



MISSION VIEJO BUZZ

Keeping the California Promise

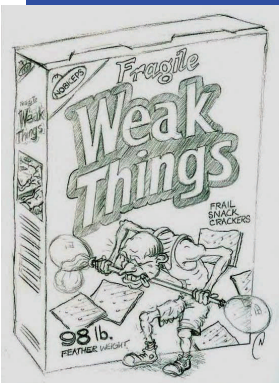
Week of August 12, 2006

The Patriot Post Founders' Quote Daily

"A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." -- James Madison (letter to W.T. Barry, 4 August 1822) Reference: Letters and other Writings of James Madison, vol. 3 (276)

Reference: George Washington: A Collection, W.B. Allen, ed. (522) 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/>

CARL SCHULTHESS, EDITOR IN CHIEF carl.s@cox.net
DALE TYLER, PUBLISHER edt@missionviejoca.org
KATHY MIRAMONTES, CONTENT/DESIGN MANAGER katmiris@cox.net



HIGH COST OF WEAK LEADERS BY BO KLEIN

Once again, the city of San Juan Capistrano has done its job protecting the interests of its citizens instead of advancing the personal interest and gains of its leaders.

The issue I refer to is San Juan Capistrano's recent approval of a resolution that would prohibit a new access road from the ranch development to a connection of the 73 Toll Road (San Joaquin Hills State Route 73). As a result, San Juan Capistrano will carry no burden of the additional traffic load within its city limits. All of the anticipated traffic congestion from development of the proposed ranch plan will be directed to Mission Viejo for eternity or as long as it matters.

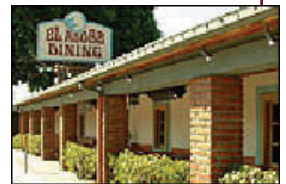
What does matter is that people like Council Members Lance MacLean and Trish Kelley wholeheartedly approved the ranch plan with its impact of a designed gridlock of our town. San Juan Capistrano, a much smaller town in resources and population, will suffer no hardship



whatsoever from new development. Our leadership in Mission Viejo put our city into a position of being completely dominated by the ranch and the toll road board. Both the ranch and the toll road agency are known to produce heavy political donors from their affiliates, and you can bet both MacLean and Kelley have been at the doorstep of the moneybag holders.

The city of San Juan Capistrano practically boasts about its actions, and its residents take pride during public comments in how they are shifting the burden to Mission Viejo. This latest resolution, though not needed because no access relief road is budgeted by the county or toll road board, was passed as a *coup d'état* to make sure such a future proposal for a new road won't be considered.

One should note that the San Juan Capistrano City Council and some of the challenging candidates for its city seats read like a roster of ranch hands from the ranch itself. They proudly boast of being associated with the ranch in one way or another. You can expect most of their council candidate fundraisers will be held at the El Adobe Restaurant, owned by ranch patriarch Dick O'Neill.



I have no issues with the ranch or its people. I have no issues with the politicians in San Juan

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Capistrano protecting the best interests of their voters. I have a problem, however, with my elected officials in Mission Viejo who lack guts, intelligence, integrity, commitment and duty to do the same for our residents.

Our town had its beginning with the ranch. That's ancient history, but ties to the land-owner have never been cut. Our council members didn't and don't have the leadership to defend and represent the city of Mission Viejo. The ranch has continued to run over our city, and San Juan Capistrano has taken advantage of our council's weakness.

MacLean & Kelley have indeed left their "mark in history" on Mission Viejo for all of eternity

ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST
AUGUST 07, 2006
CUSD TRUSTEE TO STEP
DOWN



Never mind the enemies list, alleged abuse of open meetings laws, alleged nepotism, a lawsuit by opponents, the pending departure of the district's controversial superintendent, or the OC GOP's recommendation against endorsing her. Crystal Kochendorfer, a trustee of the Capistrano Unified School District since 1988, announced today that she would not seek re-election in November because "there are circumstances in my personal life that require more of my attention."

I don't want to belittle the serious health problems of her parents, which she cites along with her first grandchild, who is due in a few months. But I can't help but think of all the abrupt departures over the years that have been made for "family reasons."

Click here to go to the Total Buzz file on CUSD, including links to a couple Register investigations into the district and a few other news story. Click "Continue reading" below to see Kochendorfer's letter to the Dana Point News announcing the decision.

-- Martin Wisckol

August 7, 2006

(Nevermind clicking just read on)

Editor
Dana Point News
Dear Editor:

It is with a great deal of mixed emotion that I write this letter to the editor announcing that I will not be seeking re-election to the Capistrano Unified School District (CUSD) Board of Trustees this November.

When first elected to the CUSD Board in 1988, I believed that good public schools were the cornerstone of a free, democratic society. I still do. I knew then, as I know now, that the futures of our nation, our communities and our children are determined in our schools' classrooms. I wanted the best education possible for my children as well as for all of the children in CUSD, and to that end I have worked with 17 other trustees over the last 18 years.

Today, Capistrano Unified, despite many challenges, is recognized as one of the finest school districts, not only in California but also in the nation. CUSD has teachers and principals second to none and continues to attract and retain the highest quality educators and support staff. By any test measure, our schools and our students not only perform above the national, state and county averages, but continually achieve ever increasing test scores. CUSD students graduate at a 96.5% rate and 92% - 94% of these graduates continue on at institutes of higher learning.

Currently there are circumstances in my personal life that require more of my attention. My parents are experiencing serious health problems and my much anticipated first grandchild will arrive in the next few months. So it is the time in my life to pass the baton. There are honest, positive people in our community who believe in public education and who can take CUSD to the next level.

I want to thank the students, parents, teachers, administrators, staff and community members who have encouraged me and supported me in my efforts through the years. You are all a special part of my life and significant contributors to the success of our schools. I especially want

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to thank all of the Trustees I have worked with for their dedication to the well-being and education of all of the students in Capistrano Unified. Finally, I want thank my family for the sacrifices it has made over the last 18 years. Your love and support has meant the world to me.

Sincerely,
Crystal Kochendorfer
Vice President, Board of Trustees
Capistrano Unified School District

Posted at August 7, 2006 12:36 PM
<http://www.thecapistranodispatch.com/>

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SMALL BUSINESS PREVAILS

Great news! Thank you to everyone who wrote letters of support for Moxie Java in the Mission Foothill Marketplace, east of Marguerite on Los Alisos. Safeway and Starbucks pulled the proposed in-store Starbucks because of all the letters and actual customers taking a stand for the small business. "The Power of the People" worked! It was the right thing to do, and I am so happy with the outcome. Thanks for all the

Jill Hanoka
Small-business owner
Mission Viejo

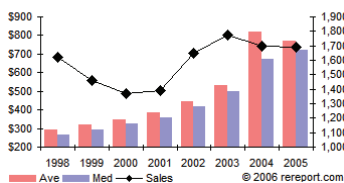


support!

WATCHING THE MARKET IN MISSION VIEJO

Some reports about home sales this summer have indicated the market is changing. One said prices are 6 percent higher and sales are down 29 percent from a year ago. By comparison, things have slowed down. Last summer, buyers had to act

Mission Viejo: Home Sales vs. Prices (\$ 000's)



quickly or miss out because homes were selling so fast.

If homeowners have checked the comps lately on their homes, they should be ecstatic. People of average means are living in homes that cost nearly a million dollars. On the other hand, I know of sellers who sold last year because they thought the market had topped out. They're now renting until they can afford to get back in.

On the retail side, shoppers are happy to see entire shelves and departments marked down in a store. I have mixed emotions about this happening in Robinsons-May as the store is going to close. Going to The Shops in Mission Viejo is always fun, but it will take awhile to get used to the idea of Macy's moving into the Robinsons-May space.

Nadine Harder
Mission Viejo

NEW LEADERS NEED OLD-FASHIONED INTEGRITY

The last-minute shuffle of candidates for school board in the Capo district has been amazing. With incumbent Crystal Kochendorfer's decision not to run, the November election becomes a lot more meaningful. CUSD incumbents in the past have often been unchallenged for reelection.

My hope for the election is for honest challengers to have a chance at defeating corrupt officials. The CUSD trustees have become so entrenched and well-funded, almost no one will spend the fortune it costs to run against them.

Several ethical newcomers have entered the race – the first step in setting things right at CUSD. It takes courage and money to run, and the day after the election will be no picnic even if good people win. I've observed the top administrators and their fawning groupies at board meetings. The corruption isn't limited to the trustees – many others are involved in FLEEING THE TAXPAYERS AND THEN LYING ABOUT IT.

Part of the culture of corruption has been the

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promotion of Supt. James Fleming's skills (employees or even PTA members getting cushy jobs) who have been willing to do the superintendent's dirty work. By contrast, those at the very bottom of CUSD's hierarchy – the teachers and students – are promoted for competence and achievement. How old-fashioned am I to expect top school officials to abide by the same standards as those at the bottom?

Connie Lee
Mission Viejo

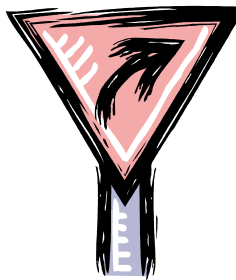
OIL PRICE IMPACTS STREET MAINTENANCE

The recent run-up of oil prices has affected the cost of our street slurring and asphalt resurfacing. Oil is the base product of asphalt and slurry. The rise in costs makes it important that our city officials begin to price the increases into the budget for oil-based products.

I would expect that all bids for street resurfacing and our ongoing slurry program have been continually going up in price over recent months. It would be reasonable to look at our street programs and increase the budgeted dollars for this critical infrastructure item.

To wait until later is only to defer and reduce our ability to maintain our streets. Some other cities have already increased their budgets considerably. I hope Mission Viejo will stay ahead of the curve.

James Edward Woodin
Mission Viejo



*Shill:
One who poses as a satisfied customer or an enthusiastic gambler to dupe bystanders into participating in a swindle.*

The Buzz August 8th

The Mission Viejo Community Foundation gave its first donation to the city, \$227,500 in cash and in-kind services. The presentation was made in connection with the groundbreaking ceremony to expand the community center. City grants totaling \$400,000 have been given to the foundation as startup money. At its inception, a spokesman said the foundation would raise \$1 million for the community center expansion. According to the foundation a year later, \$1 million is \$600,000. The remaining \$400,000 is the city's grant money, which it might get back. At its current rate of fundraising (actually, fund-lowering), the foundation might need another "startup" check from the city next year.

Can we say...Ripoff



In a guest column in the Aug. 4 Saddleback paper, the foundation chairman uses terms like "leverage" and "investment" to describe the city's gift of \$400,000. "Startup costs" instead of operational costs are mentioned without revealing the foundation director's salary of more than \$9,000 a month. Donors giving \$1,000 might consider that their "investment" will pay for the director's salary for a **FEW** days. By the way, the board apparently doesn't like criticism. One person was quoted as saying the foundation would throw in the towel if residents didn't stop complaining about the lack of fundraising. If taxpayer funds of \$400,000 weren't involved, perhaps no one would care. Public funds, however, are a concern of the public and open the door to comment.



Bids for the community center expansion came in approximately \$2.1 million **OVER** budget. Douglas E. Barnhart was the low bidder at

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\$8,543,678, and SMC Construction was second lowest at \$8,842,562. The third bid was USS Cal Builders at \$9,976,000.



Bombs continue to drop in the Capo school district. At the July 29 board meeting, Trustee Mike Darnold tried to spin it, "We're not in turmoil, we're in transition."

The Iraqi government is in transition. CUSD's administration is in **TURMOIL**.



Besieged by an attempted recall of all seven (7) trustees, allegations of malfeasance and criminal acts, discovery of an "Enemies List" of parents supporting the recall and the appearance of Brown Act violations, Supt. James Fleming announced his retirement, effective Aug. 31. On Aug. 7, Trustee Crystal Kochendorfer announced she won't seek reelection, citing "family" issues as the reason for her departure.

Works for us. :-)

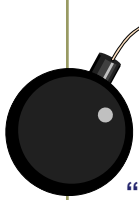


The Or. Co. Register revealed CUSD paid up to \$101 an hour to a contractor who hired Supt. James Fleming's son to work for as a plumber – a giant step up from his job at a Dairy Queen. CUSD Board President Marlene Draper's daughter, Shawna Schaffner, may have received similar special treatment. Schaffer, a vice president at Culbertson, Adams and Associates, has worked on environmental contracts for the district. Draper voted to approve her daughter's contracts. The approved work included a \$172,000 contract in December, which was awarded WITHOUT COMPETITIVE BIDS.



What's it like in CUSD's inner sanctum? Despite the appearance of harmony among trustees and 7-0 votes during open sessions, an insider said a typical behind-the-scenes meeting is more like a battleground with streams of **profanity**. With a few more employee resignations and trustees stepping down, per-

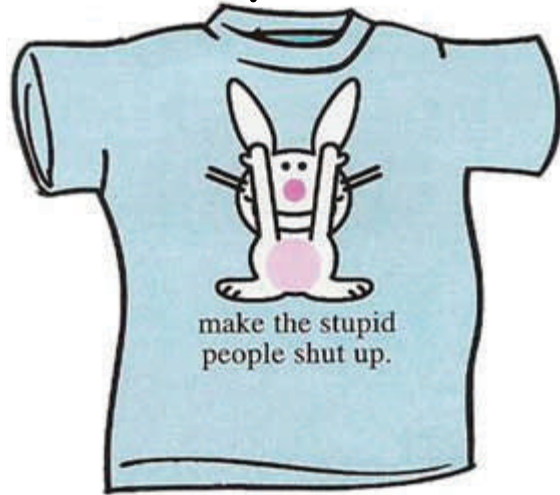
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haps residents will learn what the profanity is all about.

Ya think?

Will you please....



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