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## A few local politicians' best friends

By Cathy Dausman



Orinda City Council Member Inga Miller with her apple headed Chihuahuas, Apple, 10, (left) and Melvin, 9. Photos provided

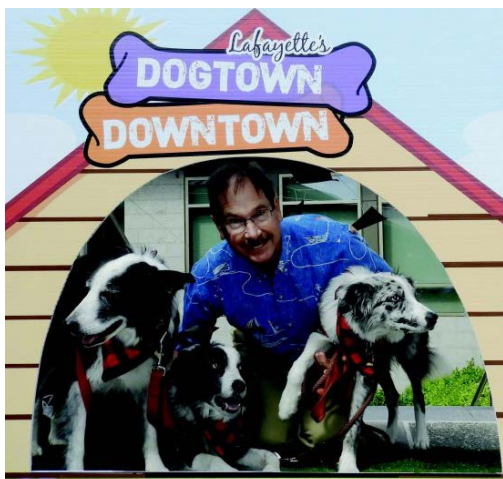
doodle, Lafayette Council Member Cameron Burks has Dori, Vice Mayor Don Tatzin has a collection of border collies, and Orinda City Council Member Inga Miller keeps apple headed Chihuahuas.

Aspiring politicians should note that a dog might just be their ticket for generating some all-important "paws-itive" press.

In this dog-eat-dog world of politics, it is imperative to have a pack of loyal followers. Who better than those who are always by your side and only occasionally growl at the media? Saturday is national Dogs in Politics Day, a celebration first unleashed Sept. 23, 1952 when vice presidential candidate Richard Nixon appeared on national TV to defend accusations of his improper use of political funds. He vowed to keep just one gift - a black and white cocker spaniel his daughters had named Checkers.

White House residents have hosted four-footed friends right from the beginning. More recently Lyndon Baines Johnson kept beagles named Him and Her. President Clinton's chocolate Labrador retriever Buddy was his companion throughout the Monica Lewinsky scandal. George Herbert Walker Bush's English springer spaniel Millie was the subject of two books, and President Barak Obama popularized the Portuguese water dog breed, bringing Sunny and Bo to the White House.

Having a canine sidekick is a reality today in Lamorinda politics, too. Moraga Mayor Teresa Onoda has a golden



Lafayette Vice Mayor Don Tatzin with border collies, from left: Tioga, Cloud and Greylock.



Moraga Mayor Teresa Onoda calls her golden doodle, Toby, "the smartest dog we have ever had." She adds, "He is also a calm, quiet dog."

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