

**Letters to the Editor**  
... continued

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

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**Join our Public Forum**

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com) and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.

*Phil*  
**ARTH**  
*Town Council*



**Moraga Wins with Phil Arth**

*He will work to:*

- ✓ Provide a balanced budget and heightened fiscal discipline drawing on 40 years of experience as a CPA.
- ✓ Improve and maintain our roads.
- ✓ Protect our scenic ridgelines and open spaces.
- ✓ Promote our shopping centers with less red tape for tenants.
- ✓ Help the Hacienda de las Flores achieve its full potential.
- ✓ Forge a resolution to the dog park controversy.
- ✓ Foster the mutually beneficial relationship between Moraga and St. Mary's College.

Paid for by Arth for Town Council ID#1349614

*Just a few of those who endorse Phil Arth:*

Organizations  
Contra Costa Times  
Chinese American Political Assoc.

Mayors  
Graig Crossley  
Margaret DePriester  
Cherie Grant

Citizens of the Year  
Linda Borrelli  
Margaret DePriester  
George Fisher  
Julie Fisher  
John Haffner  
Bob Merritt  
Gordon Nathan  
Edy Schwartz  
Al Simonsen  
Ken Tom

Businessman of the Year  
Grant Stubblefield

Town Council Member  
Howard Harpham

**www.MoragansForArth.org**

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**Be Deliberative With Your Vote**

In the last biweekly issue of this paper there is a letter to the editor signed by Tina Brier, Barry Behr, et al. The signatories of that piece include the non-compromising and very vocal segment of our residents who insist on having off-leash dog privileges at Rancho Laguna Park. And that is notwithstanding that the park, consisting of some 8 acres, is large enough to accommodate a suitable fenced area for dogs while reserving the balance for use by all the residents of our Town all day, every day.

A fenced park makes sense! Not only would it isolate the dogs from other users of the park, but it would also provide both groups with all-day use of the park. Dog owners, for example, would have available to them an off-leash area all day rather than being limited to the current morning and evening hours. Similarly, those residents wanting to use the park without encountering off-leash dogs would also be able to use the park all day.

But this small segment of our town, along with dog owners from Orinda and Lafayette, which two communities do not have any dog parks, is insisting that the current off-leash privilege be maintained. To that end representatives of this group interviewed Seth Freeman, Roger Wykle, and me to ascertain each candidate's support for an off-leash dog park. In my estimation the incentive to commit to an off-leash park was votes. I would not commit, as I felt (1) this was a safety issue and (2) the Town should take back the park from the off-leash coalition and make it available to all users all day, every day.

During that meeting I recalled that this past October one unleashed dog bit another leaving a 7-inch scar. The victim just as easily could have been a child running for a ball or Frisbee. Two years ago unleashed dogs felled a deer that was so badly injured the police had to take its life. Again, that incident might have been a child.

So now you know why that group recommend Freeman and Wykle in its letter to the editor. I suggest the other issues raised in that piece are red herrings so the signatories do not appear to have such a self-seeking agenda. For example, at Candidates' Night all the panelists committed to guarding the Town's open spaces and ridgelines, yet the letter links land development to the dog park topic.

And this group employed the same tactic months ago when soliciting signatures for a dog park referendum. There are reports that many people were assured that by signing the petition it would prevent the park from becoming a sports park. Those two matters are not linked, and I do not know of any serious intention to make the park a sports park.

When formulating your choices for Town Council I encourage you to be painstaking in your selection of candidates. If you make a mistake in the presidential election there are checks and balances that limit the President's power. Here, I am speaking of the Legislative and Judicial branches.

But the Town Council, by contrast, is a combination of all three of those branches. It manages the **executive** function through the Town Manager. It carries out its **legislative** role by passing or rejecting proposed ordinances. And, finally it acts as the **judiciary** by hearing appeals from the townspeople and granting or rejecting them. So it has a lot of power.

I suggest that when you select a candidate you might evaluate that person's thought processes and motivations. For example, if a candidate commits to an unleashed park do you respect his or her thought processes that put children at risk and takes the park away from residents who are not comfortable around unleashed dogs? I hope not! Please be very thoughtful and careful before casting your vote.

*Phillip Arth, Candidate for Town Council - [www.moragansforarth.org](http://www.moragansforarth.org)*