

**To Dream on Your Behalf: A History of Gavilan College**

by Leah Halper  
History Department, Gavilan College

This work was originally begun in 2003 done in fulfillment of a contract for co-curricular credit. It was completed as a sabbatical project in 2018.

Thanks to Suzanne Bulle, Terrence Willett, Joanne Howell, and Peter Howell. Thanks to Nancy Bailey, Susan Peterson, Kathleen Rose, Dana Young, Doug Achterman, Rachel Becerra and the whole library staff, Rachel Perez, Neil Andrade, Nikki DeQuin, Deborah Muscari, and other Gavilan community members who suggested great people I should contact. Thanks to the Gavilan College Board of Trustees and the Professional Development Committee for approving the 2018 sabbatical project that made finishing this work possible.

Thanks to Sheila Prader, Verona Flint, Roya Singleton, Don Pidd, Mary and Franz Schneider, Lucy Solorzano, and Tom Howard—Historical Societies rock!

Special thanks to Linda Bernabé, Sharol Rosati Bernardo, Lanetta Bishop, Muriel Winter Brem, Mary Ann Bruegmann, Loretta Carrillo, Kent Child, Robert Funk, Bob Garcia, Ken Peer, John Perez, Sofia Ramirez, Samuel Araiza Ramos, Margaret Morales Rebecchi, Lydia Amaro Salinas, Ray Sanchez, Karen Sato, Anthony Shebib, Bonnie Simonsen, Pat Stevens, Norma Trebino, and Alan Viarengo for their patience and graciousness in granting helpful, interesting, and provocative recorded oral history interviews, and to Tom Andrade, Carol Cooper, Barbara Goodrich DeQuin, Ed Loeser, Gloria Melone, Elwood Miller, Dave Porcella, Alan Porcella, Jeremy Smith, Ken Smyth, and Roscoe Stevens for their helpful information in person, via e-mail, or by phone. June Halper provided valuable early proof-reading aid. When the whole project was finished I used the best editor and proof-reader I know: my sister Carin Halper. Any stray errors are assuredly mine. Her unerring professionalism and diligence were hugely helpful, and I am grateful and lucky to have her.

The author wishes to hear from any reader who has additions or corrections to suggest. Please direct feedback to Leah Halper, c/o Gavilan College, 5055 Santa Teresa Blvd., Gilroy, CA 95020. E-mail lhalper@gavilan.edu

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## A History of Change

The histories of California, of southern Santa Clara county, and of Gavilan College are all filled with rapid and monumental change. Since San Benito Junior College was founded in 1919, both the area and college have experienced growth far beyond what the founders imagined. The college's existence also coincides with tumultuous years in state, national, and world history. This work attempts to place the history of the college into its larger broader historical context. I hope to offer an understanding of how San Benito Junior College became Gavilan College in 1963, and to show how the college developed into a vital local resource.

Change has been the constant in the California community college system, and at Gavilan. But the people who formed the idea of a college, those who established SBJC and Gavilan as viable institutions of higher education, and those who have worked and studied here have molded an institution that is both responsive to local needs and reflective of global and national concerns.

## Early Local History

Gavilan College and the surrounding area--San Benito county and southern Santa Clara county--were inhabited before the 1760s by the Ohlone Rumsen and Amah Mutsen people. Other native peoples undoubtedly visited for trade, harvest, or hunting, but the Rumsen and Amah Mutsen were the permanent semi-nomadic inhabitants, visiting the same village sites on a seasonally rotating but regular basis. The college's Santa Teresa Avenue site was one such village, and also served as a burial ground: when grading work was being done on the site in 1967, tractors turned up five Ohlone gravesites ("Burial"). The local newspaper, the *Dispatch*, reported that the bones and artifacts found, including abalone shells, were taken by the son of the contractor. (Since then, of course, laws preserving native village sites and particularly protecting Ohlone gravesites from desecration would have made this grave-robbing illegal.)

The establishment of San Juan Bautista Mission in 1797 brought many Spaniards and Mexicans, and then, after 1815, a few northern Europeans and United States citizens to the Gavilan hills area. The germ pools they conveyed had a devastating effect upon the Ohlone, whose lives were also disrupted, and often curtailed, by enslavement that exposed them not only to diseases, but to harsh European work schedules, punishments, and expectations. Spanish soldiers and settlers began occupying the site known now as Old Gilroy, near today's Four Corners, by the turn of the 18th century, aided by a generous land grant policy the Spanish government used to encourage settlement of the remote area. A soap works was set up near the present site of Soap Lake on Frazier Lake Road, and a number of Spanish and Mexican men worked in cattle ranching, using Monterey as their shipping point. In 1814 or 1815--it's unclear when he came to the area--the first known English-speaking settler, John Gilroy, arrived, a refugee from a British ship. Gilroy got permission to convert to Catholicism and stay. He married a local Californiana woman, Maria Clara de la Ascencion Ortega, and inherited her land grant portion. Many other English-speakers followed suit, seeking special permission from the Spanish government to remain. When Mexico declared independence from Spain in 1821-22, British and US settlers obtained permits from the new Mexican government. Sometimes they were aided by letters or testimonies from mission priests, marriages with Californianas, or their attempts to fit in by converting to Catholicism and learning Spanish.

California became a state in 1848, after a period of chaotic and conflicting governance and self-governance. The city of Gilroy moved west to its present site in the 1850s, where it would be closer to the well-traveled El Camino Real. Gilroy became a stop for many travelers and stagecoaches because of its location midway between San Jose and Monterey. (Another stop was Tennant Station, and the mission at San Juan was an important destination as well.) The town grew rapidly, becoming a Southern Pacific Railway stop in 1869. Hollister was founded in the early 1870s, and quickly became an important ranching and agricultural center; San Benito county was carved from a portion of Monterey county. The area developed with the usual pattern of public grammar schools in town, and rural one-room schoolhouses serving grades K-12. As the population increased, eventually there were enough students to merit a high school. San Benito High School was founded in 1874; Live Oak Union High School in 1904; Gilroy High School in 1912.

### **Community College Origins in the United States**

Higher education was not considered a right for most people throughout the history of the United States. Even getting public grammar schools required years of struggle in some communities, though New England led the way as early as the 18th century with free schools supported by townships. Free education for those who could attend was limited in many 19th century communities to a few years of grammar school. Even if school was available and free, not everyone could afford to release children from their work to attend.

Literacy and an ability to understand basic policy arguments were considered essential to a functional democracy, however, not to mention essential to the expansion of industry. Thus the 19<sup>th</sup> century is in part the story of gradually broadening educational options, particularly for those of European-American descent. Educational access was gradually extended downward, to kindergartens established on the German model, and upward, to grades beyond sixth where promising students could pursue better opportunities if their family economic situation permitted. "Our battle for free public elementary schools was won by about 1850. The battle for high schools was won by 1900" (Hillway 55). Of course, for poor children and for students of color the battle for decent schooling took much longer, was more difficult, and still has not been conclusively won.

Ironically, in a nation of immigrants, the battle for free or low-cost adult education took even longer. During the first century of United States history adult education for cultural or vocational self-improvement was usually left to private clubs, lecture series, apprenticeships, and other informal arrangements. Religious speakers and revival meetings were very common after the First Great Awakening in the 1730s and 1740s. Lyceums--voluntary, non-profit lecture societies-- appeared in New England in the 1820s and spread rapidly as a means for workers to learn about and debate issues (Hillway 47). The temperance movements in England and the US saw the public's hunger for discourse, and began by the 1820s to rely on inspirational speakers. The Abolitionist movement also invested heavily in touring speakers starting in the 1840s, and thousands of people flocked to hear Frederick Douglass, Wendell Philips, Abbey Kelley, and others condemn slavery. Many intellectuals in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, booked their own tours and lectured extensively on social and political questions. After 1868 for-profit lecture services encroached upon and then rendered extinct the more traditional local lyceums, but by then there were many other types of speakers competing for the public's ear. Working people could get intermittent intellectual stimulation,

but a comprehensive, cohesive education that was academically challenging--and financially demanding--was reserved for the privileged.

Access to a university education opened to middle class white men as the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed, but for most, it was an unheard of luxury to study for four years without having to earn a living. Before 1917, there was simply very little adult education available to the general public, and most of what existed was aimed at teaching illiterates and immigrants how to read and write; a few occupational courses were typically offered to these groups as well, but most people learned job skills at work or from family members. Some paid for courses at private schools where the quality of instruction varied widely.

Community colleges did not exist per se until the 20th century, though several social pressures, experiments, and ideas important to their origins were present in the 19th century United States. Historian Tyrus Hillway cites three currents that helped create modern community colleges: the 19th-century efforts to reform colleges and universities; the need for specialized adult and vocational education, which grew as the nation's economy became more sophisticated; and expanding access to educational opportunity as an ideological outgrowth of democratic ideals (33). Other factors probably include the raised expectations of laborers, immigrants, ethnic minorities, and women who wished to share in the realities, not just the rhetoric, of the land of opportunity; expanded literacy among children which created a wave carrying demand for extended education upward to high school and beyond; and an economy which created more middle class jobs and households. In such households children were not required to do paid work so the family could eat, which meant they had more extended childhoods and could engage in educational pursuits through late adolescence.

Some historians point to the industrialization and urbanization of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the main reason why a more educated workforce was needed in the United States (Cohen 1). Cohen and Brawer also cite a lengthening period of adolescence, which required more custodial care of young people, and rising expectations as the nation became more powerful globally and economically (1).

Ironically, two marginalized populations in the United States had access to institutions like community colleges long before academia, dominated by white males, saw the benefits of the two-year arrangement. Women were, of course, barred from most major universities until well into the 20th century. (Yale, one of the last hold-outs, went coeducational in the 1970s.) However, many high school academies and seminaries that admitted only women, usually to train them as teachers, had been adding thirteenth and fourteenth grades since the 1830s and 1840s (Hillway 40). Greenbrier College in West Virginia and Stephens College in Missouri are examples of this trend.

And several colleges and institutes were founded during and after Reconstruction in the South specifically for African-American students, who were likewise denied opportunities at white colleges. Many were trade schools, but academic subjects were sometimes offered. Most importantly, the courses of study often could be completed relatively quickly. Not many people could spare more than a year or two for study in the struggle to survive in the post-war South, but those who were able to get degrees found they meant a great deal in communities eager for educated professionals.

Meanwhile, the federal government entered the popular education effort through the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 (Cohen 2) by approving a federal land grant program that established colleges in every state. The federal government offered free land to a state government or private entity that was willing to build and run a college on it. Land grant colleges are still the heart of the US educational system; many were built in or near farming communities so scientific inquiry and its practical applications could be of use to local farmers.

According to Hillway, University of Chicago president William Rainey Harper is credited as one of the first to conceptualize something like a community college as a serious educational option for the typical college student of the 19th century (36-7). Harper was trying to resolve the problem that universities were spending a great deal of time on lower-level classes and basic skills, and not enough time on what today would be called upper division work. He proposed that high schools extend their offerings by two years to better prepare students for rigorous university work (38). He also proposed that small four-year colleges drop their junior and senior years and focus on the first two years to make themselves into lower division coursework specialists (37). (Hence, his idea was called the "decapitation model," and sounded as alarming and unappealing to college officials as its name implies) Not many four-year universities followed his advice, but high schools were intrigued by it as the 19<sup>th</sup> century drew to a close, and much experimentation occurred all over the country. In this earliest period, community colleges might be extensions of high schools or academies; some were "decapitations" of four-year colleges; some were "entirely separate two-year colleges" (Hillway 41). Harper also proposed that two years of college might be adequate for many students, and by 1902 he was advocating something quite like a modern community college, which he argued would greatly benefit students and local communities alike (Hillway 38).

Decatur Baptist College in Texas opened a denominational two-year program in 1897. The state-funded Joliet Junior College in Illinois followed suit in 1902 (39). Hillway quotes Colvert, who documented the existence of eight "junior colleges" in 1900, with about 100 pupils total (41). However, the real growth period for two-year colleges occurred between 1900 and 1920, when hundreds of these institutions were established. "By 1920 there were nearly 200 institutions and 15,000 students" (Hillway 41.)

World War I played a significant role in this trend. Support for higher and adult education accelerated after World War I (Hillway 48). One factor was that many soldiers, tested as part of basic training, were found functionally illiterate. Another factor was that exposure to a foreign war, one which required an initial hard sell and had many negative repercussions, brought many US citizens to demand more "Americanization" melting in the melting pot.

A fever of nationalism during and after WWI generated much support for "Americanization" adult education classes, often offered at night on high school campuses, covering the United States Constitution, social customs, and the study of English (Hillway 48). This kind of adult education was offered more or less consistently beginning in 1915 at Gilroy Union High School, in part to teach skills and in part to teach citizenship to immigrants. Gilroy High School's free evening High School for adults involved classes in business English and arithmetic, bookkeeping, typing, shorthand, mechanical drawing and manual training, cooking, sewing, French, Spanish, and citizenship ("High School for"). By 1919 San Benito High School had a similar program.

There were many immigrants and not enough adult schools. Progressives reasoned that Americanization opportunities would also work well at community colleges. So community colleges opened their doors in part to serve immigrants, a function that has become particularly important in California given its history of attracting immigrants.

But others wanted access as well: "The concern once felt for the Americanization of recent immigrants [had by 1926] given place to more essential consideration of the continued vocational and cultural advancement of our native citizens" (Hillway 49.)

More and more people completed their high school educations as the 20<sup>th</sup> century wore on, and this awoke in some the desire to continue further. "The percentage of those graduating from high school grew from 30 percent in 1924 to 75 percent in 1960" (Cohen 6). While in 1910 only 5 percent of 18-year-olds went on to college, in 1960, 45 percent did (6). One important factor in this growth spurt was that expectations among women were rising. Opportunities for women were slowly and unevenly expanding because women themselves pushed hard for more. Hillway notes:

At the turn of the century women became gradually more important in strengthening and improving adult education. They faithfully supported the lecture programs. Many of them had become teachers, and more and more were beginning to receive some form of higher education. As women grew economically independent and exercised an interest in civic affairs, they sought opportunities for self-instruction and exchange of information through many informal means, including especially the women's clubs. (48)

As we shall see, women have been significant beneficiaries of the community college system.

### **The California Wave of Community College Foundings**

The West was fertile ground for many innovations in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including women's suffrage, electoral reforms, and a new system of higher education. While religious denominations and philanthropists were founding colleges in the East, the West was largely unsettled by European-Americans, and lacked many four-year colleges (Cohen 18). The University of California system was not the only four-year public college available in California, but most others, including its major rival, Stanford, were private institutions.

In 1907, in response to national trends and interests, California passed legislation that eventually resulted in the largest system of higher education in the world. The Caminetti Act was the first in the nation (Tillery 6) to authorize the establishment of junior colleges by local high school districts. A few may have already offered post-high school classes, but the Caminetti Act encouraged a more systematic approach and included vocational classes as part of the curriculum (Tillery 6).

Interestingly, the first city in California to take advantage of this opportunity was Fresno, which started Fresno City College, the first junior college in California, in 1910 (Winter 37). In their application, Fresno city officials argued that being nearly 200 miles from the nearest college was good reason to start their own (Cohen 19).

Winter says that Fresno City College was followed in 1913 by Bakersfield College and Fullerton Junior College, in 1914 by San Diego Junior College, and in 1915 by Citrus and Santa Ana Colleges. In 1916 a wave crested, and Chaffey College, Riverside City College, and Sacramento City College were launched. There was a pause, probably due to World War I, and then the tenth California junior college was founded in 1918 in Santa Rosa (37).

The eleventh community college established in California was San Benito Junior College, founded in fall 1919 (Winter 37).

From the start, there were competing views of the purpose of community colleges. The big four-year universities in California were eager to have community colleges relieve some of their enrollment pressures by providing the first two years of college coursework for students. David Starr Jordan, Stanford's influential president, suggested this solution several times (Cohen 7) but it never gained traction. At the same time, many involved in the earliest community colleges considered the two-year education program complete in itself for most students. This model suggested that community colleges helped young people transition to adulthood and to the workplace, important goals for many students. Cohen cites Eels, an early scholar of the community college movement, as saying that the community colleges provided students who weren't natural scholars a way to stop "naturally and honorably at the end of the sophomore year" (12). In an article published in 1941, Eels discussed his 1937 study "of students entering junior colleges [which found] that 75 percent did not continue beyond the sophomore year" (Tillery 11). This statistic might be explained by a relatively high "stop out" and return rate (11), by marriage rates for female students, or by the fact that many students didn't want, couldn't afford, or didn't need more education.

Even considering this, community colleges became a growth industry. By 1917, California had begun to put into place an infrastructure for junior colleges that differentiated them from high schools. That year, the state made provisions for state and county support for junior college departments that were established within existing high schools. Also, state aid was granted to students who attended public junior colleges (Winter 38) and courses were officially designated as "junior college" rather than "post-high school" (Winter 38.) According to P. Callan's 1983 report to the state's postsecondary education commission, by 1917 the state was also budgeting for community colleges. That year, California's junior college budget was \$16 million; 23 percent came from state funding, 30 percent from the federal government, and 47 percent from local taxes (Tillery 10).

By 1920, representatives of 34 junior colleges across the United States had formed the American Association of Junior Colleges. If Hillway is correct that there were nearly 200 community colleges by 1920, at least a dozen of the public community colleges were located in California (Winter 37). The pace of growth for community colleges continued: "By 1930 there were 450 junior colleges... [and] California had 20 percent of the public institutions and a third of the students" (Cohen 14). California never relinquished the lead over other states in terms of sheer system size.

### **1919 and the Very Soft Launch of San Benito Junior College**

In 1919, the people of the United States, certainly including Gilroy, Hollister, and Morgan Hill, were struggling with two virulent forces: World War I and its aftermath, and the massive global flu epidemic. As a result, 1919 is a year historians refer to as a turning point in a

changing world. European-based imperial monarchies that had competed to hold vast numbers of colonized peoples in exploitation and misery were beginning to decline in power. A period of decolonialization and upheaval made the 20<sup>th</sup> century the bloodiest century in world history.

Thousands of local boys signed up for the war or, as it became less popular, were drafted. Though the United States suffered only a small fraction of the 16 million deaths caused by the war, 53,000 US soldiers never came home. Others returned with severe physical, neurological, and/or psychological trauma due to the weaponry and methods used in this first very modern war. In 1919, lists of discharged soldiers were being published in the local newspapers, and many local families were struggling to accept new realities with dead, disabled, or traumatized members. In Hollister, the community planned to welcome soldiers with a public ceremony once a month; the first ceremony on February 10, 1919 featured 52 soldiers out of an eventual 500 expected (“First 52”).

The war also ushered in an era of chaos and instability in world affairs, which was mirrored in the United States. There were race riots in St. Louis, deportation raids on immigrants and “radicals” under Attorney General Palmer, and attempts to limit free speech that made the First Amendment seem as insubstantial as a cobweb. There was widespread cynicism about a war fought for wealth and empire, a war that ruined so much and benefitted only an elite few.

As the war was finally ending in 1918, another catastrophe struck. The most deadly flu epidemic in human history, a flu that took at least 50 million lives worldwide, proliferated fast and hit hard. It came in waves, starting in spring 1918 and spreading due to the mobility and close association of soldiers in wartime. The worst wave started in August 1918 and overshadowed everything else that fall and winter. Ironically, the flu, like the war, particularly attacked young people. Their strong immune systems may have overreacted and caused their deaths.

The impact locally cannot be exaggerated. Businesses faltered and closed. Hospitals were overwhelmed. Teachers had no one to teach because parents sensibly kept their children home for fear of contagion. The *Evening Freelance* in Hollister reported by January 1919 that the high school was closed due to the influenza (“School Closed”) and that school officials were trying to start a correspondence course so seniors could graduate on time. Parents were undoubtedly right to be fearful; the *Gilroy Advocate* reported as late as 18 October 1919 that the New Idria School in San Benito county had closed down—all but one pupil was ill, and one had died (“New School”).

Towns passed flu mask ordinances, and people were arrested for not wearing masks in public. By fall 1919 the flu may have reverted to a less deadly strain, and became less of a public health threat. By then, though, schools were grappling with terrible losses of revenue due to lower enrollments. Ironically, once students came back to school there was severe overcrowding, as funding was based on low numbers of attendees from the year before (“Grammar Schools”).

In this sad and frightening environment, officials at the San Benito High School District made a decision, probably sometime in 1918, to quietly join the junior college movement. Why did they do it, and why then? The answers to those questions certainly must have been

documented, but much school district documentation was lost in a 1955 San Benito High School fire. So we are left to ponder likely reasons.

Locally, young people who could not afford the UC system or Stanford had few options. In 1919 the Cooperative Extension of the University of California advertised local lectures in Bolshevism and biochemistry in the *Gilroy Advocate*, but this type of learning was neither systematic nor predictable. In 1875, Florence College was built on College Street in Hollister, but it was operated by the Baptist Church (*San Benito County Heritage*) and thus was a private, and expensive, option not necessarily appealing to non-Baptists. Florence College eventually closed due to low enrollments and sold its building to the Catholic Church, which later operated a school there. According to the *Gilroy Advocate* in 1919, the State of California offered some local courses in teacher preparation through UC Berkeley, and various “business” or “commercial colleges” were established over the years, but these cost money to attend, and they came and went.

Hollister native Norma Trebino recalled that some students took the daily train all the way to San Jose to attend San Jose Normal School (1-12-18), later San Jose State College and then San Jose State University. However, this was not a viable option for anyone who had family or financial responsibilities, which was the case for most young people. The UC system experimented with correspondence courses (“UC Offers Mail”).

Many people hungry to learn attended church, theatre, or lectures, or they joined clubs. Local women who were middle-class and European-American might informally educate and entertain themselves; for example, through the Women’s Christian Temperance Movement meetings in Gilroy and Hollister. Gilroy also offered women a Ladies Reading Circle and a Ladies Civic Club, according to various meeting notices in 1919 issues of the *Gilroy Advocate*. Churchgoers could attend occasional lectures by missionaries with international experience, such as a lecture on Persia held in Gilroy in November 1919, but these offerings could not be said to constitute higher education.

School officials clearly saw a need to give local young people additional opportunities for education and employment. Some also may have felt a responsibility to serve returning veterans. To accomplish all this, a local junior college was the best option.

And yet San Benito Junior College had the softest of soft launches. A study of Gilroy and Hollister newspapers at the time reveals no public discussion of the plan to start offering college classes on a limited basis in fall 1919. Perhaps the losses from the war and the influenza outbreak provided ample reasons for reserve. It is easy to trumpet a hopeful new initiative when things are going well, but in a nation recovering from war and epidemic, starting an institution dedicated to bringing out the best in young people might sound rather naively optimistic, and high-flown hopes might have been tamped down so as not to seem ridiculously out of sync with the times. Nonetheless, it is a statement of profound faith in humanity that in such an environment of uncertainty, despair, and disruption, local officials wanted to invest in the futures of young people.

It was simply done. High school teachers were assigned extra college-level classes, in the same building used by the high school. The only apparent publicity was word of mouth, especially to graduating seniors in the spring of 1919. Classes were free.

The first public mention of San Benito Junior College seems to be in the 19 September 1919 *Freelance*, which reported that 218 students were enrolled at San Benito High School that fall. As an afterthought, the article also mentioned that there were 18 enrolled at the new Junior College (“218 Enrolled”). But the number grew. By 2 October, the *Freelance* reported, there were 35 students enrolled in nine classes for the new junior college’s first semester. (“Junior College is Proving”). Its first president was Jimmy Davis. Elwood Dryden, who knew him in the late 1930s, remembers Davis as a pleasant man unlikely to get upset about anything. The college’s first and “most famous director” was Dean Philip Power, who seems to have been hands-on and popular with students (Fuchs 1). Psychology was the most popular and largest class with 91 students—undoubtedly many from the high school—and the *Freelance* reported that most of the students enrolled in the junior college courses were spring graduates of San Benito High School (“Junior College is Proving”). Only frosh classes were offered that first year; however, classes were added in 1920 when some students had advanced to sophomore status.

San Benito Junior College got one more public mention in 1919, on 13 December, when the *Freelance* reported that the Junior College held its first social event (“Junior college holds”). It may have been a muted affair--Dean Power spoke, as did Edwin Moore, first SBJC Class president, and four others. Was there actual fun--dancing? music? refreshments? These diversions are not mentioned, but in 1919, perhaps a low-key party was an appropriate party.

We do know something about the first graduating class of 1921 at San Benito Junior College. What we know suggests one more reason administrators proceeded without fanfare. There were nine graduates in the first class, and eight were women. Virginia Brown, Mary Dooling, Helen Grant, Viola Greenep, Edith Goodnow, Leo Hartmann, Isabel Moore, Malvina Moore, and Ardis Neilson (“Graduates Make Bow”) got their diplomas on 24 June 1921.

The prevailing view at the time in most families, especially those working hard to survive, was that educating daughters simply made no sense. Girls were expected to marry, and most did. Few husbands wanted wives who were well-educated, and fewer still wanted wives who worked outside the home. Women’s roles were sharply limited, whatever their capacities. And yet by 1919 many young women had completely new ambitions—the long first wave of feminist and suffrage activism in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries raised possibilities beyond marriage and family. Women’s higher aspirations were by no means considered a positive in many circles; most men had no desire to see women in academia or the working world.

Perhaps in conservative San Benito county, with a war and an epidemic still fresh in memory, the new college administrators saw no point in drawing attention to the fact that they were giving opportunities to local young people who, for the first several years, turned out to be in the majority female. Perhaps they judged it best to do a small, quiet experiment that would eventually prove its own success.

### **Good Times, Hard Times, and Mr. Chew’s Explanation**

Between 1920 and 1940, junior colleges grew in importance and enrollment. Enrollments statewide doubled between 1920 and 1930 (Tillery 8). They kept growing during the Great Depression, although funding dropped even as demand increased (8). Community colleges provided both an “open door” and a popular second chance for many students (11). During

this period, state investment meant that expansion of public junior colleges far outstripped that of private institutions. California had 42 junior colleges by 1936 (Tillery 8).

SBJC was part of the boom. College enrollment records were lost in the 1955 fire, but by fall 1925 the college was reporting enrollment increases of 20-40 percent over the previous year and noting that students were coming from Pacific Grove, Watsonville, and San Francisco (“Local Schools Start Season”). Oakland, Berkeley, and Monterey students joined them in subsequent years, according to college yearbooks. SBJC was also running a night school with about 70 students enrolled, many of whom were learning skills such as poultry raising—which drew fifty students—or taking Americanization classes. (“Many”). That year fifteen JC students also took night units to graduate sooner (“Many”).

The boom held in 1927. At the college’s first assembly in September, the room “bulged out with the increased enrollment” (“Junior College is well attended”). And the 1930 *Benitoite* yearbook tells us that “...enrollment grew as the reputation of the school grew until 198 students were on the college rolls in 1930-1931, the largest number in the history of the school ....30 students were graduated ...” (35).

One reason for the increasing numbers was that in 1925 the district began three taxpayer-paid bus routes that made higher education accessible to many rural students (“Transportation”). Now students within a 20 mile radius of Hollister could attend high school or college. “No one thing has meant more to the people of San Benito county than this...” officials said (“Transportation”).

Enrollment also increased because the college had an excellent reputation. The *Freelance* praised Dean Philip Power and associates for “putting forth their best efforts to make the local Junior College a model one” (“Junior College is rated”). Thus it was “very pleasing to learn how highly Federal educational authorities think of the San Benito county branch” (“Junior College is rated”). When an educator in Wyoming wrote the federal Bureau of Education in Washington D.C. to ask about colleges worth emulating, the *Freelance* reported, the head of the bureau wrote “informing him that Hollister, San Benito County, CA, has one of the leading Junior Colleges in the United States (“Junior College is rated”).

Word spread. The following June, the principal of a San Fernando high school wrote to Power asking him for “about ten application blanks for students who wish to enroll...” (“Junior College Fame”).

With more students coming from farther away, deans tried to help them find housing, eventually venturing the perhaps helpful opinion that housing and other costs at this college were really very low (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* of 7). Officials also needed a reliably welcoming presence for young people away from home for the first time. In 1929, female students were encouraged to found the Associated Women Students. Members welcomed girls, supported them academically, introduced newcomers to others, and helped “make them forget there is such a thing as homesickness” (*Hi-Jacker* 15). The club’s founders attended a convention of similar groups at San Jose State Teachers College that year (15).

Perhaps the most flattering result of SBJC’s good reputation was imitation. A big crowd at the Salinas High School PTA meeting gathered in November 1925 to ask about what it took to establish a junior college (“Salinas”). They were told it would cost \$15,000 and require a

property tax of 15 cents per \$100 (“Salinas”) but cold fact proved no deterrent—wheels began turning that resulted in Salinas Junior College in 1930; it was eventually re-named Hartnell College. Nor was Monterey indifferent to the possibilities. The following February, local power brokers held a luncheon at the Hotel Del Monte to explore the idea of founding a local community college (“Monterey”). After discussion of both advantages and obstacles to starting a college, the group went on record as “heartily in favor” (“Monterey”). Monterey Peninsula College took longer to establish, but the college finally opened in 1947.

One critic of San Benito Junior College spoke up at the joint 1926 high school and junior college graduation ceremony. After three male students gave speeches focussed on athletics, keynoter Dr. Elwood Cubberly of Stanford, a pioneer in educational theory, “bawled out” the students for emphasizing athletic prowess over academics, and questioned whether college officials might be doing the same (“San Benito County High stirred”). Well into the 1950s, it is true that SBJC was closely associated with the local high school from which it sprang, and like most high schools of the time, San Benito High School put a premium on sports. Most faculty worked at both schools, and administrators and spaces, including sports facilities, were shared. The high school and college shared the same diplomas, but filled them out differently, an examination of samples shows. Beyond that, the college ran on a quarter system schedule that coincided with the high school’s semester system. Fall classes ran from early September to late January, and this period was divided into two quarters, each ending with a scholarship report (re-named “Mid-term report” by the following academic year) to let students know how they were doing (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 1). College officials took seriously the need to keep students on track academically.

Apropos of this, the local newspaper pointed out that after Dr. Cubberly’s fiery graduation speech if Dean Power had had a rebuttal, the out-of-town expert would have seen the true nature of education at SBJC, and the error of his ways (“San Benito County High stirred”).

Another likely controversy was undoubtedly the ongoing dialogue concerning ethnicity, racism, and opportunity that has been part of United States history since European settlers first arrived. In an era when many European-Americans found the idea of a Watsonville interracial church service so novel that it made the front page of a Hollister newspaper (“Interracial”), there were some students of color in SBJC’s yearbooks—but not many. In the 1920s southern European immigrants such as Greeks, Italians, and Portuguese were struggling with stereotypes and discrimination—and the situation for many Mexican-Americans and African-Americans was far more difficult, even dangerous. Nationally, the 1920s saw a resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan and many local chapters were established with strong pro-white skin and anti-Catholic tendencies. The Klan came to Hollister to recruit on 30 September, 1925, and probably other times as well. Any interested “white, Protestant, gentile citizen who believes in upholding the Constitution of the United States, strict law enforcement, free public schools and in keeping this a Protestant nation” (“Ku Klux”) was invited to come hear about the “ideals, principles and purposes” of the Klan (“Ku Klux”). Historian Sandy Lydon, who grew up in San Benito Country (and whose father Rocky plays a role later in this story), believes that the Klan probably did succeed in establishing a “Klavern” in Hollister; his website certainly establishes Klaverns in nearby communities as fact. The stock market crash of 1929 had a significant negative impact on ethnic relations, as European-American citizens in many areas agitated against immigrants who they said took scarce jobs.

The crash also affected agricultural areas in general and San Benito county in particular, though the effects could be situational, gradual, or seasonal. Indeed, the 1930 SBJC *Hi-jacker* shows little evidence that anyone was stressed or depressed by the Great Depression, though the thrifty high school and college yearbook staffs went halves on costs, each school paying for its own section. Judging by surnames, the SBJC student body had some Italian and a few Mexican members, but most students appear to have been northern European in origin in 1930.

Students were active; at the start of each semester they elected student body officers, who then planned dances (at least five in 1930), Sneak Days (for ditching school), and other fun. Students elected their first female student body president, Kathleen Paterson, in 1930, “and does she know how!” (*Hi-Jacker* 8). (For in-depth analysis of SBJC yearbooks from 1936 and 1950, see Document Analysis: *Pride and Gratitude*.) The Sigma Iota Chi sorority gave several parties and dances, but there were also Student Body activities such as an October picnic for which the entire student body, twenty carloads, drove to Rio Del Mar (*Hi-Jacker* 16). There was also a May Variety Frolic with eight vaudeville acts by students, and a winning basketball team that finished its season undefeated (21). But that year at least, football fell with a thud: after two weeks of practice the ten players hung up their helmets due to a lack of players to form a team, and officials’ plans to put SBJC football into the Northern California Conference of Junior Colleges 1931 “came to naught” (21). It would be nearly thirty years before SBJC joined an athletic conference to stay.

Women also had sports opportunities by the 1930s, though not all of them involved competitions. Women’s archery was introduced in 1932-3, and they also learned tennis, basketball, swimming, and track events (*Benitoite* 30). A riding club attracted over half of the women students (30), and women could take a Red Cross life saving course. Women could also participate in an “annual Women’s track meet” for both high school and junior college students (33).

The college suffered a hard blow in early 1931. On January 8, 1931 the newspaper reported that Dean Power “started the new year out right by assigning examinations to all of his classes. He believes that a good brisk examination starts the students studying and gives them a better chance for a prosperous outlook on their coming school work” (“Junior College High School News”). A week later Power was dead, at 52, of an early-morning heart attack (“Philip”). Students were devastated, as Power and his wife Rosemaie, Vice President and “Dean of Girls,” were beloved and essential figures at the college. Students considered cancelling a fundraising dance Power had been helping plan (“Davis”). Instead, high school Principal Davis told them they could honor Power by carrying on and doing a great job with their event. The students took his advice (“Davis”). Rosemaie Powers continued working at the college another ten years; after 1941 she is no longer listed in the college yearbooks. And Claude N. Settles was quickly hired to take Power’s place. He, too, was popular—and perhaps rather informal. Students called Settles “Deany.”

By 1933, as the Depression deepened, the curriculum at the college understandably changed to boost graduates’ employability. Among the usual offerings of languages, music, art, and history, students could study poultry husbandry and other agricultural topics, commercial law, bookkeeping, shorthand, and Home Economics, according to the *Benitoite*.

One notable event in that yearbook was a Hobo Day, common at colleges even before the Crash of 1929, but ironically popular after it. Three “effeminate” male students dressed as women hoboes, and won the costume prize, the *Benitoite* said. Another contest, this time for snapshots, offered a great prize: an airplane ride.

The Associated Women Students held several dances, a picnic, and a tea for students’ mothers. When it threw a women-only “Snow Party,” the “usual number of masculine invaders were ushered out with the promptness and willfulness of Chicago’s most notorious cafe bouncer” (*Benitoite* 22). The entertainment must have seemed irresistible: the AWS members did “a riotous take off on members of the faculty...with great success” (22). There was a student disciplinary committee but AWS ably handled its own bouncing, and the committee noted it had no cases to consider (*Benitoite* 10). These students were not trouble-makers, but we can imagine a classroom scene that may have led someone writing as “Mr. Chew” to explain to the uncool “Why We Chew Gum” (*Benitoite* 50).

Perhaps as part of a general drain of optimism and energy that made the Great Depression so trying, the sense of being a model college seems to have faded by the late 1930s. Dean Power was dead; the economy dragged; war loomed. In fall 1939, twenty years after its founding, SBJC could claim 800 students had attended, and 170 had transferred (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 3). However, college officials were not overly confident. In the document that served as a handbook and course catalogue, they acknowledged that “...the curricula which have been developed are not all that is to be desired” (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 4). The college fulfilled the goal of providing local education “to a limited extent.” A more image-conscious writer changed the 1940-1 catalog to say “the curriculum which have been developed do not cover all fields of study...” (*San Benito County Junior College Catalog* 4).

In fact, SBJC offered respectable breadth. Almost from the start, community colleges grappled with emphasizing academic versus vocational options, and eventually opted for both. Hillway says that before 1920, junior colleges often saw themselves as miniature imitators of universities, and tried hard to replicate the first two years of university experience. Little attention was paid to vocational-technical curriculum or to community service (Hillway 42). However, the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 directed federal monies into education (Cohen 28), especially funds to support the hiring of vocational teachers in areas such as agriculture and trades (Levinson 45).

Thus a number of trade and business schools “entered the field,” or merged with existing institutions, in the 1920s (Hillway 42). Most were involved with agricultural or mechanical training (Hillway 46). High schools also offered vocational classes, but

...career education in the two-year colleges was designed to teach skills more complicated than those taught in high schools. Whereas secondary schools in the 1930s were teaching agriculture, bookkeeping, automobile repair, and printing, for example, junior colleges taught radio repair, secretarial services, and laboratory technical work. (Cohen 22)

Tillery and Deegan document expanding vocational offerings (11). Many high schools “were becoming increasingly academic in mission” (Tillery 11) and were happy to cede control of vocational education to the local junior colleges. In this period, many voc-tech programs

established “labor-management advisory committees” to capitalize upon the support and expertise of local business owners (Tillery 12).

The melding of academic and vocational-technical fields was underway (Hillway 42), and many colleges offered a broad curriculum in both academics and vocational-technical fields to attract as many students as possible. This was the tack taken at SBJC. Two vocational courses of study were offered in the 1930s: Vocational Agriculture and Commerce. But other fields were supported, and college catalogs such as the *1939 Bulletin* laid out courses of study for nursing, teaching, and business that could be started locally, then completed at other colleges. Teacher certification, for example, was popular in the 1920s but once the state set a BA as a requirement (Cohen 22), students at SBJC could only do part of the preparatory work toward a degree.

The college also offered a terminal curriculum “Plan” for students who graduated after two years. And transfer students were not neglected; every catalog explains what general education classes were required by Stanford, the University of California, San Jose State College “and other state colleges” (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 14). It could be tricky, though, to separate the academic transfer curriculum from the occupational because “...a sizable proportion of the occupational curriculum in the 1930s was still preprofessional training: pre-law, pre-medicine, pre-engineering” (Cohen 22).

One reason for the embrace of vocational programs might be what Tillery and Deegan term the junior colleges’ “fervor for local control” (9). From the start, communities such as Hollister wanted their junior colleges responsive to local needs and economic trends—a goal more clearly served in SBJC’s agricultural and commerce emphases than in its UC-like transfer plan.

To attend the college, students registered and took tests. Besides academic entry exams, the college required a psychological test and a vocational interests survey (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 6). The psychological test was dropped by 1942 but the vocational testing continued into the 1960s.

Not everyone came in prepared for college-level work, so the college assigned Frank Bauman, a popular teacher and dean hired in 1938, to an orientation course for those “who have not made recommending grades in high school” (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 28). Bauman’s task was to “awaken them to the need for diligent and continuing effort in meeting the many problems that meet the citizen of today” (28).

No matter their major, everyone who graduated had to take two years of physical education, a California state board requirement (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 27.) Goals for women and men differed tellingly. Male students would work to develop “coordination, strength, and endurance” (26). Their classes promoted “coordination, self subordination and obedience to authority, and higher ideals, courage, and wholesome interests” (26). For female students, the goals were different: “Body mechanics and their control, resulting in attractive good posture, including correct sitting, standing, walking, and all movements of daily life” (27). Girls were expected to develop “a higher degree of vitality...through joyous activity” (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 27).

The college’s small size made for an informal, we’re-in-it-together environment. The yearbooks make clear that students had public nicknames for faculty and for each other.

Custodial and other staff were included, and thanked, in yearbooks. The college candidly shared with students its interest in their attendance, not only for their own success, but also in terms of dollars and cents: "A daily absence...would equal a loss of school funds from the state of sixty cents. A student promotes the financial welfare of his school district by good attendance" (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 9).

The college also encouraged "a closer spirit of comradeship" between faculty and students than was possible at a large four-year college, and urged students to get involved in "general student life...so that we may supplement book learning with experience in practical affairs" (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 3). In this period, women were prominent on the college's faculty—in 1939, 15 female faculty joined 9 male colleagues (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 2), though some years the ratio was closer to even. In fall 1939, and presumably in other years, teachers had a three-day "Institute" for professional development on their *Bulletin* calendar.

In the late 1930s, students could get involved in the Associated Men Students, the Associated Women Students, the Letterman's Club, and fraternities for journalism students, debate team members, and those with high grades, though the sorority of the early 1930s is gone. Students could also join music and dramatic performances, sports teams, and the staff of various campus publications. For 75 cents students could get a student body card that entitled them to participate in school activities and receive a year's subscription to the *Jay Seer*, the student newspaper (whose name is a play on JC, or Junior College).

Elwood Dryden came to study at SBJC in 1938. His family had moved to Hollister to establish a chicken and egg farm, and they eventually added prune-plum and apricot orchards. When he was born in 1919 they had land off Riverside Road, where they built a packing shed. He attended first through eighth grade at Suymas School, named in the local Ohlone language. The school had four classrooms, so two grades always sat together. An only child, Dryden took piano lessons privately, and was part of a "piecemeal band" in which his father played drums—they provided music at many dances, which kept him busy playing instead of on the dance floor.

In high school, Dryden was most interested in agricultural and shop classes. He was part of a group of four or five teenage guys who went fishing and had other fun together. Dryden was especially close to another farm kid, Ken Sugioka, whose parents also farmed apricots. Unlike Dryden, Sugioka had access to a car, an old Model B Ford, which they took once for a high-spirited spin, literally, on the muddy sodden field at the high school.

Hollister was a small town in the 1930s, and connections could pop up uncomfortably sometimes. A tough algebra teacher showed up at a bridge party young Dryden was attending, for example. His heart sank when he realized he was to play against Mrs. Greiner at her table--and sure enough, she was as tough at bridge as she was in the classroom. After that, he avoided her socially by deciding, "no more bridge for me!" A more pleasant connection in high school was that his uncle, Arthur Kemp, taught in the vocational department. Dryden enjoyed the vocational classes; he remembers at least one field trip to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo for a class on pruning fruit trees.

His friend Ken Sugioka was also in the vocational classes. Today a photo of him doing precision machining in a war industry factory is archived at the UC Berkeley Calisphere online library site; here is its caption:

Kenneth Sugioka, young Nisei, at work on a precision lathe in the defense plant of the Hathaway Instrument Company in Denver, Colorado. Young Kenneth, a former orchardist, was born and raised in Hollister, California, where he took an active part in church and community activities, was a mate (adult leader) of a troop of Sea Scouts, and pursued a hobby of metal working. A voluntary evacuee, he moved to Denver and found a place where his talents as a precision machinist could be directly employed in the manufacture of war materials. ("Image")

The Sugiokas sold their farm and left Hollister just before mandatory World War II internment of Japanese-American citizens took effect. Dryden kept in touch, and reports that his friend Ken became a well-known physician and anesthesiologist.

During the Great Depression Dryden's family had enough funds for food and clothing and even small vacations to Yosemite, but not enough for him to attend an out-of-town college. He pumped gas to earn some money through high school and college. Staying in town to attend San Benito Junior College, he found, was not much of a transition. "It wasn't a college per se. Same teachers, same rooms, it was like going to high school." Dryden took general education classes and remembers being a C student. He rode one of the buses, and recalls that the driver, Harry Hill, later fathered county sheriff Curtis Hill. He went to football games but says the teams were small and not very good. There were many college dances. He and his friends "chased girls," but nothing serious resulted.

After his time at SBJC, he decided to pursue business studies at the private Heald College in San Jose. He found a room in a San Jose home owned by two elderly women, and got room and board in exchange for doing their housekeeping. He learned book-keeping in a semester and then got his first big job as time-keeper for a private company that was paving General Grant Park, later Kings-Sequoia National Park. Then he worked at a cement company in San Jose, where he met his wife. It didn't work out for him to enlist in World War II, but he got book-keeping work at the Richmond and Oakland Kaiser ship-building facilities, and supported the war effort in that way.

But Dryden found he missed orchards and the fruit industry, so he and his wife experimented in their University Avenue apartment in Berkeley with a huge copper vessel that could steam-plump prunes. Then they pitted the prunes and coated them with chocolate. They sold some to local shops, but eventually came back to San Benito county. With his parents' help, he set up a business producing fruit-packs with dried fruit from the orchards. In 1963, the family started the Sugar Plum Farm, named to evoke the wonderful sweet smell of prunes being processed, and fondly recalled by locals who loved the fruit-based treats there.

Most students, like Dryden, worked at least part-time during their terms at SBJC. Financial aid did not yet exist, but students who convinced college officials that they could not attend college without help could get up to \$20 a month of paid work through the New Deal's National Youth Administration (*San Benito County Junior College Bulletin* 5). Although enrollment records for this period no longer exist, it's likely that this and other factors helped the college gain students. In 1940-1, the *San Benito County Junior College Catalog* (a new name

for the old *Bulletin*) documents modest growth: that year the college hired two additional faculty members (which brought the gender ratio that year to 15 female and 11 males) and added classes in art, aviation preparation, California history, and social institutions. This expansion mode proved temporary.

### **The 1940s: Forced to Mature**

World War II and its aftermath filled, and changed, peoples' lives in unprecedented ways between 1940 and 1950. In California, populations shifted as jobs moved to industrial centers, especially those near the coast for vessel manufacture. People from all over the U.S. poured into California for lucrative war-industry jobs. Whole new neighborhoods, industries, and lives resulted.

And yet it was a relatively inactive decade for community college development. Colleges stayed open, offered classes, and graduated decreasing numbers of mostly women as the war dragged on. But WWII was all-engrossing, and even many civilians had little energy for anything else. There was almost no new state community college legislation, and a sudden silence from students as paper for newspapers and yearbooks became hard to obtain.

The war had a huge immediate impact and an even larger eventual one. As young men were mobilized into the armed forces, just about anyone who was able could find well-paid war work. One result was that most people who traditionally did agricultural work became abruptly unavailable. For that reason, the federal government quickly created the Bracero program, in which Mexican men were shepherded into California to do farm work. The program had lasting impact on the Gavilan district. In 1943 alone, 700 workers were imported to help pear growers, the Block Fruit Company in Santa Clara, and the Progressive Farm Labor Association in Morgan Hill ("Mexican"). Some stayed after seasonal work ended, and United States courts ruled that they could attend night schools and colleges. Even more importantly, many of these men raised families in the U.S., and in the 1960s their children entered the community college system in larger numbers than ever before; most were first in their families to attend college.

The demands of this vast war and public opinion about young men's obligations significantly reduced college enrollments as the war developed. In spring 1943, Board of Trustees president J. M. O'Donnell told the *Freelance* that there were "[o]nly 25 at SBJC vs. 60 last year" ("Enrollment"). His view of the causes: the removal of Japanese-American students, enlistment, the lure of high wages in wartime jobs, and relocation of whole families closer to war industry jobs. And it would get worse, he said, as a "remarkably smaller enrollment is anticipated in fall" ("Enrollment").

Evening Adult School, said O'Donnell, "has been a lifesaver for the junior college." People who stayed in San Benito country particularly needed the agricultural skills it offered: foremanship, tractor maintenance, canning ("Enrollment"). These courses were explicitly advertised as related to winning the war. For example, regarding the tractor class: "A patriotic appeal is made to the farmers of this community to attend this course so that they will be better trained and more able to keep their machinery in better shape in order to produce more food in the Food for Freedom Program" ("New tractor").

No longer did SBJC draw many students from afar. The *Freelance* reported when school began in September 1945 that enrollment was only 28; of those, 25 were students who had graduated from San Benito High School the previous June (“Twenty Five”). The pull to enlist was strong even as the war ended—17 from the same high school class headed to the Armed Forces after graduation (“Twenty Five”).

At first, graduation rates at SBJC remained fairly high. Perhaps students who enrolled before the United States entered WWII in 1941 simply wanted to finish. Perhaps some male students were hoping the war would end while they were using their student deferments. By 1943, however, the war took its toll—only nine graduated. Still, Dean Frank Bauman said SBJC would continue to hold classes as long as students attended (“High School and”). In 1945, just three people graduated from the college; all were women.

The attrition of male students must have been continual and unnerving: they just disappeared, sometimes mid-semester. In late February 1943, for example, the paper reported on six young local men in the process of reporting for duty: one to air corps training, two to the army, three to take Armed Services exams (“School Parade” 26 February 1943).

For many women, the war offered new possibilities. Entering the workforce locally to take jobs vacated by males or moving to an urban area for war-industry work were options suddenly feasible and socially approved. Norma Trebino, who graduated from Sacred Heart High School in 1939, saw a way to nursing school. She always knew she wanted to be a nurse (1-12-18). Her mother told her to save up for the \$70 three-year nursing program at O’Connor Hospital in San Jose. So Trebino enrolled for preliminary coursework at SBJC, where classes were free. She could walk to campus and she remembers good teaching and small classes. She did not stay long enough to get a degree from SBJC, but her preparatory year there made possible a distinguished and important career in nursing.

Trebino was able to transfer to the nurse training program at O’Connor Hospital, though she had to pay upfront and prove herself with a six-month probationary period. Her mother told the hospital matriculation official, “You can depend on my daughter,” and Trebino lived up to this confidence. She was so strapped for cash she grew vegetables in the hospital yard to sell to staff, and worked grueling evening shifts at a cannery after classes. She’d get home at midnight with minimal time to study—but with help from friends and her incredible determination, she graduated with her nursing degree. “Be brave, set your goal, and don’t forget it,” she says of her success. When World War II erupted and her brother signed up, she joined the Army and went through boot camp so she could provide nursing services to injured soldiers. She was one of the first nurses in the U.S. to be trained in anesthesiology—at the age of 22. Her organizational and leadership abilities were quickly recognized; when she was 23 she was offered (and she refused) a field command by the U.S. Surgeon General. Instead, she eventually was sent to the Western Regional Amputation Center in Brigham, Utah, where she helped save thousands of soldiers’ lives working 13 hours a day, supervising 80 staff in seven operating theatres at the age of 25. Trebino found herself having to vociferously defend the rights of German POWs from a camp nearby to medical treatment under the Geneva Convention. When there was an argument, she tended to win it. She also played women’s baseball for the Army, and was such a hard hitter no pitcher wanted to face her. Recruited for a travelling Army team, she indignantly refused to give up saving lives.

After the war Trebino returned to Hollister, then worked as a rural nurse in Contra Costa county, where she alerted authorities to an unusual outbreak of schistosomiasis. She continued working in various public health and hospital jobs, and married a local businessman in Pittsburgh. At his suggestion, she returned to college, enrolling at UC Berkeley on the GI Bill and getting up at 5:45 to make 8 a.m. classes. After her graduation in public health she again worked as a nurse, but also became active in community development. She was asked to serve on local boards, including as the first woman on a Pittsburgh bank board, and eventually as the first woman to serve on the California Banking Commission in 1974. After her husband's death she returned to the Hollister area, where she has been active in community initiatives. Among others, she has funded a nursing scholarship at Gavilan College in her parents' names, and supported the Hollister Chamber of Commerce, the Main Street Program, and the Community Foundation of San Benito County. Trebino continues to take a keen interest in the community and the world, and today lives near her childhood home.

Women also had a variety of volunteer opportunities with war-bond drives, the Red Cross, the USO, and other service clubs. Record numbers of local young women hurried to marry before their sweethearts left for the war ("Licenses"), and these women had particularly strong interest in aiding the war effort. Women were recruited alongside men for plane-spotting ("Plane"), and to do other work urgently needed. In 1942, for example, students, including those from SBJC, were so critical to San Benito County harvests that a local manpower committee prioritized housing them the following year ("Bolado"). Not all the volunteer harvesters needed housing—some were 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders helping with walnut, beets, peas, garlic, and other crops ("Bolado").

The newspapers also advertised for young women—who would be well-chaperoned—to act as hostesses at dances for servicemen at Fort Ord and the new Hollister Naval Air Station ("Forty-Five Gilroy"). One young student, Muriel Winter (later Brem), became such a hostess. After high school, she rode the bus every day for a year to SBJC from her family's Tuttle Dairy outside Gilroy (1-11-18). The fun-loving co-ed was charmed by the young bus driver, but her parents hurried her on to San Jose State as soon as they realized her interest in him might be serious. Her wartime classes at SBJC were tiny—seven or eight students—but the students in them bonded and "really became a unit." There were no intramural sports during the war, and there was not funding to buy scarce paper for a yearbook when she was at SBJC. Ultimately, Winter-Brem just didn't find college enough fun, so she came home to work. The 7:1 ratio of young women to young men played a big part in her decision to leave SJSU; her social life expanded as she joined the USO and became one of the young women who went to dances with servicemen. A Gilroy bus took her and others on Thursday nights to Fort Ord, she recalls. Her parents didn't worry about her (1-11-18).

For many others, distance and lack of transportation were serious barriers to doing anything that wasn't local. Rubber, steel, gas and oil were all needed for the war effort, and rationing took effect to discourage leisure driving that wasted these materials. People were punished for wasting gasoline in various ways, including by speeding; vigilant local boards would even punish car owners who weren't in their own cars when others used them to speed ("Gilroyan"). Gas rationing didn't stop Hartnell President John B. Lemos from coming to Gilroy High on a recruitment mission—he wanted to let students know about "wartime courses and pre-service training," although Gilroy was not clearly in his district ("Students Confer"). College was now harder to attend for rural residents, even with buses available on a limited schedule. When Norma Trebino finished at SBJC and was accepted into the O'Connor

Hospital nursing program, she found a \$5 bike which she repaired and rode around San Jose (1-12-18), a city larger and more challenging to navigate than her Hollister hometown.

Saving gas was simply patriotic, and no one could forget the horrors others were undergoing in Europe and the Pacific. In 1943, students voted to place a flag in the main hall “and every boy who served will have a star “ (“School Parade” 15 January 1943). Additional stars were added as others joined the service. Students wanted to do more—250 from the high school and SBJC got first aid certification in early 1943 (“School Parade” 9 January 1943). And faculty did their best to help students relate to what was happening; *The Freelance* reported on March 18 that year, for example, that the college sponsored a talk on occupied Holland and its democratic traditions, so similar to those in the United States, and Dean Bauman asked if women would like to be trained to operate domestic flights.

Bauman tried mightily to respond to wartime needs. In February 1943 he went to a meeting of representatives from universities, state and junior colleges, defense industries, and military forces to discuss curriculum (“Bauman”). The military administrators “made a plea that colleges of all types give training courses emphasizing English, math, drawing, science, PE, and history.” Sobering as the nation’s situation was, Bauman had to see a bright side if SBJC could just hang on through the war: “Authorities at the conference foresee colleges crowded to capacity [after the war] because the need for training will be of great importance in a changing economic and industrial country” (“Bauman”).

College life continued in mundane ways. A sewing class learned to make patterns and produced pajamas. A new library was dedicated to high school principal James P. Davis. Trustees okayed a furniture purchase (“School Parade,” 9 January 1943). Students planned to stage a radio workshop for the Rotary Club (“School Parade” 25 January 1943). But the war news dominated headlines, hearts, and minds for many many people.

As the war ended and GIs were demobilized, the community college system did absorb higher enrollments. At Gavilan, the war was a turning point in gender ratios—generally speaking, after WWII, the earlier female-majority graduation classes became majority male. The GI Bill, or Serviceman’s Readjustment Act of 1944, gave many young veterans who would never have been able to afford college the means to enroll. “Under this act, the federal government subsidizes tuition, fees, books, and other educational materials, and living expenses for veterans returning from World War II. Over 8 million veterans receive[d] educational benefits during the next seven years” (Levinson 45).

The tuition-free community colleges were also appealing because students could work and save money while attending classes, and finish two years there before transferring to a four-year college. SBJC officials also planned a special course of study designed for returning vets. Anticipating the GI Bill, SBJC designed a streamlined “terminal course’ (“San Benito Schools offer”). The new two-year course tried “to meet the needs of American youths who have been forced to mature too quickly in foreign foxholes. It is planned to fit these youngsters into civilian life as speedily and remuneratively as possible.” The new course featured aviation, meteorology, navigation, and auto mechanics. College officials noted that “1600 [local] men and boys [were] entitled” to register for the program (“San Benito Schools offer”).

John Roscoe Stevens finished high school and entered SBJC in 1948. He had always been shy and self-conscious in high school. Though he did fine in college trigonometry, he was not

interested in other subjects. He went out for the SBJC football team, but at 140 pounds he found the other players were “too big for me. Coach [Andy Hardin] didn’t want me to get hurt. The other players were big, monsters--mostly veterans.” He remembers many veterans in his classes also, and recalls not having much in common with them. The lures of easy money hunting racoons and his National Guard reserve service eventually made him quit before his first semester ended. But Stevens found in the National Guard the opportunity to improve his public speaking that he needed. He rose to Master Sergeant and eventually lost his self consciousness in front of audiences. He married, had kids, found work, and ultimately retired from a job as a Meadowgold milkman to run his family’s walnut orchard in Hollister.

The state of California also moved to ensure that colleges would be funded and ready when returning GIs needed them. In 1947, according to Callan, California established a financing method for community colleges that ensured stability for several decades; it guaranteed a base of state funds, established guidelines for computing tax rates, and gave state equalization funds which theoretically would erase differences between rich and poor districts (Tillery 10). California also was a leader in stating that the goal of equal opportunity for post-secondary education should be a goal for mature adults as well as younger students. The mission of junior colleges was at once ambitiously defined as terminal education, general education, transfer and career guidance, transfer preparation, adult education, and remediation of matriculation deficiencies (Tillery 9).

Community colleges were becoming more complex institutions. In this period, many states established higher education commissions to mediate and plan relationships between the various levels of higher education. These commissions “often clarified state interest in the junior college mission” (Tillery 9).

### **The 1950s: Two Booms, Three Crises**

In California, the 1950s were defined by two booms. The first was the baby boom that continues to reshape the state as an enormous cohort of those born between 1945-1960 creates demand for infrastructure, goods, and services based on their evolving needs. The second was an economic boom as California’s economy gradually converted to the peace-time production of planes, electronics, and consumer and agricultural products.

Community colleges were popular, and nowhere more popular than in California--in 1950, “60 percent of the students in the upper division of the University of California at Berkeley, according to the registrar, are graduates of other institutions, largely junior colleges” (Cohen 22). A new collegiate culture developed in this decade, driven by the GI Bill, a changing economy, and the expansion of consumerism. The nation also re-oriented, after the 1957 Soviet Sputnik launch, to better support education. And the post-war baby boom created new needs for teachers. Levinson notes that in 1958 Congress passed the National Defense Education Act, “which provides low interest loans to college students and loan forgiveness to those who enter[ed] teaching as a profession” (45).

SBJC experienced all of these developments, but the college’s story of the 1950s involves four related and cascading disasters, any one of which could have closed down the college. Paradoxically and unpredictably, the first three made it stronger. The fourth, which did close down SBJC, resulted in a new college built on the foundation of the old.

The decade started uneventfully. Analysis of the 1950 yearbook showed a sociable group of students who expressed gratitude for the college (See Document Analysis *Pride and Gratitude*.) Lanetta Bishop, who attended in 1951-2, remembers feeling admirably grown up compared to the high school students who used the same facilities. Among her junior college classmates were many older students returning from the war (2-2-18). She had an excellent home economics instructor, and decided to make home ec her major. She remembers that college officials generally patterned the curriculum after that set by S.I Hayakawa at San Francisco State College (now University) so it would be comparable in rigor. The point was to be sure that Gavilan students would have smooth transfer experiences (2-2-18).

Bishop also recalls that girls were instructed in archery, golf, bowling, and swimming. The pool was in Tres Pinos, however, so luckily one of her friends drove the whole gang there in an Austin Healy. Ironically, she and all her girlfriends smoked, so the car “was like a steam engine” going down the street releasing clouds of smoke (2-2-18).

Many of the young women, including Bishop, only stayed for a year (2-2-18). The college was a “stop-gap” before marriage for some of them, she recalls—which was her own experience. The ethnic mix of perhaps 100 students at SBJC was heavily European-American, though she recalls one African-American classmate and a group of Mexican-Americans. She remembers a theatrical review every year with different student acts, and she was part of a group that hung out and had fun together (2-2-18).

Bishop also was president of the Pep Squad, which “backed up the yell leaders” at male sports events (2-2-18). Official intercollegiate sports activities ground to a halt in 1948, and did not resume until the college joined the Coast Junior College Conference in the early 1960s. However, small SBJC teams played other teams at random during this dry period, sometimes with success. An important reason for the erstwhile nature of sports in this period is suggested by the 1952 yearbook: that fall, the college scraped together eight players for a men’s basketball team, but by the end of the season there were only six. Subsequent yearbooks show a similar pattern.

In 1955 the college suffered its first disaster. A late-night fire at San Benito High School on May 26 created major problems for both the high school and college. One of three buildings used by both was destroyed (“Hollister School”). The building was designed by noted architect William Weeks, and had an appealing and distinctive look. Built in 1909, it became an iconic image of the high school, and later the college. Nine rooms, a third of the total, were lost (“Hollister School”). The fire also destroyed many administrative records, thus little documentation of high school or college history before 1955 survived (*San Benito High 5*).

Problems sometimes bring opportunities. Administrators quickly offered to buy out landowners, some of whom still had fruit ripening in their orchards, on nearby Nash Road (“High School Completes”). The 37 acres they procured included the stately old Carroll Vessey home, which trustees wanted to preserve as an historic building. Three portable buildings from the high school were moved to the site, and arranged in a quadrangle near the Vessey house (“San Benito Junior College gets”). SBJC classes began in fall—with one change. The college dropped “junior” and became San Benito College in an effort to project a more serious and independent image. This was in keeping with a statewide trend, and the change was communicated by a large sign at the new site (“San Benito Junior College gets”).

For the first time, the college no longer shared most of its space with high school students, though a few classes still had to be combined. All the faculty were still part-time at the college and part-time at the high school, except administrators who taught. By the time the Nash Road site was abandoned in 1963, yearbooks tell us that it had seen steady construction and had nine buildings, including a “Hub” lounge for students.

The fire and move set off a series of events that altogether created what had to be the low point in college history. Firstly, enrollments dropped; there were only 35 in the 1956-7 school year, which was the norm for the mid-1950s, when enrollments “averaged about 30” (“San Benito College Gets New Campus”). There were only eight graduates in 1956 (“Class”). With the number of students per class averaging about eight students, SBC had the dubious distinction of being the “the smallest in California” among junior colleges (“San Benito College Gets New Campus”). Some parents began to feel that such a limited college could not offer an appropriate range of courses, and discontent percolated.

College officials clearly wanted to separate the college and its image from the high school by now. One sticking point was that the joint Board of Trustees used some of tax revenues intended for San Benito College to support the high school (“Schroder named”). The revenue allocations ensured an under-funded college, which failed to attract students and thus to grow. There were other obstacles to growth: some classes that required special equipment still mingled high school and college students, social life was limited to familiar faces, and few classes were offered.irate parents took note. Another disaster was brewing, and when it hit it came two-headed, from these parents and from Salinas.

For some years, neighboring Hartnell College in Salinas had drawn Hollister students to its larger selection of classes. At that time, California law required “every high school district ... to supply junior college educational opportunities. If facilities for this purpose are not provided, the people of the district must pay the cost to counties maintaining junior colleges” (“Gavilan kickoff”). This meant that if students couldn’t get certain classes at SBC, they could attend Hartnell, the closest option to Hollister, and the San Benito County taxpayers would have to foot the bill.

In 1954 Hartnell officials began to try to force San Benito county residents to pay for all San Benito students who came to Hartnell, not just the ones who were not served by SBJC. In fact, in mid-semester Hartnell officials told six San Benito county students who were enrolled at Hartnell that they had to leave at once unless their school district paid their way (“Hartnell JC”). The San Benito County board stood up to this sudden threat, voting not to pay and telling the six students that Hartnell wouldn’t likely kick them out (“Hartnell JC”). They were right; Hartnell blinked--it would look so bad to eject students mid-semester.

But Hartnell didn’t exactly give up. “The reason we [asked San Benito students to leave] is that we have so many students coming from Hollister,” Hartnell President J. F. Ching told the paper (“Hartnell Lets”). There were ten students from San Benito county, total, that term, the paper pointed out.

In November 1954 Ching also floated the grandiose idea that Hartnell could convert to a four-year college (“Hartnell must”). State officials told him clearly that it was against state law to make a two-year college into a four-year one, but Ching had already drafted a bill for the state legislature to do just that. He had fired up others also. A week or so after the state warned

Ching to give up the four-year idea, the Salinas Chamber of Commerce came out in favor of either transforming Hartnell into a four-year college, or attracting a four-year college to Salinas. The controversy subsided--temporarily--when a group convened that winter to study attracting a four-year college to the area; even this eventually riled up Hollister officials, who accused Salinas of loading the dice on group membership so any new college would be built in Salinas. Ultimately the group's work skirted Salinas and landed a new University of California campus in Santa Cruz in 1965.

In 1956, two years after Ching first tried, Hartnell's officials decided to repeat their grab for tuition. Another fight erupted when Hartnell's Board of Trustees voted to again charge the San Benito College district for all students from San Benito county who came to Hartnell—not just the handful who needed classes not offered in Hollister. San Benito officials cried foul; this would cost the district a huge sum, and they described it as as more Hartnell pressure on vulnerable SBC to give up and join Hartnell (“High School Turns”). Hartnell levied no such charge for students from any other district. Hartnell's Ching apparently had expansionist ambitions; reports from 1956 indicate that he may have wanted to use this payment issue to bankrupt SJC, and thus force it to an annexation by his own bigger district. Annexation would have required a vote, and bigger Monterey County could have outvoted San Benito county--but this idea was never voted upon, though the mere idea created suspicion and anger in Hollister. Fierce desire to keep local control must have given Ching pause; Hollister residents reasoned that tiny San Benito County would be out-voted by Salinas voters, who could thus impose taxes or regulations at will.

That spring, District Superintendent Frank Bauman, who had started at SBCJ in 1938 and may have already decided he was retiring, was uncharacteristically candid and bitter. “There's no sense in any of this. J.F. Ching (superintendent of the Hartnell district) has precipitated all this. He wants to destroy this junior college” (“High School Turns”). Bauman said Hartnell wanted San Benito County in its district solely for its \$35 million assessed tax valuation. When a new San Benito County High School District Trustee, Mrs. Mary Ross, made a motion to favor Hartnell's charging tuition for all students, she couldn't get a second. She argued that the issue involved parents' rights: “I don't think it's anyone's business but the parents' why they want to send their children to Hartnell or any other school,” Mrs Ross declared.” An alternative proposal carried, 3-1, which allowed San Benito College officials to decide on a case by case basis whether a needed course of study for a given student was available locally or not—and thus some local control was restored to decisions about which bills San Benito County taxpayers would have to pay (“High School Turns”).

By May 1956, popular instructor Jim Ledden became director of the college, and the showdown with Hartnell turned critical. That month, fifteen students of the 35 at the college showed up at the Board meeting with petitions to get funded for transfers to Hartnell (“JC Showdown”). The paper called them a “[v]ociferous group of prospective Hartnell Panthers” (“Lance Strokes”), and they posed a real financial threat to San Benito College, which could not afford to subsidize so many students at Hartnell. Nor could SBC afford to lose 15 of its 35. The board okayed six petitions, and told the other nine students that they could get what they needed at SBC, so their petitions were rejected (“JC Showdown”). It was clear to everyone, however, that future desertions could be the death of the “tiny, battered” college (“Lance Strokes”). Getting smaller was not an option.

It was a critical moment for the college, and the Board knew it. That same evening, the board discussed with Ledden which courses to add so students would want to stay (“JC Showdown”). Ledden recommended eleven new courses in business, two new full-time teachers, and new classes in agriculture, English, home economics, math, French, library science, and social science. Some of the new classes should be taught at night, he said. “Ledden estimated his proposals would call for three or four new teachers, at an estimated cost of some \$20,000.” For once, the Board faced up to the cost of developing a quality college. Trustee Thomas Theron Wright said, “We must either adopt some of the suggestions made for improving the junior college or quit striving” (“JC Showdown”).

College officials got busy writing a long pamphlet called *Information of Vital Importance to the People of San Benito County on their Junior College*. It argued at length that the college should be allowed to survive and grow. “It would be a tragic error to give up this junior college at a time when an increase in the student population for the high school and junior college is clearly foreseeable within the next 10 years. Posterity would never forgive the people for such a costly mistake. “

Hartnell’s trustees backed down on charging for all students after the San Benito County Board of Education refused to pay for more. SBJC enrollments increased. The San Benito Board of Trustees took more actions to save the college. In June 1957, it decided that math teacher Ralph Schroder was the person “most capable” of effecting program expansion, and hired him to direct the college (“Schroder named”). Ledden, beloved by students and faculty alike, was reassigned to coordinate student activities. It was a great decision, and one Ledden probably gratefully supported after his challenging time at the helm.

Schroder came in punching; the night he was hired he told the Board he was tired of a “defeatist attitude” and “wanted no part of [the job], unless the program and title are real (and not empty) ones” (“Schroder named”). Then he brought up funding: “You must realize that the program will cost money. For 25 years the district has been receiving state tax money because of the junior college, but spending very little of the money on the college program. The time has come...when the money must be spent on the college program if it is to survive” (“Schroder named”).

The Board got the message, and began planning for an expanded and improved college. By January 1958, prospects were brighter. “Physically and scholastically, school administrators have overhauled the junior college...to a status which they hope will rank it with the State’s finest” (“San Benito College Gets New Accreditation”).

The more attractive classes and options succeeded to an extent—by fall 1957 enrollments were up to 50 at what officials called the “newly activated and vitalized San Benito College” (“J-College reaches”). Cliff Cardoza was one of those new Gavilan students in 1957 (1-19-18). He’d grown up in Hollister with Portuguese- and Italian-American roots; his family members worked hard to survive. He began working at age 11, but was also actively involved in student government and clubs from grade school forward. When he left Sacred Heart School, Cardoza had tried going away for college, but wasn’t happy separated from his family and community. He returned home, got a job in Hollister, and signed up for classes at SBJC (1-19-18).

Early in Cardoza’s first semester, Schroder approached him to ask if he would be willing to start a men’s social club (1-19-18). The college needed to increase its appeal. Cardoza felt

Schroder was on his side: when he had been laid up in bed for a month in high school, Schroder was his math teacher. And he had visited every single day to collect and deliver Cardoza's math homework. So Cardoza said yes. The club met in the living room of the Vessey house, and became active, though the student population was only 72, according to Cardoza (1-18-19). Still, he remembers parties, picnics, sports events, and a Christmas gathering at Paine's. He also remembers that the move to the Vessey property made the college more independent from the high school (1-19-18). The college also tried a small dorm experiment for male students who allegedly did their own housekeeping ("San Benito College Gets New Campus").

Schroder was in full swing when a state accreditation team arrived in April 1958. Enrollment was improving, and Schroder had a good staff and a strong vision. There were 60 students in spring 1958 ("JC has"), and for the first time the district was given its due: the full 35 cent proportion of assessed taxes went to the college and not the high school. When the accreditation team left, Schroder told the *Freelance* that the college had a "good chance" of full accreditation despite a "poor first impression" ("JC has").

He was wrong. In late October the team delivered the third, and biggest, disaster in four years: a poor accreditation report that could spell death for SBC. The team did praise the faculty's course outlines, a citizen's advisory committee, testing and guidance programs, frosh orientation, library funding, student government, college catalogs, and the incorporation of adult education ("JC has"). The college had also made good progress on separating from the high school district, the team found.

But the team had also identified 20 deficiencies, and they were serious ("JC has"). Most urgent was an emphasis on transfer curriculum without parallel vocational programs. At this time 2/3 of community college students statewide did not transfer, so the team's point was relevant ("State Lays"). The team also noted, to the faculty's undoubted satisfaction, that teachers were carrying 25-30 hour weekly workloads inappropriately heavy for college teaching--many were still doubling at the high school. It was also a problem, they said, that college art and music students were mixed into classes with high school students. The new portable buildings, including the library, were judged inadequate. The team felt it should be possible for night students to earn AA degrees, criticized curriculum offerings and development, thought there should be more remedial English and math, and noted that students were not using the library. Finally (and despite Cliff Cardoza's best efforts with the Men's Club) the team complained that there were too few student activities ("JC has").

Schroder reported that interviews by the accreditation team in local stores resulted in varied answers, including at least one person who responded "What college?" ("JC Has") It was an honest answer, and it left a strong impression that the college wasn't integrated well with its community. Though college officials were quick to point out that the members of the team were all from bigger colleges and had little experience with a small rural college, they didn't waste time arguing. The first priority was to protect the students; the second was to save SBC.

The accreditation team's decision in October 1958 was that "accreditation would be continued 'only through June 3, 1959,' " said the new district Superintendent Gary Brown ("San Benito JC Seeking"). SBC had been told what to do, and intended to do it, he said, but a more positive accreditation ruling was not logistically possible until March 1960. Thus students' academic investments had to be protected. Brown made this top priority, reporting in November that

“...we have made arrangements with the University of California to accept San Benito Junior College students during that period.” Letters were already in the mail, he added, to request the same consideration from other four-year colleges (“San Benito JC Seeking”).

As for the recommendations, Brown acknowledged that one “must” was “complete separation of the junior college from the HS” (“San Benito JC Seeking”).

Dr. Hugh Price, the chief of the Junior College Bureau of the State Department of Education doubted that the college could do all that was called for. “Put up or close up was in effect his edict to local taxpayers,” the newspaper reported (“State lays”). Price pointed out that it would be costly to bring SBC up to standard, especially given how much needed to be done to start vocational programs. The college could request a re-evaluation, he allowed, but “you are not ready” (“State lays”).

Local rancher Rocky Lydon, who thought the accreditation report “stinks” (and who was soon to become a founding Gavilan College trustee), asked why San Benito County couldn’t have a small college with modest offerings: a transfer curriculum and a “few commercial courses” (“State Lays” ). His was the strangled cry for local control vs. state standards--but eventually the local control arguments would be heard.

For now, the accreditors had spoken. The options were:

--go without accreditation, but lose apportionment funds and endanger student transfers (“State Lays” ).

--raise money and improve. Price knew how reluctant San Benitans were to tax themselves and to spend money on such a costly prospect. “If you are willing to pay the costs, fine. Go for it and I will give you all the support I can,” he said.

--eliminate the JC and pay what Schroder estimated would be \$755 per student per year to send locals elsewhere.

--Join another JC district. Hartnell lurked nearby.

--Start a new district with more of a population and tax base—but as neighboring towns were already in other college districts, the only likely candidate to join a JC district was Gilroy (“State Lays”).

All options would be costly, Schroder said—especially a new district (“ State Lays”). But Hartnell was once more eyeing SBC, and students joined the fight to keep it at bay. The student government wrote a strong defense of the college. And three students--Ruthmary Winter (Muriel’s younger sister), Jerry Lashley, and veteran Alfred Solano--also protested any possible linkage to Salinas. In letters to several area newspapers, they argued that it would be too long a bus ride, and they would lose study time and be unable to keep their local jobs (“Letter”). The students highlighted some of the positives of attending a local college. Perhaps most importantly, because they knew their audience, they explained that Hartnell would not save taxpayer money. The same trio of students went on the road, speaking in January 1959 to the local Rotary Club (“Rotary”). There Solano discussed how helpful it was to have a local school as he adjusted to civilian life, and Winter spoke of her need to stay local so she could work as well as attend classes.

By early February, college officials must have felt somewhat encouraged as they scrambled to enact their game plan: Enough of the community stuck by the college so that enrollments rose. In spring 1959, for the second straight semester, enrollment at SB College topped the 100 mark

("Accreditation is"). Interestingly, controversy may have attracted students who otherwise didn't know about SBC: there were "many from out of town we didn't expect," said Schroder ("Accreditation is"). Now there were enough students to offer a glee club and a college "review" variety show. Even a few foreign exchange students arrived. The Board had also hired eight of its faculty full-time, and had five part-time instructors. To lubricate community relations, SBC threw a huge dinner for 220 alumni ("Accreditation is").

By fall 1959, enrollments were at 205 ("J-College Roll"), in part because SBC re-energized its popular adult night school ("Adult"). At a Yosemite meeting of junior college administrators and accreditors on Oct. 30, 1959, the accrediting commission apparently bowed to political pressures ("San Benito College Gets New Accreditation"). In what the *Freelance* called a "complete reversal of the groups' former stand that their last check of the Hollister campus was sufficient," the accrediting commission announced that it would reassess SBC's accreditation in December. This time, they said, there was "every indication" accreditation would be given ("San Benito College Gets New Accreditation").

Why the reversal? The *Freelance* hints that powerful SBC supporters had pressured the commission to back off. For one thing, the team's composition would change. "It was also indicated...that the survey team would be picked with extreme care..." ("San Benito College Gets New Accreditation"). Donald Grunsky, local legislator, chair of the State Senate Education Committee, and an SBC supporter, then told the group "that the junior colleges must maintain local autonomy in their operations, and determine what curriculum is best suited to the community" ("San Benito College Gets New Accreditation"). The local control argument had weight with people who mattered.

Thus it was not a surprise, but a vindication, in March 1960 when college officials were informed that accreditation was being restored ("San Benito College Accreditation"). "Apparently we have remedied those errors," said Schroder.

He had to have been ready for a long vacation—but one more disaster, a massive final straw, was looming.

### **The End of San Benito College**

By 1960, enrollment was steady, accreditation was in place, and morale was good. Having survived a fire, a hostile takeover attempt, and a comprehensive thumbs-down by the accrediting body, San Benito College officials had learned to be pro-active about the college's survival. They began as early as 1958 to consider the advantages of starting over as a new college in a more populated district. It seemed like a long shot, but even before the fateful accreditation team arrived in April, the San Benito School Board okayed a preliminary discussion about a possible "Tri-County Junior College" with Gilroy and Watsonville officials ("San Benito School Board"). Then in 1959 Cabrillo College claimed Watsonville, and by 1960 SBC was again facing a crisis.

State laws regarding population base requirements for colleges were tightened in the early 1960s, and the state informed San Benito College that it faced extinction. The state would withdraw support from all small districts that had less than a minimum population, according to former dean of liberal arts and college Trustee Kent Child (8-13-02); San Benito county was

far below the necessary population base to guarantee the necessary potential average daily attendance of 1000 (Tyler 163).

The state let the college know that its spring 1963 semester would be its last. After that, students wishing to pursue two-year AA degrees would have to be bussed, at taxpayer expense, to nearby Hartnell, Cabrillo, or Monterey Peninsula colleges unless a new college district could be established (Child 8-13-02). It was like facing all three former crises rolled into one, and again the college officials, students, and community rose to the challenges.

A state official visited the San Benito school board in October 1961 to explain that "new laws will eliminate out-of-district students and cut off a major source of income within the next few years" ("Junior College Must Expand"). Schroder discussed the options: giving up and joining Hartnell, or forming a new district. Hartnell was a bad word by then, so Schroder focussed on starting anew. "We must enlarge our district and the only direction we can go is toward Gilroy. We could do without Morgan Hill, but we must have Gilroy" ("San Benito College Woos"). A new district, he told the Board, would be independent of that very board—it would have its own new board of trustees ("San Benito College Woos").

Doing nothing and giving up the college was simply out of the question: there was a consensus that something beyond high school was needed for young people. Former trustee Bonnie Simonsen recalled that "we were at the crest of a wave of small communities that felt they needed to do more for their children's learning. We were going to give them a good shot." There was a sense that local young people needed to go out into the larger world (5-5-03). And students gave strong support, recalled Simonsen. "Many students told me they would not have made it to college if it had not been for Gavilan" (5-5-03).

Schroder, who had been busy earning a masters degree and a doctorate in college administration, sprang into battle yet again. He convinced his brother-in-law, rancher George Thomas, and other prominent San Benito county citizens that it would be to everyone's benefit to join with southern Santa Clara county and launch an entirely new district with an adequate population base (Child 8-7-02). Part of the incentive for Gilroy and Morgan Hill voters would be relocation to a more central site. "This really ticked off some of the old SBC people, but it was a shrewd move by Schroder," Child recalls (8-7-02). Shrewd it may have been, but memories are long in San Benito county. John Roscoe Stevens, born in Hollister's Hazel Hawkins Hospital in 1928, says in 2018 that he's "still upset that they moved it to Gilroy. Gilroy's our competitor. I'm upset they didn't at least leave the aviation program [in Hollister]. We lost it, see." His son attended the new college, but the move still stings.

As had been clear in the struggle against Hartnell, a major argument in favor of a new college was simply the high cost of not starting one. A 1966 bond election flier made clear:

Under California law, every high school district must make available a tax-supported, tuition free junior college to all who are high school graduates and anyone over the age of eighteen "who can profit from the instruction." Formerly the three high school districts which now comprise the Gavilan Joint Junior College District met this requirement by transporting local students to junior colleges in other districts over considerable distances, paying tuition at the rate of about \$1000 per year per student. (*Official Statement* 7)

The first step was to put the proposal for the new district to voters. In January 1963, six months before San Benito College was scheduled to close its doors forever, Schroder must have felt jubilant to have the popular vote go 5-1 in favor of a new college district (*Official 7*). The college came into existence--with no buildings, board, or staff, but approved by voters--on January 8, 1963.

San Benito College administered its last final exams in June 1963, and then ceased to exist, though an active alumni association is still based in Hollister.

### **Ralph Schroder and the Creators of Gavilan College**

A second special election held later in spring 1963 put in place seven charter board members for the new Community College district: two each from Gilroy and Morgan Hill, and three from San Benito county, which made for an odd number in the case of split votes--and soothed some (but not all) ruffled feathers in San Benito county about the college's relocation. College President Ralph Schroder hammered out this compromise to reassure the conservative San Benitans that they weren't so much losing a college as gaining a key voice in a bigger and better college.

The charter Hollister members of the Board were shrewd, salt-of-the-earth, well-educated policymakers (Child 8-13-02). George Thomas, a tall rancher in a cowboy hat, became one of them, and served many years, seeing himself as the fiscal watchdog for the college. Child recalls that in the early days, when the board reviewed every warrant and had to pass a motion to pay its bills, Thomas "just to be George, I guess, would always vote no. I guess he did not want to spend any money" (Child 8-13-02). The other San Benito county trustees were Dr. Norman Currie, a physician in Hollister, and Howard Harris, a UC Berkeley-educated geologist who lived on a ranch in Cienega Valley, which he eventually sold to the state to create the Hollister off-road recreational vehicle park. Harris was especially interested in the physical construction of the new Gavilan campus, and was a helpful resource with his professional expertise (Child 8-13-02). From Gilroy came Ellis Bogle and charter Chair of the Board Bruce Jacobs. The Morgan Hill representatives were Dr. Wolfgang Titus and Bonnie Simonsen, who was only Gavilan College female trustee for some years in the 1960s and 1970s.

Simonsen's father was a local funeral director active in local politics, so she was well known in Morgan Hill. One day she saw an article in the *Morgan Hill Times* explaining that a new junior college was being proposed. Simonsen was widowed at a young age, and had to work and attend college to support her daughters. But she was intrigued by the challenge. "Being a stay-at-home mother didn't satisfy me. I said, enough dishes and diaper pails" (5-5-03). Reading a list of Morgan Hill candidates convinced her to run for the new Board. "I thought, if they can do it I can."

Many employees, who remember Simonsen fondly, were glad she ran and won. Child describes Simonsen as level-headed, pro-faculty, hardworking, empathetic, people-oriented, and generally a breath of fresh air (8-13-02). "When things got rough, she would take back to the other trustees some subtle influences to make peace" (Child 8-13-02). Simonsen recalls that the first board members "fought positions very strongly" behind closed doors, but when a decision was made, the members pulled together without sniping (5-5-03). "The men were very kind to me--their language was better and they were better behaved because there was a

woman on board." Especially at closed meetings, which could be brutal, Simonsen remembers that her presence "kept it gentler" (5-5-03). Simonsen served four terms, retiring in 1979. Even more impressively, she eventually bore five more children, and six of her seven offspring attended Gavilan ("Citizens").

The new Board held a packed first meeting May 23, 1963 in Hollister. (That same week, the Hollister John Birch Society chapter was also being organized.) First board members had to be sworn in. Then they re-hired the entire SBJC faculty and staff. As a priority, they also had to address the fact that the new college district did not yet have a name ("New JC Board"). The *Morgan Hill Times* was calling it "the new Live Oak-Gilroy-San Benito junior college." That night, the trustees approved a name-your-college contest. Within the two weeks they allowed for the contest, they got 58 entries from members of the public ("New JC Board"). The joke entries included GLOB College, for Gilroy-Live Oak-Benito, and Frank Cosby College, which 28 people submitted, "but none of the trustees knew who Frank Cosby is" the paper reported straight-faced ("Gavilan College is JC Name"). The Board voted 4-3 on a secret ballot for "Gavilan," with the runner-up being Loma Prieta. "Gavilan" reflected the geographic spread of the district, and was a lovely name to boot—but a decision had to be made between Gavilan and Gavilan. The prize was \$25, but so many people submitted the same name that the Board asked the San Benito Women's Guild to figure out how to handle the prize money. They gave it to four people, including Ruthmary Winter (now Weinberg), who had so ardently defended SBC, according to her sister Muriel Winter Brem. The Guild divided the \$25 into four \$6.25 checks, and according to Brem, Ruthmary was always sorry she cashed hers. It would have been better to frame it as an example of how tight with its dollars the Board of Trustees of the new Gavilan Joint Junior College District could be.

The new Board rapidly arranged for the new college to rent space at the old Hollister airport. The site, used during World War II by the Air National Guard, was owned by the city of Hollister, which leased it inexpensively to Gavilan for three years (with an option on a fourth year, which was used). SBC had won its most recent accreditation in 1959, but when Gavilan replaced SBC, the state thoughtfully extended the accreditation to 1964, thus giving the new college a chance to pull itself together.

At its first meeting, the Board also offered Schroder a two-year contract as president-superintendent of the new district. Schroder, who earned \$15,000 annually, was the best decision the board ever made and the primary force in starting the college and guiding it through its first dozen years. With a great deal of help, he oversaw the establishment of the new campus, enrollment of students, hiring of staff, and continuation of the all-important accreditation.

Schroder was complex, insanely hard working, and devoted to the college. His maternal grandfather was a California impressionist painter well known for his pastorals, and Schroder himself was "a reasonably good artist" (Child 8-7-02). Born in Oakland, Schroder graduated from UC Berkeley with degrees in math and physics in 1937. He did some teaching in Dos Palos and then served three and a half years in the Pacific theater during World War II (Fuchs 1). Schroder married Catherine Hudner, who was from a prominent Hollister family. In doing so, he gained George Thomas as a brother-in-law because Thomas had married Catherine's sister. Both couples settled on family ranch land to farm. Schroder and his wife raised Hereford cattle on their 2,800 acres (Fuchs 1). Schroder farmed for four years before throwing in the towel and taking a job teaching math at San Benito High in 1951; he also taught classes

at SBJC. He earned a masters in administration from San Jose State College in 1956, and was hired as the director of San Benito College in 1957. In 1961 he received his doctorate in junior college administration from Stanford (Fuchs 1). He had qualifications, was already known in the community, and worked hard for the college and board (Simonsen 5-5-03).

Schroder was brilliant with funding, very good with the physical design of the campus, and wise in his philosophical approach to college structure, which he envisioned as blending practical vocational and academic programs. Schroder was supportive of divisions that brought together academic transfer with vocational programs--for example, nursing was blended with PE (Child 8-13-02). Given his interest in art, it's not surprising that Schroder was also a strong supporter of the fine arts. His opinion that an educated person must have a good grounding in the visual and performing arts was reflected in Gavilan's generously staffed fine arts department: very early on, Gavilan had a full-time drama teacher, two full-timers in art, and a full-time music instructor, all with nice facilities. This was "unusual for a small college" (Child 8-13-02).

Schroder also championed, and generously funded, PE and athletics. He eventually built a strong athletic program with seven or eight full-timers, and during his tenure at the college Gavilan won state and national competitions. Those who worked with Schroder remember him as honest and forthright, and Child speaks with real admiration of Schroder's ability to make good hiring decisions. And though decisions about schedules were made top-down, Child said they worked: "They knew what they were doing. [Gavilan] did not have low enrollment classes" (8-13-02).

While he was a progressive and visionary thinker, and "the heart and soul" of the college (Simonsen 5-5-03), Schroder had some heirarchical habits that made him controversial at the college when times changed and authority was questioned. He was opinionated and rather temperamental, and had his quirks--for example, when he became a body builder in the 1960s he volunteered to pose in bikini bathing suits for health ed classes as an example of fitness and good health (Child 8-13-02).

In fall 1963 the Board appointed more than fifty members of the public to four advisory committees which worked hard to define how Gavilan would develop academically, physically, and financially. If the Board of Trustees acted as the college's parents, these advisory committee members were devoted and skilled midwives. The Education Program subcommittee was headed by Rocky Lydon of Hollister, with E.H. Bibbens of Gilroy and Dr. Howard Nicolson of Morgan Hill. Also on the sub-committee were LeClaire Boyle, Muriel Brem, Edmond Bullard, Rev. John T. Dwyer, Robert Franklin, and Rev. Ernest Tufft, W.S. Breton, Rose Hernandez, Mrs. Jerry Mosegard, Kathy Rusconi, Kenneth Duran, Marjorie Lamb, Dorothy Matthews, Bill Muenzer, Caryl Shore, Larry Williams and Grace Winter. Trustees Bruce Jacobs, Howard Harris, Bonnie Simonsen, and Dr. K.W. Titus served on the education committee.

The project cost and finance committee was headed by Jack Kazanjian of Gilroy, with Joe Chiri of San Martin and Marjorie Brady of Hollister. Bob Chappell, Wally Colt, Bruce Cooper, Louis Filice, Vernon Gwinn, and Donald Strahl, William Agler, Lynn Minton, John Moreno, Hartley Weichert, Paul Yokoi, Bob Baughman, Vic Edmundson, Earl Gunnels, Ed Hanna, Phil Klauer, Ernest Ricotti, Roland Smith. Trustees Jacobs, Ellis Bogel, Currie, and Thomas were also on the cost and finance committee.

The bond promotion committee was comprised of Shirley Lantz of Morgan Hill with co-chairs Ben Gutierrez of Gilroy and Jack Baxter of Hollister. Also Art Bannister, Carl Bozzo, Michael Filice, Lawson Sakai, Fred Sanchez, Junior Wilson, Sherry Anderson, Lee Buchheister, Carrie Gose, Ed Lazzarini, Masuo Minami, Eleanor Roberts, Joe Gabriel, Robert Helmholtz, Millard Hoyle, Kay Mamimoto, and John Solano. All board members served on the bond committee.

The landscape committee was headed by Ed Hanna of Hollister aided by Wally Colt and Robert Franklin of Gilroy, and Bill Muenzer of Hollister. Trustee Currie was also on the landscape committee.

Each group made a series of recommendations that guided the board's decisions and actions. These were well reported in the local papers. Early on, for example, the educational programs committee recommended that priority be given to a gym, a student union and administrative building, a library, a science building, and humanities, social science, and business buildings. The most expensive buildings would be put up first, the Board decided, using \$3.7 million in bond monies that the college hoped to raise.

The *Gilroy Dispatch* noted that the new Board set to work at once piecing together funding; the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors granted the new college \$112,000, and Gavilan also received an advance on average daily attendance from the state Department of Education. Another \$483,000 was raised by a 35 cent tax, with a 5 cent fee for community services. From the beginning, the district put a generous \$100,000 into a reserve fund. And Rep. Charles Gubser went to bat for Gavilan on several occasions. Among other victories, he secured federal student loans for Gavilan students who earned less than \$4,000 a year, helped the library get a good-sized grant, and won \$276,000 in federal funds for student housing.

But it was clear from the start that a bond election would be necessary, and the first Board tried but failed to organize a bond election as early as December 1963. The *Dispatch* reported that Trustee Thomas remarked that December was a good time for farmers to pay attention to local issues and vote, but it proved simply impossible to get an election together that fast. Not that the county wasn't willing to try: Schroder reported that the county was not only cooperating to get an election scheduled, but actually responded with "jumping action" to the request. Concerned about getting a date set as early as possible, officials planned a secret meeting of a college bond committee, but when the state's Open Meeting law, the Brown Act, was brought to Schroder's attention he cancelled the meeting and rescheduled a session that was open to the public.

The bond election was finally scheduled for 10 March 1964. The trustees urgently needed the funds to run the college and purchase land, but as responsible public servants, they had a Plan B: they would purchase land parcel by parcel if need be.

College officials were jubilant when the votes were counted—of 5,793 votes cast, 4,913 were in favor of \$3.7 million bond for the new college, and only 880 against ("Large")—a nearly 85% majority in an election that required only 2/3. The new college became a certainty rather than a hope, and the community's support was gratifying. No one took the support for granted—just up the highway at West Valley College district in Saratoga, a similar bond measure failed that same election day, with only 58% support ("West"). But the Gavilan College bond enabled

the district to put \$20,000 down when it found a suitable site, and then pay \$84,840 for three years, at 4 percent interest.

The Board wasted no time—it met the the day after voters approved its bond measure, monthly thereafter, and in between for committees and related work.

Perhaps one factor in its success was that the early Board spent money with extreme care. Child says that Gavilan's early decision-makers were tight-fisted, fiscally conservative farmers and ranchers who wanted to never take a penny more from taxpayers than they would defensibly use (though Thomas was the only one to routinely oppose paying bills.) The first board established a generous reserve fund that has served the college in many difficult budget years. The Board also had a spat with San Benito High School about money and goods. A serious part of this dispute concerned who should get \$21,000 in state funds earmarked in a reserve fund for the college, as well as daily attendance funding the high school had always claimed for itself, the *Freelance* reported (“Agreement”). Though the high school district was reluctant to give up the funds, Schroder argued his case to the press for weeks, and up the state education line, and the state ruled that the money rightfully belonged to the college. The high school kept its equipment under their agreement (“Agreement”).

Child recalls a final example of the board's financial rectitude and conservatism: in 1967 the district found itself with extra money from a 5 cent tax on community services. Rather than pocketing the funds as a hedge against the uncertain future, the board voted to give 1.5 cents back to the taxpayer, reducing the tax to 3.5 cents. The board's action shows a bygone sense of responsibility for pennies as well as dollars, but the Trustees felt it was the right thing to do (8-13-02) .

### **The Airport Years: Stampedes and Bombardiering**

While all this planning was going on, Schroder also had a college to run. Gavilan College opened its doors for the first time at the Hollister airport on September 3, 1963, and stayed at the site for four years, until fall 1967. The first year's budget was only \$559,000; of that \$3,114 was paid in rent for use of the city of Hollister's airport, the *Gilroy Dispatch* reported. Fully \$483,000 of the first year's budget was raised by the 35 cent tax and a five cent community services tax. Out-of-district students were also charged extra tuition. Classes began with 243 students, about fifty more than there had been the year before at San Benito Junior College (“More Classrooms”). Officials described this as an “enrollment stampede,” and happily pointed out that enrollments were strongest from Santa Clara county--more than half the students were from Gilroy and Morgan Hill (“More Classrooms”). They might have to add more classrooms, Schroder told the newspaper (“More Classrooms”).

The airport was much closer to Santa Clara county than the Nash Road site. And there was clear evidence that a new location would draw students who'd previously gone elsewhere. After the first semester, Gavilan's enrollment jumped to 442 day students and 253 evening students, the *Dispatch* reported. But not every district student could be served by the tiny brand-new college: one of the first orders of business for the new board was to enter into agreements with Cabrillo and Hartnell Colleges for students whose needs could not be met at Gavilan. And Gavilan agreed to allow students who'd begun studies at Hartnell to finish at Hartnell.

The airport site was far from ideal. Lab classes, such as chemistry or art, had difficulty without proper facilities, and swimming classes were held offsite at Bolado Park in Hollister. Some classes were held in a converted chicken coop (Simonsen 5-5-03). Bob Garcia remembers dropping in on coaches Bud Ottmar and Jerry Flook to explore enrolling, and finding them in a dusty room struggling to raise some sheetrock (3-23-18). They were too distracted to do much more than say hello and that, says Garcia, was his recruitment to Gavilan. He enrolled anyway, for his own reasons.

In fact, demand was so great within the first few years that it was necessary to advertise separate day and evening classes, and some classes were held off site, for example at Gilroy High School. Also, the airport buildings only housed 300 students at a time. Founders knew this arrangement was temporary and unworkable given plans for expansion of the college. There was pressure from the beginning on college officials to secure land and construct a new college. Paced by the furiously productive Schroder, the board set itself a formidable task to build a college from the ground up in four years, designing and constructing the site, hiring staff, and establishing a curriculum and other programs.

And at the same time, they had a thousand decisions to make about details. For example, because of the site's distance from Gilroy and Morgan Hill, the district needed buses to make regular rounds, and drivers to operate them. They paid to have class schedules sent to all registered voters in the district, and piles were also left at the local high schools. The offerings in the college catalog included typing, shorthand, English, US history, music appreciation, and PE. The citizens advisory committee on education for the new college had put equal emphasis on transfer, vocational, general education, and adult education functions. This was a recommendation typical of the prosperous 1960s, when community colleges worked hard to be all things to all people.

A mid-1960s brochure touts Gavilan's small classes, modern methods and equipment, student activities that involved the majority of students, and free tuition. Sharol Rosati Bernardo, part of the first graduating class, loved her teachers and enjoyed the academic work (1-12-18). She felt she was getting an excellent education when several teachers collaborated on course content and field trips, so her learning had a cohesive, connected quality.

Gavilan made the effort to offer comprehensive programs. Under the direction of Jim Ledden, the Gavilan Drama Guild produced *Lily the Felon's Daughter* in fall 1964 and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* the following spring. A chorus was launched in fall 1965. A police training program gradually grew into a full-scale police academy for training new recruits and providing refresher courses to police officers. There were experiments with skills classes such as tree and vine pruning, and with real estate. A cosmetology program was more durable because interest was so high—in a survey to assess interest in vocational offerings, “128 girls listed cosmetology as their first or second vocational choice” (“Gavilan College to offer”). Gavilan spent \$7,000 to remodel facilities at the airport for the cosmetologists, and \$20,000 on new equipment; it was all covered by federal vocational funding. Miss Margaret J. LaFond, who had headed up Shasta College's cosmetology department, was hired to create the program.

The brochure's "modern equipment" claim went beyond cosmetology: what appears to be the college's first computer for student use was purchased in 1966 for the math department.

And the brochure's statement that Gavilan had involved students was also factual. Even students with jobs found time and had the interest to participate in college activities. Rosati Bernardo remembers having fun at dances, as well as at football and basketball games. She became president of the Associated Women's Club, which planned events, raised money, and interacted with clubs from other colleges. Homecoming in her era involved a parade and a huge bonfire (1-12-18). Students' parents were included in the life of the college: an annual faculty tea was held by faculty and administrators so students could bring their parents to meet the college staff. Advertisement for the event made clear that "student progress will not be discussed" --perhaps to ensure that a good time would be enjoyed by all.

The college proudly held a first commencement ceremony on June 4, 1964, graduating 35 students. They had started at San Benito College on Nash Road, and graduated from the brand new Gavilan College at the Hollister airport. Assemblyman Gordon H. Winston Jr. gave 35 graduates and their families a speech about Educating the Open Mind. And then everyone attended a reception thrown by the new support organization, the Patrons Club.

As the college grew, more activities involved more students. Some attended California Junior College Student Government Association conferences. Alpha Gamma honor society students, with 3.0 or higher GPAs, also attended a state convention. The art class took a field trip to the Oakland-based California College of the Arts and Kaiser Center Art Gallery that semester also. Speakers visited the college, among them Maria von Trapp of *Sound of Music* fame, who came in late 1966. Fashion shows were held. The Daedalians Club held a one day "fly-in" air show at the airport site in November 1965; when Barbara Goodrich DeQuin was a member of the club in 1966-67 she remembers going to fly-ins elsewhere as well. Some of the club's members were students with pilot licenses, and they created flying teams for competitions. "We went to fly-ins at other colleges and competed. We'd have bombardiering targets to shoot while flying. It was mostly guys, with five or six gals." Goodrich DeQuin also became part of a women's trio that sang at college variety shows--along with Linda Ward, the wife of the college's music teacher, and Marlene Klein, philosophy instructor Don Klein's sister.

A new tradition, the Café International, was launched in 1963. The German and French classes practiced their language and cultural skills, and a number of performing arts students got involved in skits and music as the years passed. Sharol Rosati Bernardo remembers enjoying watching two Liberian students who danced as part of the Café International. By 1967, the affair took a decidedly different tone. It was still sponsored by the Humanities Division, but that year it was called "Mod, Mod World," and took place in a psychedelic wonderland created by students who emceed by computer. The students who served wore traditional European costumes dressed up with mod touches.

Sports were always part of the college's offerings—PE for everyone (except a men-only judo class), and intercollegiate wrestling, football, basketball, baseball, and cross country for male students. Cross country runners were referred to as "thin-clads." Football was, predictably, a big focus. But games did not always go smoothly. In 1964 the student governments at Gavilan, Hartnell, and MPC agreed out of hard necessity that they would share 50-50 any clean-up costs incurred by student vandals and graffiti artists before football games. The Board also hired some police officers to provide security during games, paying them \$4 an hour.

There were some wins in the early years, but overall Gavilan's early intercollegiate sports performances were not notable. In fact, Schroder told state officials in 1966 that either Gavilan

should be put into an easier athletic conference, or powerhouses such as Laney and West Valley Colleges should be removed from the same conference. They were too rich and had too many students to fairly compete with little Gavilan, he complained. "We argued this in Sacramento," Schroder told the *Gilroy Evening Dispatch* in October. "And when we came home, our football team beat West Valley. Now I don't know what we'll do."

A long-term solution had already graduated from the new college. Bob Garcia had been active in sports since his years at Rucker Elementary School in Gilroy (3-19-18). His father left his large family when Bob was very young; he was not in touch and did not send money. So Bob's six older sisters quit school to go to work, and his mother Francisca Tostado combined two or three day jobs with an ambitious strawberry business. The berry farm succeeded in part due to high war-time prices and in part due to her very hard work. Eventually she added row crops, and became the largest strawberry producer in Northern California. She could not read or write, but she was deeply intelligent about plants and people, says Garcia, and she ran a highly-organized farm. "She sacrificed a lot," Garcia says. He too was usually in the fields by 5 a.m. to pick for a few hours before school started. "There's nothing wrong with that life. It's hard work for a dollar, respect, pride" (3-19-18).

His interest in sports was immediate in elementary school--"I enjoyed being part of a group," and being on sports teams motivated him academically (3-19-18). His interest baffled his mother, who preferred him working rather than chasing after balls. So he had to forge her signature on permission slips, and when she finally made it to a high school game of his, she couldn't understand "what you people are doing out there." But Garcia loved football, and enjoyed playing basketball. Though he was not very tall, he was fast, and could steal balls effectively. He also was a distance runner, and played shortstop on his high school baseball team. He thought he'd attend Hartnell College after graduating, but the first day of football practice was so grueling, the army looked like a better option. Garcia enlisted for four peacetime years, serving mostly in Europe. He had interesting and diverting experiences. Here, too, he became involved in sports, happily taking charge of the baseball program at his base (3-19-18).

Upon his discharge, he worked in Gilroy and played on some community teams (3-19-18). Teammates said he should consider enrolling at the new Gavilan College. One factor was his interest in Linda Elder, whose father had coached Garcia in football at Gilroy High School. Garcia attended some GHS basketball games where Linda was a cheerleader, caught her eye, and finally got up the courage to invite her out. She was headed to Gavilan in the fall. "That summer when I decided to go to Gavilan College, that's when I maybe got the strength to go in there and ask Mr. Elder if I could date his daughter...I was kinda scared...I remember him: football, just a big tough guy." Elder made it clear that any date for his daughter had to be college-bound (3-19-18).

Garcia decided to enroll in 1964 using the GI Bill, and he sought out the coaches, finding Jerry Flook and Bud Ottmar busy putting up sheetrock (3-19-18). There were only 17 guys on the football team, most of them strangers to each other. "I enjoyed it. We didn't win a game" that year; the second year, they won two games. He also played basketball, with a game high of 18 points. He was doing well academically--"I'm proud. I hit the books...I had a 3.6 average at Gavilan." He enjoyed his classes, though he found he had to write the entire hour when taking Mr. Wall's biology tests, and "I could never figure philosophy for beans."

To help him out, his coaches arranged a work-study job for Garcia on campus, washing dishes and cleaning up under Lena Lico at the Gavilan Cafe. Garcia had cleaned latrines in the army so he knew how to do his best and take pride in his work. Still, it was hard work and he couldn't study. In his second year he arranged a nice cozy job doing athletic department laundry, so he could sit by the dryer and do homework. But one day as he was walking on campus he heard Ralph Schroder's gruff voice behind him. "How much money do you want?" Schroder demanded. "Lena's ready to resign. She wants you back." In fact, the whole set of cafeteria workers was ready to walk--they'd tried other students and no one did anything like the job that Garcia had done. Pretty soon he was again washing dishes. "But they took care of me...there'd be stacks of sandwiches for me."

Garcia and Linda Elder married in 1965, and he went on to get his bachelors in spring 1968 in Spanish with minors in history and PE from Cal Western University in San Diego (3-23-18). During his time there he knew he had a job waiting for him as a coach at Gavilan College--Schroder had promised him work in gratitude for his going back to wash dishes. Garcia laughs about it--no matter how good his academic and coaching credentials were, it was the dishwashing that cemented the job for him because Schroder saw his work ethic.

Schroder was finding that personnel matters took much of his and the board's attention as the college grew. The first dean of instruction had to resign because he could not earn the necessary administrative credential fast enough. A replacement was quickly found in Don White, dean of students and a coach, who stepped into the position. He stayed for a few years, then accepted a college presidency elsewhere, saying the years at Gavilan were the best of his life.

Because the college was understaffed in its infancy, people had to be willing to pitch in and do whatever needed to be done. "Fifty-and sixty-hour weeks were common," Child recalls (8-13-02). Faculty were hired to build programs from scratch and then run them as departments of one person. "There are very few now who could or would do that" (Child 8-13-02). And many faculty were approved to teach in their minor fields because it was just too hard to attract people with more specialized qualifications to a small rural college. Gavilan thus hired teachers who could teach in multiple fields, making the college as comprehensive as possible despite its small size. New faculty hires had to be flexible and work hard.

Everything taken for granted at a functional college today was painstakingly put into place, step by step, by early Boards of Trustees and administrators. For example, salary schedules had to be written for classified staff, faculty, and administrators. An early formula was that administrators would earn 150 percent of faculty salaries.

In 1965 the faculty wrote a constitution for the Faculty Senate, and also started the Gavilan branch of the California Teachers Association, a guild organization without collective bargaining status. At this point, the GCTA dealt with issues of ethics, salary, personnel, and grievances, while the Senate was recognized as "a resource and advisory committee to the president-superintendent of Gavilan." Not everything was harmony; an emergency committee on faculty morale had to be convened in August 1965, to smooth over disagreements with the administration before school began. The disagreements had a common theme: Of 29 full-time faculty that year, 17 had extracurricular responsibilities such as coaching, advising, or language lab administration. Compensation and overwork were huge issues for the faculty. But at least full-time teachers had job security and salaried positions. Part-time teachers, many

from local high schools and nearly all teaching in the successful evening program, earned only \$6 to \$8 an hour.

In addition to their load and salary complaints, faculty found college officials paternalistic. One example was a board resolution passed in 1966 decreeing that no college employee could seek outside employment of any kind without the president's permission. Such attitudes, common in earlier eras, were increasingly resented and criticized as the sixties wore on and authority was generally subjected to questioning and rebellion.

And yet faculty themselves perpetuated a key distinction: they "had a classist attitude towards classified staff" (Child 8-13-02). The non-teaching classified staff tended to be old timers who had been with the college since its days at the high school campus; the bookstore and cafeteria as well as office staff were college employees. The head of maintenance, Charlie Porta, for example, had been with the district many years. They were hard-working and committed--but Child recalls that classified staff and early faculty more or less kept aloof from one another.

Women students and staff alike labored under the restrictions of the era. When the Patrons Club provided lunch on Commencement Day, the Associated Women Students served it. And female staffers with children asked the Board for time off in late 1965 when their children became ill, but Schroder advised them to use overtime rather than sick leave.

By no means were all females docile and submissive; one of Schroder's most effective critics was French, English, and Spanish instructor Georgette Paris Smith. Her son Jeremy Smith describes Smith as Gavilan's "resident activist. She and Ralph Schroder lived to piss each other off. Their battles were legendary." Smith and her husband, were sophisticated and well-travelled. "My mother was the consummate liberal," Smith says, and "my parents brought the outside world to the classroom." Smith was active in student life and in improving faculty conditions. One charge she led, her son recalls, was to convince other teachers that eating in the specially reserved Faculty Room (as the Gilroy campus's South Lounge was early called) was elitist. Soon the faculty ate in the cafeteria with everyone else. On another occasion, Smith and colleagues invited Cesar Chavez to campus, despite broad opposition among influential local ranchers. Smith was also instrumental in the hiring of Tony Ruiz, a local Mexican-American former student who later helped start the ESL program.

Clearly, the world did not pass the college by. In 1964 the conservative trustees debated a policy on controversial speakers. Trustee Bruce Jacobs was in favor of a little appropriate provocation, arguing "College is the place for this and it stretches the mind." But, said trustee Howard Harris, what about filth? Jacobs replied that of course no one supported filth. Perhaps the fairly homogenous nature of the early board allowed members to feel confident that they'd all define filth the same way.

And in 1966, as the Board began its usual round of budget deliberations, it warned the public that another inflationary cycle had been set off by the Great Society social programs of the Lyndon Johnson administration. More liberal faculty chaffed under this leadership. Differences about free speech arose as the Vietnam War became more controversial in 1966. That year, board members expressed concern that Gavilan would be used as a springboard for off-campus political organizers. A teach-in about the Vietnam war was organized by students, but held off campus so no one could complain that the college was getting too radical.

The college re-organized in 1966 to establish divisions with majors: Social Science, Life Science, Physical Science, Humanities, Health and Recreation, and Technical Vocational. In that last area, early classes were offered in cosmetology, aviation, farriery, administration of justice, and construction science.

Gavilan tried to turn its small size to its advantage. It advertised that its faculty wanted to "further your education," rather than spending their time on research. By September 1966, 620 students had registered, a 20 percent increase over the previous year. With 30 full-time teachers, classes averaged only 21 students each. And 61 percent of the district's population was in Santa Clara county. Interestingly, there was a small but steady flow of out-of-state students from Steubenville, Ohio. Basketball coach and chemistry professor Jerry Flook, who had come to SBC from Ohio in 1961, brought a number of student athletes with him (Garcia 2-23-18). That pipeline stayed open. By 1966 half the college's out-of-state students came from Ohio.

Gilroy native John Perez started at Gavilan in its last year at the airport campus (5-11-18) Perez had always found it easy to excel at school, though he constantly worked odd jobs to stay afloat and help his family (5-4-18). Perez was intensely competitive, and in high school he felt he had to be better than others to be considered equal. "I laid it on myself," he recalls, but there also were plenty of discriminatory policies and racist messages around him to drive home the idea that he had to prove himself. He understood early on that to get anywhere, he needed an education (5-11-18).

High school was a time of awakening—he watched the news about the Civil Rights movement and debated national affairs with a group of thoughtful friends (5-11-18). He also had a wonderful experience at Gilroy High School as a member of the Mexican American Youth Organization, MAYO, advised by Spanish instructor Concha Barosi and under the auspices of San Jose's Mexican American Community Services Agency. MAYO students attended a Quaker peace conference at Asilomar, where Perez met one of the Rockefellers and other exciting speakers. With other MAYO students, Perez planned and participated in a march to express solidarity with civil rights activists in Selma, Alabama. Gilroy High classmates came to harrass the marchers, he recalls, who were mostly Chicano. Perez found his voice in high school, questioning school district officials who seemed to feel fine that so many Mexican-American students were failing and dropping out. One, he recalls, was a Mexican-American who had anglicized his name. Perez also spoke up about what he perceived as an unfair allocation of medals on his wrestling team. He ran for student body office—he and other Chicano students were "beginning to realize we had power." Perez was the second in his family to graduate from high school; his older sister Rachel was the first, but after their success, his younger relatives all got their diplomas (5-11-18).

Gavilan was tougher than high school academically, and as a car-less student he found the bus schedules to the airport site prevented much extracurricular activity. Gavilan was also a "vacuum" politically in the late 1960s, he found. He was still interested in world affairs, but he just didn't have opportunity or time to be politically active. He stepped away from sports also. On the first day of class his tennis instructor, Don Klein, offered him an A in tennis if he would play football, but Perez declined so he could focus on his classes. (Klein's wife, a re-entry student, became a thorn in Perez's side in one class where she scored so high she raised the

grading curve. To his dismay, Perez had to settle for a B.) His dependence on buses had one plus: Perez spent hours in the library studying, waiting for the bus.

His resulting high grades qualified him for the Honor Society, Rho Alpha Mu, and he was elected club president. The job rewarded him with his first plane ride, to a Rho Alpha Mu conference with expenses paid. When an opportunity arose to study in Argentina, the college librarian Mrs. Horn asked him whether he could come up with the necessary \$1,500. Perez asked his brother, but "\$1,500 was a lot of money." Perez was eager to go, but remembers that his family could never afford that kind of money for a non-necessity. His parents bought a house in this period that cost \$4,000—and thus the Argentina trip remained only a dream for him.

In fact, he had to work hard just to make ends meet. When he was old enough, his brother taught him the ropes of truckdriving, and the summer after he graduated from Gilroy High, Perez hauled sugar beets. He continued the job on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays once he started at Gavilan. Even if he'd wanted to do sports, the August practices required of athletes were impossible, as he needed to work all summer to afford college.

He loved the learning Gavilan offered him. Faculty knew so much, and "we were exposed to great thinkers. It was inspiring." In some classes, "you could see the passion in what [instructors] did." Perez enjoyed organizing student-faculty forums on topics of interest to students, such as the Vietnam War. One student and one faculty member would argue on each side of the topic; he once shared a debate with Herb Peckham, physics instructor, about an education topic. Perez was happy in Peckham's class because Peckham "would zero in on students" such as Perez who wanted to learn, and teach them self-discipline (5-11-18).

Though he was draft age, and his older brothers had served in WWII and Korea, Perez used his student deferment during the Vietnam War (5-11-18). He was not militarily-inclined—he'd had enough of quasi-military organization at a Boys State experience in Sacramento in high school. He felt conflicted about not going to Vietnam, especially when his younger brother forged their mom's signature to enlist. But college was important to him, and after he graduated from Gavilan—making his mother very proud—he transferred to San Jose State. He arrived at the height of student activism, and was exposed to a sophisticated Chicano movement with many organizations and opportunities to learn and participate. A high point was shaking hands with Robert Kennedy at St. James Park shortly before Kennedy's assassination. Eventually Perez attended dental school at UCSF and returned to Gilroy to establish a successful practice—though even as a highly-educated professional, he continued to experience assumptions, exclusions, and behaviors that were discriminatory. In 1984 he was appointed to the Gavilan Board of Trustees, and served, after being re-elected, until 1990. There he played an important role in the 1980s in ensuring that Board practices were consistent and transparent (5-11-18).

Tom Andrade, too, found most Gavilan teachers to be excellent and demanding. (Though he did take PE classes from one coach who merely had students sign in and sign out. "He didn't care whether we bowled or not" in bowling class—he was only interested in his sports team, says Andrade.) Andrade came to college with his mother's encouragement, to try it to forestall being drafted into the Vietnam War. "It was a step up from high school, very much so. It was honest hard work. You were not given anything you didn't earn from those teachers."

One in particular kept him busy. "My English teacher Mrs. Wolfe I will never forget, I had to really struggle to get a C. It was hard." But Mrs. Wolfe, after observing his efforts with writing and spelling, asked if perhaps Andrade might consider Industrial Arts. "She put me on the right path." Andrade did his general education at Gavilan, then transferred to Fresno State University, where he excelled majoring in Industrial Arts. He graduated and taught industrial arts for five years before climbing through administrative roles to finally become superintendent of the Hollister School District.

### **The Castro Valley Road Site: Five Hills and a Strawberry Patch**

As students and teachers settled in at the airport site, the board worked hard to find, purchase, and develop a new site for the college. This required several inter-dependent and carefully timed processes: finding land, raising money to buy it, buying it, getting a plan for the college made, building the college, and moving into it. The processes took four years and overlapped, sometimes precariously. "This was the biggest work; the staff ran the school and already they were doing a good job" (Simonsen 5-5-03). College officials must have felt encouraged by the passage in fall 1964 of a massive state bond issue to make money available specifically for facilities at community colleges (Tyler 160).

In 1963 the Board had hired a San Francisco architectural firm well-known for designing appealing college campuses: Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons. They produced a simple, rustic, and clean design emphasizing local materials and natural looks. "We gave them a free hand; we weren't the specialists" (Simonsen). In 1966 a landscape plan was developed by Halperin and Associates. In seeking a site, the Board looked seriously at four possibilities, all in the Gilroy vicinity. At that time Gilroy ended around Tenth Street (Child 8-7-02), so sites outside of town that were big enough but which would still benefit from city services, were desirable. A site on Crews Road at the Baldwin Ranch, and one near Bloomfield west of Highway 101, off Castro Valley Road, became the top contenders. In the end the Bloomfield site was chosen, even though it consisted of five hills and a strawberry patch when it was selected (Simonsen). The parcel had been part of the Las Animas Rancho, one of the early land grants. Eventually the land came into the hands of the Shumaker family, which used it to graze cattle and for orchards.

Lawrence F. Shumaker not only offered the land to the Gavilan District for a reasonable price, but he held the land without looking at other offers for three years while the district hustled to raise funds. "People like him wanted the college to go," Simonsen recalls. The parcel was 125 acres, with five hills and a well that pumped 1,000 gallons a minute. The hills had to be leveled, and the parcel was about two miles from the city's sewage lines. This meant that a pump plant would have to be built.

Architect Theodore Bernardi, however, pronounced it a "magnificent site," and the Board voted for it unanimously, according to the *Dispatch*. By December 1965, the plans were sufficiently complete to go to bid. The Board received eight bids, none of them local. The low bid was submitted by Wheatley-Jacobson of Palo Alto, and the Board also hired Halcomb Associates for a flat \$2,500 fee to oversee construction. The staff and Board, however, balked at having the architects handle interior design and furnishings, arguing that costs would be too high and locals could perfectly well handle these tasks. A representative from San Quentin State prison furniture factory offered to survey current furniture and have his shop make up

any deficiencies, and in the end the Board decided to purchase some of the furniture from the California prison system. "They built solid furniture," recalls Robert Funk, former journalism instructor (4-4-03).

Sewage lines proved less straightforward. The site was outside city limits, and it would be up to the college to pay the costs of hooking up to city sewage using 8" pipe, the *Gilroy Dispatch* reported. However, the city anticipated some residential development in the Gavilan vicinity, and worked out a deal with the Board: Gavilan would pay about \$80,000 of the hookup costs, and the city would pay another \$13,000 to cover the additional costs of using a larger 12" pipe that could be shared by future residents.

Schroder hosted a meeting in early 1965 for all members of the citizens advisory committees and the interested public to look over the architects' proposals. Despite a little problem with engineers, who criticized the way the architects had drawn curved lines rather than straight lines when they envisioned grading, the plan was enthusiastically accepted. On Valentines Day, the *Gilroy Dispatch* reported, the ground was broken at the new site, and state senator Don Grunsky spoke. Construction lasted from summer 1965 to fall 1967 and was planned in two phases. The first would be \$3 million for three science buildings, a library, student union, gym, theater, and maintenance building. The second phase would add a \$500,000 cosmetology building, as well as choral, art, and humanities facilities, and a pool.

Things moved quickly; Simonsen remembers how exciting it was to create a college, and how much fun to work out the details for a brand-new institution of learning. For a few years, the CJ 500 building served as a dorm for some athletes (Funk 4-4-03). This proved controversial, and for some time the college looked for apartments in town that could be rented for out-of-state athletes in particular, many of whom were African-American and subject to housing discrimination in Gilroy. Eventually housing became a matter between a coach and his players rather than a college concern—and though the Coast Conference prohibited coaches from providing housing, some coaches felt they had to get involved anyway (Garcia 3-22-18).

It became clear fast that the college would need to hold a second bond measure election. This measure also passed, in 1966. The Board floated \$1.85 million in general obligation bonds, sold on Gavilan's behalf by the county in 1966, according to the *Gilroy Dispatch*. By then all the building and services contracts had so complicated life for Schroder that he asked, and received, permission from the board to hire a business director. The district also used accounting sleights of hand, such as transferring funds to meet obligations, constantly in the early years.

Most locals supported the college and were excited about its progress. A few neighbors of the new site, however, worried that they would be menaced by students who drove too fast and too wildly; the county and the college agreed to post speed 25 mph limit signs and see that they were enforced. Fines were \$10-15, the *Dispatch* reported. Developer Charles D. Davidson announced his plans to put in a 26 acre subdivision near the college; the housing was welcomed, but college officials said they hoped he'd drop the idea of a shopping plaza, complete with service station, at the corner of Mesa and Santa Teresa. It was not beneficial for college interests, they complained, and sure enough, the subdivision was built entirely residential.

Construction was fairly predictable. In May 1967, however, tractors belonging to E. A. Buttler, a local subcontractor, uncovered five native people's gravesites ("Burial"). His son, Dale Buttler, took some relics from the sites, including abalone shells and perhaps bones. Before the Native American Gravesite Protection Act, thefts of Native American sites were not illegal. Heavy rains slowed the construction in winter, when the site turned to mud. A developer was found for a nine-hole golf course and clubhouse in 1967.

One unusual feature of several buildings, including the gymnasium and the Art Lecture hall, was that they had huge central girders (Child 8-13-02). Child recalls that the gymnasium's central girder was the longest load ever carried down Highway 101--at 140 feet, it weighed thirty tons. Turns were especially tight. It was set gently in place on two huge notches prepared in advance; two men had to ride on the girder as it was set down, to keep it balanced. Child tells of a second massive center beam being lowered gently into place in the Art Lecture building. Workmen first tilted up the walls of the hexagonal building, and huge truck brought in a giant boomerang-shaped beam that would sit on two sides of the building. "A bunch of us went down to watch this giant monstrous piece of wood. They picked it up and lowered it down and it goes right down in to center of building. It was too short" (Child 8-13-02). There was a long delay while the short beam was trucked back up to Oregon and another custom laminated beam, correctly proportioned, was made.

In early 1967, a few months before the new site was ready, the Board gave Schroder another raise. His salary jumped from \$19,000 to \$21,000, the *Dispatch* reported.

### **Gavilan College, the Summer of Love, and Oh My God the Midterm**

The college staff moved to the new site over the summer of 1967, which was the Summer of Love just 80 miles away in San Francisco. The board wanted nothing to do with hippies and their ilk, but a cultural revolution was underway, and some local young people got on board. Gilroy offered nothing like what went on at San Francisco State and UC Berkeley; even in Palo Alto and San Jose there were organizations and marches for civil rights and peace. With a few exceptions, Gavilan community members who wanted to demonstrate drove somewhere else to do so. Faculty participated in peace marches. The Black student movement was miniscule at Gavilan but individual organizers from the Black Panther party would come to campus and hand out literature, as did Brown Berets (Child 8-13-02).

Anti-Vietnam war protestor David Harris visited the campus with his anti-war message, "and we got a few letters about that, but I felt we needed to open up the minds of the students to everything" (Simonsen). Yielding to the argument that students needed productive means to voice their views or they'd find less acceptable ways to do so, the Board authorized the hiring of a journalism, English, and speech instructor in May 1967, along with faculty in the sciences, business, and cosmetology. And for the first time the college considered student rights by discussing a grievance procedure, which eventually set up a student's right to question the judgment and authority of a teacher or other staff person in academic or other matters.

Simonsen recalls another tempest over students who were playing cards at the new student union rather than attending classes. The board was asked to require students to attend their class. After much discussion, she recalled, "the board said the students were adults...we would not say to them thou shalt not."

Old-timers say they miss the students of the 1960s and 1970s. A much greater percentage of students were more academically committed, academically oriented, and had far more motivation than students today (Child 11-18-02). There were always some poor or disengaged students, but now they seem to be the majority, he said. Part of the reason may be that Gavilan students "tend to be very vulnerable and unsure of themselves" (Child 11-18-02).

Tom Andrade had enrolled in 1966 at the airport campus, and graduated in 1968 from the new site. The airport "had mud puddles you could lose a car in," he recalls, and the classrooms were nothing to look at. By contrast, the new campus buildings were "beautiful, brand new inside." But outside, the landscaping was not in place, and there were not even sidewalks from building to building--there were some plywood walkways, and a lot of mud. "We survived the new campus," is how Andrade puts it.

The new campus drew new students, and necessitated even more hirings, in part as older faculty retired. Kent Child recalls that his hiring seemed indicative of the times: he was a "hippie artist" who was thinking he might join some friends who were starting a commune in British Columbia when he heard that Gavilan had an opening in the art department in spring 1968. He was 26. When he came to the interview, lawns had been planted, but the trees were tiny saplings, and the campus was just "basically buildings sticking up out of dry dirt." He applied, only to be told after some wait time that the funds had dried up. Then, just before the fall semester began, Sylvester "Babe" Heinberg, the dean of instruction, called and said that funds had been found. Could Child come the next day to sign a contract?

Child had a family reunion planned, and asked whether he could postpone the formality. "I still remember his icy voice: 'If you want the job you'll be here tomorrow.' Well--I'll be there. Now I see it from the other side" (Child 8-7-02).

In those days, teachers were awarded tenure after two years "just for surviving," according to Robert Funk. Not everyone survived: the new journalism position cycled through teachers before Funk was hired in 1969. He, however, stayed for 21 years on the job as *Rambler* newspaper adviser, and for another fifteen years teaching speech before retiring in 2003. The atmosphere for teachers was less than ideal, recalls Funk (4-11-03). Of eleven full-time faculty hired in 1969, he was the only one remaining by 2000. The early Board did not necessarily want everyone to stay: Gavilan's early reputation, partially justified, was that the district was tight with its money and encouraged faculty to move on down the road to keep people from climbing the salary schedule. A fair number used Gavilan as a stepping stone to larger urban colleges (Child 8-13-02).

For those who stayed, building a new college was challenging as well as exciting. The day-to-day effort was enormous; the stick-like trees and barren grounds reflected the bare newness of the whole effort. Early teachers had to improvise; art teacher John Porter taught his classes in the area that currently houses EOPS, on the western side of the library complex. Porter was in his early 30s when he began, and for many students his class was the highlight of their Gavilan experience (Child 8-7-02). Gifted, colorful, flamboyant, inspirational to many, he was able to spark a love of learning about art and culture, and to bring out self-expression in unlikely places, especially with marginal students. People brought kids and even grandkids in later years to meet the art teacher who'd made such a difference in their lives (Child 8-7-02). And early teachers were often versatile, and thus were allowed to teach in their minor areas. The General Secondary credential goes back to before the early 60s when CCs splintered off from

high school districts; they could teach any course. A community college credential was established in the early 60s, and phased out in 1990. There were a few part-timers during the day, but most night faculty were part-time (Child 8-7-02).

Some of the early teachers were especially important in imprinting the college in its early years. In addition to Porter in the art department and Funk in journalism and speech, there were Cliff Pew in business, Jim Wall in biology, Ted Rempel in German and English, Georgette Smith in French and English, Don Klein in philosophy and various other positions, Tony Ruiz in Spanish and ESL, Ron Ward in music, and Mark Levine in sociology and anthropology.

Gavilan lost some excellent teachers more or less in action: biology instructor Jim Wall had a heart attack and died in his office. Georgette Smith got cancer when she was still a fairly young woman; she didn't survive the ordeal. Jim Ledden, whom Child remembers as having a Renaissance man personality, was assigned to start various new programs. He taught drama and speech. And he also created the geology program and its courses as he was an amateur lapidarian and rock-hound. When he too was diagnosed with incurable cancer, he left a huge collection of rocks that he and students had collected to the college. Law, Smith, and Ledden were honored by their colleagues with plaques (and Smith's son Jeremy speculates that his mother, Ledden, and later athletic director Bud Ottmar all may have been exposed to carcinogens while teaching at the airport facility, as all died of cancer fairly soon after that period.) Ledden's is close to the theatre he loved. Smith's is on the main mall near the Humanities building, and there's another near the science area for Wall.

There were always some female faculty at Gavilan, but after World War II, women were not hired in large numbers again until the 1980s. In the 1990s women once again came to outnumber men on the faculty. Female administrators arrived relatively late, however: there were none until the 1980s. One exception has traditionally been the vocational Cosmetology Department, which has since its inception in 1965 been majority-female on staff and among students.

In spring 1965 the Cosmetology program split an \$80,000 government grant with the Aviation Program ("Vocational and"). The college had hired Margaret LaFond to help start the program, and she was joined the following year by Helen Wood (*GC Handbook* 9). At that time, vocational education consisted of heavily gendered choices—for men, drafting technology, police science, and aviation, and for women, cosmetology and business education (*GC Handbook* 16-17).

In 1967, Sofia Ramirez was in her twenties, with three small children, and wondering how to escape the fate of older co-workers she saw doing punishingly hard work at the local cannery. A friend told her about beauty school, but Ramirez had a bad experience when she signed up for a disorganized San Jose program. Instead of giving up, she came to Gavilan College in fall 1967 to study cosmetology. There were 10 other frosh students and about 20 second-year students, and they met for one semester at the old Hollister airport before moving to the new campus. Ramirez recalls that the brand new building made the work a pleasure for students—though they quickly discovered that not every piece of shiny equipment was yet up and running.

Ramirez, an excellent student, loved Gavilan's structured, academic approach that involved work in various cosmetology fields as well as in anatomy, physiology, and chemistry. From

the beginning, the vocational curriculum in cosmetology has been guided by the state Board of Cosmetology, and though the curriculum has changed over the years, the standards set by the Board remain constant. Staff and faculty must be with students six hours a day or more, supervising their learning in haircuts, color, nails, skin care, and other skills.

With a supportive husband, she hoped to open a salon eventually. Instead, Ramirez became a lab assistant at Gavilan's program in 1970 when there was a summer opening, and in 1984 she applied to become faculty, and was chosen. Sometimes spending all day with students from a variety of backgrounds—single parents, high-school drop-outs, drifting students, as well as professionals who wanted to change careers—wasn't easy. But Ramirez says a program like hers at a community college helps students who aren't sure what they want to do, as well as students from large families that can't afford four-year colleges for four years. She also felt that her life experience could help others who wanted to better themselves: a farmworker, she married at 16 and worked hard to get her education.

After she retired in 1998, Ramirez's son Gilbert applied for a job with the cosmetology department. He'd majored in business at San Jose State, worked in salons, and decided to make cosmetology his career. For some years he ran his own salon. But he was hired full-time in Gavilan's cosmetology department in 2008, and became the lead teacher in Gavilan's program.

Another student who started college at the new site was Lydia Amaro Salinas. She moved to the Gilroy area in the fourth grade, when her WWII veteran father was able to fulfill a dream and buy 30 acres of prune orchards. He continued working at the Gilroy Cannery while her extremely capable mother ran the farm--and the kids provided labor. By the time she reached Gilroy High School, Amaro Salinas was put on the X track, the highest track on a X-Y-Z system that sorted students and educated them according to assumptions and stereotypes about their capabilities. Amaro Salinas realized one day that this X track was the college-bound track, and that there were very few other Mexican-American students on it with her.

"I joined everything," she says. She ran for student body offices, and like John Perez, she was part of Concha Barosi's Mexican American Youth Organization group. Like Perez, she attended the Quaker peace conference in Asilomar, but she went all four years between 1963-67, and met Joan Baez and colleagues of Dr. Martin Luther King there. An early feminist, Amaro Salinas participated in the Girls Athletic Association's after-school sports, including volleyball, badminton, softball, tennis, field hockey, and basketball. Girls did not get proper equipment, she recalls—there were, for example, dangerously few knee-pads to go around in field hockey. And while boys were long-jumping into a sand pit, girls were relegated to a grass area. There Amaro Salinas, who competed to win in all she did, jumped hard, and seriously injured a disc in her back. This lifelong injury ended her participation in sports for years (5-18-18).

Amaro Salinas had no counselor at Gilroy High who took the time to tell her about college application requirements and deadlines; thus she took the PSAT because she heard classmates discussing it, but missed the SAT altogether (5-18-18). Still, she wanted to attend the brand new University of California Santa Cruz. She made a date with two girlfriends to drive over and apply on the last possible day. But Amaro Salinas had had her molars pulled the day before. She was in too much pain to drive, so her friend drove her car. At Highway 129 Amaro had to ask that they turn around and take her home. She missed the deadline and did not

apply. (Her friends finagled an alternative ride, and ended up attending UCSC.) Barosi suggested Amaro Salinas consider Gavilan, which was moving to its Castro Valley Road site just as Amaro Salinas was ready for college.

Without even knowing that such things as scholarships existed, Amaro Salinas had been nominated by teachers and won two, totalling about \$600. These would cover books and more for her first year. When she signed up for Gavilan classes, the counselor there noted her good grades and put her into an experimental group with nine other high-achieving students. They had a special schedule arranged so they could take extra classes in their majors while still getting general education classes done, and Amaro Salinas focused on math and science. With responsibilities at home caring for her injured mother and a toddler sister, she had no time for anything besides her studies, but also found that no group like Carmen Barosi's MAYO yet existed at the college.

Classes were challenging but she learned things "you don't see in high school." Amaro Salinas recalls Jim Wall's biology class with awe. "Oh my god the midterm was something none of us had ever experienced." Nine out of the ten students flunked it, and the passing student got a D-. With 17-18 units every semester, she had no time to waste. She did, however, continue to eat lunch with Mexican-American high school friends and her academic group. They became so well known at Baja Burgers on Monterey Road that they started just calling in their orders and sending someone to pick them up. Being on the new campus was fun, but she also recalls that there was absolutely no shade on campus. If you wanted to get out of the sun, she says, you went inside (5-18-18).

Amaro Salinas found that she excelled at chemistry, and after graduation she stayed an extra year at Gavilan to help out at home and to work for instructor Jerry Flook in the chemistry lab. She knew a couple of older graduates who were heading to pharmacy school but felt she didn't have time to spend getting a four-year degree and then a pharmacy degree. She decided to apply to an accelerated program at the University of San Francisco, and she was accepted. She entered a world of fast-paced, intense academic demands and a "whole lot of [Mexican-American political activism] I didn't know existed." After a year-and-a-half in the four-year program she found she just couldn't keep juggling pharmacy school, weekend caregiving at home, and a job. She left the program and returned home. Her chemistry background helped her get a good job in the lab at UTC in Morgan Hill, however, and she integrated the lab as its first female employee. Despite workplace sexism and some dangerous work with toxins, she stayed for 17 years before a massive lay-off in 1993 ended her time there. Eventually Amaro Salinas got a job at the Gilroy Library.

As the decade drew to an end, Shroder planned a Dedication Day (see Document Analysis, *Dedication Day*), and held a Faculty Retreat at Camp Corralitos on 16-17 September 1968. In his prepared notes, he heaved a public sigh of relief about the threat that had kicked off the decade for the old San Benito College:

This fall we face our fifth accreditation visit in ten years. It should result in five-year accreditation, the maximum granted. No longer does an accreditation visit carry with it the ominous connotation it once held for us. Instead, we can look forward to this visit, for we can proudly point to our accomplishments on the campus and in our curriculum. (Schroder 13)

He could not resist adding that it was unlikely that any member of that year's accreditation team would ask someone in Hollister what he thought of the junior college and hear in reply, "What college?" "Today," said Schroder, "people not only know they have a college in this district, but they have a great deal of pride in it" (13).

If any one person was to thank for that, it had to be Schroder.

### **The 1970s: the College Grows and Outgrows**

A look at college access figures in the United States begins to suggest what was the main story by the 1970s for just about every institution of higher education: growth. Only 2.2 percent of those ages 18-24 were in college in 1900 (Cohen 40). In 1920, the number had climbed to 4.5 percent, while in 1940 it was 8.54 percent. By 1960 it was 18.3 percent, and by 1970, 25.4 percent (40).

The cultural changes that rocked much of the state and nation in the 1960s caught up with Gavilan in the 1970s, as whole new populations of students gained access to higher education--and made the most of it. Community colleges also articulated an "ability to benefit" philosophy--i.e., higher education was for anyone who had the ability to benefit from it. This threw access wide open. Non-traditional courses were introduced and marketed to non-traditional populations hitherto under-represented even at the inexpensive, open-door community colleges: impoverished students, students of color, immigrants, students with disabilities, and re-entry women students (Tillery 21).

The numbers alone tell a story of rapid expansion. "Between 1971 and 1982, Gavilan's mean enrollment doubled, climbing from 1,585 to 3,142" (Williams 5). The number of full-time faculty grew from 49 to 70, and part-time faculty doubled from "just over 40 to more than 80" (5).

At Gavilan, change began with a re-casting of the college's name, and thus its image. Until December 1970, the college was the "Gavilan Joint Junior College District." A national trend towards more dignified and community-based image induced the Board of Trustees to re-name it the "Gavilan Joint Community College District." In this, the college joined almost universal rejection of "junior" college designations. Most colleges also were improving ties with four-year colleges, using articulation and guaranteed transfer agreements to provide assured access upward for their students (Tillery 15).

The state and nation were experiencing rapid economic change that proved demanding for colleges. Gavilan was cognizant of the need to provide up-to-date and relevant education to its students: in 1973, the Board of Trustees stated its determination to establish educational goals and program objectives and then evaluate them every year.

A common tension for community colleges long existed between a stable academic curriculum (not so stable in our day, as new technology requires constant revision and catch-up), and "a catch-as-catch-can" segment that responds to market demands for vocational training (Deegan ix). At Gavilan, recalls Ed Loeser, who began as a student and then worked at the college, vocational offerings in the 70s were many, varied, and of high quality. Some vocational programs came and went: there was a construction technology program for about ten years, but changes within trade unions made it more difficult for students to get into union jobs.

With or without a degree, they still had to apprentice with the union, and most people opted to apprentice directly (Child 11-18-02). There was an electronics program as Silicon Valley companies were being launched so near-by; it trained people to do electronic assembly, but died when potential employers outsourced jobs to Third World countries. The program was also constantly challenged as technologies kept changing and it became impossible to keep pace with new equipment (Child 11-18-02). During this period, Gavilan also offered a two-year veterinary prep program dealing with animal husbandry, a farriery program for the many horse-owners in the area who wanted to learn how to shoe their horses, and an emergency technician program.

For faculty and administrators, the 1970s were full of stressors. There was constant enrollment pressure, recalls journalism professor Funk. It was not until the late 1970s that college officials could finally stop worrying "day and night" about enrollment and retention (Funk 4-11-03). "In the late sixties there was still a lot of worry that we wouldn't make it. Someone was watching all the time--would we get enough students? Faculty today have no idea what we had to go through" (Funk 4-4-03). Cohen attributes part of this concern to a constant-growth mentality. The baby boom led to an expansion of community colleges, which "led their advocates to take an obsessive view of growth. Growth in budgets, staff, and students was considered good; stasis or decline was bad" (Cohen 17). Thus the 1970s also saw the first blossoming of what came to be called distance learning: TV classes were pioneered in a few subjects, and these boosted enrollments a bit.

Early Gavilan College administrators were also very concerned that classes be rigorous. "I have respect for what they did--they had to do it to build the institution. The quality of education was a big concern; (the board) was concerned that when someone left they would meet the standards of a four-year college" (Funk 4-4-03). This meant constant surveillance by administrators, especially the dean of instruction, to ascertain that classroom teaching and evaluations were tough enough. At the same time, the board was responsive to the needs of local ranchers, who were in many cases board members' friends and relatives. This is one reason why the school year began late in September for many years, and then continued into late June--so agricultural work could get done. (Funk 4-4-03).

The trend in the 1970s was to teach huge lecture classes in a few large rooms and to offer several small seminar sections with fewer students (Child 8-13-02). This never worked because Gavilan did not have graduate students to run seminars, but in the mid-1970s Gavilan was able to build some new classroom spaces, and created the Social Science building with that model in mind. It immediately proved to be unworkable (Child 8-13-02). The building was jokingly called Fletcher's Folly, after Frank Fletcher, the history and political science teacher who was its early advocate (Child 8-13-02). The Art Lecture building has also had its critics, Child said, but the business building was better designed because staff who were to use the building gave their input to the architects.

The campus was built completely without air conditioning; it was considered a luxury in the 1960s, and was not yet part of the culture. As people became more accustomed to air conditioning, criticism drove an effort to air condition all classroom buildings. Staff and students also had strong opinions about public campus art. Art works inspired "great passions long before r2row," Simonsen recalls, referring to the art teacher Arturo Rosette, whose students created controversial artwork in the aughts. Simonsen said that controversial

sculptures would appear on campus, be debated hotly, and then eventually, after the furor died down, would be dismantled.

Some of the biggest furors were faculty-administration conflicts. These were set off early in the decade when a pair of younger faculty, English instructor Ted Shuter and a history instructor, organized student protests against the Vietnam War on campus. They stood "toe to toe" with administrators defending their rights to do so, but college president Ralph Schroder reached his tolerance level and fired them after they'd each put in two years of service (Child 8-13-02). Each sued the district for wrongful termination; the history teacher lost, having compromised his case, according to Child. Shuter was academically respected, beloved by students, and admired by his peers. An anonymous faculty member donated a large sum of money to help fight his termination. Shuter went back to New York, his home state, and got a job washing out phone booths for a year while his case was being fought (Child 8-13-02). After prolonged legal activity, Shuter won his case and got a year's back salary and reinstatement. He stayed another year and then found a job elsewhere.

In the year following this double dismissal, the faculty was increasingly upset with the politics and methods of the administration. "Schroder was a dictator, but it caught up with him" (Funk 4-11-03). Relations between Schroder and other administrators, on the one hand, and staff, on the other, deteriorated. At the first meeting of the Faculty Senate the next fall, apparently overhearing some criticism of the administration, Schroder exploded into the Senate meeting, "berated us, and then collapsed on the conference table, gasping. We were in shock and freaked; we worried he would die of a heart attack. Then he gathered and composed himself and went out slamming the door" (Child 8-13-02). Senate members all immediately resigned in protest against this behavior.

Funk recalls a general climate of intimidation and unhappiness. Faculty were required to chaperone weekly dances, where they were expected to act as "quasi-police" towards students who were adults (4-11-03). Teacher dress codes were as rigid as student codes: no sandals without socks were allowed, and ties and neat attire were expected of teachers. Those in violation were written up and notes were placed in their files. No matter when a teacher's classes ended, she or he was expected to be on campus until 5 p.m. Anyone who left at 3 p.m. for, say, a dentist's appointment, had to ask permission (4-11-13).

Teachers could also be written up for "inappropriate use of the podium" in class; concepts such as academic freedom and a college atmosphere of inquiry seemed foreign to the college's administrators (Funk 4-11-03). Administrators would review tests for their academic rigor, and listen at doors to see what faculty were discussing in class--and how they were discussing it (Funk 4-11-03). "Someone was watching all the time. It was a tough administration. We had to hang together to survive" (4-11-03).

Money became a divisive issue. "In those days Gav paid terrible rock bottom prices, probably in the bottom two or three in the state," Child says (8-13-02). This was because the college was small, and the Board was conservative, as was Schroder. While they were priding themselves in returning a percentage of collected taxes to the voters, however, the staff were scraping by on meagre salaries (Child 8-13-02). This further enraged the staff, which put in long hours and was expected to do much extra work; someone who stayed at Gavilan rather than moving to a better-paid job could easily lose \$250,000 in a lifetime of work (Funk 4-4-03). Those who stayed did so out of love for the college and community.

As the years passed, Child recalls, Schroder also lost touch with the local high school districts and stepped on some toes with policies such as refusing to hire high school instructors even if they had masters degrees (8-13-02). He found himself in increasingly open conflict with college faculty and staff. Strong-willed, pro-faculty individuals rankled Schroder; French instructor Georgette Smith and English-German instructor Ted Rempel were particularly outspoken and creative souls who displeased him. "He would bring us [new hires] in and shake hands and warn us to beware of the troublemakers on the faculty, and he'd name them" (Child 8-13-02).

The turning point was probably a 1974 accreditation report that criticized the lack of communication between Schroder and the faculty, and noted that he and his dean of instruction, Babe Heinberg, were unpopular with faculty. Schroder was given a year's notice by the Board in the summer of 1974 (Child 8-13-02). Within two months Schroder announced plans to retire and told the local newspaper that he was going unwillingly because new board members had changed the timbre of the board. "Schroder is not retiring because he wants to but rather, because the Gavilan College Board and he have fallen out of step. Since the retirement of Howard Harris and Bruce Jacobs two years ago, the complexion of the Board has changed" (Fuchs 1). Schroder's failure, reporter Jerry Fuchs wrote, was his inability to be diplomatic and to contain his "now famous temper."

The board had heard from an increasingly angry faculty--not only were they angry about salaries by 1974, but many felt that Schroder's (and the Board's) conservatism during the era of Kent State and the Vietnam War (Child 8-13-02) was unacceptable. George Thomas was key in ousting Ralph Schroder; despite their ties as brothers-in-law, he came to believe that Schroder was no longer the best fit (Child 8-13-02). The job outgrew Schroder, and the board let him go (Simonsen). In 1985, despite early resistance to naming buildings as memorials, Schroder was honored posthumously when the Student Center was named the Ralph Schroder Student Center.

In the same purge, most of the other lead administrators were also either fired or pressured to resign. All had "retreat rights" back into faculty positions. Dean of Instruction Heinberg was absorbed into the business department for three or four more years until he retired. This inflamed some faculty, as Heinberg was perhaps Schroder's closest collaborator (Child 8-13-02). "He was uniquely able to work with Ralph Schroder and serve as a buffer to the faculty, but of course he got in the meat grinder both ways," being blamed by both sides for problems (Child 8-13-02). Rolf Bruckner worked capably as a counselor for some time. Bill Reimal survived the purge and moved into the Dean of Instruction position. Don Klein, who taught philosophy and coached sports, moved into the Dean of Students position for a time.

A less sudden, but no less important, personnel shift occurred in the wake of Title IX, the 1972 federal regulation outlawing gender discrimination in any aspect of federally-funded education, including and most visibly in sports. This regulation struck at the heart of college athletic programs, which were invariably male-dominated and football-heavy well into the 1980s and sometimes beyond. Often programs excluded women altogether, as was the case at Gavilan College until 1975. Dire penalties for such exclusion were included in the regulations, and slowly college sports began to change. At Gavilan, in 1975, a co-ed swim team with nine women did well enough to claim third place among women's teams statewide (Dodd GAVILAN)--it was the first intercollegiate option for female athletes in the history of the

college (Dodd), though that same year a few intramural sports opportunities opened to women at the college.

The following year, Gavilan was obliged to put money into women's sports, and it created a new full-time faculty position to jump-start the program. Susan Dodd, the new hire, was an excellent choice. She launched and capably coached women's volleyball in fall 1976, basketball in winter, and softball in spring 1977 (Dodd). Under her guidance, Gavilan's women's teams joined the Bay Area Women's Collegiate Athletic Association, as women were not yet part of the men's Coast Conference. The college, says Dodd, had ups and downs in making a go of women's sports, but it made "a good effort" in providing competitive opportunities, uniforms, and officials for women's teams. The football budget, however, continued to dwarf those of all other sports, and Gavilan faced periodic challenges from female students over skewed offerings or resource allocations. The college staved off lawsuits by responding with re-balancing efforts. The three sports above continued at least through the early 2000s, and others came and went (Dodd GAVILAN). Today's athletic department is the result of long, slow change.

### **The 1970s: Change Started Coming In**

The student population was also changing. Baby boomers of all socio-economic backgrounds seeking opportunity and social mobility enrolled in large numbers. The Educational Opportunities Programs and Services program was launched in 1969 to serve low-income students. At that point the district's average annual family income was only \$6,458. The district was a pocket of poverty within more affluent Santa Clara county--which averaged an \$8,663 annual salary per family. A resolution in support of EOPS, passed by the board in 1970, pointed out that 35 percent of all Gavilan students were from families that earned a poverty-level \$5,000 or less a year, and that the unemployment rate in the Gavilan district in 1969-70 was higher than it had been in Watts in 1965 and the Fillmore in San Francisco in 1966. And perhaps because of seasonal agricultural work, that rate fluctuated from 3 percent to 22 percent, with an average of 11 percent unemployment in south Santa Clara and San Benito counties, compared to 4.2 percent in Santa Clara county as a whole, and 4.5 percent in California.

Community colleges, including Gavilan, served as a first stepping stone to attainment of BAs and graduate degrees. Cohen says "by the late 1970s...around two-thirds of all ethnic minority students were in two-year institutions..." (21). The 1970s accordingly brought an influx of Mexican-American students into colleges all over California; many (such as John Perez and Lydia Amaro Salinas a few years before) were inspired by the Civil Rights movement, the United Farm Workers Union, Cesar Chavez, and a general climate of ethnic pride. Many Gavilan students from all backgrounds were the first in their families to graduate from high school, let alone attend college. This was particularly true of Mexican-American students. By 1970-71, there were 1,162 students attending Gavilan and 41 percent were members of ethnic minorities, according to a Board resolution supporting EOPS.

Margaret Morales Rebecchi was one of those students; she came to Gavilan after graduating from Gilroy High School. Her father's family owned land in Mexico, and he could have attended college there as his brothers did, but instead he came to the United States to work under the Bracero Program. He worked hard on the railroads, and as a farmworker, but even after years of labor, she learned when she had to complete a form for her application to UCSC,

he earned only \$6000 annually for his large family. Her mother, who was born in the US, bore eleven children and was an excellent manager of a small farm with goats, cows, chickens, pigs, and lambs to feed them. Morales Rebecchi worked in the fields as a child and remembers it being so hot topping garlic that, at age 9, she passed out. There were no bathrooms, no breaks, and nothing but dirty creek water to drink. Her father wanted the kids to know what field work was like, and he stressed the importance of the education he'd missed getting as a ticket out of poverty. It worked: the kids said, "Daddy, we want to go to school to study."

Morales Rebecchi got a late start at school, and came in speaking little English. She remembers a teacher who grabbed and shook her for "disobeying," when she had no idea what she'd done. But her father was adamant--if the kids didn't bring homework to do, he'd give them some himself. Thus several siblings attended Gavilan, and some went on to four-year colleges. Like Perez and Amaro Salinas, Morales Rebecchi was also active at GHS in the MAYO club under a different advisor; by the late 60s it was less political, more cultural and social. Students wanted to learn their history--for example, the meaning of Cinco de Mayo. She also was active in student government and had friends on both sides of an Anglo vs. Mexican-American divide at GHS. But despite these activities and good grades, she never got counselling to help her apply to a four year college. She could not afford college, but neither did she see herself getting married young as her sisters had.

She attended Gavilan when it was "brand new, beautiful," and was awarded a federal Work Study job at the library. She also immediately began organizing a MEChA club with EOPS director John Ornelas as advisor--a first for the college. Early in her time at Gavilan, one of her clubs had a fundraising car wash, and a long car drew up. It was driven by Spanish and ESL teacher Gilberto Segovia, and the students quickly learned that he was an exacting customer: he made them spend an hour going over every inch of the car's exterior. He even insisted that they wash the interior, though Morales Rebecchi tried to tell him that wasn't part of the deal. She appreciates his demanding excellence now, as she later took his class in Mexican-American history and learned a great deal. She recalls that "he wanted us to be our best, to become leaders." His messages were indelible: to be proud of your culture, work hard, become someone, don't forget where you came from, and give back to the community.

Students had to advocate for Segovia's history class, as it didn't exist when Morales Rebecchi arrived. As MEChA president, she made an appointment with college president Schroder to argue the case. "I had a good reputation--everyone liked me...my father had taught us to use diplomacy." When other MEChistas found out about her meeting with Schroder, they said they would come along. It became clear that they wanted to stage a sit-in in Schroder's office with a list of demands--everyone agreed they wanted classes in Chicano history and Ballet Folklorico, and a relevant music class in Spanish. So they sat around his desk on the floor. Morales Rebecchi apologized to him later, but Schroder didn't seem to take offense. He listened to the demands. Then he said yes. Soon she was researching Aztec history under Segovia's exacting auspices.

The classes Morales Rebecchi and other students worked hard to establish waxed and waned over the years without full-time faculty to promote them ("Gavilan College and"). From 1973-76, Gavilan also received federal funding for an Upward Bound Program to prepare low-income high school students for college. The students attended special Saturday classes, and met with tutors during the week to get academic support. During the summers they had intensive college classes and lived on campus. In 1975, Gavilan dropped the program, and lost

the “qualified Hispanic employees” who had run it (“Gavilan College and”). A long-term issue for the college has been hiring, promotion, and retention of Latino staff and faculty.

Morales Rebecchi got good counseling at Gavilan, and visited several UCs. She decided to attend UC Santa Cruz. As she approached her Gavilan graduation, she suggested a graduation ceremony in Spanish to allow family members who weren’t English-speaking a chance to participate. She wanted her father to see her get her diploma. So she helped organize the first Chicano Graduation at Gavilan, inviting US ambassador to Mexico Julian Nava as keynote speaker. It was a great ceremony, but her father had to work at the last minute and could not attend. Ironically, she organized another Chicano Graduation for her finale at UCSC-- then learned that she couldn’t attend as she had to report for a job training. So her family came to the traditional UCSC graduation, but it was not exactly satisfying--when her father saw all the long-haired UCSC hippies and provocative art work, he got upset. But it was too late--she had her psychology degree, and she moved into teaching in migrant education and bilingual K-12 programs. Morales Rebecchi also became a community activist on social and environmental justice issues, such as fracking, in San Benito county.

Samuel Araiza Ramos was one of the Morales Rebecchi’s peers in the brand-new MEChA club in 1970-72. He was slightly older, having been born at Senator Lloyd Bentsen’s ranch in Hargill, Texas in 1946, then growing up in Mission, Texas in a lively *barrio* known as Monterreyito. In this *barrio* “you didn’t mess with teachers. They were like your second parents; you had a lot of respect for teachers.” About half of the teachers, and the principal, in his elementary school were Mexican-American, but students were not allowed to speak Spanish at school. He knew even then that this rule was a violation of his rights, but he and the other kids learned English.

Araiza Ramos played Little League baseball with John Terry, brother of Ralph Terry of the New York Yankees, as his coach. As a teen, he joined the Mormon Church and was renowned as an orator who could bring many new converts into the church. When he was 16, Araiza Ramos’s stepfather moved the family to Sacramento. Here Araiza Ramos attended Sacramento High School, did field work, and was very active in the Mormon Church. After graduating from Sacramento High in 1965 and completing a semester at Sacramento City College, he was called to join the armed forces. One day before he was inducted to go to war in Vietnam, he was granted a deferment by President Richard Nixon himself to go on a Mormon mission to Mexico. He was to serve there for two years. Getting a visa took six months; he spent the time taking Spanish classes at Brigham Young University.

While serving in the state of Chihuahua he came to know and revere the Tarahumara native people, who “don’t get credit for being among the smartest people in the world—they have not contaminated their water, air, or the earth itself.” Years later he helped found Apoyo Tarahumara, a local group that took corn, beans, and other material aid every six months to the Tarahumara in the Copper Canyon in Chihuahua. The effort was stopped after twenty years when narco-traffickers of various cartels began to set up check points which made it too dangerous to continue the project.

When Araiza Ramos returned to the US after his two-year Mormon mission in Mexico, his family was living in Gilroy, so he enrolled at Gavilan and found it “really exciting.” His good Spanish immediately allowed him to do an independent study under Tony Ruiz’s supervision, looking at literature that interested him. He closely studied the Mexican novel *La Vida Inútil de*

*Pito Pérez (The Futile Life of Pito Pérez).*

He also helped found MEChA, and after Morales Rebecchi had served, he became president. "It was time when change started coming in," he recalls. Araiza Ramos brought a cultural focus to Gavilan, with the help of Luis Candelaria, a teacher who had been trained specifically in Chicano Studies and was the brother-in-law of Luis Valdez of El Teatro Campesino. This connection led to Gavilan being one of the first venues for the Teatro Campesino play *No Saco Nada De La Escuela* (*I get nothing from school*).

With a poetic musician like Araiza Ramos at the helm, MEChA offered dance and musical events, including mariachis and bands such as the well-known Nightlighters. A few weeks after the Nightlighters played, Araiza Ramos learned the college had not yet paid the band. He had a good relationship with Ralph Schroder, so Araiza Ramos found Schroder and explained the problem. Schroder said he'd have to call a special meeting to get the check approved, and Araiza Ramos replied, "'You'd better have a special meeting.' He didn't tell me to get the heck out of there—he liked my spunk. Being kind of threatening was just a bluff, but it worked."

Another time, he went looking for Schroder in the weight room where the college president did his bodybuilding, and demanded something from him in a loud voice. Schroder told him to wait. Later he told Araiza Ramos privately, "Don't talk to me like that when the guys from Hollister are there—they will complain." Schroder meant, Araiza Ramos says, because he was Chicano.

MEChA also got an assist from Georgette Paris Smith, who angered conservative locals by inviting Cesar Chavez to the college to speak. Other teachers were also open and supportive of students' efforts. "They always wanted to give us a chance." When Araiza Ramos got a C on work he considered meaningful and good, he complained to his English teacher Ted Rempel. Rempel asked other faculty to read the work and suggest a grade, and it came back to Araiza Ramos with a B. The classified staffers also went out of their way to help students, he recalls. Even Sylvester "Babe" Heinberg, the dean of instruction, was gentle when he informed Araiza Ramos that he read too much communist literature. Araiza Ramos knew that was not true by a long shot, but the two had a peaceful discussion.

Like Morales Rebecchi, Araiza Ramos transferred to UCSC where he became a Latin American Studies major with a deep knowledge of the region's literature. He too served in Mini-Corps to become a teacher. Later he would complete his internship in Salinas. He moved to Hollister eventually, to teach in the K-6 system, using poetry, music, and theater to inspire students. His daughters also went into education and became teachers. One of them is now a principal of an elementary school in Gilroy. Araiza Ramos appreciates that Gavilan was affordable and non-elitist; like Morales Rebecchi, he considers his time there among the best years of his education.

The urgency that some Mexican-American students felt touched many others at Gavilan. The most startling student action Simonsen remembers was a demonstration by Hispanic students, who lay down before a meeting in front of the board room, requiring board members and public to step over them. In these years the Associated Student Body was a strong presence on campus; at times student leaders would confront the administration on issues, but they were not often combative (Child 8-13-02). Georgette Paris Smith's son Jeremy also attended the college in the 1970s. He recalls that while some Mexican-American or Chicano students

became politicized, for the most part students were so used to each other, having grown up together, that social patterns remained unaltered: there was a "white kids clique" and a "Mexican kids clique," and many people including Smith managed to maintain relationships in both.

If there were ethnic tensions, says Pat Stevens, he wasn't aware of them. Stevens was three-fourths Azorean and one quarter "Heinz 57" from dustbowl Oklahoma. A wrestler and a poor student in high school, he planned to join the Marines. But he graduated from San Benito High School in 1972, at the height of the Vietnam War. His wrestling coach and parents (one of whom was John Roscoe Stevens) coaxed him to try Gavilan instead, and to wrestle for the college team. And though "I hated school until I got here," Stevens found he suddenly had some control over his life in college, which made all the difference. "There was an orientation, and I picked a major, and they gave me some paperwork about which classes to complete, and then I was on my own." Stevens opted to major in drafting. He was more interested in agriculture, but his parents saw this as a step backward in a family that had done farm labor, and they won the argument that round.

Stevens had an eventful first day. In Paul Latzke's class on body mechanics, he weighed in at 172 pounds and Latzke discussed weight loss. By late November, Stevens was down to 138 pounds, and accustomed to the yo-yo dieting the wrestling team demanded. That first day, he also found that his locker was next to that of a large African-American football player from out of state. As there were only two African-American families in Hollister, "I had never been around Black people. I was quite intimidated" by the way his neighbor and a couple of other African-American students were shouting each other down. Actually, Stevens "thought I was gonna die" because he had unthinkingly moved his neighbor's shoes aside to make room. But after a loud, nasty exchange with another student, his neighbor turned to Stevens and said, sweetly apologetic, "Were my shoes in the way?" He put his arm around Stevens and said, "I got you, little guy." And they were good neighbors for the rest of the year.

Thanks to stand-out Roger Flook, son of chemistry teacher and coach Jerry Flook, the wrestling team won the state championship in 1973, though Stevens didn't place in this effort. This huge accomplishment was overshadowed by the football team, which had established itself as #1 national champion that year (See Document Analysis *Genuine Football*). And Stevens says the basketball team won the Coast Conference League as well, making it an extraordinary year for Gavilan men's sports.

Stevens was a classic student athlete who also had a job. On top of all that, he spent 18-24 hours a week in drafting lab, where instructor Robert Peacock taught lessons and then let students work independently. Stevens was good at the work, and enjoyed it. But he became irritated when a faculty member from another department cut through the drafting lab on his way to lunch several times, laughing and talking loudly and making distracting drawings on the board. Finally Stevens snapped, and yelled at him, "Get the f--- out of here!" Soon he was summoned by Dean of Students Don Klein, who told him not to talk like that to a teacher again, and then let him go.

He's the only one he knew, Stevens said, who ever had to see the dean. Most students were clean-living and eager to learn. He remembers political science teacher Frank Fletcher arguing politics with several East Indian students--"but not in a bad way." Mr. DuBois, who taught biology, did so using animals such as mice and snakes, which was interesting "to a country

boy like me.” And Babe Hubbel, who worked in the administration, took special care of Hollister students like Stevens when they needed to drop a class or fix a mess. In fact, Stevens made the deans list more than once, and kept trying because it was so rewarding to be recognized publicly. Stevens graduated after three years; he wanted to be a technical illustrator but did not have a real plan. He ended up working construction because he could read blueprints, and then did security for Teledyne. This led him to consider law enforcement, which led him back to Gavilan in the late 1970s for classes that would help him get a full-time permanent job.

Stevens earned a certificate of completion in Administration of Justice and became a reserve police officer in San Juan Bautista. He applied for and was accepted into the Gavilan-based Police Academy with 39 other cadets, five of them women. He wore a San Juan Bautista uniform but about 15 cadets were unaffiliated and wore a Gavilan uniform. The teachers were good, he says, but as a young male he didn’t really hear some of what they tried to impart, such as information about policing health hazards, stress on families, and PTSD.

During his first year in San Juan, Stevens solved a huge burglary case and helped recover thousands of dollars of merchandise stolen from local antique stores. This led to a handsome job offer from the San Benito County sheriff’s office, where he stayed for twenty years, until his good work there got him an offer from the county district attorney to work on investigations. Eventually, around the year 2000, Stevens returned to Gavilan for a third time, to teach classes in firearms at the Academy. And his parents lost their argument in the end about agriculture--today Stevens happily farms olives and walnuts on two plots; one of them is land that was passed down to him by his grandfather.

Ken Smyth, whose parents moved to Morgan Hill after his high school graduation, also had a “really good academic experience” at Gavilan, in 1974-5. He was the first member in his family to attend college. His parents did not have the same opportunity, and he saw the challenges they had faced without higher education. He often took the Castro Valley Road turn off of Highway 101 on his commute to Gavilan College and so drove by the several migrant shacks that still line the road. Often their inhabitants were bent over doing farmwork. The sight motivated him: “I’m gonna get my butt to class and get my degree,” he remembers thinking. He worked hard to get his general education classes completed so he could transfer to San Jose State, but took a ceramics class, too, his “first real exposure to hands-on art.” He also went to hear Ralph Nader, consumer advocate and political critic, speak in the Gavilan College gym in 1974. It was his first political event, and “I began becoming more aware on the state and national level” as a result. Smyth remembers Gavilan as being a place where there were many serious college students. “It was not a party school. It was wholesome.”

(For more portraits of Gavilan students in the 1970s, see Document Analysis #4, *Genuine Football*.)

By the mid-70s, there was a large number of international students at Gavilan. Their presence was a wonderful boon to the annual international dinners started by the language classes (Child 8-13-02). Many students from the Middle East, especially Iran after the deposal of the Shah, attended Gavilan. Some were attracted by the strong science program and encouraged by then-physics instructor Herb Peckham (Funk 4-4-03). Students responded well to international flavor. At one point, the college offered Farsi classes; at another, Gavilan provided instruction in Tagalog.

There was also a huge influx of Vietnam vets, many of whom came back traumatized by their war experience. Some used the GI Bill to attend Gavilan so they could simply heal in a safe environment (Child 8-13-02). One veteran, Ed Loeser, recalls steering clear of college services for GIs (6-21-04). For one thing, he had been self-sufficient for years, was working two jobs, and didn't need much financial or other help. For another, he didn't want to dwell on his Vietnam experience. Loeser never forgot the variety of opinions he found at Gavilan. "We thought teachers were professionals, smart, though some I disagreed with vehemently because of their political views. I remember having a major disagreement with one about who the heroes of the 60s were" (6-21-04).

Though Loeser took a medical x-ray technician course at Gavilan, he was an avid student who also took GE courses (6-21-04). He recalls being interested in the soccer and wrestling teams, but not having time to participate, between his work schedule and classes that were "pretty stiff at that time." One of his jobs was at the Gavilan cafeteria under manager Lina Lico. At that time, Loeser recalls, Lico's food was especially in demand with the many Police Academy students who were on campus for many hours a day.

Many students found time to participate in extra-curricular activities. Funk remembers festivals, international fairs, clubs, rallies, band concerts at every athletic event, choral performances, and field trips (4-4-03). Art students in particular had many options, thanks to Child:

I started an art club and within a couple years it was very very productive with art sales, art exhibits, fundraisers. They'd rent a couple buses to take students up to major exhibits in San Francisco. There were more younger students, though also there were always especially in fine arts a group of older students who did it for recreational involvement.... Students had time for these activities--many worked, but they also seemed to make time to be on campus more. (Child 8-13-02)

Music students also had satisfying experiences. Dave Porcella, who attended Gavilan to do general education in the early 1970s, returned as a music student in 1979-80 after a stint in the Navy. The first time around, he recalls that when peace activist David Harris came to the college, he brought along his wife Joan Baez; they advocated against the Vietnam War and she sang. He remembers them hanging out with her big white dog afterwards in the student union.

By the time he came back to Gavilan in 1979, the music department under Ron Ward "was really hopping." Porcella remembers an excellent staff of music teachers who offered a great variety of classes. He recalls that Ward, a violinist, had excellent contacts in the music world, so the Woody Hermann band, the Loading Zone, Mike Bloomfield of Electric Flag, and the Garcia brothers, John and Danny, all played at Gavilan in the late 70s and early 80s. Ward had students performing also, in various choirs and instrumental groups. Porcella recalls playing at the Student Union and performing from Sacramento to San Juan Bautista, in jazz festivals, the Calaveras Frog Jumps, and the San Juan Bautista mission. Ward also was responsible for the popular Café Internationals, which ended when he retired, Porcella says.

And he was a great teacher; “Ron Ward was teaching us to write four part harmonies. I still have the choral books where I wrote stuff, and I still use that stuff to this day,” says Porcella, who eventually took over and runs his family’s music store in Gilroy.

Ward also reached students who were not as musically inclined as Porcella. Tom Andrade, who graduated in 1969, tells of needing to fill a humanities requirement with a choir class. “Ron Ward would take a group of country hick guys and we would have to sing. The choir was a bunch of agriculturally-oriented characters--it was a blue collar town. But we sang Handel’s *Messiah*. That was pretty damn difficult, but we did it. The teachers cared.”

The very question of who was a college student changed in this decade, as the college began an extremely popular program for developmentally disabled adults. Carol Ghilarducci Cooper founded this pioneering disabled students’ program and worked hard to help it grow. A special education art therapist and counselor who kept her eyes open, she let the college know in 1972 that it made no sense to send unused Federal Vocational Education money back, rather than spending it on its target population of people with disabilities. “Special education” for people with disabilities was a brand new field, so counselor Rolf Bruckner invited her to do a feasibility study. Knowing that such a program could at the least serve veterans returning from Vietnam, she designed a study.

In the college district, the only special education program offered in K-12 systems was through the Gateway Center School in Gilroy, though there were scattered special education rooms at various schools. Cooper’s feasibility study looked at youth from ages 3 to 21 in southern Santa Clara and San Benito counties, and was funded by the Santa Clara County Office of Education. She found a “remarkably high” underserved developmentally disabled population. Some had been kept hidden at home, some had been institutionalized at young ages, some had found the psychiatric hospitals and halfway homes where they’d been living closed by budget cuts under California governor Ronald Reagan. All were in urgent need of services.

Cooper was given a part-time appointment, a small office in the Business building, and a work-study student who helped out with clerical tasks. She set about securing funding and program approval from the Gavilan district Board and the California State Chancellor’s office, and she also found community partners. These included HOPE Services of San Jose and the San Andreas Regional Center to help de-institutionalized people. She put together an Interagency Council in 1974, and identified individuals and families eager for services. Gavilan hired its first two part-time faculty and two part-time aides to serve developmentally disabled adults in 1974. (They and Cooper were given full-time status in 1975.) Luckily the first employee was Dave Ellis, a friendly, outgoing ex-jock whose football career was derailed by a college injury. Soon he was joined by Noni Gamino, who began to offer vocational education classes in Hollister. Besides developmentally disabled adults, the first populations served included deaf and hard-of-hearing students, students with visual impairments, and Vietnam veterans.

After 1975, once local parents saw the quality of the offerings, “the program grew exponentially,” and became self-supporting, according to Cooper. The biggest obstacle, she recalls, was other faculty. There was discomfort with disability, she recalls, as well as skepticism and anger that the college was serving people who could not necessarily succeed in college classes. One faculty member appointed himself lead antagonist. He argued that faculty in the program should not be considered college faculty, despite their credentials, and lobbied

administrators and the board to end the program. Cooper worked overtime to educate the community, and here Ellis and his irresistible personality helped; he got involved in college programs, helped host parties for faculty, started doing periodic barbecues to which everyone was invited, and generally made friends and influenced people (Sato 3-25-18).

Once the word got out in the community about services to developmentally disabled adults, calls poured in from other populations. Note-takers and other services for blind and visually impaired students were added in 1976-77. So were sign language classes and services to deaf and hearing impaired students, supervised by Gamino. Speech therapy for post-stroke survivors, and an adaptive PE program run by Ellis, were also added that year. A program for people with MS was begun in 1977, and one for survivors of head trauma in 1980. Cooper became full-time and expanded the program to offer more vocational and job training services, starting in Hollister. She also began training students as instructional aides. Many of the aides, including Karen Sato, Cooper says, "fell in love with the students" and went into rehabilitation or related work. (See Document Analysis, *Karen Sato Gets—and Keeps—A Faculty Job.*) Eventually the college added a huge Learning Disabilities program, and the Disability Resource Center today also plays a key role in supporting veterans.

Cooper raised money constantly, even after the federal government began channeling fairly reliable funds into the program in 1982. She was always looking for equipment, bus, tram, and computer funds on the local "rubber chicken" circuit of service clubs. She was amazed that other colleges were so slow to start programs—but was a consultant much in demand after her work at Gavilan. When she retired in 1998, Gavilan's program had 30 employees and was an integral part of the college. Even the faculty member who had tried to terminate the program eventually gave his support. The students in the program share much of the credit, Cooper says—they helped others see that they "are also here on the planet."

The student population at Gavilan College was further diversified in the 1970s by many single parents and divorced women who needed academic and workforce preparation. Single women's pregnancy and divorce rates jumped in the 1970s, and a labor-hungry economy in California helped many women aspire to good jobs. Kathleen Zanger founded the Re-entry Program for Women, which she directed with great success from 1972-81 (for a re-entry student perspective, see section on the 1980s.)

The college was small and new enough so that individual students could make unique contributions: one, Bruce Carmichael, a student in his early thirties who was leaving behind a troubled past, was hired by the college to do various construction projects (Child 8-13-02). He helped build the first Child Development Center, installed redwood paneling at the Student Center and counseling department, and built display cases for the art department that were graced by generations of student art (Child 8-13-02).

One group of students who made a huge impact were those in the football program. Bobby Garcia, former Gavilan student and father of 49ers quarterback Jeff Garcia, dedicated his life in the 1970s to building the program. He got a reputation with players and parents—that he cared, that he'd take care of his players, that he would work them hard ( Garcia 3-23-18). He was offered the job as head coach in 1972, and he took it. To Schroder's delight, Garcia "lived and breathed football 24 hours a day" (Child 8-13-02). In the early years, he faced a tough task just recruiting enough players for the team. Luckily the Stuebenville, Ohio pipeline Jerry Flook had set up in the 1960s still functioned, and Garcia worked hard to find talented locals as well,

visiting schools and connecting to potential players (Garcia 3-23-18). When he found them, sometimes he had to provide unofficial social services to keep them on the team: out-of-town players needed housing, many students needed food, and it was not unusual to have students with a variety of financial and logistical concerns. The job could be stressful—once the FBI came after three students for crimes unspecified; Garcia himself had to bump other students off the team for bad behaviors. One case involved a student borrowing Garcia's pick-up truck and brazenly smoking dope in it. He left an incriminating butt in the ashtray. Garcia kicked him off the team, but his teammates pleaded so hard for him that Garcia gave the student another chance (3-23-18).

In 1973, Garcia hit a once-in-lifetime jackpot with an unlikely dream team (See Document Analysis *Genuine Football*.) He had only 33 players (3-23-18). A defensive player had to double on offense. One key player was 18 with a wife and two kids to support. There were injuries and personal problems. But the small team developed amazing rapport; everyone knew everyone else's strengths and weaknesses. "We were like one. There was great chemistry among the coaches and players," Garcia recalls. One major asset was a local boy made good: that year, Garcia hired former Gilroy High School football star and ex-San Diego Chargers lineman Paul Latzke to coach the offensive line. "Talk about offensive line coaches—no one holds a candle to Latzke," Garcia said years later (3-23-18).

The team also had deep, strong community support, Garcia said (3-23-18). It played some great games full of drama and heart. By the end of the season, the Gavilan Rams were undefeated. In the state play-offs, Gavilan beat Sierra College and advanced to #4 status in the nation, according to official rankings. Then came a play-off game against Mira Costa, a powerhouse in Southern California with huge, well-trained players (3-23-28).

The Rams beat Mira Costa in a great game. The little team from Gilroy and Hollister now ranked #1 in the United States. Dick Stoddard, the quarterback, was named one of two top players in the state ("Rams' Stoddard"), and a remarkable eleven Rams players made All-Coast Conference. The Conference then tried to strip the Rams of their Coast Conference win with an eligibility complaint, but Athletic Director Latzke responded with legal action, which Gavilan won ("Rams Stripped"). The title was safe. Ralph Schroder, who had hired Garcia and supported athletics from the beginning, had the satisfaction of this colossal win before he left the college presidency. It was undoubtedly all the sweeter for being delivered by Garcia, whom he had supported since Garcia was a student.

### **The 1970s: Rudy Melone's Presidency and Garlic Festival**

Rudy Melone was hired to replace Schroder, and most staff immediately appreciated the new president's attributes. A dynamic Italian-American, Rudolph J. Melone was born in Connecticut on January 29, 1925 ("Dr. Rudy"). His mother died when he was very young, and his overwhelmed father placed him in a Catholic orphanage but continued to maintain a relationship with him (Melone). A Navy Seabee in World War II, he used the GI bill to earn a bachelors and a masters in education at the University of Portland, then earned a doctorate at the University of California-Berkeley (Melone). He helped found and served as dean at Pima Community College in Tucson, and was a dean at Skyline College in San Mateo before coming to Gavilan ("Dr. Rudy"). Melone met his wife Gloria while they were both in the doctoral program at UCB; she worked as an administrator of the social work program at San Jose State (Melone).

When he was hired at Gavilan, Melone had his hands full dealing with an unhappy staff. But he was brought in to listen to them, and he had a talent for being liked; he had the perfect personality for his assignment. "His personality was pleasing to most everyone--Rudy had a different thrust from Schroder. He would ask, How can we do it together?" (Simonsen). He was especially attuned to the person or group who felt left out. Gloria Melone relates that invariably, during the obligatory hand-shaking and schmoozing at any social event, she would look around and find Rudy talking to the person who was "sidelined, the one who is feeling lost or by himself or herself, usually a woman, usually older." He was drawn always to the underdog. Gloria Melone tells a story about the first female community college president in California, who attended a meeting of college presidents in Yosemite. The men congregated, greeting each other and laughing. The lone woman sat alone in the back of the room until Melone, seeing her, detached himself from the group, introduced himself, and guided her to the larger group so he could introduce her.

Gloria Melone also recalls greeting a gardener on campus one day. "He stopped and said 'Are you Mrs. Melone?' I said yes. He said, 'This is the first time a president of the college has spoken to me. Your husband greets me whenever he sees me.' Rudy was just that kind."

Accordingly, the campus under Melone was eventually more harmonious. Melone had terrific ideas, encouraging teachers to use professional growth funds to attend conferences and reach out into the world (Child 8-13-02). He did not want Gavilan to be small or isolated, but was a true promoter of education as a broadening experience. The Melones gave parties fondly remembered by some faculty--wine flowed around the Melones' pool, everyone relaxed in causal attire and even bathing suits, conversation was both sophisticated and intellectual. Melone began to decentralize decision-making as the college grew (Child 8-7-02), and one means of doing so was to empower department chairs to control more of the scheduling and other decisions. He also reduced the number of departments and changed the configuration of the discipline clusters.

The Board encouraged him also to build on Gavilan's relations with the community. Every morning Melone headed to a different local diner for breakfast--he'd asked around as soon as he started the job to find out when and where the farmers met, when and where the realtors met, and the small business owners, and so on (Melone). Then he started attending their breakfasts or lunches. "That's how he put himself out there to know what's out there in the community and what possible needs they had that the college might provide for," Gloria Melone recalls. He understood the differences between community college and state college or university systems, she says: a community college is more focused on local needs.

Melone heard early on that a group of Chicano activists were trying to start a non-profit housing agency. He attended their meeting and introduced himself, says Glora Melone. "This is the height of the Chicano movement, and any white person coming in, people don't know him, they wonder who is he? Why is he here? It was the usual suspicions of people who have been ignored or taken advantage of." Her husband just listened, and then offered his services. His expertise in writing grants and proposals and in dealing with government bureaucracies was invaluable. Thus he helped the group launch the community non-profit housing developer South County Housing, which over many years built thousands of low-income housing units for seniors, families, and other populations in need. He personally walked the group's incorporation papers into the right office in Sacramento.

Melone can't be mentioned without emphasis upon his role as the originator and co-founder of the Garlic Festival. The first festival in 1978 was Melone's idea. Gloria Melone said he got the idea from a small article in the SF Chronicle about Arleux, France, a town that held a garlic festival and claimed to be the garlic capital of the world. Melone showed Gloria the article and demanded, "How could they say that? How dare Arleux call itself the garlic capitol of the world, when Gilroy at that time was growing the most garlic?" Some people were embarrassed by Gilroy's garlic smell, she recalls, but "Rudy said if you got a lemon, make lemonade."

When he mentioned the idea at his Rotary Club, garlic producer Don Christopher was on board from the start, but many others thought it sounded crazy and needed more convincing, recalls Gloria Melone. They helped him give it a try anyway, and the festival that was planned for 5,000 that first year brought in over 15,000 people.

Karen Sato, a Gavilan alumna home from San Francisco State, volunteered at the first festival and remembers how hot it was, and that "parking was crazy--out in a field" near Bloomfield Ranch (5-13-18). The ticket-takers had to recycle tickets because too few had been printed (Sato 5-13-18). The disabled students program and Sato had a good relationship with Melone, and so she volunteered to serve pasta al pesto. Sato and Sally Cali French labored away for more people than the site could reasonably hold (5-13-28). Melone had worried there would not be enough booths, so he talked his three high-school age sons into taking a booth, and left the choice of what to sell up to them (Melone). One had just returned from a student exchange in France, so the Melone boys sold escargot, and their mother went back and forth all day from chopping garlic in her kitchen to taking tickets and running errands at the festival (5-28-18). Since that first hectic weekend, the Festival has raised millions of dollars for hundreds of community non-profits.

Melone left a lasting stamp on the festival by implementing a structure that continually brought in new people to lead. Someone who ran a committee one year would be training the next year's leaders, which helped avoid the kinds of cliques that exclude new people, according to Gloria Melone. This system also infused the festival with new ideas each year, as new people tried out better methods and approaches. The festival became so successful that the Department of Labor sent three employees from its Washington DC offices to find out what made it work so well. They wrote a pamphlet about how to put on a festival, based on many Garlic Festival ideas, and distributed it nationally. Since the 1980s food festivals have sprouted in many large and small communities, and many are based on Garlic Festival methods. He also ensured the long-term fiscal health of Gilroy's Chamber of Commerce, which he did not like to see "begging for money" at the city council—so he offered it the Festival's beer concession (Melone).

Melone also oversaw big changes at Gavilan, especially the unionization of the staff. Until 1977, faculty and classified staff belonged to guild-type organizations. These were membership-optional, and planned various social functions. They also did their best to advocate for salary and scheduling improvements. The negotiations were fairly one-sided; members of the two organizations would meet and discuss, sometimes for several meetings, to make deals on salaries. "We did negotiate, but it was ugly" for the teachers, who had no real clout, Funk recalls (4-11-03). Often the staff resorted to threats, withdrawals of service, and work to contract, refusing to do extras that would have built much-desired enrollment numbers. There was a fair amount of "yelling, cussing, swearing" (Funk 4-11-03). Before the

faculty union was founded, schedules were made up by the dean, who handed each teacher his or her assignment (Child 8-15-03).

All over the country in the 1970s and 80s, collective bargaining was being legalized and sometimes mandated for community college employees. In March 1975 the Gavilan Board tried to stare down the impending tidal wave with a resolution condemning collective bargaining. "[P]resent statutes now provide adequately for employees, certificated and classified, to obtain reasonable benefits from their respective employers." the board argued. Besides fearing the adversarial nature of collective bargaining, the Board members foresaw, and lamented, their own loss of control over "the management of their district." The Board urged opposition to a state Senate bill that would mandate collective bargaining in California.

Local sentiment aside, the Rodda bill passed in 1976, setting up collective bargaining for the community college systems (Child 8-7-02). "The bill defined the major bargaining units-- faculty, classified support staff, and administrators--and specified the parameters of bargaining. Working conditions, compensation, and hiring and layoff procedures were negotiable, but curriculum was not; it remained within the domain of academic senates and administrations" (Rubiales). This was followed by the Stuhl bill, which allowed agency union shops in which even non-union members would pay dues for services that benefitted them. After a couple years of organizing, the Board granted recognition to the Classified Staff Employees Association, CSEA, a group of classified employees in early 1977; they recognized the Gavilan College Faculty Association, GCFA, in June, according to Board records. These developments had a major impact on Gavilan and on other colleges.

By 2000, all but one of California's community colleges engaged in collective bargaining. Together, these colleges make up the largest system of higher education in the United States. Seventy-two distinct districts administer 114 colleges, according to the system's chancellor's office, and dozens of "centers" at locations such as military bases, shopping malls, and urban storefronts; more collective bargaining occurs within this system than anywhere else in American higher education (Rubiales).

Until the early 1980s, the classified union was by far the stronger of Gavilan's unions, with good leadership and excellent statewide support (Funk 4-11-03). Funk recalled that they had reps "who did their homework," and negotiated fringe benefits for life for all early classified employees of the district. Ed Loeser, who had left to work as a mechanic elsewhere, wanted to return to work at Gavilan. He found the hiring process quirky--for a boiler position, he was asked carpentry questions on a written test. Eventually he got a job as campus mechanic--though here, too, he was baffled by the process, as no one called to tell him he got the job. For awhile, Loeser maintained the college's modest fleet of station wagons, pick-ups, and groundskeeping equipment. In doing so, he joined his father-in-law, who was the head of maintenance at the college. Because Loeser also had welding skills, he was drafted to be the college's welder, and created most of the handrails and gates on campus.

He liked working at the college: "It felt secure compared to the real world. I liked the people and the atmosphere, and I liked working with students. There was an opportunity to learn and grow and do things at a college." Loeser misses the high standard for excellence set by early college leaders. "When I came on, every day when I finished I would ask myself, have I done my best today? I'd go home exhausted but I felt like I accomplished something."

Before Loeser came, in the early 1980s, there was an unsuccessful job action by the classified union--unsuccessful because CSEA was at that point an open shop, and too few employees joined the strike to make it effective. In his second or third year, he joined the union because he wanted to be involved and improve conditions. Loeser lists some of the union's accomplishments over the years: CSEA secured an agency shop for its members, regularized hiring and promotion procedures, worked on relations with supervisors, and improved salary and working conditions.

But there also have been set-backs. Loeser points to an ongoing problem of getting financial information from the college district, and he mourns personnel cuts in the maintenance area. At one point there were seven maintenance employees and 14-18 custodians serving the main campus on day and night shifts. There were also three gardeners; these positions have been cut far back. In the old days, all these employees made the campus look great; Mel Bettancourt, the facilities manager in the 80s, also had a high level of professionalism Loeser recalls. "He was very meticulous and proud of the campus, and insistent that everything always shine."

The college's faculty union, say old-timers, had a rougher start than the CSEA. At its inception, the GCFA, a California Teachers Association and National Education Association affiliate, had about 70 fulltime employees in the representative unit. Three-fourths voted for the union (Funk 4-1--03). Melone made a speech when the board approved the union, expressing concern that hostilities would prevent the college from moving forward (Child 8-13-02). The college did more than talk; shortly after the faculty voted to unionize, the administration swept faculty who did some administrative work as part of their load into administration, leaving the union with only 55 rather than more than 70 it would have had.

This posed a problem for the union's influence--it was "an intentional undermining of the faculty's influence on education," the faculty said later (Williams 14), and an "overreaction to collective bargaining legislation" (Williams 16). The union naturally did not wish to lose so many of its members from the bargaining unit, so the GCFA sued the district to force an interpretation. State labor officials who were called in to adjudicate found that those employees were in fact management (Child 8-13-02). The law said that if staff were involved in hiring, firing, and scheduling, they had to be declared management (Child 8-13-02). Overnight, the bargaining unit lost that group of members.

The re-classification divided the faculty. Kent Child was one of the sudden administrators. "All of us who had been faculty one day became administrators the next," Child remembers, even though many continued to do some teaching (8-13-02). Friends on the faculty began treating the new administrators differently, which Child remembers as personally painful (8-13-02).

It was also costly, the faculty said. "...the College, over a four year period, spent an excessive amount of money in direct administrative costs. This management structure at one point included 27 management positions compared to 61 full-time faculty members" (Williams 16).

Because GCFA was weak and ineffective for its first several years, Funk recalls, there was not much it could accomplish. "It was a joke," and was openly laughed at by the Board at one memorable meeting in 1981 (Funk 4-11-03). At that point, Funk, Jerry Moore (Administration of Justice), Lud Oliviera (counseling), Jerry Flook (chemistry), and Don Santana (biology) decided they had to strengthen the GCFA. It ceased to be a laughingstock, Funk recalls, and made steady improvements in salary and working conditions.

Two problems arose right away, however, for the GCFA (Funk 4-11-03). Four or five colleagues did not want to pay union dues, and contested the legitimacy of the election. They ended up in small claims court, where the judge found that the election had been fair, and he ordered them to pay their dues and thus become part of the GCFA (4-11-03).

And the two sides did not work well together. Child recalls twenty years of union-district negotiations as largely negative and adversarial (8-13-02). The district and the union would both make proposals that were not serious, merely expressions of hostility or arrogance, such as the district's proposed \$100 parking fee for all staff (Funk 4-11-03). Thus a great many board meetings were invaded by aggrieved faculty, often wearing buttons created on a home machine by counselor Lud Oliviera, and a great many newspaper headlines from this period emphasize tense relations (Funk 4-11-03). It did not help when a board member, Rocky Lydon, the early champion of local control, showed a caustic streak during the many contract disputes (Child 8-13-02). At more than one meeting packed with faculty, Lydon appeared wearing a transistor radio and an earplug. "He was obviously checked out and not paying any attention, and he sat there with this little smile listening to the game" as faculty made fiery speeches about their grievances (Child 8-13-02). As part of the show, *San Jose Mercury News* South County bureau chief Bill Glines frequently leapt to his feet and lectured the board about the Brown Act, open meetings, and other issues (Funk 4-11-03).

Funk believes that the long-term benefits of unionization have helped the college by helping faculty. "We've learned to work together over the years and the district has benefited by getting a better faculty" (Funk 4-11-03). Faculty have a voice today in the yearly calendar and have been consulted regarding facilities, technology, and even parking decisions. Gavilan developed a model faculty evaluation process, and was the first in the state to include peer evaluations that are truly intended to improve teaching. And because of the union contract, all staff must be treated equally by administrators (Funk 4-11-03), an improvement over the old days when inconsistent evaluations meant that administrators could "go after people" they disliked.

If the tensions that led to, and resulted in, collective bargaining defined the early and mid-1970s, Proposition 13 ended the decade with a sickening downturn that took years to overcome. In this period, several states underwent taxpayer revolts that ended the healthy, stable funding base for community colleges in many places, including California.

The taxpayer revolt of 1978 resulted in a sixty percent loss of property tax revenues paid within the district to public agencies, according to a Board resolution from the era, and amounted to a massive loss of \$1.7 million in income for Gavilan. The Board mandated that the district freeze all salaries at 1977-78 levels, and rescinded all sabbatical leaves. But mandating salaries without negotiating them with the unions was illegal, and the unions forced the district to the negotiating table. Naturally, more unpleasantness resulted.

When money tightened, the union argued that too much money was going to administrative salaries. There was also considerable bitterness about the Board's longtime proud tradition of giving back collected tax revenues when they exceeded strictly-adhered to budgets. The post-Proposition 13 formula was based upon dollar amounts collected in previous tax years, so the college dunned itself out of some very sorely needed funds by returning revenue to taxpayers (Child 8-13-02). Though there were statewide efforts to equalize wealthy and poor districts so

that community colleges would receive roughly proportional funding, equalization was never popular with large, wealthy districts. And in San Benito County much land is under the Williamson Act, which means in any case that it will generate less property tax revenue (Child 8-13-02).

After Proposition 13, many old-timers on the classified staff simply retired. Prop. 13 effectively stopped the faculty turnover for some years; people needed to hang on to jobs because new jobs just weren't opening up. Little new blood was hired and the faculty make-up stayed fairly constant, which was a silver lining that lent stability to Gavilan (Child 8-13-02). But as revenues dropped, enrollments kept rising in the 1970s. In fact, getting enough teachers for all those students was a problem for years. There were qualified candidates at San Jose State, UCSC, and in Monterey at various institutions, but very few came from the district itself (Child 8-13-02). This difficulty continued until the mid to late 1980s, he said, and kept full-timers who wanted to do extra work busy teaching overloads.

One part-time teacher who joined the staff in 1979 was Donna Cowan, who taught English full-time at Live Oak High School, but took on a night class at Gavilan teaching speech. She recalls that at that time "Gavilan was kind of a laid back school; for some students it was a joke or put down if you had to go to Gav. That has all changed. But then [students] all wanted to go out of town, to get out of this small ag community. They wanted to go to UCLA or Berkeley, areas that were more sophisticated..."

Cowan found friction between "Anglos and Mexicans" at Live Oak, but she did not see that tension at Gavilan. Her evening classes were small, and she had veterans, college graduates who wanted to learn public speaking, even a prison guard. "They were a breath of fresh air--they appreciated the course. For the most part, adults who come here know that they have a second chance to get on with their careers or their lives. I see brilliant students at Gavilan."

Cowan also greatly enjoyed her college co-workers, who provided an intellectual sanctuary from "175 hormonal teenagers at Live Oak," and an oasis of liberal thinkers in a conservative community.

### **The 1980s: Voices for Change**

The 1980s started badly for community colleges in general, and for Gavilan in particular. In 1980, Gotthold "Bud" Ottmar, a coach and administrator, died suddenly, after seemingly successful surgery. Despite a long-standing pledge to not name buildings after departed staff, no matter how beloved they were, the board gave in and named the gymnasium after Ottmar. But the death was hardly an auspicious beginning for the decade, and the coaching and athletic staff found reshuffling in bad budget times difficult.

And all over campus, budget woes were acute, thanks to Proposition 13. In 1980-81, according to Resolution No. 284 passed by the district board, community colleges had an un-funded deficit of \$40 million. The Board urged citizens to be aware of the serious danger to the college, and to "support measures to raise new and additional revenue to ensure the future of the state's most precious resource--its students and future productive citizenry" (Resolution 284). But Gavilan had to cut programs and services. One lasting effect of the 1980s budget crisis was a gradual phase-out by attrition of many vocational programs, including construction technology. The classified staff took the brunt of other cuts; while it numbered 102 in 1982, by

1984 it had been cut to 78 (Williams 5). Garcia also remembers deep cuts to sports programs, especially football, that made it hard to support competitive teams (3-23-18).

With deficit spending, struggling programs, and bare-bones staff at all the colleges, it was perhaps inevitable that change come. One shift decried by faculty was an easing of requirements upon vocational-technical students that had the effect of weakening the college's general education offerings. A faculty blueprint group complained in 1984 of a "basic attitudinal change....Where once the College insisted all students be exposed to a general education, it now acquiesced before student desires to simply get career certificates and move on" (Williams 12). When exposure to general education was not required, the faculty argued, "more and more [students] choose not to take courses beyond those in skill and career areas." Even public information de-emphasized academics, they said, instead touting career and skills courses (12). There was, as a result, "an absence of intellectual activity and general excitement" about college, they said (13).

State level responses to Prop. 13 were also discouraging to many involved in community college education; pressed for funding, the state overturned one of the most hallowed foundations of community college education: its tuition-free provision. After Proposition 13, districts were so starved for funds that the state legislature approved allowing community colleges to charge tuition for the first time. In 1982 the Gavilan Board tried vainly to buck the trend with a fierce resolution reaffirming the need for free community college education: "Whereas the legislature has abdicated its responsibility as mandated by the California Constitution to ensure adequate funding for the California public school system the Board of Trustees of Gavilan Joint Community College District is adamantly and unanimously opposed to tuition fees at the community colleges." Yea or nay at Gavilan, tuition became a reality the next year for community college students.

Alan Viarengo arrived at Gavilan in 1983, part of the first crop of students who had to pay tuition. He was working 40 hours a week and taking 22 units successfully, and he had no issue with paying. In fact, in speech class he found so many students were getting up to blast the state for charging them, he began to argue that the state subsidized students' K-12 education, but should not be expected to continue the subsidies for college. He honed his argumentation skills in this and other classes, enjoying playing devil's advocate. He especially enjoyed philosophy classes taught by Don Klein.

He presented most of the fallacies with the Latin names (*argumentum ad baculum*, for example), which I still greatly appreciate because that is one language I always wanted to learn but never had the opportunity. My passion for writing expanded from taking his course. In local editorials, I would purposefully write with fallacies just to yank people's chains. Not only were the reactions wonderfully entertaining, but the ensuing discussions were fantastic. (5-8-18)

He also liked his political science class taught by Frank Fletcher, though he challenged Fletcher in class over their liberal text book. A math major who taught himself to program computers, he'd missed a key placement test his first semester, and ended up in too-easy a math class. The next semester, after standing in "a long-ass line" to register for a more appropriate math class, he found himself having to explain what he needed to Fletcher, who was an academic adviser. He was pleased when Fletcher remarked that Viarengo knew what he was doing, and signed

off on his schedule. Knowing he could challenge a teacher and earn his respect was “a great experience.”

Viarengo’s class was also the first to have longer semesters, favored by humanities and social science faculty, replace the shorter quarters (Williams 6). He loved going deep into languages, and enjoyed his Spanish classes with Tony Ruiz, especially the party at the end of the semester at Ruiz’s house. An Italian-American whose family was from the Piemonte region of Italy, he also very much enjoyed Dr. Cassareno’s Italian classes, which he started at Gavilan and continued at San Jose State. He worked in the computer lab on campus and made friends he still has today. Viarengo went through graduation proudly, the first in his family to get an AA degree. He transferred to SJSU to major in math but had a miserable experience there. He was happier doing a masters in statistics at Cal State Hayward. This landed him a full-time job at Gilroy Foods doing agricultural risk assessment as part of the company’s research and development program. In 2001 he also began teaching statistics and other math classes part time at Gavilan, a job he likes partly because he has real-world experience to help his students think about how they can use math professionally. His time at the college gave him a strong foundation upon which to build, he says, and let him start his college education while living at home to save money.

Gavilan struggled through the budget crisis with student tuition and cost-cutting measures, but the faculty detected a drop in quality for general education. In a blueprint paper for reform, a group of GCFA and Senate appointees analysed college offerings from 1971-83 and detected a decline in several humanities, science, and social science offerings (Williams 6). While student population doubled in this period, the committee said, the number of sections was cut from a high of 119 in 1973-4 to a low of 96 in 1980-1. Certain disciplines suffered more, they argued--economics, history, philosophy, and literature were declining despite their importance (6). And the Chicano studies program students had fought for “simply has ceased to exist, although Hispanics remain an important element of our student population and community” (Williams 6-10).

The college survived Prop. 13 and its enormous fall-out, but the toll on Melone was significant. He was diagnosed with macular degeneration, and slowly went blind. He retired in 1985, when the budget crisis had eased some, and the college was beginning to experience recovery and even upswing. The Melones moved to San Francisco, where Rudy tried but failed to work only one day a week teaching graduate students at the Saybrook Institute, now Saybrook University. Soon his talents were recognized there, Gloria Melone says, and he was serving as interim president while the university’s board conducted a presidential search. He died in 1998, saddening many friends in the Gavilan district. He was inducted into the Garlic Festival’s Hall of Fame in 2017. The commemoration said, “Few people anywhere have left their mark in a community as indelibly as Rudy Melone” (“New Gilroy”).

Melone was succeeded by John Holleman. Gavilan's third president was a tall man with an outgoing, imposing presence, and a shock of white hair (Child 1-15-03). Holleman came to Gavilan from the presidency of Vista College in Oakland. Funk remembers Holleman as having great integrity and honesty. He was more effective, however, one-on-one than in large groups, which made him uncomfortable (4-25-03).

Holleman was a strong academician, and had been a community college administrator for many years. He'd been an internationally recognized marine biologist, specializing in

crustaceans that he'd collected in dives all over the Pacific (Child 1-15-03). He continued to teach labs for introductory biology classes during his presidency. During some of Holleman's administration, every administrator taught at least one class a year to encourage a holistic approach to running the college. But there were unsuccessful teachers among the administrators, and the college grew so much that administrative work increased, especially after Proposition 13. The practice was phased out (Child 1-15-03), to the relief of some faculty who questioned the wisdom of the arrangement.

Holleman was hired to herald the college through a wave of enrollment and fiscal growth (Child 1-15-03), and was able to award some generous raises. He was also the first to lead the college out of deficit spending and into surplus years (Funk 4-15-03). There was also a small cluster of retirements in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and some shifting of faculty. The board was interested in expanding geographically. Holleman laid the groundwork for establishing satellite sites in Hollister and Morgan Hill, though he did not stay to see those realized. He worked with city governments trying unsuccessfully to find a landowner who might donate land to the college. Instead, the college rented a series of store fronts in Hollister, where demand seemed insatiable, and offered classes.

Holleman had good ties in Sacramento (Child 1-15-03). State Assembly and Senate representatives visited the college often during his presidency. Holleman worked hard for special funding for small districts, especially equalization funding. He was so good at financing that he did most of the college's fiscal management himself, and his philosophy was to "always overestimate your expenses and always underestimate your income" (Child 1-15-03). Thus what was on paper was not always accurate, and this created mistrust among faculty, who suspected that there was a hidden budget. When money began to dry up during the late 1980s recession, the college again ended up in deficit funding due to the ebb and flow of state finances. But Holleman had built up a huge reserve, so money was there to pay the bills for the first few years (Child 1-15-03).

The 1980s also brought some positive changes. One of them was an extraordinarily heartening experiment in shared work which resulted in the beautiful restoration of the faculty-owned Mayock House. Although the venture took eight years, from 1981 to 1989, all those who participated speak of the work as a pleasure. In 1981 the Gilroy Historical Society contacted Jim Williams, then a history instructor at Gavilan (Funk 4-4-03). There was an 1886 virgin redwood house at Fourth and Church Streets in Gilroy, Williams was told, that was slated for tear-down unless someone could find space and move it. The Historical Society wanted to preserve the house, which was built by an Italian farm family from wood hauled off Mount Madonna. Williams interested the faculty, and then the college, in taking the donation.

A small piece of land at the west end of the northern parking lot was donated by the college, and for \$10,000 the house's second story was removed and the building was transported to the site in 1982 (Funk 4-4-03). Construction technology students poured a new foundation, and provided some of the work in renovating the house, but when the instructor Hal Dromensk retired, the program died. (Dromensk's interest in the project continued, however, and he volunteered after his retirement to work with the project until it was completed.) Mayock House, named for its last inhabitant, a *Gilroy Advocate* publisher who came to town after the Civil War, became a faculty project (Funk 4-4-03). The GCFA soon ran out of funds to renovate the building, however, and the college gave the GCFA a three-month deadline to get construction moving again on the incomplete eyesore. Under this pressure, GCFA member

Jerry Moore got the idea that faculty could float loans to the project at nine or ten percent interest, and money began to flow again. In addition, the faculty assessed itself \$10 a month until the house was completed. In all, the GCFA poured \$95,000 cash into the house (Funk 4-4-03).

Even more impressively, the faculty found a project that allowed people to work together, relax together, and celebrate together. Funk and Moore organized work crews after school, on weekends, and during school vacations. They hung sheetrock, put in flooring, and installed plumbing (Funk 4-4-03). When necessary, the GCFA hired experts to do tricky jobs, but most work was completed by college staff and students, some of whom were "terrific craftsmen-- John Hansell, Bill Reimel, Ken Miller, and Ted Rempel in particular," said Funk (4-4-03). Funk himself got the job of picking out interior furnishings--"no one would do it"--so he chose a color scheme and lighting. The oldest object in the building is the commode, which comes from the old Gilroy jailhouse, considerably pre-dating the rest of the Mayock house. Though it had to be re-porcelained, the commode works fine, if a bit loudly because the workers opted not to soundproof the bathroom (Funk 4-4-03). The building cannot be used for student gatherings because it is not state-certified as earthquake safe under the Field Act. But faculty and staff have had many parties, gatherings, and meetings at Mayock House, and many interviews have been held there because of the elegance of the surroundings. The Gilroy Historical Society is given courtesy use of one upstairs room, and those who worked on the house feel proud every time they drive by it when they remember the work they did.

Another historical building on campus became briefly notorious in 1981: the chapel was used in a movie. According to the college's facilities website:

The Chapel was built in 1893 at the location of Dunneville Corners in Hollister as San Felipe Community Church. From 1915 to 1927, it was used by a variety of denominations. For decades it stood abandoned and vacant before Gavilan College's first president (Ralph Schroder) took an interest in the chapel and purchased it with help from Native Daughters of the Golden West. Between 1972 and 1975 Gavilan College construction technology students renovated the building. It was renovated again in 2005 with funds from Measure E.

In 1981 Lloyd Bridges, Jane Seymour, and other actors visited campus to film a chapel scene for *East of Eden*, and reputedly hired some staff as extras. The chapel remains popular with locals for weddings, christenings, and even memorials.

One area that expanded in this time of contraction was the ESL program. In the 1980s, ESL students became a larger and larger population at the college. Georgette Paris Smith had prodded the college to serve non-native speakers, and the first ESL class was offered in 1973 ("English"). She and Spanish instructor Tony Ruiz co-taught it in a combined classroom in Humanities 102-104, which had had a wall removed (and later rebuilt). There was considerable student demand, but also much attrition, says Alan Porcella. Ruiz and Paris Smith recommended that someone full-time be hired to develop an ESL program. Thus Porcella became the first full-time ESL teacher. The numbers were low when he started in fall 1974, he recalls, but the program grew. The administration approved Porcella's request for an instructional assistant position in ESL, and Porcella said this was important to the success of the program. Not only was this person a "helping hand" with ESL, but many students came

with problems at work or home. First Mary Lee, then Dora Griggs, and ultimately Loretta Carrillo filled this role.

Carrillo, who worked both as instructional assistant and later as faculty in the program, watched the ESL program expand during the 1980s. Carrillo had grown up in San Jose and attended Santa Clara University, where she met her husband, Luis Carrillo, who became an educator in Gilroy. In college she was involved in liturgical and Folklorico dance. When she walked onto the Gavilan campus for the first time to ask about employment options, a client she'd helped in her job at a San Jose bank serendipitously recognized her, encouraged her, and helped her find the HR office. It seemed like a good omen.

Initially Carrillo was hired as a staff person for night classes. She liked being on the classified staff at Gavilan--it really was like a family, and "people knew each other, there were good friendships and the ladies got together for parties and potlucks." The college was small so "there was not a lot of positional power. Rudy Melone would stop by and talk--he'd get out of his office and circulate. It was very friendly."

Carrillo tells a powerful story showing how staff looked out for one another. One day the Human Resources director, Iris Bliss, came to show Carrillo a scholarship brochure she'd received. It was for a Masters program in multicultural education that USF was to offer, using classrooms at San Jose State University. "I think you should continue your education," Bliss told her. Carrillo was interested, but the program ran from 3-9 p.m. and so her night job made it impossible. But Bliss took her work providing resources to humans seriously, and simply resolved to find Carrillo another more workable on-campus job--which she did. Carrillo became the instructional assistant for ESL classes, working in the mornings with Porcella's students in small groups to practice reading, writing, speaking, and listening. It was a good fit--Carrillo remembered her grandfather's efforts to learn English, and she identified with students who were so hard-working. She earned the masters degree and continued to work with Gavilan's ESL students.

Besides tutoring, she also began to teach a class under Porcella's guidance. He would provide lesson plans and ideas for carrying them out, so she "learned to teach from a master teacher." She found ESL students motivated and respectful; many of them urgently needed the English survival skills which the program offered. Many were women, and they were of diverse ages. In the early years, the great majority of students were Spanish-speaking agricultural workers--they cared for orchards, harvested row crops, and packed food in canneries. Carrillo remembers a turning point for her students--in the mid-1980s a young, bold male student crossed an invisible barrier for farmworkers--he applied for and got a job at McDonalds. She can't remember students venturing beyond farm work before this, but his achievement seemed to encourage others, and many of her students sidestepped the fields and also began working in various businesses around town.

As time went on, she began getting students in class who had had more education in their home countries, including professionals, and students from more parts of the continent and world. Demand for ESL classes increased considerably after 1984, so the program kept expanding. She became involved in assessing students so they could be properly placed. All along she also did a lot of problem solving. Though the program enjoyed great attendance and more than paid for itself, students had employment and other worries. Many "did not feel they could become part of the larger campus community." Her students were often hurrying

away after class to pick up children or go to jobs; they did not have time for school activities. Still, in the 1990s she helped start and support a student Folklorico club, and for some years the students performed Mexican dances at college and community events.

But California during the late 1980s and 1990s became a battleground over immigration, and as events conspired to place restrictions on immigrants, the ESL program began to shrink. Propositions 187 in 1994 and 209 in 1996 were key to its decline. Requirements were placed on students to prove legal status before they could enroll or get financial aid; the community college system also tightened up on repeatability for classes, which some ESL students found challenging (Carrillo). Students were sent letters about use of social security numbers that they may not have understood. So the enrollments dropped off, and many potential students became afraid that attending the college could expose them to immigration problems.

At the same time, with new full-time faculty, there were new ideas about how and what to teach (Carrillo). Years of discussion resulted in a tightly articulated series of classes, but the state began encouraging ESL programs to move some classes to a non-credit program. This created confusion and uncertainty, and took years to sort out so that some vocational and “survival” classes are non-credit at Gavilan, though teachers may teach credit only classes, non-credit only classes, or both. When Carrillo retired in 2015, the program was dramatically smaller than it had been in its heyday, but it still offered immigrant students a chance to learn and succeed. Child, who supported the program for years as Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences, points out the program’s benefit to students: “...the mushrooming of the program into dozens of classes and hundreds of students is a good indicator that the program has been profoundly important in many lives” (Child 1-15-03).

Another new program was the Re-Entry program for women who had been out of school for five or more years. Counselor Joyce Glass staffed the program starting in the early 1970s, along with director Kathy Zanger. “As a counselling, advocacy, and support program for an average of 250 to 300 re-entry students each year, the program gained national recognition as a model endeavor,” a faculty report concluded in 1984 (Williams 10). At its height, the program had “a director, office staff, a bilingual staff aide, comfortable women’s center and office, and Child Development Center...” (10). It also offered classes in women’s history, sociology, and “Contemporary American Women,” all taught by part-time faculty including, at one point, UCSC’s Bettina Aptheker (whose students did a class project that over time turned into the massive local social services provider begun as a battered women’s shelter, Community Solutions).

When Mary Ann Bruegmann started in the program in 1980, the concept was that the women would go through classes together, as a supportive group, but within a few days that proved untenable for her cohort. Bruegmann, an Italian-American mother of six, step-mother of two, and foster parent to several more, came to the program with considerable life experience. She had married at 17 and traveled with Don Carrera, her first husband, to various Air Force bases, where he served for four years; one posting in the American South opened her eyes to the casual racism there. Then they returned to the San Jose area, and he became a firefighter. They settled into happy domesticity in the Cambrian park neighborhood and had five children.

But her husband was killed in a freak accident while fighting a fire; Bruegmann reached the hospital in time to say goodbye. She took whatever jobs she could find, typing for Santa Clara

University students, helping at a Catholic “club” for young people she’d once frequented, staffing a women’s gym, and ironing for 35 cents a shirt. She also learned to her dismay that the city of San Jose did not provide pensions to widows, even if their spouses were killed in the line of duty. So the entire fire department mobilized to attend a city council meeting to protest this policy; the city council reversed itself and Bruegmann got a small pension. Because of her efforts, so did many others.

Her brother moved in to provide support while he earned a law degree from SCU. After four years of mourning, she was introduced to Bob Bruegmann, a straight-forward divorcee who liked her kids and had two daughters of his own. They married and moved to Gilroy. Bruegmann bore one more child in this marriage, and the couple parented many foster children as well. In her forties, Bruegmann heard from a bowling league friend about Gavilan’s new re-entry program. She regretted not going to college, so she decided to give it a try, even though her youngest daughter was only a toddler.

Free daycare at the college childcare center was a huge help. Bruegmann and other moms had to contribute two hours a week of childcare there, and take a Child Development class, but the childcare was well worth it. She found Glass and Zanger very helpful, but after only a day or two she complained at a Re-entry meeting that the English teacher they all shared was talking down to them, and his class was too easy. Other women agreed; many were avid readers who kept up on world events and politics. At the next class, he was putting abbreviations on the board and asking the women to define them; he did “ASAP” and “FOB” and then asked Bruegmann to define SNAFU. “The clean version or the dirty one?” she shot back, making him laugh. Then Bruegmann “went into a tirade”--he was acting as if the women knew nothing; she lectured him about the value of their life experience and complained that he was wasting their time with simplistic lessons.

“You didn’t even give us an entrance exam,” she complained.

“Do you think you could pass the test?” he asked.

Bruegmann said she could, and so did other women. The next class session he had English tests ready; Bruegmann and many other women tested into classes one and two levels above where they had been placed.

Thus the group was broken up and the re-entry students were given regular classes with younger students. It was a lucky move for Bruegmann; she landed in the classroom of Jean Burrows, a kind and competent English teacher she found inspiring. She also loved the erudite Frank Fletcher, who taught history. She enjoyed being around the younger students, and had Glass and Zanger, who “were there to listen to everything you had to say...God, I loved it, I absolutely loved it.” They gave her a “Harvey Wallbanger” award for confronting bureaucracy. Bruegmann earned stellar grades and was pleased to be given a golden tassel to wear at graduation in 1976. But she was “floored” when the Faculty Cup was announced. It was an award given by the faculty to an outstanding student--and her name was called!

While she was at Gavilan she also ran for the School Board in Gilroy, and won. Bruegmann served 21 years, the first three or four while she was still in college. She had told other parents for years that if they cared about their kids’ education, they had to get involved and start taking an interest in school district meetings. She finally decided to run because she felt that

vocational students were being neglected. She made up a batch of campaign bookmarks and went door to door passing them out. She was elected, and re-elected, until she stepped off in 1996.

After her Gavilan graduation, Bruegmann took a year off to rest and figure out how to manage childcare and transportation to SJSU. Then she picked up and re-started her quest for a degree. After Gavilan, SJSU "was more of a mill--get in, get out." She majored in English and public administration. She didn't go to her SJSU graduation, but the public administration background came in handy on the school board. As an elected official, parent, and resident, Bruegmann has always stoutly supported Gavilan and its mission.

Being on the school board and watching kids and seeing their potential but knowing they had no money and no place to go...and here's this place with reasonable unit fees for kids that totally wanted to go to college but needed encouragement, needed to know they could do it--you can't put a price on that. (Bruegmann)

Another positive development in the 1980s was the passage of California's AB 1725 in 1987. The legislation recognized college faculty as partners with the district boards in running community colleges, and also established seats at the table for classified staff and students. In doing so, it strengthened faculty senates, which had been junior partners once collective bargaining gave important powers to college unions. "For several years, the senates were weak compared with the unions, which exercised power through enforcement of the negotiated contract. But reform legislation [such as AB 1725] gave significant new powers to the senates, including control of curriculum committees" (Rubiales). Shared governance was tied to funding under the new law. "If the district wanted AB 1725 money, it would have to do shared governance on all issues" (Funk 4-11-03). With AB 1725's passage, the college had to renegotiate responsibilities between the union and the Faculty Senate; Child recalls it as a "pretty graceful transition" (11-18-02). At Gavilan, AB 1725 gave the Faculty Senate a strong voice on a variety of college issues.

Among other important goals of the law were improving community colleges' images, increasing support for more money to the CCs, moving CCs from the K-12 system to higher education, developing a more unified system, and institutional renewal (Simpson). In short, AB 1725 was a comprehensive attempt at systemic reform. It also abolished the community college teaching credential system, and set up instead the Faculty Service Areas and minimum qualifications apparatus.

Additionally, AB 1725 had an impact on tenure processes. Before this law, tenure was virtually automatic for full-time faculty after three semesters. At Gavilan the decision was made mostly by the Dean of Instruction, with consultations involving department chairs and deans as they came into existence. It was somewhat subjective, but based on evaluations (Child 11-18-02). AB 1725 stretched out the process to four years, involved faculty on tenure committees, and required a much more stringent process. Within the legal parameters possible, Child said, Gavilan's faculty made getting tenure as challenging as possible rather than as streamlined; this arose from a desire for the best possible faculty, and out of concern not to be "stuck with" poor colleagues (Child 11-18-02). Many times over the years, he said, he's seen an intense concern on the part of faculty and staff to control who they work with. While this can work

against candidates unfairly, it may be best in the long run for the smooth functioning of the college: small disciplines with two feuding individuals can't—and history shows they don't—prosper. Students have also been involved in a number of disputes over a teacher's tenure at Gavilan. "Out one door there'd be people who wanted to hang the teacher and out the other door people who wanted to put the teacher on a pedestal and kneel at his feet" (Child 8-13-02). His conclusion was that every teacher and methodology is relative, and as an administrator one should do the greatest good for the greatest number where possible.

The new law also established stronger committee structures, and an affirmative action mandate that held districts accountable for recruiting, retaining, and promoting staff who were culturally sensitive to growing populations of non-traditional students. This was a statewide concern in the 1980s, and a number of initiatives were implemented, though the actual outcomes could be complicated. At Gavilan, there was a huge need to appropriately serve Latino students, but the college was frustratingly uneven in its efforts. In fall 1981, for example, "two Gavilan Hispanic employees wrote a proposal and received state funding to implement a special project designed to start a 'college satellite campus' in Hollister, California" ("Gavilan College and"). The project, called "Movidas en la Vida," brought the college to the community to expose Hispanics to academic life. Over 150 students signed up, and waiting lists reached another 100 students in the Hollister program. But the program was so successful that, ironically, "the college transferred the responsibility of the project to another college employee: a non-Hispanic administrator on the college campus" ("Gavilan College and"). Within a semester, the project lost most of its Hispanic students, and was "abandoned" by the college at the end of its second year ("Gavilan College and").

Programs to help Latino students also commonly suffered staff and budget reductions and reassignments in the hard times of the 1980s. If they survived at all, the resulting instability was tough on staff. A *Gilroy Dispatch* editorial in 1988 noted the departure of the only "top administrative" Hispanic, and called on the college to make more of a commitment to recruit Hispanics and pay them better ("Swing").

In Gilroy a number of concerned Latinos became active during the 1980s to promote opportunity and change. John Perez, who had attended the new Gavilan College in the mid-1960s, returned to town in 1979 to practice dentistry (Perez "Additional"). He found that Gilroy "had surprisingly not changed" in terms of opportunities for Latinos. But something else had changed, he says: many people who grew up in the 60s, "tempered by the national social strife...[were] now educated and willing to advocate for Latinos." He found that there were Latino social workers, doctors, teachers, counselors, business owners, politicians, and others who "wanted a place at the table...decision-making for our community." Many worked within institutions and learned first-hand how policies and procedures could be inclusive or exclusive. Perez found an emerging "voice for change" upon his return to Gilroy (Perez "Additional").

To provide Latino leadership, Perez and others founded the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. It provided an alternative to the city Chamber of Commerce which many in the Latino community felt "was not very responsive to the unique needs of the Hispanic businesses or business owners" (Perez "Additional"). There was an attitude at the city Chamber of Commerce, he recalls, that downtown ended at Monterey and Sixth Street. South of that intersection, there were many businesses, but they were Latino-owned and tended not to join the city Chamber of Commerce. The Hispanic Chamber took a broad focus. "In addition to

business issues, we advocated for educational equity and encouraged members to run for Superintendent of Schools and...City Council" (Perez "Additional").

Perez served as the Hispanic Chamber's president, and came into contact with Rudy Melone (Perez "Additional"). Melone invited him to be the Commencement Speaker at the 1984 Gavilan College graduation, and Perez encouraged students to have high expectations for their lives. Later that year there was a vacancy on the college's Board of Trustees, and Perez applied. He was selected, and served for six years.

He had a steep learning curve, and got some questionable advice (Perez "Additional"). One trustee advised him to be quiet and listen. "I didn't heed her advice," he recalls. Instead, he attended every conference for trustees that he could, usually paying his own way. He reported on each conference to the Board, and read books about successful community colleges. He got to know faculty, and wrote conference reports for the faculty newsletter. "I wanted to be the best Trustee I could for Gavilan College" (Perez "Additional").

Even if he had to vote alone—as he did concerning the severance packages for Rudy Melone and Bill Reimal, which he felt were not in the best fiduciary interests of the college—Perez did what he felt was right (Perez "Additional"). In the search for a new president, Perez opposed a search process that "lacked consistency, openness, and inclusiveness," and persuaded the Board to use a more more transparent and inclusive process. He was also an advocate for ESL students, and kept a close eye on success rates for this cohort. Perez supported bringing the Puente Program, a bridge experience for first-time college students, to the college (Perez "Additional").

A Hispanic Advisory Committee was founded in 1988 as a community-and-college organization to support programs and policies that would help Latino students and staff. Four years later the committee requested status as a standing committee on campus. The request was not granted by the board (Child 11-8-02). But the organization made frequent appearances at Board meetings, supported faculty and staff in initiatives to serve students, and generally acted as a watchdog over college programs and policies.

Once budget concerns were smoothed out, long-time tensions over Gavilan's low salaries were greatly reduced in the late 1980s. Earl Orum, who served as interim president (and also, later, as interim dean of instruction), convinced the college's board to adopt a policy that would always put Gavilan at the median or higher on salaries across campus. "Due to his eloquence and tenacity, the Board adopted this. It took years to catch up" (Funk 4-25-03). Higher salaries stabilized the staff, reducing turnover.

Another improvement from this era was a hiring procedure for faculty, which also eventually affected the procedures for hiring other staff. Child said that the college asked candidates for the Dean of Instruction job in 1989 to prepare a presentation on their suggested hiring procedure for full-time faculty (11-18-02). Martin Johnson, then a physics teacher at the college who applied for the job, presented such an excellent plan that though he didn't get the job (it went to Dr. Rose Marie Joyce), the process was adopted with slight modifications, and is being used still.

The 1980s also ushered in the beginning of an era of technology-aided instruction. When tight budgets resulted in a period of lay-offs and bumping in 1984-85, Loeser landed in a job that

combined media equipment repairs and audio-visual library clerking. At that time, the AV library consisted of rudimentary software, filmstrips, records, slides, pamphlets, and eventually videos. On his first day at the job, Loeser entered the office and found all the stuff in a big pile on the floor--there had been no one to file and organize it for months, so "I rolled up my sleeves and cleaned and reorganized and familiarized myself with the equipment." Loeser introduced 1/2" VCRs to campus, and worked with others to computerize Gavilan's teaching and learning, a huge and endless task that continued long after Loeser's retirement.

To cap a tumultuous decade, the college rocked along with much of the California coast during the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, which occurred at 5:02 p.m. on October 17, a school day. The college shut down for three days, which meant that the number of days of instruction, and thus college funds, were impacted. Faculty recall attending a meeting a few days after the quake at which college officials were assuring them that the buildings were safe. Immediately a major tremor emptied the room. Retrofitting old unreinforced concrete buildings became another task the college would have to undertake.

### **The Beatings Will Stop**

A number of large and small changes at the college contributed to its developing culture during the 1990s. In 1990 the college experienced one of the largest faculty hiring cycles it had had in years, as six new full-time positions opened up due to several retirements. Throughout the decade, as the college grew, many more part-time positions opened up than full-time ones, despite AB 1725's encouragement to hire full-timers; most colleges found part-time faculty more economical in the short term. Orienting new part-time faculty was tough, though. They often worked at more than one college and could not be on campus except for their classes. Many felt isolated. They were also virtually left out of the GCFA's representation clause, and many came to love the teaching but to feel underpaid and neglected. Part-time faculty did not get mailboxes until after 2010; their mail and packages were piled on the floor of the mailroom. In the 1990s, their inclusion in the GCFA, rehire rights, conference funds, even sick leave (a requirement under state law but neglected by the college until 2012) were far in the future.

For faculty, another small but significant change in Gavilan's culture was the negotiated adoption of a "flex" calendar in February 1991. This allowed faculty to work on special projects for state-mandated professional development credit.

In early 1991, the United States declared war on Iraq and a number of Gavilan students served as reservists in Operation Desert Storm. Faculty organized various events and lectures to explain the war's origins, and the board was presented with a resolution supporting the president, Congress, and troops. Perhaps remembering the Vietnam War tensions, and perhaps because the board was younger, more liberal, and/or less willing to opine on international matters, the resolution failed on a 5-2 vote.

Students had some wins in this decade. The college saw a fiesty, issues-oriented *Rambler* student newspaper come out more or less weekly under advisor Leah Halper, who was hired in 1990 as part of the group of six new faculty. Student editors did not shy away from controversies. They exposed poor emergency procedures, questioned college decisions, and pushed, with the Associated Student Body, for an accounting of student fees collected. In 1993, after many years in which the district collected a health fee from students but did not use it for health care, student trustee Leah Hunt led students in an effort to hire a student health nurse.

Within months, the college allocated the funds and brought on Alice Dufresne-Reyes, who began many health and wellness initiatives for students.

There were also major losses for students: One was the re-entry program. The program had fallen on hard times in the 1980s, losing its funding and real estate but limping along as a shadow of its former self. Then in 1993 the college defunded the program almost completely, killing a statewide pioneer in women's re-entry that had helped hundreds of women get a college education. It also killed its job center, which had helped students find local work, and weakened its Career-Transfer Center with budget cuts. And engineering students found Gavilan a dicey prospect; the college's Institutional Effectiveness Committee suspended the engineering program after much discussion and study in the 1990s, due mostly to low enrollments and poor college support. The program has since been revived with support from MESA. The college's auto body and auto mechanics programs also were permanently chopped when problems with enrollment and offerings could not be resolved.

Several times in the mid-1990s students tried to expand the role of the student trustee on the district's board. They were allowed eventually to make and second motions, attend executive sessions as long as personnel or collective bargaining issues were not discussed, receive all non-confidential board materials, have their non-counted vote be heard in advance of the regular vote, and receive half the compensation which other board members received. Students were responsible for bringing an Academic Honesty Policy to the Academic Senate and the Board, both of which adopted it.

The Board also passed a famed litter-free campus resolution, in which (before the wording was grammatically corrected) staff and students were asked to pick up a piece of litter a day if seen on campus and (after the wording was grammatically corrected) everyone on campus was asked to pick up a piece of litter a day. Relatedly, the custodial budget and staff were reduced in this decade, leaving old-timers to recall the days of a pristine campus with well-groomed grounds and no litter.

In 1994, as staff and faculty began to meet about the future of "distance education," the Library-Media addition went to bid. The project had been sheparded by Media Center director John Hansell through a dozen years of state red tape. It nearly doubled library space with computer labs for students and a fine TV studio, and prepared the college for the electronic revolution that would transform life and education within the decade.

Important as these developments were, the main story of the 1990s was the college's budget crisis and resultant lay-offs in late 1994 (Child 1-15-03). The budget problems were a statewide phenomena, as spending tightened up in the early 1990s, and a recession occurred. The surplus built up by John Holleman delayed impact at Gavilan, but the surplus eventually was exhausted. Holleman's last few years created huge deficit spending, as raises were granted and reserves were tapped to keep the college running smoothly. Holleman gambled that the fiscal health of the state would improve in the usual cyclical patterns (Child 1-15-03). His last few years were negatively affected also by growing mistrust on the part of the staff, which wanted an accounting of college finances once it became clear that Holleman was doing much of the financial work himself rather than relying on his business manager. A few costly lawsuits also complicated the picture.

Tensions grew between staff and administrators as confidence in Holleman and his business manager eroded. In late May 1991, the GCFA took a vote of no confidence in all administrators, which, score by score, ended up on the front page of the *Rambler* newspaper (Child 1-15-03). The Board requested that Holleman retire, and he did so with alacrity; Child recalls that he was getting ready to retire in any case, but went a bit early. The faculty, frustrated with Holleman in general and contract negotiations in particular, boycotted his retirement dinner en masse. Numerous state and local officials wished Holleman well, Child recalls, but almost no faculty were present to do so.

Glenn E. Mayle was hired in September 1992, after nearly a year in which Dean of Instruction Rose Marie Joyce acted as interim president. Mayle was a conservative Mid-Westerner who worked his way through college on a harrowing schedule--starting as a groundsman at a community college while he was going to school and getting only a few hour's sleep a night (Child 1-15-03). Child, who chaired the hiring committee, remembers that the intent was to get someone with strong fiscal expertise and an open approach, someone who would do nothing behind closed doors (Child 1-15-03).

Though Mayle had a doctorate in community financing, was an able fiscal administrator, and had been president at other colleges, including one in Arizona and one in Oregon, he "never really quite fit the California culture" (Child 1-15-03). He is remembered by many for praising and displaying Tupperware, his wife's hobby, to college administrators and community members who visited his office (Funk 4-25-03). Within a month of his arrival, the *Rambler* reported that he was interviewing for another job. Though he was an able financial administrator, he was not effective with people, and less than adept at sharing power, Child recalls (1-15-03). Holleman had created the equivalent of a power-sharing college council, but Mayle went back to a more top-down model, dealing one-on-one with administrators. When Mayle began, few knew that the college was in a bad position fiscally, but he certainly found out quickly. "He'd never have accepted the job at Gavilan if he knew what he was walking into" (Child 1-15-03).

There were warning signs about the college's budget. In June 1992, for example, thirteen classified positions were reduced in hours. In March 1993, the board was considering a reorganization of administration but had not completed its plan. The Board notified all its administrative employees that they might be released from their administrative positions and either placed in the faculty or reassigned within administration with different salaries and duties for the 1993-94 school year. In May 1994, reductions in the Child Development staff's assignments from 11 to 10-month contracts presaged more serious budget problems. In August, Mayle welcomed the staff back to school with bad news: the budget situation was very bad, he said, and lay-offs might be necessary. When he was asked by a faculty member whether a solution would be crafted under shared governance, Mayle reddened and lost his temper. "Do you want to make the cuts?" he snapped.

Mayle believed there was no way he could balance the books without eliminating jobs, and he reasoned that faculty jobs should be protected at a college. It was "a nightmare not of his creation, but the way he chose to solve it made matters infinitely worse" (Child 1-15-03). Rather than opening up the problem to the college community, and getting help in resolving it, Mayle reverted to a top-down style of decision-making (Child 1-15-03).

Alternative plans were advanced; for example, Child advocated everyone taking a voluntary pay cut, but this was controversial among administrators behind closed doors and Mayle refused to move forward without administrative unanimity (1-15-03). In the midst of the crisis, students at the *Rambler* and ASB called a community forum for students to learn about the Board of Trustees and to discuss the impact of budget cuts upon campus. They struggled to keep the forum open to student questions when Mayle tried to veto a question-and-answer format.

The board set up weekly meetings in September to deal with the crisis, and on Sept. 13 appointed a working group representing all campus parties to come up with alternatives to lay-offs. The group worked hard and CSEA members in the business office proposed a complex set of cuts and cuts-by-attrition that equaled the amount needed to offset the budget deficit (Child 1-15-03). Mayle rejected the proposals as insufficient and unworkable, and when the Board met again on Sept. 22 to hear what could be worked out, the president and the working group were at loggerheads. Mayle's style in the crisis was "autocratic and unilateral," particularly as feeling on campus turned against him (Child 1-15.03). Finally, at a special Sept. 27 board meeting, Mayle recommended 19 lay-offs of people in classified staff positions. Three of the positions were vacancies and two were changes in classification, but the proposal was the most far-reaching and painful the college ever faced.

The Board voted in October to reduce the college workforce as suggested; the meeting was packed and emotional. Many more would be affected than those who lost jobs--those laid off could use their seniority to "bump" less fortunate colleagues out of jobs. The student trustee, Jenny Coppens, who had worked hard to forestall layoffs, was the only No vote. "Thank you," cried classified staffers at the meeting as Coppens cast her vote. At the same meetings in which lay-offs were approved, the Board voted itself health benefits.

A number of those laid off were high-profile business office female employees who knew the college finances, criticized Mayle's leadership vocally, and were union activists. Mayle was accused of targeting the CSEA union in order to weaken or kill it. Whatever his intention, an embittered and demoralized classified staff, and a weaker CSEA, were certainly among the results. "I personally feel the layoffs focused on the classified" (Child 1-15-03). The decision was made to drastically affect a few rather than spread the pain. An atmosphere of deep demoralization and mistrust resulted, making productive human relations at the college the high hidden cost of the lay-offs (Child 1-15-03).

A number of lawsuits also resulted from the lay-offs, which cost the college far more in attorney and court fees. In fact, Mayle relied so heavily on attorneys that their contract negotiations fees alone totaled \$2 million (Funk 4-25-03). "The district team did not negotiate [with the unions during this period]--the attorneys negotiated," charging a high hourly rate all the while (Funk 4-25-03).

It's hard to overestimate the effect on college employees. Morale was extremely low; a cartoon circulated anonymously with a picture of a medieval executioner armed with an ax and a whip. It said, "The beatings will stop as soon as morale improves." This exactly fit the wry and miserable mood employees shared. Communication between and among sectors was poor, particularly communication between the college president and board, and everyone else. Some college employees, led by physics professor Martin Johnson, worked with the Board to come up with a strategic planning document to guide the college to more positive times. Most

employees simply did their jobs and little extra. When Mayle left in late 1997 to assume the presidency of Northern Oklahoma College, dean of instruction Rose Marie Joyce once again became the interim president. She was hired for the position proper in 1998--Gavilan's first female president. And the college embarked on a period of healing.

Joyce came to the college in 1989 from the Central Valley, and had already served twice as Gavilan's interim president. Raised in Los Angeles, she became a Catholic nun in early adulthood before leaving her order to marry Tom Joyce, who left the priesthood to marry her. Joyce fell deeply in love with the college and the community, partly because of the job and partly because of her nature (Child 1-15-03). As dean of instruction, Child remembers Joyce as an exacting supervisor: a very structured, focused personality who tended to see blacks and whites, and who would agonize over decisions, but then enforce them fully (Child 1-15-03). As president of the college, she took over at a time when there was an urgent need for gentle leadership. Like everyone who went through the mid-90s lay-offs, she was changed by the experience. Perhaps her most important contribution was her effort to open up communications among staff, students, and administration. Joyce revived the College Council, and put much energy into creating a participatory form of governance at the college (Child 1-15-03.) When budget difficulties arose, Joyce was adamant that there be no lay-offs.

Joyce introduced a new era in union-district relations by implementing Interest Based Bargaining, an approach dedicated to bringing about win-win solutions for former adversaries (Funk 4-25-03). For the first time since its founding, contracts were negotiated for three-year periods, and negotiations finished on time, rather than running far over and necessitating catch-up additions to pay-checks for retroactive raises. She also made a point of attending every ASB meeting, and demonstrated in many ways her dedication to serving underrepresented groups. Joyce also had a tremendous impact in populating the college with most of its current employees, which Child said she did skillfully. "I've never worked with anybody who had the ability to interview that Joyce did. She had the ability to ask questions that would get to the truth of someone's soul" (1-15-03). At the same time, Funk says, Joyce's relations with the athletic department and the classified staff suffered (4-25-03).

Because of conflicts with some Board members, Joyce did not feel she had the support of the Board after 2000 (Child 1-15-03), and applied for jobs elsewhere. She was hired as the president at Rio Hondo College in 2002. Martin Johnson assumed the presidency of the college on an interim basis, and in 2003 Steve Kinsella, a former dean of business services at Gavilan, came back as its fifth president.

Demographic and social changes affected Gavilan during the later 1990s. For one thing, the pools of part-time teachers who had been easily available for many years began to shrink; many were hired by other colleges during boom times, and other colleges in the South Bay began to compete with Gavilan for part-timers. Each term, the deans faced a growing list of vacancies with growing panic; a few times, Gavilan classes were abandoned on the first day of school by teachers who had received better offers that day or the day before. Child said that finding people who both met qualifications and were exciting and competent teachers was very difficult, though the Internet job postings helped (1-15-03). He often hired teachers from local high schools, veterinarians who could teach anatomy, or seed company PhDs who could teach biology. In the 1990s West Valley and Mission colleges gave many Gavilan part-timers all the work they could handle, and it became harder to find part-timers for Gavilan classes.

Freeway fliers became a phenomena over the 1990s also; many people had to piece together a full load at two or three colleges.

Meanwhile, new campus facilities were planned and secured in Hollister and Morgan Hill. Child worked hard behind the scenes to make the campus work at the Briggs Building in Hollister, and Gavilan rented a storefront in Morgan Hill for three years, until space in the brand new Morgan Hill Community Center was constructed. Dean of Business Services Steve Kinsella, later college president, encouraged the college to think about the directions in which it could expand: a bigger Gilroy campus, more space in Morgan Hill or Hollister, or an entirely new campus in the Coyote Valley area. Kinsella's successful bond campaign in March 2004, which involved all administrators and many employees volunteering time after hours, generated funds for deferred maintenance on the main campus. Some funds for an expanded Morgan Hill site were also approved.

As president beginning in 2003, Kinsella, who had a strong financial background, found and bought land in Coyote Valley at the height of boom times in Silicon Valley, when CISCO was projecting huge growth in that area for its employees. To the consternation of San Jose city officials and environmentalists, Kinsella showed independence on a committee to plan the valley's development--but concerns for endangered species and wildlife corridors slowed development, as did the 2008 recession.

Under Kinsella, the college also became involved in a long effort to find a suitable site in Hollister. Gavilan began to rent space in the Briggs Building downtown but wanted to expand as classes filled as soon as they opened there. Many city residents and officials wanted a site downtown. Former student and faculty member Tony Ruiz was elected to the Board of Trustees to represent a popular local viewpoint that the old Leatherback factory site, or another downtown site, would be Gavilan's best Hollister choice. Kinsella, however, was thinking in terms of a large traditional college campus, complete with gymnasium and athletic fields. He arranged the purchase of 88 acres south of town, across from the Ridgemark Golf Course and housing development.

The new millenium did feel new at Gavilan, in part because of the biggest single hiring wave in college history, made possible in part because of high state revenues during Silicon Valley's boom years. Sixteen new faculty were hired in 2001, some for entirely new programs such as Media Arts. Also that year, a new Child Care building and a new Allied Health building, both state of the art, were completed. An adapted PE building followed in 2004; it had been fourteen years in the making, and was Carol Cooper's last and lasting gift to the campus community--she wrote the petition for state funding.

### **The Single Dad and the Gifted Writer**

Throughout the college's history, it has served students who were not ready or able to transfer directly from high school to a four-year college. Who they were, and where they came from, has changed as the decades have passed, but the stories of Anthony Shebib and Linda Bernabé prove the point: in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as in the previous one: Gavilan College offers a boost up and out to people who need it, deserve it, and make the most of it.

2001 was the year Anthony Shebib arrived for a second time at Gavilan. Born in 1981, his was the last cohort of local kids who graduated from high school without cell phones. By two years

later when his younger brother graduated, everyone in the senior class had a cell phone. Shebib remembers excellent schools in Morgan Hill and lots of time to hike, ride bikes, socialize in person, and hang out at the mall. He was a good student in the GATE program, but over and over teachers told him and his parents that he was working below his potential. He didn't have to work hard to pass, and so he got by.

After graduation in 1999, he was a checker at Albertson's with no real plan. He came to Gavilan for a year of "goofing around," and didn't pass his classes. Then Priscilla Ramos, the young woman he was dating (and eventually a Gavilan student who persevered many years to get her own degree) became pregnant. There was never a question--Shebib was clear at age 19 that he would split custody and parent his son. His parents helped him be an active, involved father. But he was living at home and "I couldn't sleep because I felt like I wasn't doing anything with my life." He wasn't prepared to launch out and live his own, but having a son was an incredible motivation. So Shebib signed up again for classes at Gavilan in 2001.

This time he found a new group of friends as "100% motivated" as he felt, and who became friends for life. When he saw other students hanging out wasting time, "I wouldn't even talk to them." He had direction and purpose, and so Shebib earned all As and one B his first semester, and similar grades thereon out, graduating in two years once he got serious. He had teachers who were "totally top-notch--unbelievable. Everyone was good. I felt like the teachers had more time here at Gav to know the students, communicate with them, make friends with them, be with them. Also they seemed more passionate. " Even the campus itself helped him focus--without "hustle and bustle [and] highways screaming by you...your mind is clear when you see the trees, see the green. " To relax he hung out with the basketball teams playing pick-up games, and he went to Gavilan football games. He graduated in 2003 and went on to San Jose State. He has never had trouble finding good jobs in sales with his business degree. And he recommends Gavilan whenever he can, he says.

Linda Bernabé also came to Gavilan College from Live Oak High School, but a few years later. She had successfully mastered English as an ESL student and joined AP classes by her senior year. A native of Apopa, El Salvador, she was born in 1984. As a child, she saw her middle-class family life considerably disrupted by the long Civil War there, from 1979-1992. When Bernabé was very young her father worked as a driver for NBC reporters covering the war and wanted to see his daughters learn English. They went to the expensive private American school, but not for long. Because of financial set-backs, both parents left the country to work, and Bernabé was raised by her grandparents and sent to public schools. One had a row of shattered windows that were never replaced; classes clustered at the back of the school away from the street to avoid violence. Her mother brought her to the United States when she was in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and then again permanently for high school, with the help of an aunt in Morgan Hill. Her mother worked for years cleaning rooms in local hotels--hard, heavy labor, while her aunt worked at a mushroom farm for a few years, then transitioned to working in shipping and receiving for a local manufacturer.

Bernabé's school experience at Jackson Elementary School was negative, as her English was minimal and there was no ESL program. Britton Middle School was better; she had ESL classes, more of a support system, and more Latino peers. She was a top student--which "proved if I try I can make it," she says. But after 7<sup>th</sup> grade she returned to El Salvador. Finally her mother brought her back to the US so she attended Live Oak High School for her senior year. She found it a challenge socially. "I was Brown so people assumed I was Mexican," she

recalls. But she liked different music, had urban tastes, and felt it was “mandatory to do my best.” So many Mexican-American peers, she found, did not believe in themselves or in school, which she found heartbreaking. She came to see high school as a sociological experiment, with Asian, Norteño, Sureño, and other Mexican groups. “I got to see discriminatory behavior” firsthand. Bernabé finally broke out of ESL classes and into AP classes, but getting placed took effort. Once she was there, she more than held her own.

College was a given, and three cousins had had good experiences at Gavilan. She took a placement test in 2003 and arranged her work schedule. She had no car, and so caught the 15 bus to the 68 and transferred; the buses ran only three times each morning and each evening. Bernabé was put into Ken Wagman’s calculus class, where she did so well she was offered a tutoring position. She also landed in a Learning Community class with Karen Warren, and was delighted to be asked her opinions on various issues. But it was her second semester that launched her; writing teacher Xochi Candelaria did something “very small--she wrote on one of my essays, ‘You’re a gifted writer.’” For an ESL student who never felt sure of herself no matter how well she was doing, this was momentous--“such a happy moment.”

Candelaria did her a second service also--one day she was absent, and asked her colleague Kimberly Smith to fill in. Smith took note of Bernabé’s contributions to the class discussion, and approached her after class to recruit her as a Writing Center Tutor. Soon Bernabé was tutoring in the Writing Center, and Smith was encouraging her to aim for a UC rather than a CSU. “Kimberly believed in myself more than I did...she changed my life...she went out of her way to reach out...to help to a student who didn’t know how to navigate the system.” Bernabé was working two jobs just to afford the closer, less costly San Jose State University. Smith told her that everyone takes student loans--and then she wouldn’t give up. Smith used “this ability she has to dream on your behalf. She pushed me. Working two jobs, trying to save money, you don’t think you can get help.” Bernabé finally applied off-schedule, with Smith’s help, and had to wait a whole year, until fall 2006. Her family strongly questioned her choice, but in the end UC accepted her and gave her financial aid.

At UC, Bernabé discovered that she could create her own major combining studies in language, culture, and linguistics, a route she found so exciting “my brain was pounding.” She was an honors graduate from UC, and was preparing applications to doctoral programs when her mother became ill and she had to return to Morgan Hill. She took jobs to get by, then worked for four years in a charter school, quickly rising to become director there. When a job opened up in 2015 running the Morgan Hill Community Center campus for Gavilan, she applied and got it. She enrolled in a masters program in business at CSU East Bay. Now she tries to help students by giving them information about succeeding and transferring that she didn’t get early on, to “make life exciting, and better.”

Bernabé’s tribute to her teachers is lavish and articulate, but it is not unusual. One characteristic that has set Gavilan apart in its forty-plus years has been that the most staff are at the college because it is their first choice. Long hours and extra assignments have created a relatively small college with unusually strong academics. The unusually accessible staff care a great deal about students and their futures. “By and large we’ve just hired some excellent people and the college has got to thrive because of that,” Child said (11-18-02).

### **Author’s note**

The history of Gavilan College after the year 2000 will, I hope, be written by someone else. The stories of Steve Kinsella's presidency, from 2003-2016, and that of Kathleen Rose, who began in 2016, are every bit as rich and interesting as what came before. The college's expansions into Morgan Hill and Hollister, adoption of electronic teaching and living, contributions to Silicon Valley, battles over part-time representation within the GCFA, federal grant projects, the 2012 "Student Success" movement, and other phenomena too numerous to mention will be prominent in any succeeding history of the college.

In celebrating its centennial in 2019, Gavilan has looked back in time to its academic and community traditions. The focus of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be unremittingly forward to a changed and electronic world. If the college can help students function in both worlds, it will produce graduates who are whole people, critical thinkers, and engaged citizens.

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