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The word was out: vote

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

As Election Day approached, every public source of information seemed to become the unofficial town crier for consciousness. The buzzword was simple: vote. And, vote they did. Voters for the Moraga, Orinda and Lafayette council seats turned out at approximately 55 percent, well over the county average of 48 percent.

On Tuesday, Nov. 6, Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, one of the many voting precincts peppered throughout Lamorinda, experienced a steady stream of voters all day with the biggest rush happening after 5:30 p.m., as people stopped by to vote on the way home from work.

Joshua Peal, precinct coordinator, said prior to the rush, "It's a really good turnout; triple that of previous elections and two thirds of the votes are coming in by mail."

When asked if he had any thoughts as to why this election had such a strong voter turnout, Peal hypothesized that it was due to the results of the 2016 elections. "It might just be my opinion, but I also feel that Obama Care and the whole health care issue made people want to participate."

Provisional ballots were also available to voters who lost their ballots or left them at home. These ballots allowed a voter (even those registered in another city), the ability to cast their vote. The only caveat being that you were left out of casting a vote for your city's candidates and issues if you voted outside of your registered city.

Without conducting an exit poll, voters were asked why they were compelled to vote in this election.

A teacher, who asked to remain anonymous, commented about Proposition 8 (the Dialysis Treatment Initiative). "It feels like it's a national issue, not just California." As a teacher, she also felt it important to cast her vote for State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Dave Cummins basically liked the format and presentation of this election ballot, but felt that vital

information was missing. "I was confused by the whole section for the various judges. There was no information as to who they were or why we were voting for them. I ended up not voting for any of them, because to vote with no information is irresponsible."

Cummins did have a future Election Day suggestion for Joaquin Moraga's lack of parking spots during school hours. "Request that the fire department allow provisional parking in otherwise temporary zones, if you can prove you're there to vote."

Most voters who stopped to chat outside the polling location answered that they felt it was important to vote.

Wendy Edmisten proudly said, "We vote in every election; just because."

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