

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

July 16, 2013

Follow the money

Re: "VVC's troubles" (The union affiliation attached to the Victor Valley College full time faculty is the California Teachers Association, not California Federation of Teachers (CFT).

Part time or adjunct faculty is affiliated with AFT/CFT. The two unions are entirely separate.

That said, I would like to thank the Daily Press for highlighting the college's struggles and the astute comparison to what happened when George Air Force Base closed.

There are almost 300 classified employees and just over 400 adjunct faculty members employed at the college. There are about 120 full time teachers. That is a sizeable number of persons affected by the college's status. But importantly, there are almost 10,000 students who attend VVC that would have their accreditation of classes impacted should VVC fail to get its financial house in order.

The issues have always been about the budget and how it is implemented, or in my opinion, not safeguarded in one particular area. That group of only 120 people mentioned above annually carve out about \$15 million in salary alone, of the roughly \$50 million yearly budget. Those same 120 teachers annually receive roughly another \$1.5 million in health benefits. The remaining 500 or so employees and the hard costs of running the college utilize the remains. VVC has a plenitude of the highest paid full time community college teachers in the state, many earning over \$200,000. And yet we are failing. Has this community received value for those huge salaries?

Each recommendation that the ACCJC has offered, has some tie back to fiscal responsibility, which has been lacking in that one huge area. It is time for that to be addressed and sooner rather than later, because later will be too late.

Lynne Glickstein

AFT President Local 6286

Apple Valley

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Finally someone "cut to the chase" (Our Opinion, July 14) and told the public exactly the reason Victor Valley College is under sanction by the Accrediting Commission for California Junior Colleges (ACCJC). Thanks for exposing what has been going on for years.

There is currently a vacancy on the Board of Trustees. In the past the board has gone out to the community and asked residents who wished to serve to submit an application. The trustees then would do due diligence and select a qualified person. That is the way Joseph Brady was originally selected to serve. Now, Mr. Brady and President Lorrie Denson would like to follow the same procedure as in the past, but Dennis Henderson and John Pinkerton want to appoint the "third vote getter" from the last election — which would be Joe Range. The board is currently dead locked. If no decision can be made, I believe by Aug. 30, the board must call a "special election." I have been told that would cost upward of \$150,000.

If Henderson and Pinkerton prevail, Mr. Range would be seated, and with a majority vote, the ineffective leadership we have seen on the VVC board for several years will continue.

Jim Carr

Spring Valley Lake

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You got it right: VVC could soon go the way of George Air Force Base, a distant memory leaving a trail of destruction for the people and the economy of this valley. You also pointed out that the trouble at VVC has been building for at least the last seven years, during which time Dr. Christopher O'Hearn, the president of VVC, received little or wrong guidance from the then governing board of trustees.

No need to worry though, Joe Range is ready to re-join the Board and calm the troubles of VVC. Mr. Range was on the board that failed to provide the leadership to VVC when they needed it. Mr. Range failed to win re-election in 2012. Didn't he get the message?

Nice guys can often put together enough votes to be elected to a board, but nice guys don't necessarily get the job done, and apparently the electorate realized that in November. Mr. Range served as board president and yet, even in that position of titled leadership, he was not able to get the job done. It is time to move on from past failed leadership at VVC and give new leadership a chance.

I agree that Joseph Brady and a group of concerned citizens are trying to spread the word of the importance of VVC to the future of this valley. Hopefully they can also spread the word that past participants in the downward spiral of VVC, such as Mr. Range, are not welcome to take another swing at driving the last nails in the coffin of what was once the premier institution of higher learning in the High Desert. The trustees should appoint a fresh new member, as has been past practice, to fill the current vacancy, before state law requires the expense of a special election that VVC cannot afford.

Mark Breyman

Apple Valley