

## Convent, fire district work out differences

Some agreement has been arrived at between the Aptos fire protection district and the Poor Clares convent.

Board chairman Richard Duchscher told directors last week that he had met with Mother Joseph of the convent about the differences the nuns have with firemen.

Publication of those disagreements following an inspection of the convent by uniformed firemen prompted the largest public meeting held by the fire district.

Duchscher told the directors that his meeting covered 10 different areas:

- Regarding the chapel, the nuns do not feel that it is public. While it is capable of seating more than 200 people, Mother Joseph told Duchscher that only once have they had more than 30 people at Mass in the chapel.

- Panic hardware on doors in the chapel was not installed, Duchscher said, because when the chapel was built, it was not considered to be public and therefore none was required.

- Hand-held candles are carried approximately six times a year in processions and then only in the chapel.

- The nuns are still not happy with being classified as a "hotel"

- Occupancy in the state code, Duchscher said, but seem to have accepted it since it was explained to them that this part of the code also includes monasteries and convents.

- A gasoline pump has not been installed on the gasoline

storage drum used to contain fuel for a tractor. The reason, Duchscher said, was because no gasoline has been drawn from the drum. A pump will be installed before the drum is tapped again.

- Acting on an earlier suggestion by the board, letters will be written by Mother Joseph to the fire department whenever any work is done as part of the compliance with the department's directives. The letters, in this case, will be accepted in place of re-inspections.

- Duchscher said the nuns would not state how they acquire money for the convent, but stated that they have very limited funds. Money is available to them to do the things that are absolutely necessary, such as putting in the extinguishers.

- Regarding the department's requirement for an alarm system, Duchscher said there are one or two nuns awake and moving about the convent at all times. They do have a mechanical alarm system in the convent which will be connected to the required detectors so when an alarm is sounded, it will sound in all parts of the convent.

- The nuns disagree with the number of fire alarms required by the department.

- Mother Joseph has promised to send a letter to the department, Duchscher said, stating that all novices will be made familiar with all exits so that signs will not be necessary. All hallways are illuminated 24 hours a day.