

Mike Reagan REFLECTIONS

OCTOBER 3, 2008

YOUR ADVOCATE FOR SOLANO COUNTY'S 5TH DISTRICT

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"Many are saying history will be made on Nov. 4, but locally this election is not about history but our future. Please consider your vote carefully, as we will have to live with your decision for more than just the next four years. Don't skip this election!"

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Thanks for the 'crazy ideas' that are paying dividends

When the voters gave me the opportunity to represent them four years ago, I had what is now being called "a crazy idea." I saw it as **my job to listen to the people of this district** and to bring their ideas forward. What finally got implemented was tweaked here and there as I combined the perspectives of different folks to generate results:

- ✓ **GIVE A VOICE TO SENIORS, VETERANS, FARMERS AND BUSINESS:** You would have thought that such integral groups to our community would have already had a voice at the County level, but they did not. Now we have the Senior Coalition and the Military and Veterans Affairs Committee keep the Board in tune with their unique issues. The status of our farmers has gone from remnants of a bygone era to the stalwarts of a bona fide industry cluster that the County is working to expand. And the entire community came together in a series of Economic Summits to build a common economic framework to grow and diversify our local economy.
- ✓ **DOUBLE THE RESERVES:** Doubled the amount the County sets aside in its reserve by establishing as its base calculation what it would cost to keep the county operating in case of emergency. Now, the County is in a position to advance lines of credit to the Solano Community College, Partnership Health Plan -- and more than likely others as the credit crisis continues.
- ✓ **SET ASIDE FUNDS TO REPAIR BUILDINGS:** We know that buildings will wear out, so the County now has money set aside to repair its buildings. More needs to be added to this fund, but \$10 million was a good start. Applied the same concept to leave accruals and now the County can't justify leaving positions vacant to pay off leave balances of retiring employees.
- ✓ **LEVERAGE WINDPOWER TO FIX TRAVIS AFB RADARS:** Long before the newspapers were reporting how Travis AFB radar's upgraded technology was now noticing the windmills that have been in the Montezuma hills for decades, I was working with the national and base leadership to find a solution. Our wind resource area is a prized commodity, so it made sense to make it a prerequisite for the windmill companies to solve the Air Force's problem first. There's now \$1 million on the table to make that happen.
- ✓ **TRAIN COUNTY EMPLOYEES IN CUSTOMER SERVICE:** Although I would write the rules differently, you can't hold people accountable if you haven't ensured they are trained to do their job. Every County employee has now been trained in customer service, and now they are accountable to provide good customer service. If they are not, please let me know. County employees have also been trained on their role as emergency service workers in a contingency. This push sparked the deployment of a leadership academy, succession planning and mentoring programs -- all elements of a more efficient and sustainable organization.
- ✓ **PROTECT US FROM THE DELTA VISION PROCESS:** When I took office nobody seemed to be noticing a series of efforts to steal our Delta identity in order to satisfy the thirst of Southern California. Not anymore. The five Delta counties are now speaking with one voice and the State and southern water interest are paying attention to us and our needs.
- ✓ **OTHER CRAZY IDEAS/RESULTS:** ■ Hold a summit to get our tourism folks working together; we did and now they are working together to develop a Solano County brand. ■ Re-whicker our state and federal lobbying capabilities; we did and now we are getting a real return on our investment (Fouts Springs land swap is good example). ■ Find a way to get rid of abandoned boats; championed an ordinance that lets the Sheriff to remove abandoned boats off the County's waterways.

Serving You on These Committees

Board of Supervisors

- *Chair Protem*
- *Personnel Committee*
- *Legislation Committee*
- *Military and Veteran Affairs Committee*
- *Senior Issues Committee*
- *Economic Development & Tourism Committee*

National Association of Counties

- *Community and Economic Development Steering Committee*

California State Association of Counties

- *Board of Directors*
- *Housing, Land Use and Transportation Committee*
- *Economic Development Policy Committee*
- *Water and Flood Control Task Force*

Association of Bay Area Governments

- *Bay Area Hazardous Waste Management Facility Allocation Committee*
- *Bay Area Coalition of Counties*

City-County Coordinating Council

Delta Protection Commission Delta Long-Term Management Strategy for Dredging

- *Executive Committee*

East Vallejo Fire Protection Board

Fouts Springs Youth Facility Joint Powers Board of Directors

- *Chairman*

In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority

Local Agency Formation Commission (Alternate)

- *Fire District Consolidation Committee*

Remote Access Network Board

San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission (Alternate)

Solano County Water Agency Board of Directors

Solano Economic Development Corp. Board of Directors

Solano County Transportation Authority (Alternate)

Travis Regional Armed Forces Committee

Travis Community Consortium

Travis AFB Environmental Restoration Advisory Board

Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management Board

- *Budget and Audit Committee (Chair)*
- *Legislative Committee*
- *Technical Rules Committee*

County 'steady' despite shaky economy, State budget woes

The Board learned Tuesday what the predicted impacts on the County's budget from the downturn in the housing market, the financial market meltdown and the still structurally deficient State budget. The potential budget hit could be \$12 million this year, and next year's forecast isn't any better. Unlike the State, the County diverted the surpluses of the good years to cushion the fall in the bad years. The experts are saying it could take a couple of years to turn the tide, so the Board has to prudently use those reserves. More to come on this topic ... tough decisions are ahead. On a related note, I've joined the Bay Area Council in calling for a constitutional convention to fix what the Legislature's partisan politics has failed to do – an inadequate budget 85 days late is only their latest failure.

Economic Summits put our reaction time ahead of the game

With all the turmoil in the real estate and financial market, it is good to know Solano County is ahead of the game – thanks to the Economic Summits – when it comes to figuring out what we need to do to get our economy moving forward. We were already working on the tough issues, such as how to bridge the gap between the expectations of our youth and the needs of our employees. A Youth and Economic Development Summit on Oct. 22 will ask the youth what they want in future employment, instead of just preaching at them. This could be an eye opener. On Nov. 20, we will gather back together again to hear the results of the first Solano County Index of Economic and Community Progress. I look forward to your input to help us figure out our next moves to improve our economy.

General Plan on track for voter approval in November

There doesn't appear to be any organized opposition to Measure T – the measure that allows us to start implementing the people's General Plan for Solano County. That doesn't mean we shouldn't be working this issue hard so everyone really understands how this General Plan will enable our farmers to react to market conditions. The General Plan process spurred other changes too. The County now has two ombudsmen in Resource Management and Ag Department to help people navigate the system (maybe even fix it too). The next step will be to implement the General Plan and to work with the farmers in Suisun Valley and Dixon Ridge to develop strategies to grow their economic base. Campbell's expansion, which is at the public comment stage, will certainly enhance this effort.

Dixon veterans to move down the street to their new hall

Finally the Dixon Veterans Hall that was allowed by my predecessors to fall into such disrepair will be replaced by something worthy of our veterans. The new location at 1305 North First Street still needs some renovations to turn the retail center into a meeting hall, but I'm pushing for a speedy process so we can celebrate the holidays together in the facility. In addition, the new roof on the Suisun Vets Hall looks great. The plans are being worked out now to address that building's ADA issues. Significant work is being done on the Benicia Vets Hall too.

Jail overcrowding issue coming back to Board in October

Nobody disagrees that the Sheriff needs more bed space to house inmates, but the staggering price tag to build and operate a jail expansion, in light of current economic conditions, has people wanting to hold off on any construction. That's understandable, but we can't do nothing ... that price tag is even more staggering. We can build something smaller (which can be expanded later) that gives the Sheriff the needed extra bed space and room to conduct programs to reduce the likelihood the inmates return. I will not compromise your safety.

Working together is making the ride on I-80 smoother

I never thought I would say I enjoy driving through a construction zone because it has the smoother ride, but that's what we are enjoying on I-80. There's a lot of work going on, but I'm not hearing any complaints. We all understand it's worth the inconvenience. Unfortunately, we have a one-year delay on the \$47 million project to widen and make Highway 12 safer. A few land owners would not let Caltrans on their land to do endangered species survey. Absolutely everyone wants a safer Highway 12, but we need everyone to cooperate to make it happen.