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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

I commend Ryan Andresen for not hiding the fact that he was gay when applying for the rank of Eagle Scout. Although the Boy Scouts' twisted anti-gay policy is largely ignored and looked down upon by most involved, I look forward to the day when job applicants, athletes, and those deserving other honors will not feel they need to hide their sexual orientation before applying for what they deserve.

David Finger
Orinda

Editor:

Sunday we had the second traffic death in recent memory on Pleasant Hill Road. The stretch of road between Springhill Elementary School and Acalanes High School is often congested and now has become deadly. When not congested it is used as a high speed alternative to 680. A regional agency (like ABAG) declared Pleasant Hill Road a "Route of Regional Significance." There are street signs directing drivers to use Pleasant Hill Rd. as an alternative to the freeway.

Now the City Council wants to put over 300 units of affordable housing on this stretch of road. Town houses are already being built on the South side of Highway 24. An impact report is not necessary to realize the added traffic will make Pleasant Hill Road much worse and more dangerous for the children who use it daily getting to and from Springhill Elementary and Acalanes High School.

Think also about the people in the units. Low income renters would benefit greatly from access to public transportation and shopping. The site is isolated, at least two miles from BART and shops. A far more attractive location for affordable housing would be close to BART and walking distance to shopping along Mt Diablo in the downtown area. There are usable lots across from BART on Deer Hill Rd. With better planning we can reduce traffic, traffic fatalities and live lives with less environmental impact.

Sincerely,
Hercules Christofides
Lafayette

LAFAYETTE ELECTIONS

Editor:

The retirements of Carol Federighi and Carl Anduri from the Lafayette City Council will leave big holes to fill. Each has served for more than 12 years and left lasting and positive marks on Lafayette. I value them highly as colleagues. Please thank them for their service.

Five qualified candidates are pursuing three council seats available in November. I ask you to join me in supporting Traci Reilly and Mark Mitchell as new council members, and Vice Mayor Mike Anderson for election to his third term. Traci has served on the Crime Prevention Commission for eight years, most of those as chair. I got to know Traci when she and I co-chaired the Measure P campaign several years ago and I attest that she never rests while pursuing a goal. She played a key role in creating Lafayette's solicitor ordinance, which requires solicitors trying to sell things by going door-to-door to register with the police. Her three children keep her very involved in the school community. In a city that relies on council members to work in addition to make decisions, Traci is more than up to the challenge.

Mark has been on the Planning Commission for 10 years including a year as chair. Having lived in Lafayette for 50 years, he has watched our community evolve, mostly for the best but sometimes not. He recognizes that changes, once implemented, are hard to reverse, and takes a cautious approach to many development proposals. That outlook, coupled with his financial background, helps ensure that Lafayette will remain the community that we all like.

Mike has served with distinction, helping to formulate the recently adopted Downtown Specific Plan, create the successful Hillside and Ridgeline Ordinance, and create annual budgets that are sustainable with current resources. Mike has an excellent understanding of, in his words, "What makes Lafayette, Lafayette." I feel privileged to have served with him during the past eight years.

Remember to vote on November 6 and please join me in supporting Mike Anderson, Mark Mitchell, and Traci Reilly for City Council.

Don Tatzin
Lafayette

Editor:

One of Lafayette's not so "hidden" treasures is the strong public-private partnership bolstering our local schools, as evidenced by the long-time involvement of Lafayette's leaders, businesses and residents alike. Our family believes this tradition will be continued with the addition of Jean Follmer and Quinlan Tom to the Lafayette School Board and Traci Reilly to the Lafayette City Council. Jean has been a steadfast advocate for Lafayette public schools since she moved here in 2007. A staunch supporter and product of public schools herself, Jean has attended more school board meetings than most have or will in their lifetime. She has served tirelessly at the Springhill School, LPIE (formerly LASF) and District levels with a remarkable gift of leading by example. She asks tough questions and is a keen, analytical thinker. Jean works to help affect change at the state-wide level, in order to get to the root of the funding problems of public education in California. Quinlan believes passionately in Lafayette's public schools. He, like many of us, moved to Lafayette for the outstanding education they provide and is committed to giving back on behalf of his two children. Quinlan has shown through his leadership at Lafayette Elementary, Stanley and LPIE that he is deeply committed to working on behalf of Lafayette's children. Traci's commitment to thoughtful, smart growth and her understanding of the potential impacts of development on the community and schools will enable her to make prudent decisions on behalf of the entire community. Her term as legislative representative on the Lafayette PTA board highlighted her aptitude of the effects of state legislation at the school and community level. She, along with Quinlan and Jean, will only enhance the strong existing relationship between our town and schools, through continued dialogue and collaboration. We have had the distinct pleasure of working alongside Jean, Quinlan and Traci through various school, district and city-related efforts over the years and wholeheartedly endorse all three of them. We hope you will join us by voting for Jean Follmer and Quinlan Tom for Lafayette School Board and Traci Reilly for Lafayette City Council in November.

Suzy Pak & Mark Gundacker
Lafayette

Editor:

I would like to convey my recommendation for Nancy Wallace for the Lafayette School Board. I met Nancy and her family 7 years ago. We have worked together doing grant writing for the education foundation she created for Lafayette children (SEED). Nancy's passion for children and education is so apparent in the leadership and direction she has demonstrated in the roles she's played in the Lafayette community: At Diablo Valley Montessori where she was re-elected President of the School Board for five years when her children were young, at Springhill Elementary on the PFC Executive Committee for three years and most importantly, at the district level for the past seven years, where she served on the Parent Advisory Board to the Director of Students Services, co-created the District Grant Writing Committee and founded SEED. She is a regular attendee at School Board meetings and is familiar with issues facing our district from preschool through 8th grade. Nancy's vision is a world class education for all our children. Nancy believes we need to remain technologically current, provide meaningful differentiation in the classroom, create consistency in curriculum across grade and develop a cohesive and fully coordinated curriculum from kindergarten through 8th grade. California's education system used to be the envy of America. Now, California is ranked 47 out of the 50 states in educational funding. Our District has experienced severe budget cuts over the past few years. In order to keep our schools top rated and preserve our homes' property values, parents have been asked to increase the amount of money they contribute to our children's education through auctions, LPIE and PTA/PFC donations. We've also instituted parcel taxes to make up for the shortfalls. However, we need to look for alternative ways to raise money as well, and Nancy has proven experience finding creative funding resources. Her foundation has raised almost \$60K over two years, mainly through grants and has tapped into local resources such as Whole Foods' nickels for non-profits to help fund education in our District. Nancy's professional background as an attorney and actuary make her a perfect fit for managing our district's budget in these uncertain economic times.

Sincerely,
Carol Yee
Lafayette

Editor,

I am writing in support of Nancy Wallace for Lafayette School Board. I met Nancy eight years ago on the Diablo Valley Montessori School Board. Nancy was President of the Board had previously co-chaired the auction. I was the current auction chair, so we worked closely together. Working alongside Nancy I saw her dedication to education and her skills as a fundraiser. As a board member, I also saw how thoughtful, responsible and intelligent Nancy was and how effective she was as a leader. Everyone on the board respected and trusted Nancy, which is why we elected her five times to be our President. When Nancy's children started at Springhill, she quickly joined the PFC Executive Board. As PFC VP, Nancy raised

money for Springhill through auctions, fundraisers and direct solicitation campaigns. More importantly, Nancy identified alternative funding sources and made them a reality. She helped form the District Grant Writing Committee (now a part of LPIE) and founded a non-profit that has raised almost \$60,000 in just its first two years - mostly from grants. Having been VP for the Happy Valley Parent's Club, I know there is a limit to how much we can ask our parents to continue to give, so I particularly appreciate Nancy's ideas for other funding sources. But Nancy isn't just a fundraiser. She has been active throughout our District for almost a decade. As a member of Rapport, Nancy experienced the issues our individual schools face. As a member of the Grant Writing Committee, Nancy worked with our Assistant Superintendent and learned the District's curriculum priorities. As a member of the Director of Student Services' Parent Advisory Committee, she learned about budgets, the AIM program, special needs, disciplinary matters, and staff issues. She knows the issues affecting our District. Nancy has the skills to manage our District professionally. She was an attorney and an actuary. Her understanding of legal issues and complex financial matters is an invaluable asset to our District. She is the kind of professional we need on our governing board.

Respectfully,
Mayada Innenberg
Lafayette

Editor:

I urge Lafayette residents to vote for Traci Reilly for City Council and Jean Follmer for School Board. Both candidates have the experience, dedication, and passion to do an outstanding job.

Traci Reilly has served on the Crime Prevention Commission for the past six years and has been Chair since 2008. She worked steadfastly to help Lafayette pass the No Solicitors Ordinance that has been vital to protecting neighborhoods and providing our police with a mechanism to respond to calls about unlicensed solicitors knocking on doors. In addition, Traci has regularly attended city council and commission meetings. She understands the important issues facing our city, including the ongoing need for road and infrastructure maintenance and repairs, the concerns of residents regarding balancing growth, traffic, and public safety, and the need to continue a fiscally sound city budget. With two of the three incumbents stepping down from City Council this election cycle, Lafayette can count on Traci to hit the ground running. Traci will bring to the City Council not only her experience, but also her well-developed skills and her great personal rapport.

Jean Follmer is currently an Executive Board member of LPIE (formerly LASF) and served on the Springhill Parent Faculty Club for three years, including one year as President. In addition to working on Measure B, leading Springhill's efforts to secure a new track, and serving on the Site Council at Springhill, Jean co-founded Lafayette for Education, a grassroots organizing seeking sustainable funding for California schools. Jean is passionate about ensuring the quality of our schools and providing our children with a well-rounded curriculum. Like many residents, Jean moved to Lafayette for the schools. Her children attend Springhill and Stanley, and Jean has been an active volunteer throughout their schooling. Jean understands that while we wait for Sacramento to come up with funding solutions at the state level, we need to act at the local level to maintain the quality of our Lafayette schools. There are two open seats on the School Board. Jean is the right choice for one of your votes.

Linda Murphy
Lafayette

Editor:

Lafayette is fortunate to have five members of the community running for the three open City Council positions on November 6th. Three of these residents have a strong record of supporting the City's General Plan, Mark Mitchell, Traci Reilly and Mike Anderson. Mr. Anderson, who has served on the City Council since 2004 and also served on the current 2002 General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC), has consistently voted to uphold the City's General Plan on matters pertaining to such Plan. Mark Mitchell, who has served on the Planning Commission for ten years, has also consistently voted to uphold the General Plan on matters relating to its direction. Traci Reilly, who has served on the Lafayette Crime Prevention Commission since 2006 and worked tirelessly on the passage of the City's solicitor's ordinance to protect our residents, has supported the General Plan on many occasions before the Council and Planning Commission.

As chair of GPAC and someone that has worked for over forty years to preserve the City's General Plans and our wonderful community, I strongly recommend these three individuals for the Lafayette City Council. They are experienced, hard working and committed to preserving our City's small town character.

I urge you to vote for Mark Mitchell, Traci Reilly and Mike Anderson for City Council on November 6th.

Guy Atwood
Lafayette

MORAGA ELECTIONS

Editor:

In a recent article covering the highly attended "Candidates Forum" held at the Serbian Church, my position on new development of open space and ridge-lines was misunderstood and incorrectly reported. This note is intended to clarify my use of the words "conservative interpretation" of the Moraga General Plan and MOSO results in severely restricting any development that proposes to impact existing open space and ridge lines. This interpretation requires me to vote in favor of preserving existing open space and ridge lines and to argue against and to vote against projects that violate the intention of the General Plan and MOSO to prohibit such projects. My position is not a hollow promise. Residents can expect me not to wobble as Mrs. Mendonca has and to consistently vote to preserve open space and against ridge-line development. Candidate Philip Arth has also failed to articulate this conviction. In addition, I would never propose liquidating Town-owned open space to pay off a mortgage as the incumbents spent \$40,000 investigating this simply dumb idea.

I have a published record and have made presentations in four countries in support of the UN Global Compact and the UN Principles of Responsible Investment (UN PRI). I have led an IFC chaired project designed to benchmark and improve environmental, social and governance (ESG) practices by the largest companies in the emerging markets, with my focus on India.

This work has resulted in the Home Minister proposing mandatory disclosure by Indian corporates on their sustainability and socially responsible practices.

At the Candidates Forum I did say that there is a fine line between social policy and property rights. As a business man and fiduciary for investors, I confront this issue everyday. My published view is that incorporating ESG principles enhances long term returns and that returns can be quantitatively measured by more than near term dollars and cents. The Town Council with me on board will have a timely opportunity eliminate ambiguities and to incorporate language demonstrating Moraga's thought leadership commitment to sustainability and participation in the Cities Program of the UN Global Compact (UNGlobalcompact.org).

Thank you,
Seth Freeman
Moraga

Editor:

Spending in Moraga

It finally occurred to me that I should figure out how much Measure K would cost me in dollars and cents. I discovered that this one percent sales tax would have cost me only \$1.18 last month because most of my spending in Moraga is not subject to sales taxes. Food at Safeway and pills at CVS are not taxed. Neither are services like drying cleaning. But the ongoing revenue from this little sales tax would permit us to keep our streets and storm drains from deteriorating to the point where restoring them would be prohibitively expensive. All of the revenue generated by Measure K would stay in Moraga, unlike the other taxes which leave town and come back to us in amounts too small to meet our needs. Please vote yes on K.

Dale Walwark
Moraga

Editor:

When people hear that I live in Moraga they say, "Oh! Great schools and it is so beautiful there!" The reason Moraga is beautiful is thanks to over 25 years of residents' hard work to preserve its remaining open space. The General Plan, crafted and informed by Moraga residents, specifies that the Town should "Protect ridgelines from development."

Last year, two members of the Moraga Town Council, Karen Mendonca and Howard Harpham, decided that the "protect" clause didn't really mean "protect" and proceeded to cast deciding votes in a 2-1 decision to allow a developer to cut 30 feet off the top of Rheem Ridge to put a road and homes there. Harpham never pretended to be pro-open-space, so his vote was somewhat predictable, and he is not running for re-election this November.

Karen Mendonca is a different story. Four years ago, she ran on a platform that stressed her commitment to ridge line and open space preservation, and was elected thanks largely to her strong stand on these issues and the many residents who campaigned for her on this principle.

Mendonca's about-face on ridgeline protection shows me that this politician does not have the consistency to represent the voters who put her in office and whom now she asks to re-elect her. In the coming years, after the development on Rheem Ridge is built and I look at the sad remains of its beautiful ridge line-reduced by 30 feet and topped with an asphalt road, cars and houses-I'll think of a politician who failed her office and her voters.

We need to elect Council people we can trust to maintain the integrity of their office and who understand what rules and values keep Moraga a beautiful and desirable place to raise our families.

Suzanne D'Arcy
Moraga

Editor:

I'm writing to ask my fellow Moragans who value our scenic hillsides and ridgelines to vote for Roger Wykle for Moraga Town Council. While every candidate is professing his/her concern about open space, Wykle is the only one with a track record that proves it.

In his years on the Moraga Planning Commission, Wykle has been an unwavering guardian of the Moraga Open Space Ordinance (MOSO). For example, when the Commission reviewed the Hetfield Estates development this year, he was the only Commissioner to vote against it, pointing out that its massive landslide grading was inconsistent with MOSO and the General Plan.

The Town Council incumbents running for re-election say they want to protect ridgelines, but the fact is that the Rancho Laguna II development was approved on their watch. That development will cut off part of Rheem Ridge and build 27 houses in the Rheem Blvd. scenic corridor.

A few months later this same Council tried to sell Town-owned open-space to developers to get money for a building remodel. Wykle was the first Planning Commissioner to object, insisting it was out of line with the General Plan's policy to "preserve open space to the maximum extent possible." His leadership on the Planning Commission helped eventually cause the Council to back down, for now at least.

With big development decisions coming in the next several years, we urgently need Wykle-the only candidate with a proven track record on protecting open space-on the Moraga Town Council.

Carol Haag
Moraga

Editor:

We are endorsing Parker Colvin for a seat on the Moraga School Board.

A major reason we moved to Moraga 45 years ago was the community's reputation for school excellence. We have seen our five children move through the system here and then, very ably, advance through higher levels.

In these difficult economic times, Parker's skills would be very helpful in continuing programs deemed necessary for the educational well-being of Moraga children. His business background in public school financing is outstanding.

Also, he is a caring person with great integrity.

Monte and Kay Hess
Moraga

Editor:

I am writing you to endorse the candidacy of my friend, Karen Mendonca, for reelection to the Town Council of Moraga! Karen has served our town with integrity and determination, bowing to no special interests in the pursuit of what is fair, and right, and just.

Recently however, she has been targeted by certain elements who have seen fit to cast aspersions on Councilwoman Mendonca's character merely because she refused to bow to their special interests.

Karen's leadership is a brand not seen too often -- the kind of leadership that produces results by building consensus, exemplifying a decency that has become an all too rare commodity nowadays. In a collegial body that is our Town Council, where individuals of varied political beliefs are united by their desire to serve our Town, this kind of leadership that Karen possesses is of singular value when it comes to reaching a decision on critical issues that come before the Council.

She will not shrink from conflict where her principles are involved. She will stand firm and that is what special interest groups do not like. By the same token, she will find common ground among her colleagues on the Council in an effort to achieve results for the people of Moraga. And she is good at it and that is why she has been attacked by those whose special interests are at odds with those of the people of Moraga.

Courage. Dedication. Integrity. That is what Karen Mendonca has given to Moraga in her first term that saw her become Vice-Mayor and later Mayor of our town. We need Karen on the Council!

I endorse Karen Mendonca for another term on the Town Council of Moraga! Please help her win a second term!

Best regards,

Sonny Ebarle
Moraga

Editor,

I want the next Moraga Town Council to govern from the middle, and to take a little heat when the greater good requires doing so. With this in mind, I've decided to vote for Karen Mendonca, Phil Arth, and Mike Metcalf. Three issues illustrate why.

The first is the Town's finances. I believe that budgets have been prudent. I think the incumbents have done a good job, and I like Mr. Arth's accounting background. We've all known for decades that a large bill for roads was going to come due. That it finally has is not any particular council member's fault.

The second is development. Four years ago, I had a Measure K sign on our yard, I wrote a pro-Measure K piece, and I was pleased to be in touch with various supporters of the measure. I was sorry that Measure K did not pass.

Today, I am concerned that some people want the Council to act as if Measure K did pass, such as by "interpreting"

the General Plan to fill the holes that Measure K was supposed to fill. I want there to be meaningful land use review and for the Town not to hesitate to impose appropriate conditions on development, but I do not want the Council to take the perilous approach of "interpreting" the existing rules beyond what they truly cover. I think the three candidates that I am supporting recognize this.

The third is what to do at Rancho Laguna Park. The late afternoon hours, especially during the spring and summer, are classic hours for taking the kids to the park -- and not everyone thinks that is enjoyable with a lot of dogs running around. I'm disappointed that some candidates have ruled out any adjustments whatsoever, even something as modest as sharing the late afternoon hours on an alternating day schedule. In contrast, I think that Ms. Mendonca, Mr. Arth, and Mr. Metcalf have shown that they want to find a solution that serves the entire community.

For all these reasons, I think Mendonca, Arth, and Metcalf would be good stewards.

Tony Rodriguez
Moraga

Editor:

I am enthusiastically supporting Shari Simon for Moraga School Board. I have known Shari for close to ten years. She and I are friends, and our families are close. Together we've watched our daughters grow and thrive in this wonderful community. Over the years, I've worked with or observed Shari in a variety of settings, ranging from helping in the kindergarten classroom, to participating in PTA and school district site council meetings, to travelling to Sacramento to lobby for our public schools, to fundraising for MEF. Throughout, she has kept up a tireless commitment to our schools and their funding and has developed an impressive level of knowledge about the latest leading research on effective education. Shari has done these things for one fundamental reason -- because she cares to the core about our children's education. My experience of Shari is that few things evoke more passion in her than the success and well-being of the students in our schools. And the thing about Shari is that she is able effectively to direct that passion towards positive results -- overcoming challenges, solving complex problems, and -- something I've long admired in her -- making things happen. I am confident that, if elected to the school board, she will work her heart out for our children and for our schools. And she'll do it with the compassion of a loving mom and the cool efficiency of a seasoned Silicon Valley executive. She has my vote, and I urge you to give her yours.

Renata Sos
Moraga

Editor:

I am very pleased to support candidate Dexter Louie for Moraga School Board. Through the years I have had many opportunities to work with Dexter; both in school-related settings as a PTA President and MEF Board Member and through non-profit groups such as Habitat for Humanity. Dexter is an extremely valuable asset to both our schools and community. In spite of continued State cuts, Moraga continues to be one of the highest performing districts in the state. Our school district is in great shape due, in no small part, to the contributions of dedicated citizens like Dexter.

There are tough times ahead for our schools and we need Dexter's experience. He is a longtime resident of Moraga and understands the need to balance the interests of all stakeholders. During his tenure, he has worked hard to ensure the successful passage of two parcel taxes. I believe his leadership will be critical if state budget shortfalls require the District to seek additional local funding in the coming years. Dexter values and supports the efforts of our superintendent, Bruce Burns, and the Board has operated very collaboratively and effectively under his outstanding leadership. He fully understands where the district has been and has a clear vision for its future. We are very fortunate that Dexter is willing to serve for another four years. I strongly believe we need his continued leadership to maintain high academic quality, fiscal soundness and effective governance that will keep our schools strong and responsive to the needs of all students. Please join me in casting your vote for Dexter Louie.

Stacy Ashby
Moraga

Editor:

As a parent of three children in the Moraga School District, I can think of no one more qualified to serve on the Moraga School Board than Shari Simon. I served on the Moraga Education Foundation board with Shari for several years and I've personally seen her leadership as MEF raised more than \$7 million in private funds for our schools. Through her experience as a volunteer, she has developed an understanding of public school finance that is second to none. Moreover, she is undaunted in her pursuit of the highest quality education for our children despite the limitations imposed by Sacramento. And she pursues her vision with passion and grace. That's why I'm voting for Shari Simon for Moraga School District Governing Board.

Eric Flett
Moraga

ORINDA ELECTIONS

Editor:

Save on car repairs: vote YES on L!

My neighbor spent over \$400 on new low-profile tires after an encounter with an Orinda pothole. Thanks to the deplorable condition of Orinda's roads, another Orinda resident paid over \$1,300 to have the front suspension replaced and the front end aligned. The owner of an auto repair shop in Concord said Orinda is his best source of customers.

Raise the topic of our roads at a neighborhood gathering, and build your very own collection of auto repair horror stories!

If you drive in Orinda, it's only a matter of time until your car will need expensive repairs - tires, struts, shock absorbers, alignment.

Yes, our roads really are that bad. It's far cheaper to pay a little more in sales tax than even one big auto repair bill. Vote YES on L.

Allan Prager
Orinda

Editor:

As a new resident of Orinda and parent of young children, I am enthusiastically supporting Jason Lurie for Orinda's school board. I have worked with Jason for the last six years and can attest to his work ethic, forward thinking, and deeply rooted concern for others and his commitment to his family, friends and community. While raising three wonderful girls with his wife and working as an attorney seems like a lot to me, I wasn't the least bit surprised when Jason announced his plan to run for school board. In my mind, Jason has always been able to find time for those things that are most important to him: his family, friends and community, all of which will be improved with the addition of Jason on the school board. Jason embodies the reason that we moved to Orinda and the type of person that we want our kids to be able to look up to.

I also want to thank all of the existing school board members and those running for the school board as your time and energy are both needed and appreciated.

Sincerely,
Drew Mickel
Orinda

Editor:

I urge Orindans to vote yes on Measure L. This measure will make a down payment on fixing Orinda's residential roads. Some will tell you that this measure will not complete the job, and they are correct. But it is a start and is the first step of a ten-year plan by the City to bring our roads and drains to a good state of repair.

I hope you will agree with me that the City has done a good job of using its existing revenue to repair the most heavily traveled roads in Orinda. This is a deliberate strategy that is working, but it leaves little funding for residential roads. As chair of the Citizens Infrastructure Oversight Commission, I have confidence the City will use the new revenue from Measure L equally wisely to improve residential roads. Success breeds success, and I am hopeful once Orindans see the benefits of Measure L revenues, they will provide the City with the remaining funds necessary to complete repairing our roads and drains.

Who will argue that Orinda's roads are good! They are not. In fact, Orinda's roads are among the worst in the entire Bay Area. Delaying repair will only make the problem worse and more costly. Vote yes on Measure L to start fixing our residential roads.

Dennis Fay
Orinda

Editor:

Compared with other California cities of all sizes, Orinda is in excellent financial shape. Credit for this belongs to the current City Council in general, and Mayor Steve Glazer, in particular. Orindans live in only one of 3 cities in the County that do not have a defined benefit pension plan. Our unfunded retirement obligations are exactly zero, in sharp contrast to the bankrupt and nearly insolvent public safety agencies and cities that surround us.

Orinda has maintained a balanced budget through a multiyear downturn in property tax revenues by closely matching staffing, the main costs, with services. Staff has been reduced in response to changes in city services needed, such as in the Planning Department and the Dept. of Parks and Recreation.

For a city with just a ten million dollar budget, 40% of which goes to police, Orinda has been able to devote a surprising amount of money to try to maintain our awful roads, focusing on the ones most used. Mayor Glazer spearheaded a highly collaborative effort over the past 18 months to revisit a comprehensive plan for road repair

and maintenance, and to gauge the public appetite for paying for this. The result was Measure L, on the ballot this fall, to begin to address our infrastructure issues. While not a complete solution, it is the best measure for these times, and Steve is to be applauded for pushing forward the first step of a solution.

So, please join me in voting for Steve Glazer. Let's build on his legacy: his deep knowledge of the community; the strong financial management; and the inclusive approaches to seemingly intractable problems. Let's move forward together to continue to keep our City enviably strong.

Carol Penskar
Orinda

Editor:

Victoria Smith possesses important qualities which have made her a superb Orinda City Councilmember. These qualities include good judgment, a judicious and even-handed approach, a strong work ethic, knowledge of issues facing Orinda and, most importantly, experience dealing with those issues. Victoria has spent almost ten years closely involved in Orinda's local government, first as a Planning Commissioner and then as a Councilmember and Mayor.

I know from first-hand experience that Victoria has done an excellent job in all these roles and urge my fellow Orindans to join me in voting for her this Fall.

Bill Judge
Orinda

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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