

The Reactor

Paul Azevedo



Pacifica! It's a sight to see

It took an optometrist in Santa Rosa to demonstrate to me what sharp 20/20 vision actually consisted of. At age 12, I thought my serious case of shortsightedness was normal vision. Then I looked out that Fourth St. window, and beheld a wonder world I hadn't known was right in front of my nose.

The same kind of problem can bedevil other folks. Which brings us to Pacifica's own Bill Clinton. When he read an insightful analysis of Pacifica's situation by former Mayor Ginny Jaquith, all he saw was blurry psychobabble. Fascinating! Ginny tried to help us sharpen our vision of the future. What she wrote is not necessarily perfect. It is worth our respect and careful review.

The folks we elected to Council after the recall are trying their best, every one of them. Unfortunately they are making their predecessors

look better by comparison. Reason to gloat? By no means. I wish them every success. Every time they fail, we all fail.

Cities all over California, with far sturdier tax bases, are undergoing turmoil and upset as they try to maneuver the quicksands of budget shortfalls and fiscal problems. During such times, those who know the price of everything and the value of nothing come forward with their machetes, ready to do brain surgery on city budgets.

It's interesting Dr. Clinton recommends Ginny Jaquith read the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. For the past three years I have coordinated a public reading of those estimable documents at the Fourth of July Picnic. Senator Kopp has participated, as have Council members, and a spectrum of Pacificans from left to right. I don't

recall Bill Clinton showing up, though I issued a public invitation to all.

By encouraging the reading of the most venerable documents of our heritage, I was attempting to advance in my own small way what Ginny Jaquith promoted in her guest column, a sense of community. Ginny has put her heart and soul into Pacifica. What a shame some of those who discounted her unlimited generosity of spirit and her major contributions to this city continue to criticize her and to gloat over her recall defeat.

The former council was a victim of bad law as much as anything. If the regulations that govern recall elections combined the recall itself with the election to choose replacements, so that the former incumbents had run directly against their would-be successors, they would still be in office. Recalls foster a fantasy world, where we get to vote against real people and for unknown and therefore ideal, candidates. If we had had to select only from among real people, each one with his or her own baggage of faults and shortcomings, the old council would have looked better and better, just as they do now. Even a Landscape Tax looks good, when you see the budget shambles without one. Scalpels are definitely needed, and the skilled surgeons to use them. We need you, Ginny.