

Monday, February 14, 2000

Phone: 943-6568

Fax: 547-8186

E-mail: newsroom@recordnet.com

The Record Local

Stockton B2
Tracy/Manteca B2
Lodi/Lode B3

911 B4
Obituaries B4
Opinion B5
Weather B6

B

Video sleuth to file police report on sign tampering

Many shocked by Simas' actions

By Sarah Grunder
Record Staff Writer

A private investigator who captured San Joaquin County Supervisor Ed Simas on film Saturday as Simas took down and destroyed signs of challenger Victor Mow will today file a report with the Stockton Police Department.

Rob Archuleta said Sunday evening that he plans to file the report so that the sign destruction and vandalism become public record.

"It will probably put everyone



MOW:
Simas' rival.



SIMAS:
Tore down signs.

on notice that there may be someone else out there with a video camera. If signs are not where they are supposed to be, call the committee and we'd be happy to take them down," Archuleta said.

A day after the videotape was

made and released to The Record, Mow — a Stockton City Council member — reported growing interest in his campaign, and Simas' main rival on the Board of Supervisors called the footage bizarre.

Simas, who is chairman of the board and is in his third four-year term, remained unavailable for comment. His campaign continued to say Sunday he had permission to remove the signs in a vacant field on Don Avenue in north Stockton.

On Saturday, Archuleta took video of Simas in a vacant field off Don Avenue removing Mow signs and replacing them with his own. Simas then used a knife to cut up Mow's signs and loaded

the pieces into his pickup.

The video, provided to The Record by Mow's campaign, later shows Simas tossing the pieces in a trash bin at Sandman Park.

Simas' campaign has maintained that only they had permission to place signs on the lot. Mow's campaign says both Mow and Simas had permission from owner Frances Perez.

Perez said Saturday she had given permission to both campaigns — but now wants all signs removed. Both campaigns said Sunday they would comply with her request, and by Sunday evening, Simas' signs had disappeared.

Once the crime report is filed, it will be forwarded to the district

attorney's office and a decision about what action to take will be made there, according to Stockton police Lt. Dennis Smalle.

"Basically, the report would be taken and someone would investigate it and with that information we would see if there's enough evidence," Smalle said. He said it is a misdemeanor offense to deface campaign posters but cautioned that it was difficult to tell now what, if any, action would be taken.

The video will be evidence, and officers will likely interview those on both sides of the issue. If the decision is to go forward, a citation to appear in court would likely be issued.

"It doesn't matter who the per-

son is. That's normal procedure," Smalle said.

Mow said Sunday he is most interested in making sure his signs stay in place. His campaign has had a rash of vandalized signs in the past few weeks and had asked Archuleta, a Mow volunteer, for help.

"I think for our campaign we've just been frustrated trying to get our signs up and have them stay up," Mow said.

Mow said he received phone calls from many supporters Sunday.

"I've received just a tremendous number of calls from people expressing outrage ...," Mow said.

Please see SIGN, B4

Street and a 16-year-old boy, were both arrested for battery and assault with a deadly weapon for an incident that happened around 12:55 p.m. Saturday near Poplar and Madison streets. A 17-year-old male said seven or eight people beat him with sticks and punched him. They also called him a derogatory name for a being member of an opposing gang. After being treated at a hospital, the victim pointed out the suspects to officers around 2:50 p.m.

Assault with a deadly weapon arrest: A 13-year-old girl was arrested for assault with a deadly weapon. She allegedly committed the crime on her mother Friday. The mother took the girl to a mental-health facility, and the girl walked off. Police located her at Hammer Skate on West Hammer

Lane around 7:30 p.m. Saturday and took her back to the facility. After being released, the girl was arrested.

STOCKTON FIRE

The Stockton Fire Department handled 179 calls for service in the 24 hours ending at 5 p.m. Sunday.

HIGHWAY PATROL

The California Highway Patrol office in Stockton handled 683 calls for service in the 24 hours ending at 8 a.m. Sunday. Officers responded to six noninjury accidents and three injury accidents. CHP officers also arrested 10 people on charges of driving while intoxicated.

Mr. Alrrington was born in Martinsville, Texas. He lived in Stockton for 35 years. Mr. Alrrington retired after 30 years working for Gross Tile Co. He was a tile setter. Mr. Alrrington served in the Army during World War II and the Korean War. He was a member of Bricklayers and Allied Craft Workers Union.

Survivors: children, Diane Wilson, Amy Warix and George Alrrington Jr., all of Stockton; sisters, Marie Walters and Lillabelle McElwee, both of Texas; and five grandchildren.

Services: 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, DeYoung Memorial Chapel, 601 N. California St. Visitation: 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, in the chapel. Committal: 2 p.m. Wednesday, Belmont Memorial Park, Fresno.

Jose Refugio Chavez

Agricultural worker

Jose Refugio "Cuco" Chavez, 71, of Stockton died Thursday in a hospital. Mr. Chavez was born in Durango, Mexico. He lived in Linden for 27 years before moving to Stockton three years ago. Mr. Chavez retired after 18 years as an

agricultural worker in Salinas. He was a member of Gallero's Association of San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora, Mexico.

Survivors: wife, Celia Chavez of Stockton; children, Maria De Jesus Cardenas, Maria Del Refugio Hernandez, Leticia Chavez and Aydee Chavez, all of Stockton; siblings, Jesus Chavez of Stockton, Jose Maria Chavez, Felix Chavez, Chela Chavez and Eva Chavez, all of Santiago, Durango, Mexico, Inez Chavez, Concepcion Chavez and Guadalupe Chavez, all of Chicago, Carmen Chavez of Reynosa, Mexico and Juana Chavez of Houston; and seven grandchildren.

Services: Mass, 1 p.m. Wednesday, St. Mary's Catholic Church, 203 E. Washington, Rosary, 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Cano & Rodriguez Garden Funeral Home, 2164 E. Charter Way. Visitation: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday, in the mortuary.

Burial: Stockton Rural Cemetery.



CHAVEZ

"We have too many people trying to manipulate supply and demand to benefit their part of the sector of the economy, which does more harm than good," Figueroa said. "Wall Street is involved in financial self-gratification rather than economic procreation."

The economic boom is rewarding only a narrow segment of the population, he said. But getting that message to the voters has been tough, says Figueroa, who doesn't have a lot of election cash and hasn't campaigned much.

"I try to make the issues as simple as I can for the voters," he said. "But getting people to change is difficult."

Kurey, who is making his first foray into politics, said there is a whole marketplace of ideas out here that the current crop of politicians haven't tapped.

"I'm running because there is a need to emphasize that government is shaped by the collective consciousness of the people," he said, noting that government, like

his job in nursing, is about empowering people to take better care of themselves.

If elected, Kurey says he would seek to improve education, work for a fair tax system and support organic agriculture, better food labeling, renewable energy sources and prevention programs in health care and the criminal-justice system.

Kurey concedes it will be tough to beat Pombo, who he says has done "a fine job overall" in the House.

"How do you win against an incumbent that has done a respectable job, in an economy that's booming? It's like Mission Impossible," the 45-year-old said. "But I will continue to share some ideas and hopefully make things interesting. If you define winning as 'making a contribution through earnest participation,' then I think I have an excellent chance."

■ To reach reporter Abbie Dutcher, phone 833-1122 or e-mail adutcher@recordnet.com

attorney for San Joaquin County, said charities can stay absolutely safe from any legal trouble if they post signs that say no purchase is necessary, meaning the price of the raffle ticket is just a request for a donation.

"In other words, if you're a leadbeat you can go to the local church and ask for a raffle ticket and they have to give you one," Shattuck said. He added, however, that he knows of no one ever complaining about being refused a free raffle ticket.

Art Croney, executive director of the Committee on Moral Con-

Croney's committee opposes any expansion of legalized gambling. He said the measure will make it easier for crooks to set up phony charities just so they can sell raffle tickets and pocket the profits. Now, prosecutors have discretion to shut down the sham organizations and allow the legitimate charities to continue their traditional fund-raisers.

"There is nothing broken that needs fixing," Croney said.

■ To reach Capitol Bureau Chief Jim Sams, phone (916) 441-4078 or e-mail jmsams@recordnet.com

SIGN

Continued from B1

"It's been an interesting day. The number of people who've indicated they want signs now has grown considerably."

Simas' fellow supervisors had a mixed reaction to the disappearance of the signs.

"I'd heard rumors that the signs were disappearing," Supervisor Robert Cabral said. "I was quite surprised to see the picture (in Sunday's newspaper)."

Cabral said he was aware of the dispute over signs at the Perez property.

"But I know this whole sign thing tends to get out of hand," Cabral said.

Supervisor Dario Marenco, who is often at odds with Simas and has walked through Simas' district urging voters to elect Mow, was less diplomatic.

"Well, you know the chairman of the board out slashing signs — that's not good for San Joaquin County," Marenco said. "This is just bizarre behavior."

"I don't think sign slashing is something we're looking for in a chair," added Marenco, whose bid for the chairmanship was blocked last month by Simas, Cabral and Supervisor Jack Sieglock.

Supervisor Steve Gutierrez, who also frequently disagrees with Simas on policy matters, said he was sad that political campaigning in the county had stooped to such a level.

"I'd say shock," Gutierrez said of his initial reaction. "I was really shocked to see it on the front page."

"I think it's sad that campaigns can get to those depths where those kinds of strategies can be used," he added. "You're supposed to run on the ideas — on what you can bring to the office."

A call to Sieglock, the Lodi-area supervisor who often votes with Simas, was not returned Sunday.

Marenco expressed hope that the issue of sign slashing will not be brought up at Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting.

Reaction Sunday was not limited to just supervisors.

Stockton residents displaying Simas' signs on their property had mixed views.

"It was the wrong thing for him to do for a man in his position," said Ken Flolo, of the 1700 block of Valencia Avenue. He said the Simas sign in his yard was placed there without his permission, but he said he voted for Simas in previous elections so he decided to keep the sign. He said he is considering whether to take the sign down.

Harold Smith, of the 2000 block of Paloma Avenue, said he will wait until he hears more on Simas' motivations before making up his mind.

"I've had some second thoughts," Smith said. "I'd like to find out why. If he was being vindictive, that would change my thought pattern."

Don Parsons, Simas' campaign manager, noted that Simas' campaign has lost dozens of signs.

"We've had problems with this all over. It's not confined to stealing."

Parsons said in recent weeks he even took a photo of some kids stealing one of Mow's signs.

Simas represents the 3rd Supervisorial District, which includes parts of north Stockton, Lathrop and much of the county west of Stockton.

Record staff writer Eric Louie contributed to this report.

■ To reach reporter Sarah Grunder, phone 943-8547 or e-mail sgrunder@recordnet.com