

# Sports

Jay Grant

## Listen up: It's time to halt public sex

An open letter to Mayor Bob Gentry, The Laguna Beach City Council and Chief of Police, Neil Pirrell:

Last Thursday at 3:20 p.m. a 9-year-old boy needed to use the public restroom at Riddle Field to change into his baseball uniform. There were 25 other children present at the park getting ready to play a game.

The youngster walked into the bathroom and encountered three men engaged in homosexual acts.

Shocked and shaken, the boy reported what he had seen to an adult, and the police were called. By the time officers arrived, the men had left and avoided arrest.

I hold myself responsible for what happened to that young boy. Remember, he's only nine.

For the past three or four weeks, I had observed a steady stream of men going in and out of the restroom

during the mid-afternoon when the baseball team I coach was preparing for a game. Two weeks ago, one of my players went into the restroom only to quickly exit because several men were inside. It got to the point where I discouraged the kids from using the bathroom at all and felt a responsibility to walk with my players when they were forced to use the facility.

I strongly suspected homosexual activity was taking place. The same cars kept arriving day after day, and I should have notified the police but didn't. I rationalized that surely with all the kids at the park to play baseball these men would not chance sex with children nearby. I was naively wrong.

The officers who arrived at the field in response to the call and the police I talked with the next day informed me they know certain homosexuals engage in sex regularly in Laguna's public bathrooms, particularly those at Riddle Field. The fact children are present is no deterrent at all, they said.

I was told extra police were to be on patrol beginning June 15th because this was usually when increased activity took place. Apparently, this year's warmer May weather prompted such conduct to begin earlier. The police said I should have called them the minute it became obvious what was going on.

I asked what could be done to deal with this problem. I was told undercover police work was the most effective way but political pressure prevented this procedure and convictions in court were difficult. All the police could do now was to increase their visibility and let the homosexuals in the bathrooms know there would be intensified surveillance.

I am appealing to you, the leaders in our community, to take the strongest action possible against this activity. I trust those men practicing public sex are a distinct minority, but parents in Laguna Beach should not have to worry about their children using our city's bathrooms. No impressionable child should ever have to walk into such a scene in Laguna Beach again.

If it means stationing officers at public bathrooms to alleviate the problem, please do it. If it means undercover officers could help stop this crime, then authorize it. Perhaps warning signs posted in the bathrooms and expensive tickets given when men are caught loitering inside public facilities would be effective.

The parents in this town would feel exactly the same if drug use or gang violence were the problems children faced in bathrooms. Our kids have the right to feel safe from exposure to any unwholesome and detrimental public behavior.

Thomas Jefferson said a wise and frugal government restrains men from hurting others. I trust you will find ways to put a restraint on a problem that must not continue.

The baseball season lasts three more weeks, and it would be nice for Laguna's children to feel safe using the bathroom at Riddle Field again.



### International A's 12, Mets 10

The A's and Padres have been declared International League co-champions after both teams won their final regular season games.

The A's edged the Mets, 12-10, and the Padres slipped by the Angels, 7-6. In the other league game, the Dodgers downed the Giants, 9-6. The final league standings are: A's, 11-4; Padres

10-3-2; Dodger, 9-7; Angels 7-7-2; Giants 5-8-2; Mets 2-13.

A post-season tournament will be held this week, concluding play for this year.

The managers and coaches of this year's teams are A's, Don McGann and Jay Grant; Padres, Mick Herbert and Karl Akins; Dodgers, Tom Belloni and Norm Gerard; Angels, Bob Leedom and Larry Gardner; Giants, Phil Kams and Bill Galloway; Mets, John Marconi and Dick Gebhard.