

Panel picks 14 historic sites for plaques

The Greater Bakersfield Bicentennial Committee is sponsoring a Historical Landmarks Project to place bronze plaques on 14 sites of area historic significance, said Ray Pettit, GBBC chairman.

The solid cast bronze plaques will be a lasting reminder "of some of the important heritage we have in Bakersfield," Pettit said.

"The plaques can be sponsored by interested individuals or groups. Appropriate credit will be inscribed on the plaque. We are planning a dedication tour around July 4."

About half of the 14 plaques have sponsors, he said. Anyone interested in sponsoring a plaque should contact Pettit at 324-6414 before April 15.

Plaque sites, selected by the Heritage Committee comprised of Marsha Dolby, Lawrence Weill, Richard Bailey and Dr. Harland Boyd, are:

—Former site of the Tibbet home, 817 K Street, where Pioneer Nursery is located. Lawrence Tibbet was a famed opera singer and one of the greatest musicians ever to come out of Bakersfield. His father, Will, was killed in the 1903 shootout with famed outlaw Jim McKinney.

—Former site of Weill's Department Store, 1420 19th Street, where Ted's Department Store is located. Weill's was one of Bakersfield's first stores. The store's founder, Alfonse Weill, lived to be in his 90s, and his son, Lawrence, is on the Heritage Committee.

—Former site of the waterworks, 17th Street and Chester Avenue, where Bank of America is located. A large tower at the site supplied water for Bakersfield for the fire of 1889, but it wasn't quite adequate during that disaster.

—Former site of Drury Drugstore, 18th Street and Chester Avenue, where Michael's Restaurant is located. It was first drug store in city.

—First Masonic Temple, 20th Street and Chester Avenue.

—Colonel Baker home site, 19th Street between M and N streets. Baker was the county's first surveyor and the city was named after him and his field where travelers stopped to rest.

—Former site of Kern River Mill, 700 Truxtun Avenue, where Hill House is located. It was owned by the Kern County Land Company.

—Former site of Chinese Joss House, 2110 L Street, site of the McKinney shootout. McKinney died there, felled by a shotgun blast fired by deputy Bert Tibbet, brother of Will. Will and City Marshal Jeff Packard died soon afterwards of wounds received in the battle.

—Former site of St. Francis Church, corner of Truxtun Avenue and L Street, where California Republic Bank is located. It was first Catholic Church in Bakersfield.

—Former site of town hall, 1715 Chester Avenue, where Title Insurance and Trust Company is located. It was used for town meetings, parties and dances.

—Bakersfield City Hall, Truxtun and Chester avenues.

—Former site of Emerson School, 1315 Truxtun Avenue, where Beale Memorial Library is located. It was one of the first schools in the city.

—Former site of the courthouse at Truxtun and Chester avenues, where Administration and Courts Building is located.

—Former site of the gas works, 1924 Q Street, where the state Employment Development office is located. It supplied gas for Bakersfield.

Richard Meyers named president of Cerro Coso

New Cerro Coso College president will be Dr. Richard Meyers, 38 Ridgecrest resident and member of the college administration since 1972.

Kern Community College District trustees made the appointment yesterday following a 45-minute executive session. Trustees also met in executive session Wednesday to interview three



DR. RICHARD MEYERS

candidates selected by a screening committee from a field of 30 applicants.

Meyers was appointed acting president of Cerro Coso in August following the resignation of Dr. Richard Jones, who left the district to become president and superintendent of Clark College in Vancouver, Wash.

Salary for the Cerro Coso president is \$31,500 annually. Prior to being appointed to the presidency in an acting capacity Meyers was dean of instruction and supervised portions of construction of Cerro Coso College, completed in 1973. The college was housed on the Burroughs High School campus before that.

Other candidates included Dr. Donald Krischak, dean of the district's Delano Center, and Dr. Ivan L. Jones, an administrator with Glendale Community College.

"It was one of the most difficult decisions we have had to make," board president M. Glenn Bultman said following the executive session. "All three of the final applicants were extremely well qualified."

In an interview with The Californian following his appointment, Meyers said he anticipates no personnel changes at the college.

The college has 30 full-time and 220 part-time faculty members. About 4,400 full and part-time students attend classes at the college and its 17 off-campus sites. The college serves a 10,000-square-mile area.

Meyers said he will continue efforts to increase ties and relations with Ridgecrest and surrounding communities.

"Right now I spend 40 to 50 per cent of my time dealing with the community," Meyers said.

He said in many instances problems between the college and community are similar. He recently was presented a key to the city by the Ridgecrest City Council in appreciation for services the college has provided residents.

Meyers said one of his objectives will be to increase services provided at off-campus sites. These include 12 sites in Ridgecrest and others in eastern Kern, Inyo and Mono counties.

"Right now we are offering classes at these sites, but we need to provide more services," Meyers said. "These include counseling and library services."

Meyers said even though Cerro Coso College is less than four years old, there isn't enough classroom space.

"This is why we are looking at other sites. But we must be careful we don't overextend ourselves financially," he said.

The college's budget is \$2.1 million. The total district budget to operate Bakersfield, Porterville and Cerro Coso colleges and the Delano Center is just over \$18 million.

Meyers said of the students enrolled, 51 per cent plan to transfer to four-year colleges, while the remainder are seeking vocational careers.

Asked how the college obtains equipment to finance vocational education, Meyers said:

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Jury gives \$21,500 in \$65-million suit

One of the longest civil trials recorded in Kern County Superior Court ended at 4 p.m. yesterday with the jury sealing a \$65 million demand down to \$21,500.

The jury of six men and six women, impaneled before Judge John D. Jellef Feb. 5, was instructed eight weeks later, then deliberated for two hours before bringing in a hollow victory for the S. P. Lipoma Company and its owners, Samuel Phillip Lipoma and Harry Rudolph Roberts.

The jury, led by Jesse Sanchez of Bakersfield, found the Southern Pacific Transportation Company responsible for damage to the bulk loader, scale and conveyor, caused June 26, 1971 when an SP train crew shifted a string of freight cars while the bulk loader was in operation. The veniremen, including jurors from Taft, Mojave and California City, denied crop damage, customer loss, damage to the partnership and loss of good will included in the \$1.8 million in special damages and \$60 million in punitive damages asked by the packing shed owners in final arguments by attorney Edward A. Hume of Redwood City.

While Hume and attorney John T. Hourigan of Delano, associated in the trial, ponder the advisability of filing an appeal, attorney George Martin is

assembling cost figures to be assessed against the Lipoma company.

Under civil law the defendant is entitled to receive costs of trial (excluding attorney fees) if an offer was made to the plaintiff, prior to the case going to the jury, that was in excess of the jury's verdict.

In his opening statement, Martin said his client was willing to settle for reasonable damage to the loading dock equipment. During his summary, the member of the law firm of Borton, Petrini and Conron estimated the maximum damage at \$30,000, which his client was willing to pay.

Martin argued the train accident didn't cause any crop losses, as claimed by the plaintiff.

The potatoes left to rot in the fields were not the result of the accident, he said, but because of a depressed market and failure of Lipoma clients to fulfill their contracts.

The plaintiff in civil cases pays the jury costs. In this instance the defendant also will bill the plaintiff for 42 depositions taken in six different states, the time and labor of expert witness Bill Bilbo of Resources International in Fresno and \$12,000 in expert fees paid by Southern Pacific before the trial began.

If the trial verdict stands, the plaintiff will be paying out more than the \$21,500 awarded by the jury.

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METROPOLITAN NEWS SECTION

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The pilot of this Cessna 150 was headed for Meadows Field yesterday, but didn't quite make it. Robert DeVecchio and his passenger, Robert Ballard, both of Las Vegas, were

crossing the mountains near Tejon Pass. They were unhurt after plane nosed down in field south of Panama Lane and east of Fairfax Road. Pilot said engine trouble developed

and he could not maintain speed or altitude. Damage to aircraft was minimal, as plane halted nose down in field, according to sheriff's office. — (Californian Photo)

Hearing enters 100th day No end seen in HEW fight

By W. J. McCANCE
Staff Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — There appears to be no end in sight for the school compliance hearing, in its 100th day.

This was confirmed yesterday by County Counsel Ralph Jordan, heading the defense against Department of Health, Education and Welfare allegations Bakersfield City School District violated the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

"We reach the 100th day of this proceeding, now HEW has announced a rebuttal witness. The subject matter he's going to deal with reinforces our conclusion HEW has no confidence in its case where they have made the broad allegation there has been deliberate discrimination by the school board.

"What they are doing now is indicating they can't make their case fly on deliberate discrimination. So now they are going to ask the hearing offi-

cer and courts to conclude statistics showing minority children have lower performance scores on state reading and math tests equates with the district offering inferior education," Jordan said.

Jordan's comments were aimed at the testimony, scheduled for Thursday, of Dr. John Bartko of the National Institute of Mental Health.

"Now we will have a HEW rebuttal witness testifying before we conclude our defense," Jordan said yesterday.

Bartko is scheduled to follow the testimony beginning Tuesday of J. C. Warneke, district supervisor of testing and evaluation, and Drs. Richard Bilas and Frank Falero, economists with Systems Management Associates.

The hearing probably will be in recess Monday. District lawyers yesterday and today were arguing the intro-

duction of several hundred documents into evidence said critical to the district defense.

Dennis Reid, assistant county counsel, and Bernard Barmann, deputy county counsel, have been successful in getting most of this material into evidence despite many objections from Stephen Spitz, HEW counsel.

Jordan and Spitz clashed again yesterday over Bartko's testimony and Spitz said, so far, this is the only rebuttal witness he plans to use.

He said there may be several other witnesses on bilingual issues, depending upon the testimony of district witnesses next week.

Spitz said Bartko's testimony is necessary because Peter Levine, another HEW counsel, must travel from Washington to handle the three district witnesses.

He said since Levine would be in San Francisco it would save HEW money if Bartko is allowed to appear because Levine is handling his testimony. Otherwise, Spitz said, Levine

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Dennis Reid, assistant county counsel, has been helping in school district defense in San Francisco for last three weeks. Hearing entered 100th day today. — (Photo by Beverly Ross)

111,713 eligible to vote in county

Most recent tabulation by the county clerk's office shows 111,713 persons are eligible to vote in Kern County in the June 8 primary election.

As has been the case for years, Democrats have a commanding lead over Republicans in registration totals. There are 65,520 Democrats (58.65 per cent) and 41,374 Republicans (37.04 per cent).

Minor parties account for 1,261 persons (1.13 per cent) and independents for another 3,558 (3.18 per cent).

There is a glimmer of good news for the GOP. Since January, it has been narrowing the gap, albeit slowly.

At the beginning of the year Republicans accounted for 36.5 per cent of those registered. So the party gained a half of a percentage point in registrants in three months.

During the same period Democratic totals slipped from 59 per cent, about one-third of a percentage point.

Since January about 350 persons have registered to vote each week. County Clerk Vera Gibson expects registration to pick up even more as the primary date gets close.

To vote in the primary voters must register on or before May 9. They may register after that and qualify to vote in the general election Nov. 2. Miss Gibson said.

Car explosion highlights busy day for fire fighters

Bakersfield and Kern County firemen responded to three separate fires yesterday and early today, involving losses of \$2,000 or more.

The most spectacular was the explosion of a car parked in a driveway in southwest Bakersfield that hurled glass and auto parts more than 150 feet.

KCFD units from Stockdale Station, under the direction of Battalion Chief Floyd Moore, responded to the blast at 2:39 a.m. today.

It occurred at 4512 Meadowlark Way, where a 1973 Chevrolet owned by Ralph V. Sanford, the resident, exploded. There were no injuries.

Preliminary investigation showed that the car was equipped with a 41-gallon LPG tank in the trunk of the car. A leak in the tank, plus a short circuit in the car's electrical system apparently triggered the blast, a KCFD spokesman said. It took firemen 10 minutes to extinguish the fire.

In addition to hurling glass and parts of the car in all directions, the blast expanded the roof and doors, the spokesman said. Loss was set at \$2,400, but a save of \$1,400 was given.

Several hours earlier, at 6:39 p.m. yesterday, Bakersfield firemen extinguished the fire.

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