

Convention And Visitors Bureau Works Today In Preparing For Future Years

Editor's Note: The following is a progress report on the Convention and Visitors Bureau of the Greater Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce. The report that follows tells what the bureau did in 1967 in preparing for 1968 and future years.

In 1967, the Santa Cruz Convention and Visitors Bureau felt the organizational management scalpel and some changes were made.

The bureau kept its monthly business meeting but it added five new task forces which also met once a month. In effect, time spent on convention and visitor projects were doubled.

The five task forces were the Advertising Task Force, the Special Events Task Force, the Tours Task Force, the Convention Task Force and the Tourist Task Force.

Advertising Task Force

The Advertising Task Force, chaired by Mary K. Hubbard, had the responsibility of coordinating all tourist and convention advertising campaigns for 1967.

The first project in 1967 was a \$4000 radio advertising campaign which was implemented during January and February. The campaign, which espoused the virtues of the area in the spring, was aired in the San

Joaquin and Sacramento Valley areas and could be heard in the San Francisco Bay Area. During the first part of the year, the task force also began investigating a possible package program for the visitors coming into the area.

The task force was responsible for the creation and maintenance of the chamber's brochure program. In April, the task force allocated funds for a new Santa Cruz Visitors Guide and Map. By June, the new brochure was heavily distributed to the visitors.

The task force allocated \$728 in funds to the Cabrillo Music Festival for the publication of its festival brochure. Task force members felt that the festival was the type of vehicle that tends to upgrade the community's image and so it was supported. In June, the Santa Cruz Fun Guide was endorsed for publication by the task force. The fun guide contains 32 pictures with accompanying titles which display the greater Santa Cruz area. The production cost was approximately \$2400. The brochure contains a map of the area which depicts the Tree-Sea Triangle Tour.

In September, the Advertising Task Force began to re-define its role in advertising. Task force members concluded that in the future their advertising

funds should be used primarily on area promotions to bring conventions and visitors to Santa Cruz County communities. Meanwhile, the Santa Cruz County Advertising Committee should assume the responsibility for all "out-of-county" advertising. The members felt that the county advertising committee would be more effective in "out-of-county" advertising, because of its large budget.

The task force continued to support the theory of "umbrella advertising," which involves the coordination of all the advertising done in the County of Santa Cruz.

Special Events Task Force

"To attract and lengthen the stay of visitors in the Santa Cruz area," was the featured responsibility of the Special Events Task Force, chaired by Vester Dick. To attract new visitors to the area, the task force was obliged to develop new special events for the area and to offer its assistance to special events already in existence in the county.

One of the key recommendations of the task force was that the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce take an active part in formulating a special event to coincide with the 200th year celebration of the discovery of Santa Cruz in 1769. The board of directors agreed that in 1969

a celebration of the discovery should be a major project on the chamber's calendar. The task force learned that many counties on the Don Gaspar Portola discovery route were well into the planning of their celebrations. The task force members decided that a Santa Cruz celebration would be an integral part of the state's celebration.

The task force has written Lieutenant Governor Robert Finch, state chairman, and other California county organizations to set up a meeting in Santa Cruz for the purpose of discovering what part Santa Cruz will play in the state celebration.

In June the Special Events Task Force worked closely with the Miss California Pageant. Members suggested that during pageant week, local residents and visitors were unable to actually see the pageant and the contestants in operation. To gain more local support for the pageant, the task force suggested that the civic reception for the contestants be renewed. The task force coordinated the event with the Santa Cruz Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the pageant's civic reception was well received by the community.

Feeling that good athletic events could draw visitors to the area, the task force supported the International Pro-Am Surfing Championships at Steamer Lane in November. The task force sent out 150 sports releases for the event. Radio and television plugs also were sought and the end result was a record-breaking attendance of 5000 visitors plus good radio, newspaper and television coverage.

The task force presently is working on a new special event in cooperation with the Santa Cruz Junior Chamber of Commerce which would occur in 1968.

The event will be a two-day bicycling race, hopefully involving every major bicycling organization in California. Tentative plans call for a workable tract to be formed within the city. A possible title for the event is the Santa Cruz Tree-Sea Triangle Cycling Invitational. The task force members felt that cycling in California has a good reputation and this type of event is a good spectator sport. If the event is successful, it would draw thousands of cyclists

To attract more conventions to the area, the task force recommended that the city consider a redevelopment study for the Santa Cruz beach area. The group maintained that the beach area image should be changed either by private or governmental assistance.

After the initial conclusion to make a convention center feasibility study, the group moved quickly but methodically. They met with San Francisco hotel owners and operators who urged the development of the center. They met with city and county officials who were interested in developing a center which could be financed from existing and projected room tax revenues. They met with convention center consultants on steps needed to prove or disprove the feasibility of a center.

The group explored with Charles Luckman and Associates in Los Angeles the need for a size and site study. They reviewed studies made by other communities and developed information on the possibility of federal financing for a portion of the project.

By early October, the task force had completed preliminary research on the impact of a center in Santa Cruz and the value to existing business.

During the second annual Congress for Community Progress, the convention center panel discussed the desirability of a new convention center. The business leaders agreed that the city and county should immediately take steps to develop the ways and means to acquire such a center.

The task force then arranged a panel discussion of "Community Promotion of Today's Convention and Sales Meeting Market" at the California Mission Trails fall board meeting in Santa Cruz. Local citizens heard top professionals in the convention industry tell them to "get going!"

In researching other communities, the task force flew a delegation of city and chamber officials to Fresno to view the Fresno Community and Convention Center and to have an information session with Robert Stevens and Associates, builders of the center.

Late in November, the Convention Task Force had gath-

Pets Of The Week



Tours Task Force

The Tours Task Force was saddled with the obligation to develop special guided bus tours for convention delegates. At the end of the year, this task force had completed its entire program of work.

Starting with the Tree-Sea Triangle Tour, the group developed an Antique and Art Gallery tour, a boutique or specialty shop tour, a historian tour, several day tours from Santa Cruz and a college campus tour.

"Primarily, we used the tours for wives who accompanied their husbands to conventions here," said Fred McPherson III, chairman of the task force. He said that 16 tours had been used in 1967. "The El Dorado Caravan Club, which had over 800 delegates in attendance at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds, spent close to \$2500 in retail trade in the Santa Cruz area during their recent convention here," he said.

At the conclusion of the year, McPherson said that his task force had finished the job it had been assigned and recommended that the task force not be given a standing committee priority in 1968.

Convention Task Force

The group which probably received the most publicity for its work in 1967 was the Convention Task Force of the bureau.

Chaired by Ken Ferguson, the task force took on the difficult job of developing a Santa Cruz Convention Center Feasibility Study.

"The first job was to make the public aware of this potentially lucrative industry for Santa Cruz," Ferguson said. The task force sought to enlist the cooperation of the entire community. Initially, it began to build a local foundation for conventions by asking all local clubs, organizations and individuals coming into contact with conventions to join in solicitation efforts.

mid-December, the task force presented a 44-page report to the City and the County of Santa Cruz.

"One of the major hurdles has been accomplished," said Ferguson, "but this is just the beginning."

Tourist Task Force

Jim Thomas, who chaired the Tourist Task Force during the last four months of the year, summed up the activities of the group during a recent bureau meeting.

Thomas said that the task force got off to a slow start but that it did complete about 50 per cent of its assignments. The group's responsibilities included seeking ways to keep visitors in the Santa Cruz area for longer periods.

The task force improved the bureau's literature distribution and researched the possibility of promoting a county-wide tourist information center program.

The highlight of the year's activities, according to Thomas, was the beach area investigation and interim report. A duty of the task force is to seek to solve problems that tend to destroy a good Santa Cruz image. Thomas said that the tour of the beach area after Labor Day by chamber, bureau and city officials was just the beginning of a more complete investigation on how to cope with many problems in the beach area. He said there would have to be a continuing investigation and follow-up on what began in September.

Louis Haber, chairman of the 1967 Santa Cruz Convention and Visitors Bureau, pointed with pride to the work done by "these outstanding chamber members." He said that the bureau had tried to answer some of the "real" problems facing the community in 1967, but he acknowledged that it was just a beginning and that a great deal of work lay ahead of the bureau for 1968.