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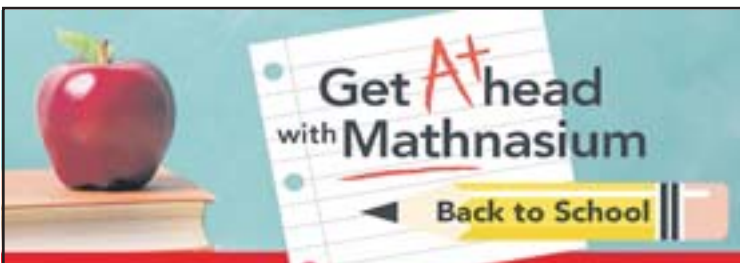
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Letters to the Editor



Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only).

Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis.
email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Editor:

Make your vote count.

In a few short weeks, US citizens will have the privilege of voting. Along with that privilege comes the responsibility to become informed and to vote intelligently -- to make their vote count.

But how do you assure that your vote counts -- that it actually supports your objective and your candidate -- especially for those contests in which multiple positions are available (for example, the Town Council elections in Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda)? Two points, in particular, should be understood by the informed voter:

1. If there are three positions available in an election contest, for example, the voter is neither obligated nor required to vote for three candidates. The voter may cast a ballot for zero, one, two or three candidates, depending on the voter's decision to support, specific candidates.

2. If the voter chooses to specifically support only two candidates, for example, and there are three open positions, casting a casual vote for a third candidate is called a "throwaway" vote. History has shown that throwaway votes can be very detrimental to the voter's intent -- to elect their preferred candidates. In order to make this point crystal clear, consider the following simple example. It is quite possible that, after all votes are counted on election day eve, one of the voter's preferred candidates may have finished in fourth place -- one vote behind the candidate for whom the voter cast a "throwaway" vote. This certainly was not the voter's intent and it absolutely was within the voter's power to control while completing the ballot.

Vote only for the candidates that you support. Think carefully before you cast a throwaway vote. The candidate that you defeat may be your own.

Frank Comprelli

Moraga

Orinda Elections

Editor:

Orinda has outstanding schools, among the best in the state. Credit for this belongs to the current school board in general and Matt Moran in particular, who have maintained this strong legacy in very difficult times.

This success is an ongoing challenge, especially regarding funding. The primary source of school funding in California is property taxes that are collected by the state, which doles them out to local districts based on ancient formulas. On a per pupil basis, Orinda Union (OUSD) is near the bottom of the list. To keep our schools top notch, the community makes up the rest, providing about one third of OUSD funding.

Maintaining this fiscal foundation while emphasizing quality education is very challenging. In his tenure on the OUSD Board and as its President, Matt Moran has worked with the Board, the administration and the community to maintain a full 180 day school year; class size reduction in grades K-3; professional development for our teachers; and upgrades in technology infrastructure.

During his tenure, the Board has been collaborative and productive, which has made it very effective. Matt Moran has been critical in this success.

So please join us in voting for Matt Moran. Let's continue under his leadership to maintain the quality, fiscal foundation, and effective governance that keep our schools at the top.

Carol and Mark Penskar

Orinda

Editor:

In the words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, "Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education." As November 6 approaches, "We the People" properly focus on the selection of individuals to serve us on the National, State and Local levels. As education is critical to our community and our nation, thought and care should be exercised when voting for our local School Board members. We write today in support of the re-election of Matthew Moran to the Orinda Union School District Board of Trustees.

Matt Moran has tirelessly served the Orinda Union School District for the last four years. As a member of the OUSD Board of Trustees, he has doggedly worked to provide the highest quality education for our children in this community. During this time of economic challenges, Matt's work with his fellow trustees has shielded our children from the impact of reduced funding from the State of California. He is committed to a balanced and rounded educational environment for all of our children. He has worked in a spirit of partnership with our teachers, administrators and parents. His focus and determination have been to provide the best educational opportunities to the children of the district.

We have reaped the harvest of Matt's toil. Our three children have benefitted immensely by the unparalleled education provided by the Wagner Ranch School and the Orinda Intermediate School. Matt has served them well for the previous four years. Were our children Orinda-registered voters, we have no doubt that

they, too, would vote for Matt. Perhaps you fear our view is clouded by nearly a decade of friendship with the Morans? Do not only consider the opinion of the Atkinsons. Matt Moran is also endorsed for reelection by every member of the Orinda City Council and four out of five Trustees of the Orinda Union School Board. Matthew Moran has selflessly served this community for four years. He is willing to serve again for the benefit of our children. We owe it to ourselves, our children, and our community to ensure that Matthew Moran be elected to continue his support for our students.

Respectfully,

Dick and Julie Atkinson

Orinda

Editor:

There will be a measure on the Orinda November ballot proposing a ½% sales tax on purchases in Orinda and on large purchases, such as automobiles, bought anywhere in the Bay Area. The proponents of the tax claim that some of the tax will go to Orinda residential streets. However, the Orinda City Manager refuses to state: (1) what portion of the tax will go to arterial and collector streets and what portion (if any) will go to residential streets, (2) which residential streets will get the tax money and what the repair will consist of, (3) when the repair will be done, if at all, in the 10-year duration of the tax.

Since the policy of the City in the past has been to spend road money only on arterial and collector streets, what reason do we have to believe that any of the ½% sales tax will bring any road repairs to Orinda residential streets?

Since the tax goes into the City's general fund and can be used for anything, why won't the City give residents of private roads their fair share of the tax?

The Contra Costa County Grand Juries have repeatedly criticized the Moraga/Orinda Fire District for gross waste; however, Orinda City Council members Smith and Glazer voted not to appoint a committee to investigate how a financially effective Fire District could help in upgrading Orinda roads, an essential requirement for fire and ambulance service.

The City Council majority, including members Smith and Glazier, when asked to appoint a committee to investigate the waste in the Fire District, stated that it was not in their "purview" to review the service that another agency provides to Orinda residents. In other words, their buddy-buddy relationship with members of the Fire District Board of Directors was more important than reducing the waste in the Fire District. We need new blood in the Orinda City Council instead of ineffectual new taxes. Please join me in voting NO on the ½% sales tax and in voting ONLY for Linda Delehunt for the Orinda City Council. She is in touch with reality.

Clyde Vaughn

Orinda

Editor:

I've been Steve Glazer's campaign treasurer since he first ran for the Orinda City Council in 2004. So I know firsthand how hard he works to represent us fairly. Steve has brought a more analytical and thorough approach to the city council, and I think we've benefited as a result. He hears both sides before he makes a decision. He's worked to improve Orinda's home remodeling process, which was notorious for its difficulty.

He's also spent a lot of time and energy trying to get more funding for road repairs, and creating new citizen committees on infrastructure, finance, and safety. He listens, thinks, and has thoughtful responses to people and situations. He works hard for all of us.

Before he was on the city council, Steve was a long-time volunteer who, among other things, co-chaired two Orinda school parcel tax campaigns that have helped protect our schools from state budget cuts. He's done a lot of other volunteer work as well, at schools, swim meets, and other community events since moving to Orinda in 1996.

Steve (and our other incumbent city councilmember, Victoria Smith) has been endorsed by the Contra Costa Times. Let's re-elect a good city councilmember, Steve Glazer.

Linda Landau

Orinda

Editor:

We Need To Fix Our Roads!

As a local Realtor I get to drive more of Orinda's roads than the average resident and I can tell you the condition of the roads drops off quickly once you get off the main through streets. I also get to see the look on home buyer's faces when we hit really rough patches or when I have to slow down to maneuver past potholes. One client remarked the roads looked like those in a third world country. As a real estate agent and as an Orinda homeowner I urge Orindans to VOTE YES ON MEASURE L because maintaining our roads is important to maintaining our home values.

Rick Booth

Orinda

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