



# NEWS

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## Service center opens doors

The Blue Mountain Community Service Center, a new office housing multiple county agencies and community resources, opened its doors on Tuesday, April 4, at 291-A Main St., West Point, with a celebration featuring presentations and pizza for the 50-plus attendees.

The opening was a culmination of efforts by District 2 Supervisor Steve Wilensky to establish one location to make it easier for residents to access local and county services.

The center combines 42 different entities under one roof, including churches, tribal councils, community service organizations and county organizations.

“In meetings that I had been attending throughout the county, it became apparent that people from this area were not accessing services that are available to

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# Center home to multiple agencies, groups

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them,” said Wilensky. “We have a 40 percent no-show rate among area residents for county service appointments in San Andreas. Community members were reluctant to deal with people they didn’t know or trust and the piecemeal location of county service locations combined with people whose lives may be in crisis made it difficult for people to access services.”

“With this center, we can make this community a better place,” said Wilensky. “We can take the full measure of our community and come together with one central effort.”

Among groups and organizations present were county Social Services, Health, Behavioral Health and Probation departments; Dream Catchers; Mother



**Suzette Ariza (left) and Briana Creekmore are two key figures in the operation of the new Blue Mountain Community Service Center on Main Street in West Point.**

Lode Job Training; First Baptist Church; Lions Club; Adult Literacy; Calaveras Band of Miwuk; Women Infants and Children (WIC); domestic violence prevention services; West Point

Community Covenant Church; Habitat for Humanity; Friends of the Library; West Point Fire Protection District; Calaveras County Volunteer Center; veterans organiza-

tions; Calaveras Works; Head Start; and the Blue Mountain Coalition for Youth.

Two key figures in the operation of the center are Suzette Ariza, eligibility worker, Calaveras Works and Human Services, and Briana Creekmore, community service liaison, Calaveras County Behavioral Health Services.

Ariza works with local residents for help with eligibility and access to county programs, including Adult Protective Services, Child Protective Services and Veterans Services.

Community members can meet with Ariza at the center or the Veterans Hall on Highway 26. Ariza’s hours

are Tuesdays, 7 a.m. to noon, and Thursdays, 1 to 6 p.m.

Veterans Services hours are Tuesdays, noon to 4 p.m.

“The first person through the doors was a person whose home had burned and they had no resources,” said Wilensky. “They came to this office, their needs were assessed and within a very short period of time, one church had provided the first month of rent, another church provided the last month of rent, a local realtor had helped us find a rental home and our job training programs were providing access to training so the person could find a better-paying job.”

Call 293-2333 for more information.

## Marine keeps birds in flight

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“She was so excited to be in Washington D.C. She’s

just loving it! I can’t wait to go see her and have her come home again!”