



# MISSION VIEJO BUZZ

Keeping the California Promise

Week of March 10, 2007

## The Patriot Post Founders' Quote Daily

"If we can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people, under the pretence of taking care of them, they must become happy."

-- Thomas Jefferson (letter to Thomas Cooper, 29 November 1802)

Reference: respect quoted

Founders' Quote Daily is a service of The Patriot Post, the most widely read conservative journal on the Internet. If you would like to receive Founders Quote Daily, and this highly acclaimed Digest of news, policy and opinion delivered FREE by e-mail to your inbox, link to: <http://PatriotPost.US/subscribe/>

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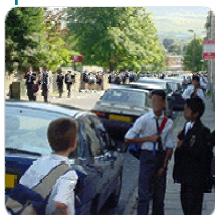
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### SHORT COUNCIL MEETING STAFF EDITORIAL



With little of interest on the agenda, the March 5 city council meeting ended at 7:20 p.m. Few people attended, but those who stayed to the end learned that Councilman John Paul Ledesma and his wife are expecting their first child in October.

Noticeably absent at the meeting was anyone from Councilman Frank Ury's dwindling fan club. For the first time in years, no one launched a gratuitous personal attack from the public microphone.



One public speaker asked when the city will address problems of a neighborhood impacted by traffic from Newhart Middle School. The blog regrettably informs the public that the November election is over, and a remedy won't likely be discussed again until the next campaign season in 2008. The speaker referred to a petition signed by neighbors, and she said residents have been asking the city's help for four years. After the council ignored their requests for four years, did residents wanting change vote for incumbents in the No-

vember 2006 election?

Hmmm...  
Probably!

Another resident making public comments suggested converting the Potocki Center to an art center. He suggested a business-minded group of interested citizens should explore the idea.



No member of the public pulled any agenda item for discussion, and only Councilwoman Gail Reavis wanted to talk about a proposed "goal-setting" workshop before the council voted on it. The proposed workshop (\$39,000) and related activities less a "goal setting" workshop. (\$15,000) passed 4-1 with Reavis dissenting after saying the council wasn't ready for such a workshop.

Anyone observing city politics during the past several years has probably noticed the council doesn't need \$54,000 worth of help to set goals. Ury made clear in 2006 his goal was to knock three incumbents (Trish Kelley, Lance MacLean and John Paul Ledesma) out of office. Ledesma made a sizeable donation to Ury's opponent in the 2004 city race in an effort to prevent Ury from getting on the council. Ury has numerous times implied from the dais he would act nicer if Ms. Kelley would act smarter, and Kelley and Reavis have for years regaled



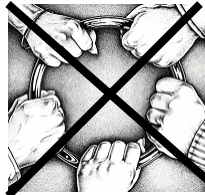
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viewers with catfights during meetings.



The pricey goal-setting workshop was also described as group leadership development. All five council members proclaimed during their campaigns that they were already proven leaders. Not only do they lack leadership skills, they have exhibited no desire to work as a team except when conspiring against each other. Entire neighborhoods have learned this council has little interest in addressing community problems or protecting residents' quality of life. Why waste city tax dollars on training, particularly when these council members failed to learn from previous similar workshops?



As an example of the council's problems, MacLean during the March 5 meeting essentially asked the city attorney if the mayor can be stripped of her title before her turn ends December 31. The city attorney said the other council members voted to give her a turn as mayor, and they can vote to end her turn at any time.

A report about the high number of vehicles being stolen while parked at the mall received little attention during the meeting. After the city manager said the report had been written as a result of a council request, no one from the public commented, no council member commented and no one had any question. The topic of auto thefts came to the council's attention when residents asked why the public hadn't been informed of the thefts. Because no council member asked, viewers of the March 5 meeting didn't learn if the report addressed the original question of why the rash of thefts wasn't reported in newspapers. The city manager talked about the report, saying anyone could look up informa-



tion about crime by accessing the Internet, but he didn't address the question.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR CUSD PARENTS' VICTORIES ADD UP

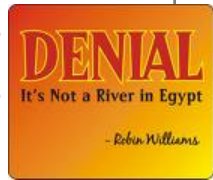


We won a small (but somewhat hollow) victory at the March 7 Capistrano Unified School District board meeting. The old guard trustees actually apologized for former superintendent James Fleming's actions in creating lists, as outlined in the Waldrip Report. They then followed that up with a unanimous vote to terminate payment of Fleming's criminal defense attorney fees.

The problem is, they claim they knew *nothing* about any of his actions – even though it was widely reported in the media and parents complained (loudly in many cases) about Fleming's damaging actions. I'm sure many of you will remember Trustee Marlene Draper's infamous response during a board meeting last summer, when parent after parent addressed the board to denounce Fleming's actions and his list, which were reported in the media. She stated firmly, "Let me reiterate, *there is no list.*" Well, she had to eat those words, and she not only admitted the existence of at least *two* lists, but she had to apologize for them as well.



The denial from the board members that they knew anything about the lists or any other actions was, unfortunately, typical – which is why I say this is a somewhat hollow victory. I don't expect the trustees' behavior to change. Had they said "We refused to listen to parents when they complained about Fleming's actions," that would have been true and would have gone a long way toward restoring some trust. Instead, they simply refuse (still) to acknowledge that they knew ANYTHING about any of this despite the media reports, the Grand Jury investigation, parent complaints, etc.



Thanks to those of you who support doing

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the right thing, speaking up and forcing change, however small. I hope you believe, as I do, that small victories can add up to big changes, so it's important to keep moving forward.

Kim Lefner  
CUSD Parent

# The Buzz

March 7



A blog reader who knows a thing or two about Target stores says their new stores usually open in October. He said the corporate office's timing gives new stores a jump start with Christmas sales, although that might not be Target's underlying reason. The reader's speculation would fit in with comments from Target's spokesman regarding the new store planned at Jeronimo / Los Alisos. However, the spokesman announced a year ago the store would open in October 2006. Perhaps the new store will open in October 2007.

★★★★★

Here's news that blog readers can use. The goal of the Computer Take-Back Campaign is to protect the health and well being of electronics users, workers and the communities where electronics are produced and discarded. The campaign's goal is to require consumer electronics manufacturers and brand owners to take full responsibility for the life cycle of their products through effective public policy requirements or enforceable agreements. For anyone who is interested in taking a more in-depth look, click on the link below or cut and paste this Web address into your browser: <http://www.computertakeback.com/index.cfm>



★★★★★



Six months ago, some parents in the Capo school district were stunned to hear ex-superintendent James Fleming's legal defense fees would be paid by taxpayers. CUSD

has paid \$5,033 in fees to the \$400-per-hour attorney, Ronald Brower. At the March 7 board meeting, trustees voted to stop paying Fleming's legal fees, which sounds like a principled and responsible decision. The rest of the story, however, indicates the case against Fleming is either winding down or inactive at this time. The trustees could vote again to continue paying if and when Brower's services are needed.

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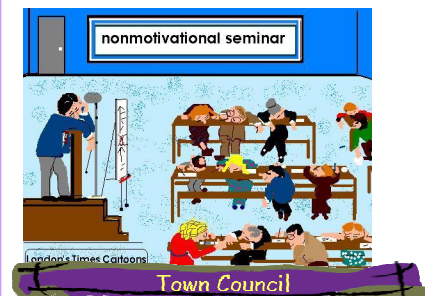
Capistrano USD trustees on March 7 announced that Placentia schools chief Dennis Smith is their top choice to become the new superintendent. Trustees plan to make Smith an offer during a special meeting on March 12. Before his Placentia-Yorba Linda tenure, Smith led districts in Florida, Irvine, Cajon Valley and Laguna Beach. Smith also serves as the current president of the Orange County Superintendents Association.

Meet Dennis Smith



★★★★★

For unknown reasons, watchers of council meetings are getting a break from the same three people who have spoken at nearly every meeting for years. Following several months of a letter-writing campaign to Saddleback Valley News, their lunatic ranting abruptly stopped. A bigger problem than the lunacy was their disrespect for the truth. The noise had grown old, and they were contributing nothing to the objective of better government.



# the end