

Mike Reagan REFLECTIONS

APRIL 15, 2006

YOUR ADVOCATE FOR SOLANO COUNTY'S 5TH DISTRICT

VOL. 2, NO. 2



"When moving ideas forward, you should be mindful of the past but never let it, or the failure of those who do not get the vision, to hobble progress."

Contact Info

Supervisor Mike Reagan
Solano County 5th District
675 Texas St., Suite 6500
Fairfield, CA 94533

www.mikereagan.net

707.784.6130
FAX: 707.784-6665
Toll Free: 1-866-7SOLANO

mjreagan@solanocounty.com

Stephen Pierce
Field Representative

707.784-6131

spierce@solanocounty.com

Change, not tabloid journalism, to fix pay issue

On our national day of mourning – Tax Day, it seems appropriate to pass on to you my take on the tabloid journalism series on Michael Johnson. The reporting was lacking and often out of context (enough said). However, its silver lining was it did get people talking again about how the County pays its employees. Travel, expenses, salary and bonuses are all linked to what I've been working on since I was elected: revamp a compensation policy so it treats taxpayers and employees fairly. Last November a consultant gave the Board a report that echoed my call for change. The Board hasn't fully embraced this approach yet, but I've pushed (and won) for a business-like test survey that will tell the real story of our payroll practices. *I have chosen not to pander to the media on this topic, because you hired me to focus on fixing policies, not play politics. You can rest assured that I have not nor will I ever allow wasteful spending of taxpayer dollars on my watch.* Hopefully you will start seeing some good reporting about what I've been working on since last year: an unambiguous travel policy, a new compensation survey methodology, and a standardized approach to appraisals and incentive programs.

Summit sets wheels in motion to attract more tourism \$\$\$

Our proximity to everything between San Francisco and Reno attracts people to live in Solano County. We should encourage tourists to think the same way – stay here while enjoying our amenities and that of our neighbors. To kick off that conversation, we hosted a Tourism Summit in March and brought together many of the organizations that benefit from tourism. We highlighted a county-wide visitors' guide we were producing with Solano Magazine as a handout to visitors at the county exhibit at the State Fair. Additional copies could be distributed through hotels and other typical outlets. We undersold our efforts. We were not prepared for what the guide represented – a desperately needed attempt to address the unmet need for a collaborative effort on tourism. The Solano EDC has stepped up to continue the conversation on tourism at one of its breakfasts this summer. I look forward to seeing where this economic engine travels.

Travis AFB could launch more than just cargo airplanes

From D.C. to Sacramento I've been pushing an idea to use the surplus space at David Grant Medical Center for a joint civilian-military-Veterans Administration training practicum for doctors, nurses and other specialists. A host of experts are helping me work the idea to see how to make it part of the solution to deal with the state's nursing shortage. In less than five years, we will be 3,300 nurses short. By 2020, that number climbs to 55,000. Those stats are a call to action.

Thank you for stepping up and serving Solano County

- Appointments of **Brett Johnson** of Vacaville, **Michael Fortney** of Vacaville, **Jack Batchelor** of Dixon and **Jeff Shewmaker** of Rio Vista to the Solano County General Plan Citizens Advisory Committee
- Reappointment of **Shirley Roady** of Dixon to the Animal Care Advisory Commission
- Appointment of **Pat Negroni** of Dixon to the Dixon Fire Protection District
- Reappointment of **Janice Rogala** of Birds Landing to the Montezuma Fire Protection District
- Appointment of **Vince Ferrari** and **Bob Hall** of Collinsville to the Collinsville Levee Maintenance District

MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE: Go to www.mikereagan.net for a list of current committee and commission openings.

Serving You on These Committees

Board of Supervisors

- *Personnel Committee*
- *Military and Veteran Affairs Committee*
- *Economic Development & Tourism Committee*
- *Senior Issues Committee*
- *Strategic Planning Committee*
- *Transportation Land Use Committee*

Delta Protection Commission

California State Association of Counties

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

Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management Board

Bay Area Coalition of Counties

ABAG Bay Area Hazardous Waste Management Facility Allocation Committee

Fouts Springs Youth Facility Board of Directors

Solano County Water Agency Board of Directors

Remote Access Network Board

Solano Economic Development Corp. Executive Committee & Board of Directors

City-County Coordinating Committee

Travis Regional Armed Forces Committee

Travis Community Consortium

Children's Policy and Planning Council

Partnership Health Plan of California

Winters Branch Library Financing Authority

Travis AFB Environmental Restoration Advisory Board

LEAD, FOLLOW OR GET OUT OF THE WAY

SACOG flood protection solution puts Solano under water

The Sacramento Area County of Governments is working on a flood protection plan that serves its five counties by pushing all their water down the Sacramento River into the Suisun Bay. I've been working to put a "dam" on their plan because it could increase flooding in all the low lying Delta areas in Solano, Contra Costa and southern Sacramento counties. The high volume of water backs up once it hits the narrow Carquinez Strait at high tide. In a worst-case scenario, we could have flooding in Vacaville, Suisun, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Benicia and even Dixon as SACOG's "solution" could backup and overwhelm our county's drainage system of channels and creeks. I told them flood management is more than just diverting flows away from cities – it is the detention of storm water until its release doesn't impact those of us who live downstream. Both the Sacramento and San Joaquin river valleys must do this by increasing what they can hold upstream until its release can be safely coordinated with the capacity of the Suisun Bay.

Cemeteries, halls, JROTC among issues veterans tackling

The year-old Military and Veterans Affairs Council has a full plate of issues it is trying to solve, and I'm proud to have brought this county-wide team together. They are weighing in on ways to help Vallejo properly maintain the old Navy cemetery at Mare Island, looking at ways to increase the awareness of JROTC programs in our schools, and creating a County Honor Guard to provide honors at the new national veterans cemetery in Dixon. The naming of the VA cemetery as the Solano National Cemetery got another congressional push when George Miller and Ellen Tauscher wrote a letter to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. They too are pushing the fact that 90 percent of the veterans likely to use the cemetery now live within 75 miles, which I discussed in my March lobbying trip to the VA and our congressional delegation. "Sacramento Valley" may be more recognizable in D.C., but to our veterans and their families this new cemetery is in Solano.

BOS to consider Senior Coalition as its senior advisory body

Next month the Board will hear a proposal by the Senior Coalition of Solano County to become the Board's official advisory body on senior issues. I heard their presentation at the Board's first Senior Issues Committee and was thoroughly impressed. The Senior Coalition is a collaborative effort of public and private organizations that touch seniors in one way or another. As a group they know the issue: our senior population will triple by 2050. As a county, we need the same commitment toward senior issues as we have had for children's issues.

Study will raise new perspective on profitable agriculture

I can finally report that the scope of work on an agricultural feasibility study is complete, so the experts can start gathering the facts. I think what they will find is what I've already been hearing from farmers – remove the barriers to us making a living. They are telling me the Orderly Growth Initiative, which they championed, has had the unintended consequence of limiting the ability of farmers to take advantage of good business practices. Somehow we have separated the ag infrastructure from the business of farming, which is undermining the foundation for a quarter of our local economy. The study, which will coordinate with and inform our General Plan update, might enlighten attitudes about ag-related commercial activities.

County often only middle man for Federal, State programs

Most people don't realize that about 85% of the County budget is focused on administering programs delegated to us by Federal and State bureaucracies. That fact seems even more forgotten when we must implement funding cuts originating in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. I've pushed (with some successes) for a Board policy that limits services and programs to the provided funds. I want to go even farther. If Sacramento or D.C. decides to cut funding for a program, we should give them public credit for what can no longer be done. We should also litigate to get out from under unfunded mandates. That should ruffle some political feathers.