

Moraga Dad Runs for Congress

By Sophie Bracinni

(Editor's note: The Lamorinda Weekly does not endorse political parties or candidates for any office; the following is not a statement of support for Nick Gerber's candidacy but rather a profile of one local dad, in celebration of Fathers' Day)

He has a big smile, a charming wife and two young children. He is conservative, with a green tint, and wants to take Democrat Ellen Tauscher's seat in the U.S. Congress. What makes a normal father, who was happy to promote Moraga's businesses, take a leap and want to transform a nation? Nicholas (Nick) Gerber had a life changing experience when his wife was diagnosed with cancer. The two of them decided there was no better time than now to realize their life long dreams.

Nick Gerber was raised in New-York and got an MBA from the University of San Francisco. An entrepreneur at heart, he started a number of businesses, some very successful such as the United States Oil Fund. Today, Gerber is after District 10, a bold target in an area that traditionally votes Democratic. But he thinks that the battle can be won on ideas, not labels.

As we all know, winning takes money. Gerber is not afraid to pick up the phone and ask Republican sympathizers for campaign contributions. His first objective is to get his name out there. So he's going to the luncheons, the breakfasts, the dinners and doesn't miss any meetings of the Chamber of Commerce. And when his constituency wants him to look the part and wear a tie, Gerber is happy to oblige.

As a parent, Gerber wants a better world for his children. He believes that becoming a dad made him realize that he could plant a seed, nurture it and mold it. "I wouldn't trust someone who does not have children to run the country," he adds, "You need to raise a family in order to know what children need." And Nick's family was his first support. When tragedy struck them a year ago, with Melinda Gerber's sickness, the "Gerber team" fought together. Today Melinda, a pub-

lished author, puts her creativity to work in support of her husband's dream. She knows that if he wins, the stress on the family will be high with a husband who must spend a lot of time in Washington, D.C.

The Gerbers say they are about taking responsibility and keeping their commitments. Gerber wants government to stop treating people like chil-

dren, so citizens can get the rewards that come from initiative and creativity. For example, he believes that a Universal Health Care system is not a good idea: "Of the 15% of people who are not now covered, many are young and healthy, and they do not want coverage," comments Gerber. "The problem is only about 7.5% of the population, and we do not want a system where the State will tell you that you should take one aspirin and not two." Gerber would rather see deregulation to bring down the cost. Having experienced the health care system first hand, he is very vocal about allowing patients to test new drugs if they want to take the risk and he would like to see the FDA practice a more hands-off approach.

Part of Gerber's commitment to create a better world for his children translates into strong environmental positions. He believes that the environment is fragile, that it's our duty to protect it and that we should move away from burning fossil fuel. "Good stewardship of the environment is a normal position for a Republican," he concludes. "After all, the EPA was funded by Richard Nixon, and another Republican President, Theodore Roosevelt, significantly developed the National Park System."



Nick and Melinda Gerber

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