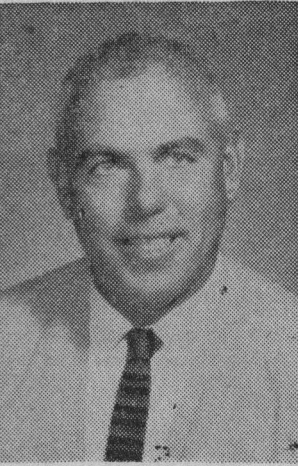


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Soquel Merchants Seek New Lease On Life



Jim Coulter

The Soquel Merchants and Civic Assn. has been shaken up to its commercial corps, but still is in business.

Officers of the group resigned en masse Friday after a number of young Soquel merchants said the organization should place more emphasis on commercial affairs and that its officers should themselves be merchants.

Former president Jim Coulter is a high school principal.

He said he was in complete accord with the merchants' decision and had taken the job of president in the first place because the group could find no one else to assume the post.

"This movement has my wholehearted personal endorsement," Coulter said. "It's the healthiest thing that could happen to the club. The younger merchants believe merchandising and civic affairs are so closely tied together they cannot be separated, but they feel the club's emphasis should be support to merchants in the carrying on of their business."

At a follow-up meeting on Monday night, the group planned a barbecue next Thursday to kick off its campaign to revitalize the club.

It was decided that each of the merchants at the meeting will go out and personally contact other merchants and bring them to the barbecue to get acquainted.

Merchant Frnk Gill said some brief talks will be made to "try to inspire these people a little bit."

The club will mail out ballots for nomination of new officers to be followed by later nominations from the floor and an election.

It's more activity than the club

has seen in a long time.

Friday's meeting was held, in part, to determine whether the group, plagued by lack of attendance at its meetings, even would continue in existence.

Now, it may be on the way to a more vital role than ever.

"This burst of energy from the young guys in town is just what we were looking for," said Coulter. "These are the people who should take over and indicate the direction the club should go."

"We're just trying to get this

thing rolling," Gill commented. "I think things are better already than in the past because the merchants seem more interested.

"We feel the club should be motivated primarily toward merchandising and promotion.

If we support those, we'll be helping the community — those items are inseparable. It's not at all true that we don't want participation from citizens. But we want our directing body to be merchants so the emphasis will be on business."