

# Contra Costa Special Districts Association Newsletter

Contra Costa Chapter of the California Special Districts Association

Spring 2014

March 2014

## American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration



Robert Doyle, General Manager of the East Bay Regional Park District, has been elected to the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration.

The Academy is a group of distinguished practitioners and educators who are leaders in the field of park and recreation. They must have served for at least 15 years in a high level of administration in a park and recreation agency or as a recognized educator in parks and recreation administration. They also must have demonstrated outstanding ability in administration, management or education in the profession; displayed broad interest with a direct service benefit to the advancement of public parks and recreation or assumed leadership with a keen desire to contribute to the advancement of the field. The Academy is limited to 125 active members.

Established in 1980, the Academy was formed to advance knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; encourage scholarly efforts by both practitioners and educators to enhance the practice of park and recreation administration; promote broader public understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the public good; and conduct research, publish scholarly papers and/or sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration.

"The Class of 2013 is exceptionally talented," said 2013 Academy President Tom Lovell, Administrator of Parks and Recreation in Lee's Summit, Missouri. "The distinguished new members represent park and recreation agencies of all sizes and demographics as well as academia. The future of the Academy is bright."

## Bette Boatmun to Remain as Chair of CCSDA

At the January 27th, 2014 chapter meeting Bette Boatmun was re-elected to serve as Chair (President) for another two year term.

Sharyn Rossi was elected to serve as Vice President and also appointed Treasurer. Stan Caldwell was elected to serve another term as Member at Large.

## Special District Honors for Kensington Fire Protection District



**Congratulations  
Kensington Fire  
Protection  
District!!**

The Kensington Fire Protection District has been re-accredited as a District of Distinction and they have also received the District Transparency Certificate of Excellence. Sherry Sterrett Special District Leadership Foundation and CSDA Board member made the presentation at the January Contra Costa Special Districts Association meeting.



In a time where proper fiscal management and responsibility in public agencies is paramount and the task of governing these agencies has become even more complex, regulated and costly, it has become increasingly important to demonstrate to constituents that districts have sound fiscal management policies and practices in place among other areas of importance in district operations.

This accreditation is designed as a way for districts to highlight their prudent fiscal practices along with other areas important to effectively operate and govern a special district.

The Special District Leadership is an independent, non-profit organization formed to promote good governance and best practices among California's special districts through certification, accreditation and other recognition programs.

## About the Contra Costa Special Districts Association (CCSDA)

### Chapter's Purpose:

*To promote the efficient, economical, and responsive public services offered by the independent special districts of Contra Costa County.*

### Chapter's Objectives:

- To support member districts in the provision of services for the people of Contra Costa County.
- To inform the public about the purpose and benefits of local special district government.
- To act as a local forum of member districts for discussion and consideration of special district issues and to establish positions and advocacy on such issues among other governmental agencies, including the Contra Costa Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), county government, cities, and the state of California.
- To act as a communication network among member districts as well as other governmental agencies and organizations.
- To programs of interest programs on issues to member districts.
- To make recommendations to the CSDA Board of Directors.

### Chapter's Services:

The Contra Costa County Chapter holds quarterly membership meetings in January, April July and October We have newsletter published twice a year.

We have a directory available of all Contra Costa County special districts.

For more information contact Bette Boatmun by email at [bboatmun@yahoo.com](mailto:bboatmun@yahoo.com)

## New Resource on Public Engagement in Budgeting

Budgeting is one of the most important decisions local agencies make. This new guide will help you choose the right approach and tools when engaging the public in the allocation of scarce taxpayer dollars.

<http://www.ca-ilg.org/public-engagement-budgeting>

## About the California Special Districts Association (CSDA)

With over 1,000 members throughout California, most with five or more board members and sometimes dozens of staff members, CSDA has a network of thousands of members. As public servants and elected officials, most of these members have strong ties to the community and many likely have relationships with state legislators. The Grassroots Mobilization Program is CSDA's effort to identify, organize and action these relationships in order to influence public policy.

The California Special Districts Association (CSDA) is a 501c (6), not-for-profit association that was formed in 1969 to ensure the continued existence of local, independent special districts. CSDA offers its members cost-efficient programs, support to local agencies and representation at the State Capitol, boasting a membership of over 1,000 organizations throughout California. We are the only statewide association representing all types of independent special districts such as wastewater, irrigation, water, park and recreation, cemetery, fire, police protection, library, utility, harbor, healthcare and community services districts.

### CSDA Mission Statement

*The California Special Districts Association provides legislative advocacy, education and member services for all special districts.*

### Why be a CSDA Member?

CSDA has been advancing the value for special districts through member resources and as the collective voice of the profession. CSDA is the one association that provides a strong voice for all independent special districts in California. CSDA is the only association that offers educational opportunities designed specifically for independent districts of all sizes and types.

## Future California Special Districts Events

### Special District Legislative Days

Sacramento Convention Center  
May 20-21, 2014

### CSDA 2014 General Manager Leadership Summit

Resort at Squaw Creek  
June 22–24, 2014

### CSDA Annual Conference

Renaissance Palm Springs Hotel  
September 29 - October 2, 2014

## Creating Wetlands: 3-year project will benefit wildlife and ISD ratepayers

The state Department of Water Resources, Reclamation District 830 (which maintains the levee protecting Jersey Island), and Ironhouse Sanitary District (ISD) have entered into agreements to transport up to 600,000 cubic yards of dirt from approximately 100 acres of ISD property to a habitat restoration project a couple of miles away on the other side of Marsh Creek.

The project will result in a benefit to the district of about \$2.5 million via the sale of the dirt. The total DWR grant is just under \$9 million. "This project will be a great deal for ISD ratepayers," General Manager Tom Williams said. "We'll be able to use this money to offset future district fees."

The Marsh Creek Delta Habitat Enhancement Project will use the dirt to raise the elevation of part of the Dutch Slough Restoration project (across Marsh Creek) that has been deteriorating over the last 100 years. By raising elevations, additional tidal marshes and upland areas can be created, improving the habitat value of the restoration project.

More than 100 years ago, small manmade levees were placed around shallow tidal lands so farmers could keep the Delta waters out and grow crops. While that sounds harmless, unfortunately the loss of the important tidal areas that filter storm water and protect against storm surges, combined with decades of land subsidence, have resulted in tall levees, and substantially less protective coastal areas.

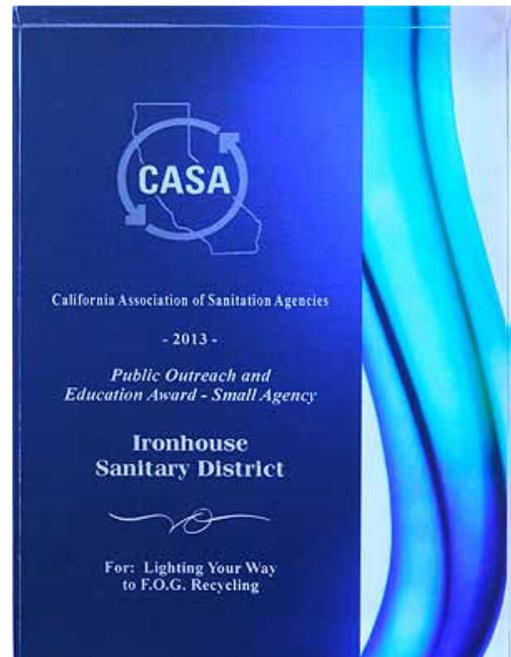
The project will also create about 90 acres of wetland and tidal marsh habitat at the site where the dirt is to be removed. The project is estimated to take three years to complete, with relocation of most or all dirt happening in 2016.

"This project is a win-win-win-win situation," Williams said. "The local environment gets 200-300 acres of additional habitat, ISD gets money to offset rates, the Delta levee districts meet program mandates for habitat enhancement, the community gets additional open space areas to enjoy, flood protection is improved, and the list goes on. It's a fantastic opportunity that allows our district to do these great things, while bringing in money over the next four years that doesn't come from the ratepayer."

Once the new wetlands habitat is built RD-830 will maintain the habitat for five years. During that time, the goal is to develop a self-sustaining natural area that is appealing to native fish species, migrating birds, and other wildlife that frequent the area. In addition, ISD hopes to use the project to encourage educational opportunities related to Delta habitats, species, biology and science.

## ISD Honored for Outstanding Public Outreach

Ironhouse Sanitary District (ISD) received a special award from the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) for Public Outreach and Education at the association's annual conference in August 2013.



ISD received the award for its "Lighting Your Way to Proper FOG Recycling" program, which launched in late 2011 to encourage residents to not pour household fats, oils and grease down the drain, but rather recycle their FOG at the district's drop-off site so that it can be reused as bio-diesel fuel.

The award-winning campaign included advertising on the district's website, signage, social media and media coverage. Bay Area and Sacramento area news stations covered the district's Saturday FOG drop-off days that encouraged residents to bring in their used turkey fryer oil and holiday cooking grease.

Tapping into the reuse angle of turning the FOG into bio-diesel also caught the attention of "green" bloggers, garnering a "Weekend Warrior" award for providing the service.

This is the second major CASA award for ISD, which in 2011 was also recognized for technological innovation and achievement for the new Water Recycling Facility.

## ISD Annual Board Reorganization

At the Ironhouse Sanitary District annual reorganization of the board on December 3, 2013 David Huerta was appointed President, and David Contreras Vice President.

## Growing a Healthy Community One Garden at a Time

“Los Medanos Community Healthcare District (LMCHD) had some vacant property and it came to me that a community garden would be a great idea,” said LMCHD board member and Community Garden chair, Marilyn Condit. “I wanted something that would benefit the community and also a way to utilize the property to make it beautiful. Gardens help build community and promote healthy eating.”

The garden got started six years ago; LMCHD broke ground on the community garden. It took four years for LMCHD to raise the money, rally community interest, and for the city of Pittsburg to really embrace the idea. LMCHD hired landscape architect Joel Summerhill, who was a former employee of the City of Pittsburg. Bobbi Palmer, CEO of The District said “We ended up working with a group of high-risk teenagers who actually helped to build the garden. STS Academy provided a valuable community service for Pittsburg and the teenagers were a huge help! The District bears the cost of keeping the garden thriving, while the gardeners do the hard work.

The community garden consists of 39 ground plots, 18 raised beds, and 23 circle plots. They run at maximize capacity and maintain a wait list. Linda Strong, LMCHD board president and co-chair of the Community Garden stated “the garden is absolutely beautiful. Great vegetables are grown in our organic garden and it’s really exciting to support our residents with access to fresh vegetables in such a practical way.”



**LMCHD Community Garden “World Food Day” cultivating a community in which good health may flourish for all District residents.**

Garden plots are intended for the organic growth of edible fruits, vegetables, and herbs. Annual flowers may be included. Gardeners are expected to participate in garden work days to help with maintenance and harvesting of community plots. Steve, a Pittsburg resident, is the unofficial Mayor of the community garden and is a constant presence in the garden. He serves as

official greeter and coach for new gardeners. He is passionate about vegetables and stated, “We know what we grow, and it’s all natural.”

The community plots are ground plots that the gardeners use to grow fruits and vegetables that benefit our “neighbors across the street.” All the fruits and vegetables are picked, bagged and donated to Loaves and Fishes and food pantries within our community.

Individuals or organizations who want a garden plot attend a community garden meeting and complete the registration process. Plots are available on a first come, first serve basis.

To join the Community Garden a person must be a resident of Pittsburg or Bay Point and pay an annual membership of \$20.00. The District provides water, tools, and some seeds for garden use.

## Transparency Certificate of Excellence Awarded to Central Contra Costa Sanitary District

The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central San) has earned the District Transparency Certificate of Excellence from the Special District Leadership Foundation in recognition of its outstanding efforts to promote transparency and good governance.

The Transparency Certificate was presented to the Central San Board at its November 21, 2013 meeting. “This award is a testament to the Central San commitment to open government,” said Stan Caldwell, the 2013 president of the California Special District Association. “The entire district staff is to be commended for their contributions that empower the public with information and facilitate engagement and oversight.”

## Andy Katz to remain as EBMUD board president for another year

On January 14, 2014 the East Bay Municipal Utility District’s Board of Directors unanimously reelected Andy Katz to his second, consecutive one-year term as board president. Director Katy Foulkes unanimously was reelected board vice president for a second, consecutive one-year term.



## Central San Wins Collection System of the Year Award

The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District's Collection System Operations Division work hard every day, often in some pretty miserable conditions, to ensure a constant, efficient flow of wastewater from the homes and businesses they serve to the wastewater treatment plant in Martinez. They do this by cleaning, maintaining, inspecting and repairing more than 1,500 miles of sewer pipes and 17 pumping stations that comprise the District's collection system.

It's a dirty job, but they love it. That's why they're so good at it. The California Water Environment Association, a not-for-profit association of more than 9,000 professionals in the wastewater industry, recognized the District's Collection System team as the best in the Bay Area by presenting them with the following San Francisco Bay Section awards:

- Collection System of the Year
- Supervisor of the Year: Dante Marchetti, Maintenance Supervisor
- Collection System Worker of the Year: Don Bartlett, Maintenance Crew Leader

These awards are earned "through remarkable accomplishments in compliance, safety, training, innovative practices, cost effectiveness and superior operations."



*The award being presented by CWEA SF Bay Section Vice President, Steve Dominguez (left), to our Central San Board President, Dave Williams.*

Next up: statewide competitions in April.

## Contra Costa Special District Association Member Dues

The dues are only \$50 a year. Members may elect to pay for one, two or three years at a time (\$50, \$100, \$150). Dues renewals for some of our districts will be arriving soon in your mailboxes.

## Guess who will be going fishing!

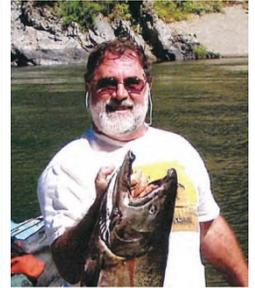
David Requa, District Engineer & Assistant General Manager for the Dublin San Ramon Services District (DSRSD) retired this past October.



**Dave at his desk dreaming of the day he can retire!**

**Dave worked at DSRSD for 18 years before retiring, during his career he has also worked at Black & Veach (16 years), and Contra Costa Water District (5 years).**

**Dave is looking forward to spending more time fishing and developing new hobbies. Congratulations Dave! We will miss seeing you at our Contra Costa Special Districts Association meetings!**



Sue Stephenson DSRSD Community Affairs Supervisor said it best "Dave was a wonderful manager to work with and we will all miss him."

## Discovery Bay: Renovated community center opens



**The New Year will be a new start for this town's community center.**

After a busy 2013 that saw Discovery Bay's Community Services District buy a former athletic club property and deal with some of the growing pains of turning the purchase into a long-awaited town hub, a spruced-up version of the building opened the first week of January.



## Twenty Years of Service Recognized

The December 13, 2012 meeting marked the completion of 20 years of service by Directors Stan Caldwell and Greg Pyka of Mt. View Sanitary District. Both assumed office in December of 1993.



Both Directors have had excellent attendance, made substantial contributions and have rarely missed a meeting. They each have spent hundreds of hours preparing for meetings, reviewing staff reports, and deliberating over matters to be considered with the other members of the Board at the public meetings.

Their respective efforts have been instrumental in maintaining the health and safety of thousands of residents and their commitment to using recycled wastewater for the reclamation of wetlands has provided an education to thousands of school children, birders and wetlands enthusiasts throughout the County and the region.

At this same meeting Stan Caldwell was nominated and elected President for 2014 and Greg Pyka Vice President.

## Dublin San Ramon Services District Board Reorganization

The Dublin San Ramon Services District (DSRSD) Board of Directors has elected Georgan M. Vonheeder-Leopold as president and Edward R. Duarte as vice president for 2014. The five-member board also includes Directors Dawn L. Benson, Richard M. Halket, and D.L. (Pat) Howard.

## Sherry Sterrett PHRPD Board of Directors Chair for 2014

December 16, 2013 – Pleasant Hill Recreation & Park District (PHRPD) is pleased to announce that Sherry Sterrett will serve as the new Board of Directors Chairperson in 2014, succeeding Bobby Glover, District Board Chair for 2013.

The PHRPD District Board selects a Board Chair each year. Every Board member has the opportunity to serve

as the Board Chair. This will be the fifth time Sherry Sterrett, the new 2014 Board Chair, has served in this leadership position.

As a District Board member, Sterrett consistently demonstrates her unwavering dedication to PHRPD through her active membership of numerous District co-sponsored groups and volunteer efforts to work with District committees to get things done. And as a member and past president of the California Special Districts Association, she ensures the District stays current with statewide legislation, special district issues and opportunities.

## Transparency Certificate of Excellence Awarded to Mt. View Sanitary District

Mt. View Sanitary District (MVSD) earned the District Transparency Certificate of Excellence from the Special District Leadership Foundation in recognition of its efforts to promote transparency and good governance.



Sherry Sterrett California Special District Association Region 3 board member and Vice President of the Special Districts Leadership Foundation board presented the award to MVSD at the Contra Costa Special Districts Association January 27th, 2014 meeting.

## Central San Annual Board Reorganization

At the December 5th Central Contra Costa Sanitary District board meeting Dave Williams was appointed President and Mike McGill Vice President. Their terms will commence on January 1st, 2014.

## Steger Sanitary District Board Reorganization

At the December 12th, 2013 meeting Dwight Merrill was nominated and elected President and Graham Brand Vice President of the Board for 2014.

## LAFCO Update

Second Round MSRs - The second round water/wastewater MSR is underway. It covers eight cities, 19 special districts, and a number of private and mutual water service providers. The MSR consulting team has been working closely with the local agencies on data collection and verification. We expect the Public Review Draft MSR report to be released in February/March 2014. The special districts have been very cooperative.

The Commission also plans to initiate a second round MSR covering fire and emergency medical services in 2014.

## New General Manager of the Los Vaqueros Recreation Company

The Recreation Company manages the Marina, fishing, John Muir Interpretive Center and recreation at the watershed. Its contract with the Contra Costa Water District was recently renewed.

When Chris Senti announced he would retire after 33 years in the recreation field, Brian decided to change careers and spend even more time at Los Vaqueros. "I love the outdoors," he said.



Brian was a Deputy Helicopter pilot with the Contra Costa Sheriff's Marine Patrol and Aviation Unit. "It was while flying over Los Vaqueros that I first learned about the park," he said.

Brian is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, flew B-52 bombers and is a veteran of the first Gulf War, stationed in Saudi Arabia. Following his service, Brian joined the Contra Costa Sheriff working in the Marine Patrol and Aviation Unit, flying helicopters and piloting patrol boats.

At Los Vaqueros, he will be working to increase awareness of the watershed, and getting more people to come out and enjoy the views and hiking challenges, along with fishing. "Los Vaqueros is the best-kept secret around," he said.

## Discovery Bay Honors

Members of the Discovery Bay Community Services District (CSD) were recently awarded certificates of completion and recognition for their participation in the Special District Leadership Academy and ongoing education from the Special Districts Association.

The recognition is in honor of the CSD's time and commitment to receiving and maintaining core governance training and education in accordance with best practices throughout California's special districts.



CSD honorees, from left to right, are Chris Steele, Kevin Graves, CSD President Mark Simon, Bill Pease and Marianne Wiesen.



Participants in the newly formed Special District Leadership Academy conference were able to complete all four modules of the Academy during the course of two and a half days. The conference content is based on CSDA's Special District Leadership Academy (SDLA) ground-breaking curriculum-based continuing education program that recognizes the necessity for the board and general manager to work closely toward a common goal. SDLA provides the knowledge base to perform essential governance responsibilities.

## Your Districts News Story Could Have Been Here!

*Please send your district news releases to Stan Caldwell to keep us informed about all of the exciting things your special district is up to. We always welcome your news contributions to our newsletter!*

Newsletter Editor Email:  
[stan\\_caldwell@comcast.net](mailto:stan_caldwell@comcast.net)

## EBMUD Board Director Named ACWA President

John A. Coleman, longest-serving EBMUD board member, will serve as leader of the largest statewide coalition of water agencies.



**The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) elected East Bay Municipal Utility District board member John A. Coleman as its president.**

On the EBMUD board, Coleman represents water customers in Alamo, Blackhawk, Lafayette, the town of Danville and portions of San Ramon, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek.

ACWA is a statewide coalition that represents nearly 440 public agencies that collectively are responsible for 90 percent of the water delivered to cities, farms and businesses throughout California.

“The direction our state takes on water policy in the next two years will have a profound impact on the next generation of Californians and beyond. The issues challenging us are great: securing a dependable supply, restoring the Bay-Delta, protecting watersheds, managing groundwater and others. But the opportunities are equally great as innovation continues leading us towards improvements in water quality, water recycling and energy management,” he said.

Coleman will serve as ACWA president from January 2014 to December 2015. “We need to look at the critical role a clean, dependable water supply means to our economy, environment and future. I’m honored to be named president of ACWA at such a critical time for California water policy,” he said.

He previously was elected vice president of ACWA in December 2011 and served as president of the board of the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) from 2002 to 2004. This is the first time the same individual has presided over ACWA and CASA, two industry leaders on state water issues.

## Mark your calendars with our future Chapter Meeting Dates:

April 21, 2014 - July 21, 2014 - October 20, 2014

Meetings 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

We meet at Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA.

## Celebrating Eighty Years of Regional Parks in 2014

For 80 years, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) has connected people to parks by preserving open space and offering enjoyable and healthful recreation opportunities for local residents.



EBRPD's story begins in 1934, during the heart of the Great Depression, when a group of public-spirited citizens organized a campaign to tax themselves. Their goal was to preserve valuable open space for future parkland. This visionary effort created the East Bay Regional Park District.

Today the Park District is the largest regional park system in the nation, operating 65 parks on over 114,000 acres with 1,200 miles of trails throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties.



## Mark Cornelius Retires

Longtime local special district attorney & CCSDA Treasurer and Vice Chair Mark Cornelius retired from special district service to pursue other endeavors and adventures including performing in his local country western band Durt Cheap.

Enjoy your retirement Mark!



## Over 1,500 Celebrated New Pleasant Hill Community Center Grand Opening!



On Sunday, January 26th, Pleasant Hill Recreation & Park District welcomed over 1,500 people to celebrate the grand opening of your new Pleasant Hill Community Center. Guests toured the grand new facility, watched live activity demos, visited District and Co-sponsors exhibits, signed up for activities, sampled delicious refreshments, listened to great tunes, danced, and connected with friends.

## Get Ready to Play Ball at Pleasant Oak Park!

Pleasant Oak Park Grand Opening & Dedication Ceremony was held on March 2, 2014. Enjoy this completely renovated PHR&PD park and sports center located at 2 Santa Barbara Road (across from PH Middle School). New picnic areas available for outdoor party rentals.

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## April 21, 2014 Meeting

**Special Note: LAFCO will convene the Independent Special District Selection Committee to hold the election of special district LAFCO Commissioners.**

LAFCO Special District Commissioner Terms - In mid-January 2014, LAFCO staff sent out a letters advising the special districts that the terms of two special district members on Contra Costa LAFCO will expire in May 2014. The vacancies are for a regular member seat currently held by Dwight Meadows (Contra Costa Resource Conservation District) and the alternate seat currently held by George Schmidt (West County Wastewater District). LAFCO will call for nominations and the names of each district's voting delegate. The election will be held on April 21, 2014 in conjunction with CCSDA meeting.

LAFCO will be mailing information to districts prior to the election.

## Join Top Policy Leaders at Special Districts Legislative Days



### SPECIAL DISTRICTS LEGISLATIVE DAYS

MAY 20-21, 2014 | SACRAMENTO

Special Districts Legislative Days is a compelling two-day legislative conference that features a dynamic lineup of speakers and activities. Representatives from all types of special districts attend this event to ensure the successful delivery of the core local services special districts provide to millions of people statewide. Hear from and interact with some of California's key elected officials and leading policy experts on the most important issues currently facing special districts. Take this opportunity to meet with your legislators and exchange ideas with other special district leaders, both in the Capitol and at a private legislative reception.

This year's Special Districts Legislative Days (SDLD) include a dynamic program focusing on "Laying the Foundation for a Stronger Economy." This two-day event includes keynote speaker Legislative Analyst Mac Taylor, moderated panel discussions, pre-arranged legislative visits, industry-specific roundtables and a legislative reception.

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### Contra Costa Special Districts Association

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Bette Boatmun, Chair - Email: [bboatmun@yahoo.co](mailto:bboatmun@yahoo.co)

Sharyn Rossi, Vice Chair - Email: [QueenB111@aol.com](mailto:QueenB111@aol.com)

Member at Large & Newsletter Editor Stanley Caldwell - Email: [stan\\_caldwell@comcast.net](mailto:stan_caldwell@comcast.net)

[www.csd.net/contra-costa-special-districts-association](http://www.csd.net/contra-costa-special-districts-association)

We meet at Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, 5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA.

