

McKinleyville Community Services District (MCSD) Remembers Grant A. Ramey

We at MCSD are all saddened to hear of the passage of Grant Ramey. I met Grant shortly after I joined the District last year. He was one of the first people to welcome me to the District and McKinleyville. Feisty and confident, Grant provided a great overview of the history of the District. We met a number of times and discussed the history and future of the District. He explained the early issues and concerns and had many suggestions for future improvements. He told me “do the best you can for the community and remember that not everyone will be in agreement with your decisions.” The following are some of Grant’s own words that were provided to me by his grandson David.

“In 1952 I moved to Eureka, CA and went to work for Arcata Plywood. I then met the love of my life, my Katie. We were married on February 20, 1956. In 1954, I purchased ½ interest in a small lath mill and I owned it outright within a couple of months. From a small plant with 4 sheets of tin, a beat-up lath machine and an old jeep engine, I built it up into a business employing 18 to 20 men and ran it for 24 years. Meanwhile, Kate worked as a grocery checker at the Purity Grocery Store while I ran the mill. We were involved in Cub Scouts, 4-H, Future Farmers of America and numerous other community projects.”

“In 1970 I was elected to the newly formed McKinleyville Community Services District Board of Directors. Even though McKinleyville was predominantly Democratic when the District was formed, the original board consisted of 4 republicans and one conservative democrat. I served on the board for 23 years, during which time we installed water and sewer mains, the wastewater treatment facility and began the parks and recreation department. Since the inception of the MCSD, McKinleyville residents have had one of the least expensive water and sewer bills in California. I am very proud of that.”

“From 1976 through 1984, we owned and operated the Mad River Flea Market. After my mill closed in 1977, Kate and I traveled extensively. We visited 49 states, parts of Canada, Mexico and a wonderful month in Australia and New Zealand.”

During his 23 year tenure on the MCSD Board of Directors, Grant served as Board President, Vice President, and Director.

Grant was key in finding the initial funding for the construction of the District’s sewer collection and treatment facilities, which were completed under budget. Grant also saw the need for creating community through Parks and Recreation. He actively promoted and advocated for the creation of District Parks and Recreation powers. He promoted the creation and conversion of the surplus sewer department land to Hiller Park. He sought and secured Park Funds from Humboldt County. Grant supported the concept of receiving the donation of the property and development of Pierson Park, voted for MCSD Ordinance 42, which enabled the formation of open space

maintenance zones, and promoted the passage of Measure B to fund the construction and maintenance of the current District recreation facilities. Without Grant's vision, the community would not be enjoying all the Parks and amenities that exist today.

Grant also represented MCSD as a member of the Humboldt Bay Wastewater Authority, the Redwood Region Economic Development Commission, the Humboldt County Solid Waste Disposal Committee and the ACWA Joint Powers Insurance Authority.

Grant also volunteered uncounted hours to the Boy Scouts, 4H, the Grange, the Seniors, the Community Association, the 7 Steps and political campaigns.

I am fortunate to have met Grant and have the opportunity to discuss District issues and accomplishments with him. Grant will truly be missed but his legacy will always be remembered for his significant contributions to McKinleyville and MCSD. For any additional information, please contact his grandson David Baldosser at 707-839-3251.

Norman Shopay – General Manager