

October 29, 2007

Message From the Chair Emeritus—Richard Johanson

Compliments for some good things that happened last week:

- To those FBC members who wrote checks to the *Carver Middle School Academy* for the purchase of athletic uniforms and equipment. Special credit goes to FUSD Board Member **Janet Ryan** for bringing the need to our attention.
- To the agitators within the ranks of the *Fresno Teachers Association* who apparently have decided that a role reversal is in order and that they should conduct themselves with the same character traits they are entrusted to teach to our children.
- To *Fresno Pacific University* for attracting a sold out audience of 1,600 to their Business Forum featuring author **John Maxwell** speaking on “How To Be A REAL Success”. Perhaps his most thought provoking statement was “a leader can’t be lonely at the top if he/she is walking among his/her people”.
- To the *Fresno Metropolitan Museum* for bringing **Scott McNealy**, Chairman and Co-founder of *Sun Microsystems, Inc.* to Fresno. Who that attended will ever forget the notion of “irritating the problem”, “did I say that it’s free” (quality open source is Sun Microsystems) and “Curriki” (free curriculum for everyone) because “We believe that access to knowledge and learning tools is a basic right for every child.”

2020 Vision—Making the Case For Comprehensive Education Reform in California

At some point, you really do have to start over from a blank sheet of paper and ask yourself, what would I do if I was starting from scratch? **John W. Gardner**, one of the inspirations behind the re-emergence of civic entrepreneurs, stressed the importance of building in renewal points in every enterprise to ensure adaptability and sustainability. Unfortunately, attachment to form, control and conformity can prevent renewal, no matter how critical the issue, resulting in bankruptcy, failure and even death. A series of studies, entitled “*Getting Down to Facts*”, by an education research institute at *Stanford*, clarified what has been obvious to educators, “California schools are being held accountable to 21st century standards while supporting them with antiquated systems developed in piecemeal fashion during the 20th century.” Fragmentation, specialization, dissection—all can make one so narrowly focused that the mission of an enterprise can be forgotten by parts thinking the game is intramural sports, not global competition. Check out <http://irepp.stanford.edu/projects/cafinance-studies.htm> to read the studies.

Westside Institute of Technology—A Dream Realized

“Sometimes it takes a long time for true collaboration to emerge, and this partnership of three school districts, a community college (West Hills), and the County is a fine example of that.” The **I-5 Business Development Corridor, Inc.**, in anticipation of changes on the West Side, has worked since 1998 to create a training institute to serve the needs of the people and businesses in the area. Kudos to **Richard Fosse** whose perseverance sustained the vision and to the superintendents of the schools districts, **Chancellor Frank Gornick**, and the **County Board of Supervisors** for leveraging resources across sectors to serve the needs of the community. Kudos also to **Barbara Goodwin** and **COG**, whose One Voice trips to Washington are providing focus and pay offs for everyone.

How Do We Create Safe Communities?—November 1, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Without understanding, an exploration of best practices and being willing to let go of what we think we know to explore possibilities, we can lock ourselves into beliefs and patterns with diminishing returns. More is not better when you are digging yourself into a hole. *Fresno Citizens For Good Government* is hosting a panel of seasoned practitioners to discuss the challenges of youth violence in our community so that we can respond more effectively and

embrace potent prevention and intervention strategies. **Cedric Reese**, MBA and **Jane Middleton**, MSW, will facilitate. The event will be at Saints Community Church of God and Christ—3740 East Ashlan Avenue at Millbrook. Call Mila for more information at 559-244.2522.