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County Supervisor Polls Lamorinda

By Sophie Braccini

Contra Costa County Supervisor Gayle Uilkema recently presented the results of an ongoing survey she does to get the pulse of her constituency. Her District (#2) is very diverse, from Hercules to Walnut Creek and Martinez to Lamorinda, but her studies show a certain consistency in the concerns of the voters, even if our Lamorinda area presents some specific traits.

Since January of 2007, Supervisor Uilkema has been conducting rotating surveys of

her communities. In order not to stress a budget already tight, she conducts the polling one community at a time, sending 195 questionnaires per city and having interns table and analyze the data. “We are legally permitted to send 200 flyers at no cost per month,” says Uilkema, “this polling allows me gauge the opinion of the people I represent on the questions I will have to vote on.” She communicates the results to City Councils, who always take interest. The questions:

1. Do you think that people will ever switch to public transportation as their primary means of getting around?

2. Do you ever burn wood whether in your fireplace or outside in a fire pit?

3. According to State law a 2/3 vote is required to increase taxes. Do you favor reducing the voter requirement for passage to 55%, if the money is used only for specific purpose such as schools or roads?

4. Do you favor estab-

lishing a State health care system that includes coverage of ANY person living in California?

5. Do you feel that the quality of roads in Contra Costa County is being maintained appropriately?

6. Do you think that other subjects are more vital to your community than those listed above? Of so, please list a few:

The results for Lamorinda are not significantly different than the rest of district #2.

		Response		#1 Trans		#2 Wood		#3 2/3		#4 Health		#5 Roads	
				Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Jun-07	Moraga	32.5%		11	42	27	26	22	31	23	26	14	37
				20.8%	79.2%	50.9%	49.1%	41.5%	58.5%	46.9%	53.1%	27.5%	72.5%
Jul-07	Orinda	32.5%		16	39	35	22	25	29	25	29	7	49
				29.1%	70.9%	61.4%	38.6%	46.3%	53.7%	46.3%	53.7%	12.5%	87.5%
Sep-07	Lafayette	34.1%		13	43	29	27	16	40	28	28	30	26
				23.2%	76.8%	51.8%	48.2%	28.6%	71.4%	50.0%	50.0%	53.6%	46.4%
District-Wide Totals				134	396	233	289	207	311	264	228	192	320
				#1 Trans		#2 Wood		#3 2/3		#4 Health		#5 Roads	
				25.3%	74.7%	44.6%	55.4%	40.0%	60%	53.7%	46.3%	37.5%	62.5%

“Such outreach is important to know which community we need to work on,” explains the Superintendent, “for example, as the Air District works on a wood burning ordinance, we will conduct public hearings where people burn the most.” Uilkema adds that 60% of the respondents believed that her questions covered the most important issues, but additional concerns are crime and illegal drugs, as much in Lamorinda as elsewhere in District #2.

Gayle Uilkema will run unopposed in November for her 10th mandate. “I am very honored,” she says, “and this allows us to go right back to work.” Among her tasks is the second version of the survey that incorporates two new questions about the degree of satisfaction with police activity and a possible gas tax to finance improvement of air quality.



County Supervisor Uilkema with Moraga Mayor Deschambault at a recent “Liaison” meeting
Photo Sophie Braccini