HUD renewed the County’s qualification for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Act (HOME) programs for Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005. These CDBG funds are for eligible projects in the unincorporated communities and thirteen (13) cooperating cities. These cities are Adelanto, Barstow, Big Bear Lake, Colton, Grand Terrace, Highland, Loma Linda, Montclair, Needles, Redlands, Twentynine Palms, Yucaipa, and the Town of Yucca Valley. For the purpose of these grant funds, this area is referred to as the "County Consortium.

In 1995 HUD combined the HOME, ESG and CDBG programs into a single grant application process. As part of the grant application process, the County is required to submit a document addressing the strategies and priority needs for using these three grants over a five-year period. This document is called the Consolidated Plan. The County adopted its second five-year Consolidated Plan on April 18, 2000. That Plan covered fiscal years 2000-01, through 2004-05. Now, HUD rules require the County to develop a new Consolidated Plan to cover the next five years. These are fiscal years 2005-06 through 2009-2010. As part of preparing the new five-year Consolidated Plan, the County is gathering information on community housing and economic developments needs in the localities covered by the County Consortium. The Needs Identification Report is being developed from information gathered at twenty-four (24) Community Needs Identification Forums held in cooperating cities and unincorporated communities throughout the County during the Fall of 2004, from information received from County departments and non-profit agencies, and from surveys received from agencies, citizens and adjoining jurisdictions. Additional needs information is coming from the project proposals received since October 2004, for the County’s 2005-2006 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The 2005-2006 Needs Identification Report will be presented for public comment and for review by the Board of Supervisors at the March 1, 2005 public hearing. This hearing will be the first of the two HUD required hearings on the Consolidated Plan. The proposed 2005-2006 Consolidated Plan will be considered by the Board of Supervisors at a second hearing to be scheduled for March 29, 2005.

Also, as part of the grant application process under HUD regulations, the County must develop a Citizen Participation Plan to address how the public can become involved in the development of the 2005-2010 Consolidated Plan. The proposed Citizen Participation Plan update for FY 2005-06 also will be presented at the March 1, 2005 public hearing. The goals and objectives of the proposed Citizen Participation Plan will closely follow prior year plans that were previously approved by the Board of Supervisors.

PUBLIC COMMENT For a period of thirty (30) days, beginning on February 14, 2005, and ending on March 15, 2005, the public is invited to submit written comments on the Housing, Community and Economic Development Needs Identification Report and Citizen Participation Plan. Copies of these documents are available for public review at the office of the County Department of Economic and Community Development. Comments received after 5:00 p.m. March 15, 2005 cannot be considered in the final preparation of the Needs Identification and Citizen Participation Plan. Send comments to County ECD at the address shown below.

Those individuals wishing to express their views on these substantial amendments may be present and be heard at the public hearing or may, prior to the time of the hearing, submit written comments to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, 385 North Arrowhead Avenue, Second Floor, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0130.

If you challenge any decision regarding the above proposal in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you present at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence delivered to the Board of Supervisors at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Due to time constraints and the number of persons wishing to give oral testimony, time restrictions may be placed on oral testimony at the public hearing regarding this proposal. You may make your comments in writing to assure that you are able to express yourself adequately.

San Bernardino County
Department of Economic and Community Development
290 North "D" Street, Sixth Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0040
Attn: Program and Compliance Section or call (909)388-0959

BILL POSTMUS, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

J. RENEE BASTIAN, CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

CNS-776638/
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