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Wayne Fontes went through all the chairs during his educational career.

# Green Sheet

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## Junior high principal wants to cap career as district trustee

By CANDACE ATKINS  
Wayne Fontes is kind of a Horatio Alger for Soquel School District.

Fontes will retire at the end of this month as principal of Capitola Junior High, a position he has held for a decade.

He was not always a principal. Fontes began his career in education as a school janitor. From there he moved up the academic ladder to bus driver, then teacher, and later, administrator. Fontes says he is not finished yet. "The only position I haven't held is trustee, so I will run for that in November," he commented.

The reasons for Fontes's retirement, he said, are a combination of his age and years in education. "It's a fiscal thing. With the changes taking place in the district, there is a need for younger, more vigorous leaders," he added.

To look at the retiring principal, one would say he is the epitome of youth and strong leadership. If there are any questions about that, just ask a student. Fontes, for ten years, has managed to consistently serve as a respected leader for thousands of teens who have attended the intermediate school.

Fontes attributes his ability to serve so successfully to consistent school policy. Discipline, often thought of as a major factor when dealing with junior high students, is a

three-way responsibility, he noted. The parents, student and teacher are involved.

First offenders are asked to decide what they can do to avoid a second trip to the office. This is after the actual offense has been defined by Fontes and the youngster. "And that can sometimes take time — a lot of time!" he laughed.

When the student comes up with his own way to change his behavior so that subsequent referrals will not be necessary, he writes what the principal refers to as "the famous Dear Mr. Fontes letter," where the offender outlines the problem and his positive plan of action. The correspondence is signed by the student and his parents.

After that, if the student is still having problems, Fontes said, "things start to get unpleasant." Students are still given an opportunity to select a way to change their behavior.

If things do not change, Fontes tells the youngster, "Hey, you're all done votin'," and will take further measures. The principal says he never deals with a youngster in public. If they have "business to settle," it is done in private. A student is never humiliated in front of his friends.

For the most part, Fontes feels the junior high youngsters are a good group, and discipline does not have to be a focal point. "Oh, I still have

some squirrels!" he laughed. To look at the campus, one gets the feeling that even the "squirrels" like Fontes.

The principal will not retire to a life of leisure. Instead, he plans to learn the contracting business from his brother-in-law. He will pursue his new career full time. Fontes has experience in construction; he built two houses in the past with Santa Cruz Gardens Elementary Principal Duane Beaubien. He also completely renovated his current home on Cliff Avenue in Capitola.

In addition, Fontes will continue to do all of the repair and maintenance work on his 1958 Mercedes Benz. He learned mechanics from his father, Tony "Pop" Fontes, a longtime resident of Depot Hill.

Fontes said, of course he has regrets about leaving. He feels he still has the ability to run a school or even serve as an instructor; his retirement is not because he is old or tired, he laughed.

The principal feels a sense of completeness from his 30 years in education, but also wants to continue offering his experience as a member of the board of trustees. If elected, he said he will continue working toward schools as an integrated part of the community, rather than islands that let down the draw bridges two times a day.

## Arts workshop

The third and final workshop by the Arts Resources and Technical Services Project, "ARTS" will be held Tuesday from 1 to 5 p.m. in Laurel Community Center, 301 Center St., Santa Cruz. The session is offered at no charge to all interested persons; however the class will be limited to 25 people. For questions, 429-1188.

Workshop topics will be on program and financial planning for individuals and non-profits. Sam Sternberg from the Regional Young Adult Project of San Francisco will act as leader. Areas covered will be cash flow management, analysis and control of income and expenses, analysis of goals and objectives, personnel policy and how to determine suitability of programming.

ARTS is a part of the Museum Without Walls in Santa Cruz.



Handlebar mustache is Curt Bowman's trademark.