Victims Event Honors, Comforts

No one is immune from the impacts of violence, something illustrated last month as people from all walks of life gathered for the 19th annual Victims’ Dedication Ceremony.

Organized by the District Attorney’s Office, the event honors victims of crime and supports families and friends who have suffered a loss. This year, County supervisors stood along with others to tell their stories. If you missed the event, you can view it online. There is a link to the video later in this article.
During the ceremony, families are invited to come forward and talk about their lost loved one. Sadly, there is always a long line of those wishing to speak. Joining in were Supervisors Simón Salinas and Luis Alejo, sharing with the crowd how crime and violence has impacted them.

Alejo recounted that his aunt died in a domestic violence-related incident. In 1994, Pajaro residents Jessica Cortez, 9, and her brother, Jorge, 16, were murdered. Their deaths, he told the group, spurred him to begin community organizing.

Fifty years ago, Salinas’ brother died from violence. He understands why gatherings such as this are so important.

“It always stays with you,” Salinas said. “But to come here and share gives us some comfort knowing that we’re here as a community to stand together with each other.”

This year, inspirational comments came from a family whose mother was murdered 26 years ago and the case was just recently solved. Her daughters shared their struggles and their ultimate triumph of honoring her with their success. You can see the entire ceremony on the Monterey County Government Channel’s YouTube channel.

It is the last ceremony for retiring District Attorney Dean Flippo, who has been with the Monterey County District Attorney’s Office as long as the Office of Victims of Crime Unit, which was launched 40 years ago. Flippo has been a
key figure at this event since its inception and told attendees their courage is what continues to inspire prosecutors and law enforcement in the fight against violence.

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**Employee Survey to Launch May 14th**

Watch for information coming next week about the County’s first Employee Engagement Survey.

The survey will be available online and will launch on Monday, May 14th. It will remain active through Friday, May 25th and is available to all County employees. It is being coordinated by the Human Resources Department, which is hoping that everyone will take a few minutes to share their thoughts by answering a variety of questions.

“The feedback we receive will be used to assist management to address areas of interest to employees,” explains Human Resources Director Irma Ramirez-Bough. “We hope the survey will identify areas we are excelling in as well as areas the County can improve upon. We have a valuable workforce that we want to hear from.”

The survey takes just 5 minutes to complete. All responses will be confidential and anonymous.

“Responses will help us develop initiatives, trainings, programs, best practices and policies to enrich employees’ work experience in our organization,” says Ramirez-Bough.

If you have questions about the survey or need to provide feedback using a paper form, please contact your Human Resource analyst.

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**Cinco de Mayo: Good Eats, Good Cause**

While Cinco de Mayo marks a Mexican military victory, the date has become synonymous with celebrating Mexican culture, particularly the food.
It was just good fortune that the Auditor-Controller’s Office annual Tostada Bar Lunch fell the day before the 5th of May, so it was a great time to enjoy tostadas and all the fixings, all in support of Relay for Life.

Idalia Ow and her expert tostada-making colleagues always put on a great lunch which includes a drink and dessert. You can feel good about indulging as the money goes to a good cause.

This year, Idalia and crew raised $571.00 to benefit Salinas Relay for Life.

If you are interested in taking part in the Salinas Relay for Life, it will take place May 18th & 19th at the Salinas Sports Complex.

The PFD Café at Schilling Place got into the Cinco de Mayo spirit, offering some favorite Mexican treats.

Chicken mole, carne asada, cactus salad, flan and many salsa varieties made it hard to choose just one. Those who wore traditional Mexican clothing received a 10% discount off their order.

Lots of weekly events are happening at the café. If you are interested in keeping up with the menu specials, you can ask to be on their weekly distribution list. Contact the café folks at pfdcafe.schilling@gmail.com.