

*Whales and Whaling*

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Section **B**

# Monterey Bay

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Once the site of a thriving whaling business, the cove at Davenport Landing is still a fine spot for whale watching

Mercury

## It's whale watching, protecting time in Davenport



**DAVENPORT** — Their great black bodies mottled with gray and white splotches and encrusted with barnacles, the giant gray whales are on their annual migration from the Bering Sea to the waters off the coast of Mexico.

This tiny town, once the site of a flourishing whaling station, is a good spot for whale watching.

There are other spots on the Central Coast, too, Point Lobos on the Monterey Peninsula, for instance.

But formalized whale watching still is centered here.

And such people as Alvin Gregory and the McCrary brothers, Lud and Bud, have launched a campaign this year to get the gray whales back under the international protection they had from 1938 to 1978.

Gregory's former store — still known as Gregory's, though now owned by the Arro family — is a center for whale watchers. There are whale watcher pins, pennants and books for sale there. And the mesa across Highway 1 from the store is a good spot for setting up a telescope.

Enthusiasts who want to get closer to the whales will have a chance this year. Bruce Elliott, regional manager of the state Department of Fish and Game in Salinas and wildlife biology instructor at Cabrillo College in Aptos, will take an expedition out from Monterey by boat at 8:30 a.m. Sunday.



Alvin Gregory  
... Whale campaigner

The trip will be preceded by a lecture at 7 p.m. today in Room 454 at Cabrillo. Fee for the lecture is \$5; the boat trip is another \$25.

The old whaling station in Davenport has disappeared.

According to Gregory, the original town was about a mile north of its present location on a high bluff. It was, he said, in the cove at the mouth of Agua Puerca Creek, now known as Davenport Landing.

Alverda Orlando, a local historian, said that 1,700 barrels of whale oil were produced here in 1862, the most "successful" whaling year. More than 100 different products are made from whales, she said.

Whaling became such an intensive industry that the gray whales at one time nearly became extinct. They recovered enough to be hunted again in the 1920s and 1930s. Then, by an international agreement, they were protected against killing.

The international whaling commission ended the protection agreement in 1978 — and Gregory, along with the McCrary brothers and others, are trying to get the commission to set up a new protection agreement.

Meanwhile, they're putting out whale watcher buttons and other materials to raise money for their campaign, and to publicize it.

And Davenport, named for its ship-captain founder, still is a great spot for whale watching.

According to Gregory, Capt. Davenport, a merchant marine captain, got the idea that whaling would be a profitable business when he was approaching the coast outside the entrance to San Francisco Bay and passed immense schools of whales.

He knew that with a properly outfitted vessel the big mammals could be captured easily and converted into oil.

This was in 1851 when he sailed into San Francisco with a cargo of oranges from the Society Islands on his boat, "The Alfred." He sold "The Alfred" and chartered the bark "Otranto."

But the California gold rush was on then, and good sailors were hard to find. Men were deserting their ships for the big money in the mines.

Davenport realized it would be useless to try to conduct whaling operations with an inexperienced crew.

He unloaded the Otranto's whaling gear in Monterey.

The equipment was hauled to this area and the original town of Davenport was established.

A lively village grew up in

the cove and on the knoll behind it. There were several hotels, a livery stable, blacksmith shop and general store.

Davenport built a 450-foot-long wharf out from the cove. Timber, tanbark, cord wood and cedar posts were shipped to San Francisco on small sailing vessels.

But faced with the lack of experienced seagoing men, Davenport came up with the idea that it didn't necessarily take a seagoing operation to handle a whaling business.

He worked out a system where his men could go out from shore in whale boats, make a kill and tow the whale back to the land station where the blubber could be removed and "tried out" in huge pots.

This kept the crews with their families on shore and proved more successful than completing the whole operation aboard ships at sea.

Most of Davenport's men were farmers and worked on their farms until they heard the bells ringing in Davenport Station, where upon they laid

down their plows and picked up their whaling tools.

On Jan. 1, 1976, the California gray whale became the state's official marine mammal.

The gray whale, Gregory said, spends the summer feeding on small squid and krill in the Bering Sea where they mate and bear their young.

The females, which grow to a length of about 45 feet are slightly larger than the males. The young are born tail-first and are from 12 to 15 feet long.

"As soon as the calf is born," Gregory said, "the mother noses it to the surface so it can get its first breath of air. It will grow 18 feet in a year."

Davenport is a good spot for watching whales, experts believe, because the mammals follow a shore current and like to stay near kelp beds for protection.

Gregory said some people believe the whales try to scrape off the barnacles on the rocks just off the beach at Davenport.

The whales "spy hop" in order to get far enough in the air to look around and see where they're going, an activity that has scared many a fisherman in a small boat.

"The whale's head comes out of the water straight up about 8 or 10 feet as if they were walking on their tails," Gregory said.

He said one fisherman recalls fishing off Davenport in a 12-foot boat in about 30 feet of water and when he looked from baiting his hook he noticed he was right by a huge "rock."

He hadn't seen the rock a few minutes earlier — and then it turned out to be a spy hopping gray whale who had quietly surfaced to see what was going on.

The Davenport Landing wharf was abandoned in 1880 because the whaling business had dropped off and the cost of operation was too high.

Capt. Davenport moved to Santa Cruz and died there in 1892 at the age of 74.

## Teacher firings 'possible but painful'

By Mac Bowe  
Staff Writer

**MONTEREY** — It is possible to fire teachers at community colleges but it is "a traumatic and painful process."

That's the information passed on to community college representatives here by John Hiatt, dean of students at Reedley College.

Hiatt gave pointers on how to accomplish the sticky task to deans from community colleges throughout the state in a discussion of Proposition 13 and the ramifications if budget cuts are ordered in the future.

Hiatt has experience to back up his advice, having had to notify 78 full-time teachers of their termination this year. After the process was complete, however, Reedley College trustees reversed their decision on the cuts.

"It can be done, however, no matter how distasteful it is," Hiatt said.

The college official said that before the passage of Proposi-

tion 13, Reedley anticipated a loss of \$5 million from a \$17 million budget.

"We already had cut in all other areas but still faced a shortage. Realizing that 85 percent of our costs were represented by employees' salaries we took a look at them."

State law requires that certificated employees be notified by March 15 that a district intends to discharge them.

Hiatt described how meetings with the college's entire staff to explain financial problems were boycotted by teachers' unions.

The college then examined credentials and degrees of teachers, their teaching experience within the district and their seniority.

"An analysis of their records completed the procedure."

On March 9 district trustees voted to discharge 78 teachers and registered letters were sent out the next day.

"We encouraged them to appeal the decision and hearings were held in Fresno on April

25 and 7. All but five teachers appealed their discharges.

"The hearing officer generally accepted our criteria but ruled that we must use out-of-district as well as in-district experience.

"The officer sustained us in 76 percent of the cases."

Then on May 9 the district board reversed itself and voted not to send a final notice to teachers.

Hiatt gave a list of "do's and don'ts" if districts face a similar situation.

• Make sure your seniority lists are accurate and up to date because they will be challenged. Have accurate and up-to-date files on experience, both within and outside the district.

• If you have a multi-campus district make sure you assess seniority throughout the entire district, otherwise you will have someone with more seniority on one campus "bumping" someone with less seniority at another campus.

• Be aware that the process

will eliminate certain "protected" programs, such as some involving minorities.

• Include administrators among those to be terminated. It makes the action more palatable.

• Inform teachers early. Have someone with you during both deliberations and hearings who is an expert on credentials.

• Don't use the occasion to get rid of incompetent or unpopular teachers.

• Don't expect understanding attitudes from those affected.

• Don't minimize the extent to which the faculty will go to support you.

• Expect angry reactions and a serious deterioration of morale.

"You will find that those in academic fields will be more outraged than those in vocational education and agriculture," Hiatt said.

"The latter have marketable skills in the private sector."

### Inside:

### Alcohol burn

For 18 months we have been urging the development of alcohol fuels to reduce this country's dependence on imported oil, reports columnist Jack Anderson. Alcohol distilled from timber wastes, agricultural surpluses and even municipal garbage can be used as an additive to gasoline to produce "gasohol."

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