

BEE REPORTER MAKES IT UP AS SHE GOES ALONG

Contributed by Administrator
Saturday, 30 January 2010

Bee reporter makes it up as she goes along.‏
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1/29/10 8:43 AM To: voiceofmodesto@hotmail.com
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.ExternalClass p.ecxMsoNormal, .ExternalClass li.ecxMsoNormal, .ExternalClass div.ecxMsoNormal {margin-bottom:.0001pt;font-size:11.0pt;font-family:'Calibri','sans-serif';} .ExternalClass a:link, .ExternalClass span.ecxMsoHyperlink {color:blue;text-decoration:underline;} .ExternalClass a:visited, .ExternalClass span.ecxMsoHyperlinkFollowed {color:purple;text-decoration:underline;} .ExternalClass span.ecxEmailStyle17 {font-family:'Calibri','sans-serif';color:windowtext;} .ExternalClass .ecxMsoChpDefault {;} @page Section1 {size:8.5in 11.0in;} .ExternalClass div.ecxSection1 {page:Section1;} The Sabatino Report www.voiceofmodesto.org news@voiceofmodesto.org The Morning Mayor Show is on VoiceofModesto.org from 9 to 11 daily. The rebroadcast is from 7 to 9:00 AM on 106.1 FM January 29, 2009 Bee reporter makes it up as she goes along Remarks before the Modesto City Council on January 26, 2010 By Carmen Sabatino Free speech may be guaranteed by the US Constitution, but it can prove to be very expensive here in Modesto. I would like to share a story to bring public awareness to just HOW expensive it can be. Prior to the vote on Measure M (which enabled the creation of a Pay Commission that raised your salaries) I asked the court to limit your ability to promote the measure with tax dollars. Your response to that action was to hire an expensive law firm to use a SLAPP suit to defend yourselves. SLAPPs, or Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation, are meritless lawsuits brought on the basis of speech or petition activity. SLAPPs silence and punish those who engage in public participation, chilling speech that is essential to the functioning of our democracy and to the public interest. Initially you used \$30,000 dollars of taxpayer money in a political battle with me. You were willing to settle the bill for \$15,000 and the judge awarded you \$22,000. You then spent another \$12,475.28 dollars in an effort to collect the \$22,000 judgment. The Modesto City Council was not finished. You demanded that the court order, "Sabatino pay a fine of \$1,000.00, Sabatino pay the additional \$12,474.28 in legal fees, and that Sabatino appear in Court to be remanded into custody." You initially demanded that I pay a fine of one thousand dollars. You demanded that I pay twelve thousand dollars in legal fees, and that I be remanded to jail. Then you cancelled your court date. Notwithstanding this, I was still assessed a penalty of twenty-two thousand dollars. It is noteworthy that the Governor this year signed legislation specifically prohibiting this abuse of government power, but not in time to stop your actions against me. By the time this charade had ended, it had cost the taxpayers some \$50,000 dollars. Your effort to have me jailed failed, just as another attempt in 2003 failed. That year, when I was running for re-election to the office of Mayor, a number of bogus felony charges were filed against me. The publicity surrounding those charges cost me my election, but they failed to pass the sniff test at a jury trial. The last time I checked, the First Amendment was still in our Constitution – but here in Modesto it comes at a high price. *** Cardoza heads for the hills The City of Modesto recently received \$25 million dollars in federal funds. The city qualified for the money thanks to the leadership of Mike Zagaris, George Petrulakis, the Alliance, and others who can be identified as the usual suspects that are partly responsible for our disastrous economic condition. Cardoza and Mayor Ridenour could have expressed gratitude for the return of our tax dollars by the Obama administration. We have accepted the money and the following Cardoza quote is not designed to make the feds work harder to help fix our problems. "I'm pissed off," Cardoza said Wednesday. "The Obama administration did not cause these problems, but they're not working hard enough to fix them." Perhaps the solution is for local government to work harder to solve our own problems. Regardless of how you feel about our President, he does not need politicians who as he said, "head for the hills”. We need representatives to deal with local problems. We need an energetic business community that does not demand to feed at the public trough, but is allowed to work without government interference. We need jobs, not more money for those that are looking for more profit at the expense of the taxpayers. *** Taser rules for the Stanislaus County Sheriffs Department are attached for your information. The question is, are the rules adequate and enforced? *** More on the MID this morning.