

Trabing

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# Mostly about People

By Wally Trabing

Thar' was a time when statistical information about a west coast settlement would have to wait the recollection of a bewhiskered trapper climbing out of the wilderness for his yearly tub bath.

The the breathless middle western inquirer he'd allow as to how Villa de Branciforte in 1822 had grown like "wildfire" with at least 120 residents acrowdn' the territory and hardly room to move anymore.

Villa de Branciforte was what they first called Santa Cruz back in the mission days. The trapper probably noted that they were 50 or 60 shacks, a store of sorts and a bar and a pretty fair fiddler.

That was about all there was worth rememberin', so the matter would be dropped until the following year and Villa de Branciforte would fall back into a void.

Not so today. A near-sighted sheepherder in Andorra could, within a week, be telling his sheep that 30,161 persons voted in the 1960 June primaries in Santa Cruz county and that during the

same year 18 persons committed suicide.

A big statistical eye, blinking from the head of the state economic development agency in Sacramento is watching over you.

Each year it reports what it sees collectively. If you voted, died, made a buck, were fined for speeding or just existed here up to 1960, you are a statistic.

Here are a few from the 1961 report which you might reel off during embarrassing moments when other words fail you.

The county has a square mile area of 439; the state owns 6.13 acres of beach in Capitola for you; and there were 22,202 acres under irrigation and 1140 farms reported in 1959.

Santa Cruz county is among the leaders in production of snap beans.

In 1959 (latest figures available) there were 1112 deaths, 1490 births, 549 marriages and 282 divorcees.

The highest number of deaths (175) occurred in the 70 to 74 age bracket. The smallest (4) were from 5 to 9 years.

Among the births, 775 were males and 715 were females. Three American Indians were born in the county that year.

In 1960, 151 persons were hospitalized for psychiatric treatment.

Of those who died in '59 most (645) died of heart disease; and 194 from cancer, 33 from auto accidents, 13 from home accidents and five from plain old age.

In 1960, about 8280 citizens failed to talk their way out of traffic fines.

That year there were 23,609 Democrats and 22,728 Republicans registered for the November general election.

Next time you hear someone complain there's no place to go around here, just skip up and hit him with these figures.

There's 913 miles of road in the county. This includes 112 miles of state highway, 517 miles of county - maintained roads, and 111 miles of unmaintained roads to get lost or stuck on.

There are also 171 miles of streets within incorporated county cities.

In 1960, there were 54,158 motor vehicles and trailers registered in the county—and that helps explain why 2,468,486 persons lost their temper that same year.

The big statistical eye missed one item that we will add for special cocktail party starters.

Last November there were 25-50 Clark's Nutcrackers spotted on Rancho del Oso near the northern county line.

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