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## Letters to the Editor

Editor:

As one of the founders of SHSTC, I thoroughly enjoyed Laurie Snyder's well researched update on the facility. The most important job I had in the project was to contact industrialist Richard Rheem's assistant to see if he had five or ten acres we could acquire at a reasonable price. To our delight, he offered us 54.7 acres at a price of around \$20,000! Needless to say, we snapped it up, and the rest is history.

George "Dode" Hall  
Orinda

Editor:

As I was driving to Church this past Sunday, I was horrified to see a sign among candidates running for office, "Defeat Mendonca" In my opinion, it stated anger and hostility. That was a "Bully Sign" that left no name of ownership. I spent my career as an educator, teaching children love and respect for each other. If one has a difference of opinion, it can be handled diplomatically. These signs were drastic and unacceptable. Is this the negative message we want to convey to our youth, our future adult citizens? How sad.

Millicent Mc Cormack  
Moraga

Editor:

A plea for civility:

As I drive around bay area communities this time of year, the roadways are lined with signs of candidates running for office. Nothing unusual here. Until you drive into Moraga and see signs that single out and attack a candidate. These mean-spirited signs, and there have been various iterations over the past 6 months, have set Moraga apart from other communities-and not in a good way.

Over the years, Moraga has developed a bad reputation And for good reason. As a resident of Moraga for over 28 years, I have watched good, hard-working public officials who are trying to balance the needs of the community viciously attacked by small, vocal groups when they do not get their way. Though the issues have changed, the vitriolic responses are all too similar.

Unfortunately, the result is often stagnation or litigation. What's worse is these vicious, retaliatory behaviors have stymied Moraga's potential to raise financial and social capital.

The latest controversy is over the use of Rancho Laguna Park by off-leash dog owners. Without getting into the details of the debate, one could only hope that the behavior of the dogs is better than that of the owners. By and large Moraga residents are looking to our public officials to establish rules and conditions that consider fair and balanced access to the park and the health and safety of all that use it.

Ironically the candidate targeted, Karen Mendonca, understands the importance of civility in dialogue. Her academic career included research on the leadership skills that build successful organizations through the practice of civil discourse. In March of 2011, she was invited to give a keynote address at Saint Mary's College where she delivered an address entitled, "Civility is a Choice--Even in Politics."

Mendonca is hardworking and accessible. In 2010, she instituted monthly "Ask the Mayor and Town Manager" open public meetings. Karen works collaboratively with the community and Town staff in order to make informed decisions that respect the Town's history, uphold the General Plan and positively shape our future.

We can do and must do better at working together with civility to achieve the best results for all the people who live in Moraga.

Renee Zeimer  
Moraga

Editor:

I have been watching with interest and dismay, the new kerb installation on Moraga Way on the Orinda side of Miramonte High School.

Seems to me, that the whole thing has not been thought through - cyclists have no idea what is going on, and ride in the road anyway (are they supposed to ride between the kerbs and the hedge?), trash trucks can't get to the trash cans, busses now block the road entirely as they can't pull out of the traffic stream, - these kerbs have eliminated parking in front of all the residences (including Miramonte), - these kerbs will force head-on collisions as there is no way now to pull off the road in a potential accident situation, - cars will hit the kerbs by mistake and cause major damage to their cars and accidents as well.....

Do you want me to go on?

Lamorinda apparently has more money than sense when it comes to road spending - these agencies do not have a revenue problem, they clearly have a spending problem!

Colin Taylor  
Moraga

Editor:

Moraga made national headlines when teenager Ryan Andresen was denied an opportunity to become an Eagle Scout in a local troop, allegedly on the basis of his sexual orientation (he is gay). He has appeared on the Ellen Degeneres' TV show and 400,000 people signed an online petition in support.

I find it disappointing that the Lamorinda Weekly devoted no coverage to this story (although you covered the troop when it promoted several boys to Eagle Scout in July). Ryan's plight generated significant attention on Moraga. Apparently, when that attention is negative, the Lamorinda Weekly turns the other way. Turning away is no different than endorsing discrimination by silence; a free and unafraid press should know better than that.

Scott Bloom  
Lafayette

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