

## Service grew with population

By Jerry Bowen

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In August 1956, the headline declared "Hickory Will Be Phone Prefix Here." The area was growing, and numbers like "6806" for the California Market in Vacaville couldn't possibly be used as the population exploded.

Pacific telephone had to grow with the population and similar numbers in each separate city couldn't be dialed. After the changeover, the California Market listed its number as Hickory-8-6806, dialed as HI-8-6806. Wow - seven digits to remember. Of course, today we have to remember even more digits if we are to dial long distance.

In 1956, attitudes toward what kind of homes should be built in Vacaville were quite a bit different than today, as can be seen in an article dated Aug. 17, 1956 on Page 1:

"An interim zoning ordinance at this time is necessary for a well planned community for its welfare, its esthetic values and for the elimination of eyesore and slum areas - in short, for the planning of a community for which residents could take pride

"The proposed ordinance, prepared after careful thinking by the city planning commission and Lawrence Livingston, professional planning consultant, should be given a fair chance.

"Desirable residential sections should be reserved for large lots and attractive homes, while cheaper homes should be built in other areas.

"If large lots were made a requirement, prices of homes should not be increased greatly nor should there be a great difference in the ability to buy on the part of the prospective home owner

"These are modern times. Slums and small lots should be a thing of the past. American families are demanding better homes and yard space large enough to keep their children off the street. Let's not go backward!"

I guess they hadn't heard of infill, laws on low-cost housing, both mom and dad working full-time to break even, heavy-handed environmental laws, and growth controls.

But the town was growing fast and all the problems that go with it were in an upward

spiral.

On March 3, 1961, a Page 1 headline blares, "Lagoon Valley Plan Bared: \$1 Million."

At the time there was an airport, small trailer park and a tavern in Lagoon Valley. A proposed development on 70 acres southeast of Highway 40 was going before the County Supervisors consisting a trailer park that could hold up to 400 trailer home spaces. I have to admit it makes the current housing development in the area look pretty good.

Small business owners were up in arms over the decisions made by the "old guard politics" city council. But it all began to come to an end in April 1962 when voters replaced three of the pro-redevelopment council members - Griffin, Gonzalez and Moriel - with small businessmen Moore, Bagley and Hassing. Lawsuits and bitter struggles over the next few years split the city but, in the end, the historic downtown was saved.

John Rico had a way of putting things into perspective in his column, "Around Vacaville."

Today, comments on the Dixon racetrack seems to splash all over the news in many ways. Back in '62, Rico had his own view of Dixon when he commented, "A couple of Dixon residents I know were complaining the other day: 'There just isn't anything to do in Dixon - no bowling alley, no golf course, no . . .' One diversion they forgot to mention, which has always been a pastime, is going down to the railroad track and waving at the engineer and the brakeman as the train goes by. These two men were wrong - Dixonites do have something to do."

Little did he know then that there is a proposal today to eliminate that pastime by changing the configuration of the rails downtown to eliminate the traffic and hazard problem. My, what will Dixonites do for fun then!

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