

# No parcel tax on June ballot

By Pippa Fisher

The Lafayette School Board decided at their Feb. 21 meeting not to move forward with the parcel tax measure on the June 2018 ballot following a 4 to 1 vote against it.

School Board President Teresa Gerringer says, "While there is unanimous agreement about the need to identify a sustainable, long-term funding source, there was not a clear path to success for a measure that would adequately bridge the gap in state funding."

LAFSD Schools Superintendent Rachel Zinn said in a letter to the community that the vote came after a lengthy and thoughtful discussion about running such a measure.

Zinn points to the high degree of uncertainty that exists including the "unknowns of the new federal tax law, the election of a new governor, the selection of a new superintendent, and changes to the current Lafayette School Board with four seats up for election in November."

Formal polling conducted at the end of last year showed a high degree of community support for the schools but Zinn says the amount that was favorable to voters was not sufficient to balance the budget. She says that, thanks to a small allocation of one-time monies and

gap funding that districts will receive from the state in 2018-19, the district will be granted a reprieve for one year giving the board time for consideration of a future parcel tax measure.

Zinn says that the need to close a substantial funding gap isn't going away.

"Even with slight increases allocated to school districts as part of Gov. Brown's January budget, the Lafayette School District will need to continue to identify sustainable ways to significantly enhance revenues," she says, adding that strong advocacy at the state level is needed if the funding model is to change and adequate funding for districts like Lafayette is made a priority.

Zinn says that money raised by Lafayette Partners in Education becomes even more critical at this time.

"I cannot emphasize how important it is to build a base of understanding about the district's budget and the challenges we face, all which could require us to have to make difficult decisions as we work to maintain our outstanding educational programs," says Zinn. She encourages people to contact her for additional information. Budget information can also be found on the district website.

# Citizen of the Year exemplifies 'service above self'

By Pippa Fisher



Don Jenkins

Photo Pippa Fisher

This year's Citizen of the Year does not sit still and let life come to him; he makes things happen. Don Jenkins was given the honor this year in a unanimous vote, selected from an extremely talented pool of nominees.

Jenkins has taken on leadership roles in so many organizations over the years it is hard to keep track of them all. He says it all started soon after he graduated, with the Junior Chamber of Commerce – an organization for the young in business – and their efforts on a project to get seat belts in all cars.

Born in Berkeley and raised in Danville, Jenkins, the son of a naval chaplain, spent some time in Rhode Island where he graduated from high school before returning to California, graduating from UC Berkeley in 1963 and marrying his wife Linda (Becky) the same year. Linda, a nurse, is no slouch herself with much of her volunteer work done overseas.

"She's as much a part of this as I am," Jenkins says.

The couple moved to Lafayette in 1970, and have two daughters, Renee and Diana, who attended Acalanes High School. Jenkins coached soccer, "despite not knowing any of the rules," he says. He also coached softball and baseball for his daughters through their junior year. He and Linda now have three grandchildren.

Jenkins owned and operated Lafayette Square Insurance Services until he retired three years ago. He received the Business Person of the Year award in 1996 and was the Chamber of Commerce President in 1995.

Jenkins served on the Mt. Diablo Estate Planners Coun-

cil and Planned Giving Council of Northern California and has helped countless people find what they want to make as their legacy, through foundations. He says by sharing his financial expertise he is able to act as an intermediary between organizations and individuals.

He was a founding member of the Lafayette Community Foundation in 1999, which led to involvement with the financial planning for the Lafayette Library and Learning Center.

LCF Board President Cheryl Noll says that Jenkins gets more accomplished in one day volunteering than most people do in a month or even a year.

"The Lafayette community has been so fortunate to be on the receiving end of his generosity and spirit. Part of Don's energy has been funneled into the Lafayette Community Foundation, where he was an integral part of raising money for the Lafayette Library and Learning Center," comments Noll.

Jenkins says he enjoys being involved in the early stages of projects. He was part of the fundraising team that made the California Shakespeare Festival in Orinda a reality, and is a member of the Sunrise Rotarians, where he served as both Rotary president and national advisor to the Rotary Foundation.

Last year's Citizens of the Year, Dick and Robin Holt say the community is the better for his accomplishments. "Don has given so much to our community over many decades.

He epitomizes the Rotary motto of service over self," says fellow-Rotarian Dick Holt.

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