

hope that Pacifica's wheelchair brigade will organize itself as a parade unit. The next parade, wouldn't it be great to see 50 or 100 wheelchairs on Linda Mar boulevard, each one carrying a banner that says, "down with architectural barriers."

If there is, I'll volunteer to be a pusher. Meanwhile, take a wheelchair user to lunch, and see if you can get into the restaurant.

Just as important, see if the restrooms are usable.



Ken Faria taught me a lesson. The feisty former resident of the Linda Mar flood plain is the man who showed us how a citizen can shake up the system and accomplish important goals.

Without Ken, there would not be the elevator in the City Council meeting room. That elevator is not only important in itself, as a means to permit even the handicapped to attend council and other meetings. It is also a symbol, to show how the wheelchair-bound can overcome the humiliation and major inconveniences laid on them by the

### ...of handicaps, humiliation and a wheelchair parade.

neglect of the able-bodied majority.

Ken also saw to it that Pacifica followed the law and had lift gates put on the PMT buses. With Ken out of the area, SamTrans will undoubtedly be able to avoid giving the wheelchair bound the kind of service that was available to them the last eight or ten months.

The rumor is that they are considering some sort of half-baked "dial-a-ride" setup. I've even heard that they're considering limiting it to doctors' visits only, as if wheelchair-bound humans were second class citizens who are entitled to mobility only for the most urgent business. This decision, I hope, hasn't been made. If that is the plan, I hope they switch.

The handicapped have long been in the position of having to beg for the "gift" of mobility. Their problem increases their expenses. It cuts their ability to earn income. It also seems to make them "un-citizens" to many people in positions of responsibility.

OBSERVE how hard it is to get contractors to build curbs for wheelchair passage. Observe how

demeaning it is to be consistently ignored by architects. Architects have to be forced to install elevators. They must be forced to design restrooms for use by the wheelchair user.

It takes only a few amenities to make buildings and outdoor construction usable, but these are the first elements economized out of architectural plans.

IT TOOK years to get a law passed to require that architectural barriers not be designed into buildings. Even with such a law to back him up, it took Ken Faria a lot of pushing, hauling, and the persistence of an old-fashioned encyclopedia salesman to persuade a usually good-hearted, intelligent City Council to obey the law.

Why should people of good will ignore the handicapped? It seems that even though they are 5 to 10 per cent of our population, the handicapped are so varied that we don't think of them as a group.

THEY ARE pregnant women. Some of them are in wheelchairs. Some of them are on crutches. Some of them are simply slow movers because they have a heart condition or emphysema.

The very barriers which they complain of tend to keep them out of our sight, in their homes, and thus to hide from the rest of us the extent of the problem.

THE EFFORT to get around, to get and keep a job, to live and maneuver by their own efforts, consume much more of a wheelchair-bound person's time and energy than that of the majority.

I know all this, but I

## PACIFICA LUMBER CO.

- SERVICE
  - QUALITY
  - FREE DELIVERY
- Coast Highway 1  
at Rockaway  
**359-2883**