

GSA Insider

APRIL 2026



Great Service Always!

GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY NEWSLETTER



IN THIS ISSUE

From the Director 2

GSA Employees of the Year 2-3

GSA All Hands 4

Meet the New Faces at GSA 5-6

GSA Safety Newsletters: Building Awareness One Month at a Time 7

GSA Leadership Academy 8

Honoring Service: GSA Team Commended for Memorial Work 9

Purple Heart Monument Installation Complete 10

Assessor's Office Digital Tour 11-12

GSA Fleet Services Partners with The Arc of Ventura County 13

Ventura County Parks Work Plan Receives Preliminary Approval 14

Sprucing Up Campgrounds during Off-Peak Season 15

Oak View Community Center Pergola Project 16

Procurement Drives Strategic Purchasing and Fiscal Stewardship 17-18

Staff Compliments 19-20

Celebrating GSA Staff 21-22

Who's Coming/Who's Going 23

Spotlight 23

From the Director



As we move into a new season of progress at GSA, I am proud to highlight the accomplishments, initiatives, and people that continue to strengthen our agency. This edition showcases the many ways our teams are driving innovation, improving service delivery, and supporting Ventura County. We begin by recognizing our GSA Employees of the Year, whose dedication and professionalism exemplify the best of our organization. We also reflect on the connections made during our GSA All Hands.

We welcome new colleagues in Meet the New Faces at GSA, each bringing valuable skills and fresh perspectives. Safety remains central to our mission, and our ongoing GSA Safety Newsletters continue to build awareness across the organization. Professional development also remains strong, with the GSA Leadership Academy preparing emerging leaders for future challenges. This issue highlights meaningful projects across the County, including our team's honored role in the Simi Valley Memorial work, the completion of the Purple Heart Monument, and the innovative Assessor's Office Digital Tour. Our partnership with The Arc of Ventura County further demonstrates the positive impact of collaboration within our community. In Parks, we celebrate key advancements such as the

Ventura County Parks Work Plan's preliminary approval, off-season campground improvements, and the Oak View Community Center Pergola Project. Meanwhile, Procurement continues to elevate fiscal stewardship and operational value through strategic purchasing initiatives. We round out the newsletter with Staff Compliments, Celebrating GSA Staff, and Who's Coming/Who's Going—recognizing the achievements and transitions that shape our GSA family. Thank you for your ongoing dedication and professionalism. Together, we continue to make GSA stronger and deliver the exceptional service our departments and communities count on.

Tom Hunt

2025 GSA Employees of the Year

Congratulations to the 2025 Employees of the Year:

- Line/Field Staff – **Victor Flandes**, Auto Mechanic I, Fleet
- Administration – **Edward Palkovic**, Senior Accountant, Fiscal
- Supervisor/Management – **Melissa Lorenzen**, Interim Assistant Procurement Officer, Procurement



Employees of the Year Nominees and Winners

In the category of Line/Field staff, the nominees were:

- ◆ Antonio Barajas
- ◆ Dwayne Conary
- ◆ Saul De La Rosa
- ◆ Victor Flandes
- ◆ Joel Landin
- ◆ Lonnie Washington

In the category of Administration, the nominees were:

- ◆ Meighan Batinica
- ◆ Jennifer Cadoff
- ◆ Ashly DeLaPaz
- ◆ Elizabeth Fajardo
- ◆ Rebecca Moak
- ◆ Edward Palkovic
- ◆ Pannipa Pantutamangkul
- ◆ Alexander Zarate

In the category of Supervision/Management, the nominees were:

- ◆ Rory Aronsky
- ◆ Domingo Becerra
- ◆ Chad Bowie
- ◆ Jeri Cooper
- ◆ Tryna Huebner
- ◆ Melissa Lorenzen
- ◆ Chinna Nahabedian
- ◆ Aron Ruiz
- ◆ Andrew Smith
- ◆ Patrick Squires
- ◆ Ryan Stover



Victor Flandes, 2025 Employee of the Year, Line/Field Staff:

Victor Flandes is recognized as being an outstanding member of GSA Fleet Services for over three years, starting as a student worker from Oxnard College. He quickly excelled in the Automotive shop, demonstrating a strong work ethic, eagerness to learn, and exceptional teamwork. Hired as an Automotive Service Worker and later promoted to Automotive Mechanic I, Victor wears many hats, assisting as needed, supporting senior mechanics, and providing top-notch customer service. His dedication, skill, and positive attitude embody the spirit of “Great Service Always” and make him a valued member of the Fleet team.

Edward Palkovic, 2025 Employee of the Year, Administration:

Edward Palkovic is recognized for his exceptional initiative, innovation, and dedication to customer service and fiscal responsibility. He developed the Fleet Dashboard and other financial tools that improved transparency, strengthened cross-departmental relationships, and empowered agencies to make informed decisions.

Edward also spearheaded efforts to secure approximately \$500,000 in tax credits for electric vehicles, EV charging stations, and solar installations, benefiting the County and advancing sustainability goals. His technical expertise, proactive mindset, and commitment to excellence make him truly deserving.



Melissa Lorenzen 2025 Employee of the Year, Supervision/Management:

Melissa Lorenzen is recognized for her exceptional leadership, stability, and commitment to public service. During a period of significant transition, she stepped seamlessly into increasingly complex roles, from Senior Procurement Specialist to Interim Chief Procurement Officer, ensuring operations remained consistent and service to County departments continued without disruption.

Melissa fostered a collaborative, supportive team environment, strengthened morale, and empowered staff to take ownership and solve problems, all while leading by example with professionalism, empathy, and dedication. Her leadership, integrity, and positive impact have left a lasting mark on the organization.



GSA Comes Together for an Energizing All Hands

What a day for GSA! More than 200 employees came together for the Director's All Hands presentation, creating an event full of energy, connection, and celebration. From big accomplishments and agency highlights to exciting plans for the future, the event was a chance to reflect on all that GSA has achieved — and all that's ahead.

Director Hunt tried to test our GSA knowledge with some trivia questions, but the room could not be bested with many 5/5 scores. We chanted our way to appreciation with a good 2, 4, 6, 8 – who do we appreciate? G-S-A! G-S-A! Even creating a new way to remember who's strat plan is aligned... 3-6-9... G-S-A!

Since stepping into this role, Director Hunt shared with the team the three qualities that have consistently stood out for him: commitment, adaptability, and pride. He revealed he sees a team that shows up each day to serve the County and one another — solving problems, maintaining high standards, and doing the right thing even when no one is watching. He's watched all of us adjust to new leadership, evolving expectations, and operational challenges with resilience and professionalism. And that he truly sees the pride in our craftsmanship and customer service.

One of the biggest highlights of the day was cele-



brating our Employee of the Year nominees, finalists, and winners, whose dedication and

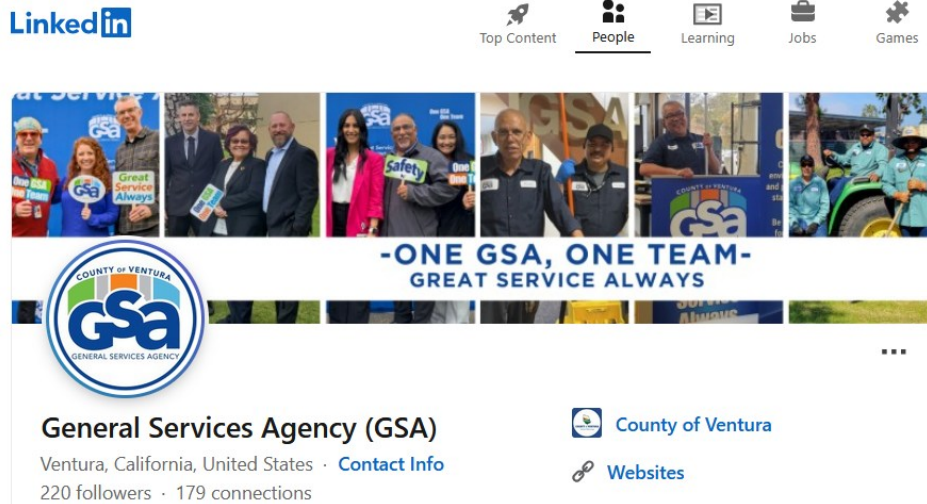
excellence help power GSA every day. With laughter, engagement, and plenty of team spirit throughout the room, the All Hands was a great reminder that GSA's strength is its people. One team, one mission, and a lot to be proud of!



Meet the New Faces at GSA — Trivia Challenge!

Have you checked out GSA’s LinkedIn page yet? It’s a great place to stay connected with what’s happening across our agency, from exciting announcements and new job opportunities to welcoming the newest members of the GSA team.

If you haven’t already done so, be sure to [connect with us](#) and follow along!



Our HR team has also introduced “Heartfelt Welcomes,” a series of emails highlighting new hires along with a short bio about each of them. If you’ve been reading them, you might already know a little about our newest colleagues.

But how well were you paying attention?

Let’s find out with a quick trivia challenge!

On the next page there are nine fun facts about some of our newest GSA team members. Your challenge is simple: match each trivia fact to the correct new hire.

Take a look at the photos on the next page to see if you can guess who’s who!



Josh Lietsch
Park Services Ranger I



Marc Amon
Security Services Manager



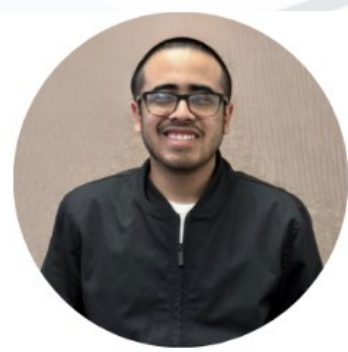
Lisa Castro
Custodian



Mark Chavez
Building Equipment Utility Worker



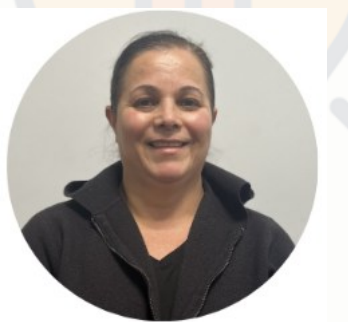
Yael Chavez
Park Services Ranger I



Jeremiah Castro
Custodian



Juan Gaytan
Maintenance Engineer



Nereida Verdin
Custodian



Kenney Johnson
Chief Deputy Director Facilities

1. Earned a Bachelor's degree in Biology from CSU Monterey Bay
2. Once ran a catering business called Hungry Squid Pizza
3. Previously worked in hotels and enjoys going out for coffee with her daughter
4. Likes going to church, spending time with family, and playing video games
5. Previously worked in the Special Education Department for Ventura Unified School District
6. Is a foodie and served in the U.S. Marine Corps
7. Is a grandfather and a retired commander from the Oxnard Police Department
8. Loves bowling and is a big sports fan
9. Is a huge Dodgers fan and previously served as Director of Support Services for the second-largest school district in Washington

See page 21 for answers.

GSA Safety Newsletter: Building Awareness, One Month at a Time

In January, our Safety Officer, **Kenny Leighton**, kicked off the year by launching the new **GSA Safety Newsletter**. The purpose of these monthly updates is to keep staff informed, diligent, and prepared by sharing practical tips, timely updates, and valuable resources that strengthen safety across our workplace. Each issue is designed to highlight proactive measures that prevent accidents, maintain a secure environment, and promote the well-being of all employees. Safety is a shared responsibility, and staying informed is one of the most effective steps we can take to ensure a safer environment for ourselves and our colleagues.



The February Safety Newsletter provided training on **Ergonomics**. The scientific discipline centered on designing and arranging environments, products, and systems to fit the people who use them. The goal of ergonomics is to create comfortable, efficient, and safe work environments by accounting for human physical and psychological needs and limitations. By reducing strain, improving posture, and preventing repetitive-use injuries, ergonomics plays a vital role in workplace health.

Whether in an office, manufacturing environment, or healthcare setting, thoughtful ergonomic practices help ensure that our spaces and tools support human capability and promote overall well-being.

March is **Ladder Safety Month**, an important reminder of the risks associated with everyday tasks. Falls from ladders remain one of the leading causes of workplace injuries. More than 160,000 ladder-related injuries occur in the United States each year, often due to improper use, damaged equipment, or lack of training.

To help keep everyone safe, here are common mistakes to avoid:

- Standing on the top rung
- Using a damaged or unstable ladder
- Ignoring ladder weight limits
- Overreaching or leaning too far to one side
- Using the wrong type of ladder for the task

By staying alert, using equipment properly, and following basic safety guidelines, we can significantly reduce the risk of ladder-related incidents.



2026 GSA Safety Goals:


- LOTO program
- IIPP Program Document
- Respiratory Protection Program
- Ladder Policy
- Indoor Lighting Policy
- Supervisor Safety Training
- Safety PM/WO Implementation

By taking just a few minutes each month to read through the newsletter, you'll discover actionable guidance that can

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make a real difference in preventing injuries and strengthening our overall safety culture.

 [GSA Health & Safety Website](#)

 GSA Safety Officer 805-765-5314

GSA Leadership Academy Is Here

Excitement continues to build across GSA as we officially launch the GSA Leadership Academy. This is one of the flagship initiatives of our Strategic Plan and a major investment in the future of our workforce. The Academy reflects a shared commitment to developing strong, confident, and capable leaders at every level of the organization. By equipping supervisors and leads with practical tools and skills, we are strengthening our agency today while also preparing the next generation of GSA leadership.

The Leadership Academy is designed as an interactive, cohort-based learning experience. Over eight monthly sessions, participants will engage in meaningful conversations, case studies, and hands-on activities that focus on real-world application. Each session explores a key leadership competency, including:

- **Effective communication and listening**
- **Conflict management and resolution strategies**
- **Emotional intelligence and self-awareness**
- **Critical thinking and problem solving**
- **Team building, coaching, and employee development**
- **Decision-making and accountability**

These sessions will be facilitated by experienced GSA leaders who will share insights, guide discussions, and connect leadership principles to the challenges and opportunities we experience across our departments. The small cohort model ensures a collaborative environment where participants can ask questions, exchange ideas, and support one another's growth.

Beyond skill-building, the Leadership Academy serves a larger purpose: strengthening our culture. It creates a space where employees can build relationships across divisions, gain a broader understanding of agency-wide priorities, and share perspectives that enhance our collective work. This investment in professional development is also a direct response to employee feedback, which consistently highlights the value of training, mentorship, and growth opportunities within GSA.

The launch of the Leadership Academy marks an important milestone for our agency. It demonstrates that leadership is not limited to position or title—it is a mindset, a responsibility, and a shared commitment to delivering the highest level of service to the County. By supporting our supervisors and leads in their growth, we are reinforcing our dedication to excellence, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

This is more than a training program; it is a step forward in shaping the future of GSA. As we move ahead with our Strategic Plan, the Leadership Academy is one more way we are empowering our workforce and building momentum together as *One GSA, One Team*.





Honoring Service: GSA Team Commended for Memorial Work in Simi Valley



Grounds Team pictured above: Antonio Barajas, Lorenzo Villa, Eduardo Amezcua, Juan Rivera, and Ruben Centeno. Not pictured but involved with the project: Carlos Nicasio and GSA Maintenance Electrician Josh Bean

On March 25, 2026, the GSA Grounds Team received well-deserved recognition for their exceptional work on a newly completed memorial at Simi Valley Fire Station 45. The memorial honors the life and service of Thomas James Daniel Minadeo, and the Grounds Team was selected to design and complete the landscaping and site enhancements that now surround the tribute. The project required thoughtful planning, attention to detail, and a deep respect for the significance of the memorial. The team worked closely with the station to ensure the final result would serve as a meaningful space for reflection for firefighters, family members, and the community.

In recognition of their work, Janice Parvin and Sevet Johnson visited the site. Both leaders praised the team for their craftsmanship and professionalism, noting how the memorial landscaping enhances the space and honors its purpose. They then requested a group photo with the Grounds Team to commemorate the moment. This was a proud day for GSA, and a wonderful example of the impact our teams make across the County. Outstanding job to the Grounds Team for representing GSA with excellence and care.



Purple Heart Monument Installation Complete

The County of Ventura is proud to highlight the successful relocation of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Monument—an effort more than two years in the making. Originally situated on the golf course at Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC), the monument has honored Purple Heart recipients within the installation but had limited public visibility. Recognizing the importance of ensuring broader community access, the Military Order of the Purple Heart offered to donate the monument to Ventura County. This launched a coordinated effort to secure proper permitting, plan the relocation, and identify a prominent new home for the monument at the Ventura County Government Center’s Veterans Memorial. Approved by the Board of Supervisors in September 2025 and championed by First District Supervisor Matt LaVere, the project reached major milestones with excavation and concrete placement completed on February 21, 2026, culminating in the monument’s installation on February 28, 2026. The move reflects a shared commitment to honoring the bravery and sacrifice of service members wounded or killed in combat. By placing the monument at the Government Center, the County has created a highly visible and accessible space where residents can pay tribute year round. The relocation was made possible entirely through donated services: the monument itself, along with the contracted work required to transport and install it, were generously contributed by local contractors and veteran supporting partners. GSA Maintenance, GSA Security, and Lourdes Solorzano (Supervisor LaVere’s Senior Administrative Assistant) played vital roles throughout the process, coordinating logistics, ensuring site readiness, and supporting safe installation activities. This project aligned closely with the County’s Strategic Plan priority of cultivating a diverse and innovative workforce dedicated to service excellence, while also fostering a culture of connection, health, and wellbeing for employees and the broader community.



Assessor’s Office Digital Tour

The Ventura County Assessor’s Office recently came to GSA for a 90-minute walk through a fully operational document automation environment — seeing live demos from variable data processing to real-time data capture, with GSA staff at every stop ready to answer questions and demonstrate capabilities.

The visit was organized to strengthen GSA’s partnership with the Assessor’s Office and open a conversation identifying document workflows that still rely heavily on manual handling. GSA staff walked through real examples of “document automation signals” — the everyday paper-based tasks that are candidates for modernization.



Stop by Stop



The tour began in the Print-to-Mail operation, where Ben Skirvin walked the Assessor’s team through the current template library, production scheduling, and a live variable data printing demo using a sample Assessor data file. The group watched a notice go from raw data to USPS and presort-ready digital templates complete with data quality savings.

John Wong then led a walk-through of the Print Center, covering inserting, sealing, metering, and USPS induction; highlighting the quality check-points and job tracking that keep high-volume runs on schedule.

Assessor's Office Digital Tour Cont.



Mark Martinez and Ali Esquivel covered the Mail Center, showing centralized mail metering, package and carrier services, and courier operations. This countywide infrastructure moves physical documents in and out every day at scale.

The final stop before the debrief was the Scan Center, where Joshua Gannon, Tryna Huebner, and Jonathan Hensley demonstrated high-speed inbound mail capture, document classification, and structured data output.

The live Digital Mailroom model showed how paper returns, web submissions, and counter drop-offs all converge into a single, clean data stream.





GSA Fleet Services Partners with The Arc of Ventura County



The Arc of Ventura County, a non-profit corporation founded in 1954, provides vital services to residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Historically, The Arc relied on outside vendors to manage maintenance and repairs for their specialty fleet, often at locations far from their base of operations. Attempts to hire in-house repair personnel were complicated by licensing and insurance requirements, creating a gap in efficient and reliable vehicle service.



During a conference, Chris Melton connected with Andy Mack, CEO of The Arc, and shared information about the quality and expertise of GSA Fleet's trained technicians. Familiar with ADA-equipped vehicles, GSA Fleet staff have the knowledge and tools to safely and efficiently repair specialized vehicles. Following this conversation, The Arc reached out to GSA to explore a partnership. After a public hearing, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors approved a memorandum of understanding between the two organizations to establish a collaborative working relationship.



Through this partnership, The Arc gains access to internal quality control, workload prioritization, emergency readiness, and cost savings. GSA Fleet has developed specialized expertise over the years in maintaining law enforcement vehicles, ADA-equipped vehicles, and heavy equipment—skills that are often unavailable in the private sector. These capabilities provide a significant advantage to partners requiring specialized services.

This collaboration also establishes a framework for future partnerships with cities and districts throughout Ventura County. The agreement outlines a clear invoicing structure detailing parts, labor, outside vendor costs, and taxes, using standardized language that allows GSA to set expectations and maintain accountability. This ensures that all partners can access GSA's specialized fleet services with confidence in the quality, transparency, and efficiency of the work performed.



Ventura County Parks Work Plan Receives Preliminary Approval

Ventura County Parks has achieved an exciting milestone with the preliminary approval of its new two-year work plan. This plan is structured to be fully fundable and is projected to reduce the department’s deferred maintenance (DM) backlog by an impressive 36%.

The proposed project plan and concept budget, shown below, outline a strategic approach to upgrading park facilities, addressing long-standing maintenance needs, and enhancing the overall visitor experience.

In addition to improving infrastructure, the work plan is expected to generate significant long-term financial benefits. If implemented successfully, the improvements are estimated to increase enterprise fund revenue by more than \$600,000 annually, a major boost that will help sustain future park operations and reinvestment.

This is a meaningful step forward for Ventura County Parks and reflects the County’s continued commitment to maintaining safe, accessible, and high-quality public spaces for the community.

FY	Location / Park	Project Description	Staff/Contract	Project Type	Project Cost	Deferred Maint	
26/27	Nyeland Acres	Nyeland Acres Park and Community Center Improvements	Contract	CI	\$ 16,699,503	\$ 1,252,463	
26/27	Saticoy Park	Saticoy Park Redesign & Renovation	Contract	CI/DM	\$ 8,000,000		
26/27	Saticoy GC	Saticoy GC Main Building Renovation	Contract	CI/DM	\$ 3,853,526	\$ 3,082,821	
26/27	Oak Park	Construct 17 New RV Sites and Add Park Amenities	Staff/Contract	CI/DM	\$ 1,746,800	\$ 1,310,100	
26/27	Dennison Park	Dennison Campground Play Equipment Improvements	Contract	DM	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	
26/27	Punta Gorda Lot	Expand Rincon Camping into Punta Gorda Lot - Phase I	Staff	CI	\$ 175,000		
26/27	Kenney Grove	Remove Dilapidated House and Install 4 RV Sites - Phase I	Contract	CI/DM	\$ 120,000		
26/27	Soule Park	Soule Park Tree Installation Phase II	Staff/Contract	Misc	\$ 65,000		
26/27	Soule Park GC	Stabalized Erosive Rverbanks Threatening Golf Course Infrastructure - Phase II	Staff/Contract	Storm	\$ 2,500,000		
26/27	Foster Park	Foster Park Storm Redevelopment Phase II	Contract	Storm	\$ 2,225,000		
26/27	Misc	Annual \$300K DM projects - Develop final list by fall 2026	Staff/Contract	DM	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	
					Total =	\$ 37,277,829	\$ 6,554,384
27/28	Toland Regional	Toland Park RV Camping Improvements - Phase I	Staff/Contract	CI/DM	\$ 275,000	\$ 27,500	
27/28	Foster Residence	Foster Residence Bridge, Washed Out Trail and Loop B Improvements	Staff/Contract	Storm	\$ 225,000	\$ 11,250	
27/28	Steckel Park	Steckel Area Improvements Master Plan	Contract	Planning	\$ 175,000		
27/28	Jose Flores CC	Construct Passive-Use Park and Improve Parking at Jose Flores CC	Contract	CI	\$ 900,000		
27/28	Punta Gorda Area	Coast Ranch RV Park Development - Design	Contract	CI	\$ 65,000		
27/28	Tapo Canyon	Tapo Canyon RV Camping Expansion - 21 Sites	Contract	CI	\$ 275,000		
27/28	Foster Residence	Foster Residence Camping Expansion	Contract	CI	\$ 225,000		
27/28	Misc	Annual \$300K DM projects - Develop final list by fall 2027	Staff/Contract	DM	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	
					Total =	\$ 2,440,000	\$ 338,750

DM corrected for FY26-28 projects \$ 7,300,134
 DM for unprogrammed projects \$ 12,723,480
 FY25/26 DM backlog \$ 20,023,614

Sprucing Up Campgrounds during Off-Peak Season

While Ventura County campgrounds are enjoyed year-round, the off-peak season provides an ideal opportunity for the Parks Department to give these popular destinations some much-needed care. Through a successful partnership with the Probation Agency Work Release Program, Parks schedules monthly campground closures to complete important maintenance and improvement projects that would otherwise be difficult to perform during peak visitation periods.

During these closures, crews tackle a wide range of upgrades to keep facilities safe, clean, and welcoming. Recent work has included:

- Replacing fire rings
- Pressure washing picnic tables
- Deep cleaning restroom facilities
- Adding base material to campsites
- Performing mechanical weed abatement
- Installing new RV pedestals

These efforts have already made a noticeable difference. The Parks Department has received numerous compliments from guests who appreciate the refreshed facilities and the visible care being put into each campground.

This ongoing collaboration ensures that our campgrounds remain some of the most well-maintained and visitor-friendly outdoor spaces in the region—just in time for another busy season ahead.



Oak View Community Center Pergola Project

Each year, the Parks Department identifies key deferred maintenance projects across our parks and facilities. One priority project for this season was the much-needed improvement of the patio area at the Oak View Community Center.

Over the winter, the Parks maintenance team removed the deteriorating pergola and an aging BBQ pit, rebuilt the pergola structure, and installed new tables to enhance the space for community use.

Initial contractor estimates for this work exceeded \$120,000, but **thanks to the skill and dedication of the Parks maintenance team**, the project was completed for one-third of the estimated cost. These significant savings allowed the department to purchase additional amenities for the patio area, further improving the site for visitors and community events.

This project is a great example of how the Parks Department continues to stretch resources, maintain public facilities, and create welcoming spaces for the community to enjoy.



Before



Before



During



After



Procurement Drives Strategic Purchasing and Fiscal Stewardship

GSA Procurement continues to play a critical role in supporting County operations through strategic purchasing, fiscal responsibility, and innovative solutions.

Saving Money While Supporting Public Safety

One notable achievement was completing a Request for Proposal for the Sheriff's Department and Public Works Agency for a multi-jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan.

“Through a well-managed process, Buyer Peter Berry achieved \$20,000 in savings while supporting essential public safety initiatives.”

This state-required plan, updated every five years, ensures **compliance and emergency preparedness** across multiple jurisdictions.

Advanced Technology for Search and Rescue

Procurement supported the Ventura County Sheriff's Office in acquiring a Wingtra RAY Survey Drone, capable of:

- Mapping up to 1,300 acres per flight
- Using AI-assisted technology to identify human-like features and missing-person items

Providing GPS data to help field personnel locate areas of interest
This investment enhances public safety and improves efficiency in time-sensitive situations.

Additionally, the Ventura County Fire

Protection District received four drones, three with thermal imaging, improving situational awareness during emergency response and firefighting operations.



Training and Collaboration

Procurement also provided trainings for the Sheriff's Department and Ventura County Behavioral Health, helping new employees:

- Understand Procurement processes
- Share challenges and feedback
- Build stronger communication and collaboration

“These sessions reinforce Procurement’s role as a responsive and supportive partner to County departments.”

Supporting Wildfire Prevention



Procurement partnered with the Ventura County Fire Protection District to secure equipment and services to reduce wildfire risk, including:

Remote-controlled tracked vehicles with forestry mulchers

- Remote-controlled tracked vehicles with forestry mulchers
- Goat grazing services in Bell Canyon, reducing vegetation across 42 acres

These efforts help protect community safety and property in fire-prone areas.

Fleet Modernization

So far in FY26, Procurement has facilitated the purchase of 49 vehicles for GSA Fleet, totaling \$5,600,479.91, including:

- 20 Chevy Tahoes for the County Sheriff – \$1,243,080
- 15 Kia Carnival Hybrids – \$688,478
- Bearcat tactical vehicle – \$391,040
- Kenworth dump truck – \$298,673

These purchases modernize the fleet, increase hybrid vehicle usage, and provide a balanced mix of law enforcement, passenger, and specialized vehicles.



Staff Compliments

Sometimes it's the little things that affect people. **John Kam** – Bldg. Interior Specialist from the Project shop was responding to a recently assigned work order. Although it was nothing major or unusual for **John**, it left an impression with his customer. Jeremy Siders (Program Assistant for CEO HR) commented on **John's** effort on the work order, "I just wanted to let him know that he was extremely helpful and proactive. He saw another issue with my desk drawers that I thought was too small to deal with but has been annoying me for a couple years and just went and did some balancing adjustments and fixed it. I like having an office where everything works properly, which I now have, so I can get my work done more effectively." Thank you, **John**, for your PARTNERSHIP and great CUSTOMER SERVICE!

Steve Nelles submitted the following: "The GSA Mail Center manages courier activity across six routes and 300+ brown mail service locations. **Mark Martinez** took the initiative to contact facilities across our customer base to update service contacts and coordinate any holiday schedule adjustments. This proactive outreach strengthens customer service and supports effective resource stewardship."

From Chris Melton in Fleet who wrote to Julie Miller in Procurement: I wanted to tell you how much we at Fleet Services appreciate **Robert Willis** and the work he has done regarding some of our contracts as they apply to AB-339. He notified staff about an issue, explained it to Fleet staff, answered our questions and understood our frustrations with the new processes. He then explained it again a second time to me in a way to where I was able to see a path forward. We were able to solve what was a complex issue in less than 24 hours and can move on to other work. Absolutely stellar job by **Robert.**"

From Jeri Cooper in Parks: "Huge shout out to **Ranger Josh Walker** who assisted Channel Islands Marine Wildlife Institute to rescue a seal pup. Customer service is not just about the people who book within our parks, it's also about the call to action when we see someone or something in need. Great job lending a hand!" **Jeri** forwarded the following comment and photo - "Thanks to **Ranger Josh** for helping myself and my wife rescue an underweight 7-month CSL pup! On behalf of Channel Islands Marine Wildlife institute, Thank you".

Charlotte Cubitt-Serrano wrote in with some kudos: "Shout out to: **Saul Dela Rosa, Nate Dixon, Kevin Monroy, Joseph Rodriguez, Ken Milton** and **Christian Acuna** for holding down the fort at the Government Center campus through the holidays. We were short staffed with scheduled vacations and unexpected call outs. PTFD staff helped cover the HOA, HOJ, and Courts in addition to PTFD work requests. They jumped in to help right away, no questions asked – total rockstars! I would also like to shoutout my small but mighty team in Dispatch. They all work hard every day, and through the holiday schedule the three of us including **Rozalynn DeAlba** and **Shannon Asato** covered phones, Maintenance attendance, Passdown, Standby, and Christmas-Holiday rain and road closure reports (with minimal tears and sweat involved). They had a great attitude and are always willing to help cover their teammates."

Staff Compliments Cont.

I wanted to extend my sincere thanks to you and your team for all of their assistance in preparing vehicles for our agency’s participation in the Baker to Vegas run this week.

From **Jorge Bonilla** and **Joel Miller** ensuring the vehicles are safe and ready, to **Meighan Batinica** coordinating the Voyager cards, and **Kenny Schmidt’s team** in the shop making time to install the radios, it’s clear a lot of effort went into making sure everything came together seamlessly. That level of coordination and support does not go unnoticed.

Patrick Maynard, Director of Emergency Services.

Sean Payne and the Security Team stepped up and increased security measures due to concerns raised from the County Planning Committee. Dave Ward wrote “First, thank you for your assistance last night and today. Our hearing overall went well, and the added security was of value to the Commissioners and to staff.” Thank you for keeping safety a priority!

From Ivelisse Ayala with HCA Behavioral Health: Hi, I am a field-based case manager with VCBH, on 1/30/26 I used the Motor Pool service for the first time. I wanted to let you know that **Aron Ruiz** was able to assist me when I locked my personal keys in the van after concluding my reservation. He was very kind and I am brown mailing you something to give to him on my behalf. I think it is very important to share compliments about employees just as much as complaints. I am so happy to share with my fellow colleagues, how to use Motor Pool since we are adding more field-based programs. I love to train others and share information. I look forward to using motor pool more often and now feel very comfortable to do so. I appreciate your time and I thank you for having such wonderful employees and being a great leader.

Thank you, **Rory** (this is **Rory Aronsky** in GSA Procurement)—and a huge thank you for all the work you’ve put into our items over the past few months. With so many renewals on January 1, along with the added AB339 and travel requirements, I know it created a significant amount of extra work, and we truly appreciate all your support. Hopefully once we wrap up the current items, we will slow down and won’t have to trouble you too much moving forward in 2026. Thanks again for all your help—we really appreciate it!!!!

From Patrick Squires in F&M and was sent to Julie Miller in Procurement: Hi Julie, as we all work to understand the ramifications of AB 339 on our contracted services, I wanted to commend **Jose Becerra** for his assistance. **Jose** has proactively provided us with as much information as possible, including setting up an on-line training to help us start to navigate the issues. I appreciate his willingness to reach out to us to start us on the path.

Facilities Manager Jill Siela wrote “to recognize and extend my sincere appreciation to **Anthony Morganstein** for his exceptional support during the onboarding of our new employee over the holidays. **Anthony** proactively stepped in and took responsibility to ensure a smooth and successful onboarding experience while both the supervisor and manager were out of the office. His initiative, reliability, and strong commitment to the team did not go unnoticed. Thank you, **Anthony**, for demonstrating exemplary teamwork and dedication.” Trades Supervisor **Nate Paul** received word from **Garrett Harmon** and **Martin Marquez** that they would like to shout out to the plumbers, **Ian Limoli** and **Robert Stadler** for jumping in to re-pipe the waste lines on 3 sinks at the HOA that were corroding and beginning to leak in a plumbing chase that was difficult to access. Having the plumbers dedicate their efforts to this job allowed **Garrett** and **Martin** to continue working on other urgent jobs in the building without having to divert their attention.



GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY
COUNTY OF VENTURA

DIRECTOR'S AWARD OF EXCELLENCE CHALLENGE COIN

Recognizing Excellence: Zulema Covarrubias Leads the Benefits Awareness Campaign

On February 27, 2026, Zulema Covarrubias was honored for her exceptional creativity, leadership, and dedication in developing the Countywide Benefits Awareness Campaign featuring *Bennie the Elephant*.

Zulema transformed the initial concept into a cohesive and memorable design that reached employees across all print, web, and email platforms. From character development to tagline creation to coordinated marketing assets, her work brought the campaign to life in a fun, engaging, and highly effective way.

Her attention to detail, consistent on-time delivery, and outstanding customer service were instrumental in the campaign's success, all while she continued to manage her regular design workload.



Congratulations, Zulema, and thank you for your remarkable contributions to the County's communication efforts!

Congratulations to Dave Fishman on New Safety Training Certifications

Congratulations to Dave Fishman for successfully completing the Train-the-Trainer certifications for both forklift and scissor lift operations. This achievement represents a valuable investment in our team's safety and professional development.

With Dave's new certification, the department is now able to provide in-house equipment training during onboarding and as requested by supervisors and managers. This enhanced capability ensures staff receive timely, high-quality instruction to perform their duties safely and confidently.

Thank you, Dave, for your initiative, leadership, and commitment to strengthening our department!



Answer Key From Page 7: 1 Josh Lietsch, 2 Mark Chavez, 3 Nereida Verdin, 4 Jeremiah Castro, 5 Lisa Castro, 6 Yael Chavez, 7 Marc Amon, 8 Juan Gaytan, 9 Kenney Johnson

Celebrating GSA Staff

Congratulations to Tamarra Barbey on Earning Her FMP Credential



Congratulations to Tamarra Barbey for earning her Facility Management Professional (FMP) Credential through the International Facility Management Association (IFMA). This globally recognized certification is built on four comprehensive courses: Finance & Business, Operations & Maintenance, Leadership & Strategy, and Project Management.

Completion of this rigorous program represents a significant professional milestone and highlights Tammy’s commitment to excellence, growth, and continuous learning. Her achievement not only advances her own expertise but also strengthens the credibility and capability of our entire GSA team.

Congratulations, Tammy, on this outstanding accomplishment!

GSA Events Committee Kicks Off the Year With a Sweet Success

The GSA Events Committee, “Great Shindigs Always”, is proud to continue fundraising efforts that support agencywide employee engagement and bring staff together throughout the year.

To kick off 2026, the committee hosted an extremely popular and incredibly successful GSA Artisan Bake Sale, complete with their much loved candygrams. This year’s sale showcased an impressive variety of homemade offerings, including kimchi, fresh salsa, baked treats, and other delicious creations. The committee extends a heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed, purchased items, or helped spread the word.

Approximately 17 employees generously donated homemade goods, and thanks to the overwhelming support from staff, nearly everything sold out. Events like this are a shining example of what we can accomplish together and a true reflection of *One GSA, One Team*.

The GSA Events Committee looks forward to bringing even more fun, connection, and community spirit to GSA throughout the year!

2026

ARTISAN

SALE

RECAP

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO DONATED THEIR ARTISANAL GOODS & THEIR TIME.





OUR FIRST FUNDRAISER OF 2026 WAS A SUCCESS!

WE RAISED OVER \$1500!



CONGRATULATIONS TO ARON RUIZ FOR WINNING THE BAKER'S BASKET RAFFLE!

MOVIN' & SHAKIN' – WHO'S COMING, WHO'S GOING IN GSA

NEW HIRES

Facilities & Materials:

March Amon, Special Services
Juan Gaytan, Maintenance Engineer
Kenney Johnson, F&M Chief Deputy Director
Lisa Castro, Custodian
Nereida Verdin, Custodian
Jeremiah Castro, Custodian
Mark Chavez, Building Equipment Utility Worker
Jessica Baca, Facility Projects Engineer
Jose Antonio Gonzalez, Custodian

Fleet:

Miguel Chavez, Parts Specialist

Parks:

Yael Chavez, Park Services Ranger I
Joshua Lietsch, Park Services Ranger I

RETIREMENTS

Dawn Julien-Burns, Administrative Assistant I
Efrain Leyva, Custodian

PROMOTIONS

Facilities & Materials:

Lauren Fisher, Technical Specialist IV-PH

Procurement:

Julie Miller, Chief Procurement Officer, Deputy Director
Melissa Lorenzen, Asst Chief Procurement Officer

RESIGNATIONS / SEPARATIONS / TRANSFERS

Facilities & Materials:

Austin Koff, Inventory Management Asst III
Jorge Colon, Custodian
Sergio Garcia-Mendez, Grounds

Fleet:

Edwin Rivas, Program Administrator II

Procurement:

Karla Navarro-Student Worker

Spotlight

A Valuable Step Forward: Reflections from GSA Procurement

Karla Navarro writes, “During my time as a Student Worker III with GSA Procurement, I supported the team with a variety of key tasks, including organizing information, conducting research, assisting with projects, and managing incoming and outgoing mail. A major part of my role involved communicating with vendors to ensure compliance and confirm that all required documents were accurate and up to date.

This experience helped me strengthen my organizational, communication, and time-management skills as I learned to track multiple tasks, work within different databases, and handle information with care and accuracy. Even though many of my responsibilities were clerical, I gained a strong understanding of how essential these skills are in a professional environment.

I’m grateful for the support and guidance from the GSA Procurement team. The skills and experience I gained here have prepared me well for my next step in my Human Resources internship at Smucker's, where accuracy, organization, and clear communication are key.”

Best of luck to Karla as you continue taking steps toward achieving your career goals!

