



MISSION VIEJO BUZZ

Keeping the California Promise
Week of January 13, 2007

The Patriot Post Founders' Quote Daily

"Were the pictures which have been drawn by the political jealousy of some among us faithful likenesses of the human character, the inference would be, that there is not sufficient virtue among men for self-government; and that nothing less than the chains of despotism can restrain them from destroying and devouring one another." -- Alexander Hamilton and James Madison (Federalist No. 55, 15 February 1788) Reference: The Federalist

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URY: THE VOICE FROM THE FAR LEFT EDITORIAL STAFF



Mission Viejo residents tuning in to council meetings might notice the new seating arrangement of elected officials.

Council members' positions on the dais have for years indicated which ones are in or out of power. Gail Reavis is in the center seat as mayor, and John Paul Ledesma is to her left as vice mayor. They're "in." Reavis also has the privilege of deciding where others sit. She placed Councilman Lance MacLean at her right, seemingly a friendly gesture. Reavis is either currying favor with MacLean or he's sitting next to her by default.



Council Members Trish Kelley and Frank Ury are the bookends -- a first for Kelley, who occupied one of the three middle seats throughout her tenure from 2002 through 2006. Ury (to Reavis' far left) sits between Ledesma and an empty chair. Kelley sits to Reavis' far right. Beyond the physical separation of Reavis and Kelley, Reavis at the

Jan. 2 meeting stated as one of her goals ending the city's penchant for feel-good programs. Kelley's City of Character nonsense comes to mind.

By separating MacLean and Ury, Reavis has effectively cut the cross-talk and snickering that took place during 2006 when MacLean and Ury sat next to each other. If Ury leans over and talks to anyone, it would be Ledesma, who probably won't respond. Like a bad schoolboy, Ury has been isolated.



Residents attending meetings since the November election say Ury fidgets and appears disinterested in the proceedings. Prior to the election, Ury frequently leaned back in his blue suede chair with his hands clasped behind his head. His posture continues to come across as arrogant, bored and above it all. Will he stick around for the remaining two years of his term?



City hall insiders say Ury has ambition to run for higher office. Assemblyman Todd Spitzer will term out in 2008, and a county blog controlled

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by Ury's lobbyist friend has been dropping his name as Spitzer's replacement. Others mention Ury's alleged wish to become a county supervisor, which doesn't make sense. Ury several months ago denied he's interested in taking Spitzer's place. Any closet candidates will soon come out, as the race will likely be decided in the 2008 Primary Election.

Mission Viejo's city election three months ago was devastating for Ury, who backed unsuccessful challengers Diane Greenwood, Justin McCusker and Bill Barker. Ury not only campaigned on street corners for Greenwood and McCusker, he openly trashed Kelley, Ledesma and MacLean. He

*And now YOU'RE trashed Frank
How's it feel?*

three incumbents from being endorsed by the Orange County Republican Party.

In addition to Ury's hostile behavior toward Kelley, Ledesma and MacLean, Reavis has reason not to trust him. Among other issues, when Reavis got into a legal tangle with the former city manager and his secretary, Ury's lobbyist friend found a "free" attorney for her. The free advice -- legal threats and claims -- put Reavis at odds with residents, city staffers and her council peers.

Perhaps the lobbyist will have to forget about cashing in on Ury's popularity for awhile. Ury has been bypassed as mayor and stripped of meaningful appointments to agencies where he might network. Ury's former fan club has diminished considerably, and those who followed him around for two years appear disenchanted. A vocal blog writer pulled his plug from Ury's power strip as soon as Diane Greenwood officially lost her bid for a council seat.

Although Reavis and Ledesma's edge may be temporary, Mission Viejo's power seekers will likely start courting them again.

While Kelley and MacLean's political views are vastly dif-

ferent from those of Reavis and Ledesma, this foursome has found unity by galvanizing against Ury.



CUSD NOTES FROM BOARD MEETINGS JANUARY 8 AND JANUARY 9

Following are notes from a CUSD resident who attended the school board meetings this week. The notes are titled "Things for parents and taxpayers to think about in CUSD."

The first five items were discussed at the board meeting on January 8 and January 9.



The old board has approved to date \$142 million to build the new high school, San Juan Hills High School. That figure includes: pool, stadium, all-weather track and field, and theatre. It does not include the cost of a covered eating area for students or classrooms to house the projected student enrollment of 2,500. (Current classrooms will house 2,100 students only.)

SJHHS (the new school) will open with only 600 students -- how will this alleviate overcrowding at the five other high schools?

The old board approved the construction of a two-story portable at Aliso Niguel High School -- a 13-year-old school (and say they will obtain state matching money) while parents of Capo Valley High School, Dana Hills High School, Newhart and every other school in the district were told their schools had to be 25 years old.

The old board approved \$10.18 million new two-story portable at ANHS to add 93 parking spaces (about \$100,000 per parking space).

The old board approved and spent approximately \$16 million to convert Arroyo Vista to a

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K-8 to add approximately 300 students to the campus (the school enrollment is capped at 1,050 students and has TWO multipurpose rooms).

The new district office cost approximate \$55 million (including interest) to save half a million a year in lease payments. Break even is approximately 110 years. Funding source is Mello Roos, RDA, Developer fees--all money that could have gone to our schools.

The district's investigation confirms district personnel and money were used on a political campaign (money that could have gone to our students). Check the link below:

<http://www.thecapistranodispatch.com/archives/CUSD%20Investigation.pdf>

In the report (retired) Judge Waldrip writes that district officials Smollar and McGill were left alone with the recall petitions for more than two hours while compiling a list of petition gatherers. The names were transferred to a spreadsheet, and a district database was used to complete a spreadsheet with student information including names. To use student records for purposes other than educational is a violation of Ed Code.



The district can open buildings without fire alarms by following a policy written by CUSD called "Fire Watch," which means someone at the school is responsible to "watch for fire" -- we each have to have smoke alarms in every room of our homes but an entire building can be opened without functioning fire alarms in CUSD.



American Red Cross

URGENT REQUEST FOR BLOOD DONORS

The American Red Cross is urgently appealing for the greatest-possible participation in scheduled blood drives during the coming weeks. There is an immediate need to boost the blood supply. January typically brings a drop in blood donations because of winter

vacations.

Currently, the Red Cross is delivering many units of blood to hospitals as quickly as they can be donated, processed, and tested. All blood types are needed. Children with leukemia, adult cancer patients, accident victims and others depend on all of us to give blood. You can help. Please make a convenient appointment to donate blood at an upcoming blood drive. Visit www.givelife.org <http://www.bloodservicesmail.org/ct/d7MIbEE1YQNT/> or call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1 - 8 0 0 - 4 4 8 - 3 5 4 3) . If you have been told previously by the American Red Cross or another blood center that you should never donate blood, please disregard this message. If you recently made a blood donation, or if you have already scheduled an appointment to donate blood, please accept our thanks on behalf of the patients whose lives you may have touched.

To donate blood you must be at least 17 years old, weigh 110 lbs. and be in good health.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR CAPO SCHOOL DISTRICT UPDATE

DEAR CONCERNED PARENT/CUSD RESIDENT:

If you have not yet seen (Retired) Judge Waldrip's report on the CUSD allegations (about the "enemies hit list", etc.), you may find it here: <http://www.thecapistranodispatch.com/archives/CUSD%20Investigation.pdf>. CUSD had the report in its entirety on its website, but has since removed the most damaging evidence against former Superintendent James Fleming, memos describing very questionable activity. You can now find them at The Capistrano Dispatch's website.

In his report, Waldrip describes how the district employees went to the Registrar's office and collected names (illegally). I knew about

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that, but what I didn't know until I read the report is that there is a "second" list, of our children.

Starting on page 30, there is a copy of a Memo from Susan McGill to Fleming, in which she states "*Per your request* (emphasis mine), attached are the lists of individuals who were listed as signature-gatherers along with the information on whether they have children in CUSD and which schools those children attend."

Some of the people reading this letter are on that list. While the children's names and info were not posted on the website for privacy reasons, it seems that Fleming and his cohorts in the district did indeed collect info about our children to create a list. While Waldrip draws the conclusion that it doesn't seem like anybody was harmed through the creation of such a list, he has no way of knowing that, as he was limited to just a few interviews of parents, not all of whom even have children in CUSD. Many people I spoke with wanted nothing to do with what they believed would be a district whitewash, so they refused to speak with Waldrip. But at least a few parents I know personally believe that their child (or children in some cases) were retaliated against by the district.

I figure I had a right to see the list for myself since my kids' info is apparently on it. So, the district faxed over a copy of the list with my name, my husband's name, my child's name, along with the school he attends, his grade level, as well as our home address and phone number.

Not only did Fleming use district resources to create a second list with our children's names and info on it, but according to another memo in the report (starting on page 26), Fleming clearly used district resources to send out people to "spy" on the recall effort in its early stages and report back. The memo referring to this was sent from Fleming to Board of Trustees President Marlene Draper, on District letterhead, was generated by district staff (Fleming's assistant), outlines details about the recall movement and while I'm not an attorney, it sure seems pretty clearly to violate the law that prevents school officials from getting

involved in election or recall politics -- especially on district time and using district resources.

The way I see it, now that we have evidence that Fleming requested that McGill create this second list, I for one intend to ask the Trustees at the next Board meeting to take a vote to immediately stop paying for Fleming's legal defense, based on the fact that: a) he inappropriately and perhaps illegally generated a list of our children, their school info, grade level and home address/phone number for political reasons, and b) that he did it using district resources and district time.

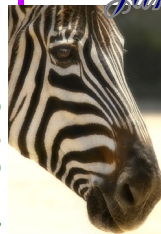
I am asking any interested citizens to please join me at the next Board meeting on February 12, to ask the Trustees to vote to immediately stop paying for the legal defense of Fleming. If memory serves, the Trustees said they would pay for it until such time it was demonstrated that Fleming did something wrong. Well, now we know. No more excuses.

Kim Lefner
CUSD PARENT



The Buzz

January 13, 2007



What's black with stripes and a \$10-million price tag? It's the new 93-space parking lot at Aliso Niguel High School. The Buzz hopes CUSD residents are still watching to see how their tax dollars are going up in smoke.



With the release of (retired) Judge Waldrip's report regarding wrongdoing at CUSD came a new list. Former Supt. James Fleming sent two of his administrative staff members to the Registrar of Voters' office in 2006 to get informa-

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tion about who gathered recall signatures. This is different from the "enemies list" revealed by the Orange County Register last summer. A Mission Viejo resident whose name appeared on the second list responded to The Buzz: "I'm happy to be on the list. I felt slighted when I didn't make the list of enemies." OC Register columnist Frank Mickadeit described the enemies list as a badge of honor.

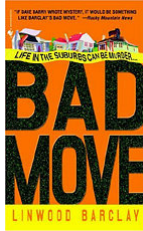


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One of the underlying problems with CUSD's "investigation of wrongdoing" is that school district officials and their buddies were investigating themselves. It's no surprise that the self-evaluation found nothing wrong.

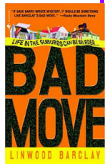
★★★★★

Council members chose their city commission appointees at the Jan. 2 meeting. Despite new applicants with plenty of talent, some council members reappointed current commissioners, including passive ones who barely participate. On the other hand, newly appointed Planning Commissioner Brian Skalsky, an unsuccessful council candidate who came in last, appears to have no relevant experience. Residents speculate he was selected for another reason: he poses no serious threat to any council member's reelection bid in 2008.



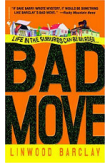
★★★★★

Who's in charge of Mission Viejo's economic development? Residents would likely give the obvious answer: no one. Receiving unanimous council support on Jan. 2, the city manager and a well-paid city secretary were reappointed to direct the city's economic development. Perhaps they can boast coursework in Bureaucracy 101, arranging people for group photographs and writing puff pieces as their qualifications. By contrast, Lake Forest has a real economic development director and a growing economic base.



★★★★★

Here are examples of city staffers' concepts of business analysis. When two council members were promoting a city gym, the "needs analysis" provided by staff was a laundry list of gymnasium uses (e.g., space for Brownie Scouts to learn wigwam construction). As the "needs analysis" for the senior transportation program, a city staffer said they researched how



many city residents are 85 years of age or older. What would happen to a business if it relied on this type of analysis?

★★★★★

Newly elected CUSD Trustee Ellen Addonizio (of Mission Viejo) has called for three proposals to be considered at the February board meeting: terminating the district's funding of defense attorneys for former district employees, adopting an anti-nepotism policy and creating an internal audit committee. All three ideas depart dramatically from practices of the old board.



City Council meets in a room called "Council Chambers."

City Council is made up of people who are elected to represent different parts of your town.

Council members hold regular meetings to oversee city services, establish laws and approve the budget.

Sometimes public meetings are held so that citizens can discuss issues that affect their community.

The end