



# MISSION VIEJO BUZZ

Keeping the California Promise  
Week of February 11, 2006

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## THE PATRIOT POST ~ FOUNDERS' QUOTE DAILY

"No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity." -- James Madison (Federalist No. 10, 23 November 1787)  
Reference: The Federalist — 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>

### EDITORIAL COMMENT A MATTER OF RECORD



Everyone deserves a chance, and after 14 months in office, Councilman Frank Ury has had a chance. Ury in his 2004 campaign said he would apply his business background to city government. Ury says he is an engineer but how has that helped the city? Ury replaced former Councilman Bill Craycraft, who was in sales. With Bill, customers at least knew what he was selling.

One of Ury's 2004 campaign mailers claimed 1) He would force Edison to bury its lines; 2) He would streamline government and cut wasteful spending; 3) He was on the front lines to stop the El Toro airport; 4) He was instrumental in supporting the expansion of the community center.

1) Did Ury force Edison to bury its lines? The decision not to bury the lines had likely been made before Ury began campaigning. Despite his campaign rhetoric, Ury's personal emails early on indicated his awareness of the hopeless plight.

2) Has Ury streamlined government? For 14 months, he's tried to expand government and bureaucracy, including his failed attempt to create a separate traffic commission. Has he

### Erase the Waste

cut spending and waste? No, and his costly yearlong push to dump the city attorney – only to renew the same firm's contract – was ridiculously wasteful. He tried to give a gift of public funds to his HOA for a city park on private property, **AND THAT'S ILLEGAL.**

What else is on record for this councilman who ran as a fiscal conservative? Ury proposed reinstating Lance MacLean's \$148K electronic sign in the budget. During his council campaign, Ury was silent on the first-ever proposed tax increase, Measure K. He proposed a pay increase for council members. He proposed expanding the city's after-school program at a number of schools - a blatant social program – and he now appears to support building high-density, government-subsidized apartments for those with very low income.

3) Ury's claim as an El Toro Airport fighter is bogus. As another whopper, he engaged Or. Co. Supv. Chris Norby to record a campaign phone message in which Norby stated "Frank Ury fought the El Toro airport from the beginning." Ury wasn't a participant, and the real heroes who fought the airport from the beginning had never heard of Frank Ury. Mere days before Measure W passed, Ury did acquiesce in allowing a group of activists into his Stoneridge gates to plead their case to the HOA. Measure W passed without help from Ury or his

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**HOA.**

4) Ury's claim that he made any difference in supporting the completion of the community center prior to running for council is too vague to measure. Was he "instrumental"? Residents who attended Community Services meetings say absolutely not. He asked trivial questions about the design of the building and then voted as a commissioner in the 7-0 recommendation to move forward.

Ury's mailer also stated "Frank's Priorities:" 1) fix traffic problems, 2) complete the senior center, 3) put power lines underground, 4) audit city spending. Except for item 2, Ury has struck out. He could claim partial credit for item 2, as the council voted 5-0 to move forward with the community center expansion. With partial credit for one item, his performance on the council is not a perfect failure. No one is

perfect

which beach will it run aground? As a taxpayer, I submit that it will rest upon the taxpayer's beach, much to the dissatisfaction of everyone.

James Edward Woodin  
Mission Viejo



**TEXT OF FEB. 6 COUNCIL COMMENTS  
A CALL FOR FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**T**he fact that the same law firm was chosen as city attorney after more than 12 months of closed-session meetings is a charade for the taxpayers of Mission Viejo. The meter is always running, and I know that regardless of the reasons, the indecisiveness costs the city thousands of dollars.

In addition to this, I have attended council meetings for more than a year with probably only one absence, yet not once have I heard the unfunded pension liability of CalPERS mentioned or agendized except obliquely during the semi-annual budget review in May or June of 2005. There has been no public discussion at council meetings of the approximately \$3.8-million liability or how it is to be resolved. Maybe it will just go away or the stock market will bail you out. I submit this is not going to happen. The majority members on this council – you know who you are – persist in ignoring the most critical budget item for our city. Which moniker applies here? Shall it be "asleep at the wheel" or shall it be simply "indifference"?  
The rudderless ship has been drifting. On

**LETTERS**

**EARLY RETIREMENTS?  
OR RESIGNATIONS?**

**E**ach month during the past year, a new word was spewed out from the "word of the month" – the former mayor. But did anyone hear such words as animosity, vindictiveness or vengeance – the words displayed by the former mayor?



Could there be a carryover of the welcome change of UCI Med Center resignations, wending its way downward and elsewhere? Our local voters could also replace the current and former mayors in the coming November election. If the two elected officials choose not to follow the lead of the UCI incompetents and resign soon, they could have a learning experience in November.

The welcome change of early retirements or resignations would serve well.

William Cruse  
Mission Viejo

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## EVERYONE LOVES A SURVEY

**R**egarding the city's new contract for yet another opinion survey, the questions are typically contrived for a desired result. What's the objective this time, imposing a pet project on the residents or going on the campaign trail?

### POSSIBLE SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

**Q: Isn't Councilman Lance's MacLean's gym proposal more important than world peace?**

- A. Yes, as long as the gym is named after Lance.
- B. Yes, we have to keep him off the streets, but existing courts won't do.
- C. He's always right – he's brilliant!
- D. Whatever you say, Lance.

**Q: Isn't Lance out of touch in asking for yet ANOTHER phone questionnaire?**

- A. Not at all. Lance is brilliant
- B. Not at all. We like Lance's ulterior motives.
- C. Not at all. It will make a good platform for campaign promises.
- D. A phone survey is the ONLY way since Lance doesn't listen to citizens in council sessions, and the city only has 130 employees and NONE of them are qualified to do a survey on the net, at council meetings or by mail because that would solicit responses other than the selected viewpoints of people we want to call directly who support Lance because he's already called them.

**Q: Should the city pursue the senior voters' wishes for senior transportation that Councilwoman Trish Kelley failed to act on and will try to reactivate during her reelection bid?**

- A. Yes, but Lance should get the credit for not doing anything this time.
- B. Yes, Lance needs a senior platform after attempting to divert funds to a gym.
- C. Campaign consultants at Lance's Irvine fundraiser said it's a good idea.
- D. I wouldn't dare question Lance's desires. He's BRILLIANT.

**Q: Should the city consider traffic issues a priority?**

- A. Of course, after accepting all those new housing developments, Lance has to show

he's concerned about solving the biggest threats to quality living.

B. Yes, Lance plans on adding even more housing beyond the state's housing low-income goals, and another traffic study will make him look **BRILLIANT!**

C. Yes, we have to clear the roads at all costs to make the gym accessible to 10 basketball players for after-work fun without traffic delays.

D. Yes, if Lance can combine the two issues of senior transportation and new housing congestion into one solid campaign platform...

Bo Klein  
Mission  
Viejo

THAT'S  
BRILLIANT!



## THE FACE OF MISSION VIEJO BY DALE TYLER

**P**eople living in Mission Viejo often overlook one of the unique features of our fine city. You won't find any garish neon signs. In fact, Mission Viejo has one of the toughest sign laws in the state. The goal is to make our city consistently beautiful without hurting businesses' need to attract customers.

**O**ur sign ordinance, MV City Code, Section 9.29, while being strict, can be eased for short-term special events, like store grand openings, church events or even public street fairs. The Planning Commission and city staff work to help businesses understand our rules and help with exceptional short-term situations. In fact, our sign rules make doing business in Mission Viejo easier by not having a constantly escalating (and expensive) battle for the biggest or best signs. Business people should feel comfortable knowing there is a level playing field with respect to signage. Signs in Mission Viejo are restricted in size,

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location and type of construction. For example, when McDonald's came to town some years ago, they wanted to put up their trademark "Golden Arches." However, this was not allowed under our sign code, and a smaller but more attractive design was permitted. That restaurant was successful for many years until competition forced its closure. There are many similar examples that serve to illustrate how having a strict sign law makes our city beautiful.

**O**f course, there are exceptions to this beauty, and this article is designed to highlight some of them. The first and most obvious is the garish, flashing signs at the entrances to Saddleback College. Since the college is technically a state institution, it refused to comply with our sign law. In fact, one of the Saddleback College administrators told a Mission Viejo Planning Commissioner, "We make our own rules here, and we will do what we like whether you approve or not." Unfortunately, this arrogance resulted in two of the worst signs in Mission Viejo. Not only are the signs ugly, they are a distraction to motorists, which can cause accidents.

**A**nother problem area is that of the eyesore at Crown Valley and the I-5, also known as the Kaleidoscope. Over the years, many of the worst sign violators have been tenants in that facility. Of course, the occupancy rate of the Kaleidoscope has been very poor over the years (costing the city \$2 million, but that's a story for another day). Access to the center and parking are terrible. The center takes almost any business, even though many of them pay no sales tax and, thus, do nothing for the city. In that environment, it is hardly surprising that some of those tenants chose to break the sign law and put up large banners and other signage which is ugly and not permitted by city law. Further, Kaleidoscope's owners are constantly trying to put up more and larger



exterior display signs to try and save their failing property, making their lack of business sense our problem and "uglifying" Crown Valley.

**W**hat is surprising is that, despite efforts by the city staff, Council Members Trish Kelley and Frank Ury specifically protected businesses like Howie's Game Shack from complying with the law by telling city staff not to enforce the law. At the Dec. 12, 2005, council meeting, Kelly made a motion to direct the staff to ignore the law and not cite Howie's Game Shack for violating the law. Note that the violations in question are ongoing and long-term, and many attempts have been made by the city to talk to the business and get them to correct the problems.

**E**ven more ominous is the attempt by those same city council members to change our sign rules to permit some of the garish and ugly sign practices allowed in cities like Garden Grove and Costa Mesa. Of course, these council members and their supporters claim that loosening the sign code will help business and, thus, bring money to the city. However, this is poor reasoning. Although Mission Viejo has a strict sign code, it is fair, and all businesses, large and small, play by the same rules. The character of our city depends on having beautiful and clean streets. Larger and more obtrusive signs will destroy the "California Promise."

**W**hat happens next depends on the citizens of Mission Viejo. All those who are concerned about this issue should contact their council members and let them know how they feel.

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# The Buzz

Feb. 7th



During the Feb. 6 council meeting, Councilman John Paul Ledesma called for a point of personal privilege as Mayor Lance MacLean was mid-sentence. MacLean, looking puzzled, said, **“Now?”** The two walked off camera together. MacLean had just appointed Council Members Trish Kelley and Gail Reavis to serve on an ad hoc committee regarding a public opinion poll. No exaggeration – Kelley has directed those in her camp not to speak to or otherwise interact with Reavis. Kelley seems to go into an altered state with the mention of Reavis’ name. One can speculate on the sidebar: Ledesma: **“What are you thinking?”** MacLean: **“MUD-WRESTLING.”**

Public speakers at the Feb. 6 meeting criticized the proposed public opinion survey. One speaker suggested the real purpose as reelection profiling and asked, **“Who is to benefit?”** Timing of the idea, dormant from 2003 until three council members are up for reelection, is suspect. Another speaker said it appeared to be a push poll in which questions could be geared toward pet projects of various council members.

Speaking of reelection strategy, Kelley gave her senior transportation report during the Feb. 6 meeting. After 3 1/2 years of **“concern”** for senior transportation, what has Kelley accomplished? The only program is a contract with OCTA, taking seniors to and from the community center for lunch. In a community of around 100,000 residents, how many people participate? The answer is eight. Ury, who has been making rounds with Kelley as she **“visits”** (campaigns at) meetings with seniors, added that the effort will soon improve. Translation: a plan will be hatched prior to printing of Kelley’s campaign literature.



If anyone knows, no one is telling the estimated number of residents watching council meetings on Channel 30. At City Hall, attendance has seriously fallen off. The cavernous chambers have been nearly empty in 2006,

even with reasonably short meetings. Despite obvious disinterest, the council is responding to one resident’s suggestion to have a town hall meeting. What’s the point



Coming to a location near you: a large complex of affordable apartments. Some Mission Viejo residents who live in the Capo school district are worried about the threat of more apartments impacting their schools. They should be worried. School officials tried to suppress dismal results when apartment-dwellers moved into south Mission Viejo. Renters are not a protected class – feel free to tell the truth about them. Crowded conditions with multiple families living in one unit are not conducive to academic achievement, safe neighborhoods or quality of life.



## STEADFAST RETURNS ON FEB. 20

Community members should be aware that Steadfast will present its proposal at the next council meeting on Mon., Feb. 20, beginning at 6 p.m. The proposal would include 144 townhomes on the commercial parcel next to Unisys. A Target store appears in the plans as part of the mixed-use concept, but some residents are questioning if the store will ever be built.

Residents have successfully defended the commercial zoning of this parcel for more than two years. *All those interested should plan to attend this important council meeting on Feb. 20.*

Mickey MacDonald  
Mission Viejo

~~~ The End ~~~