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**LAMORINDA Community**

**The Initiative Campaigns:**

**Where the money comes from, where it goes, and some BIG surprises**

By Sophie Braccini

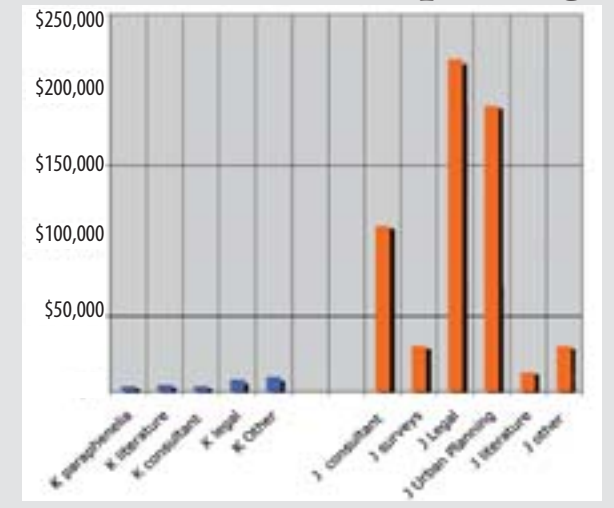
In Moraga, the candidates for Town Council raised and spent anywhere from \$700 to \$9000 and the 'No on J and K' campaign raised over \$2000. MOSO 2008, Measure

K, stepped it up more than a notch with expenses in the \$40,000 range. All of which pales in comparison to Measure J, entirely financed by the Russell Bruzzone Corporation, with expenses in the vicinity of half of a million dollars.

October 6th was the day for local campaign committees to file their quarterly financial statements. The documents, known as 460 reports, are public and list the contributions received as well as the expenses incurred.

82% of Measure K funding has come from residents with an address in Moraga. 29% of these residents live in unincorporated parts of the county (with Moraga addresses). Many of them live close to the Bruzzone property in Bollinger Canyon, and would be the most impacted by the development of that property. The support of the "unincorporated residents" has been the grounds on which opponents of Measure K have charged that the measure is

**Measures K and J Spending**

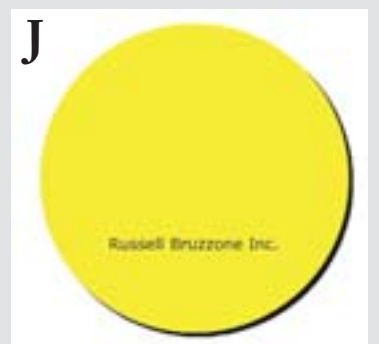
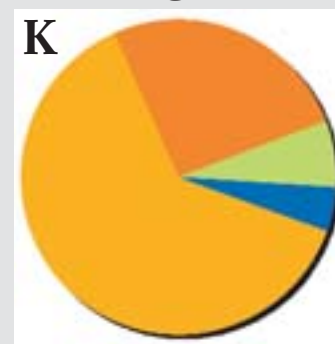


supported by "outsiders." It should be noted, however, that most of these residents send their children to Moraga schools and contribute to the school district, they are members of Moraga community groups, shop in town and some are employed in the town.

The Measure J campaign has spent over ten times more than that of Measure K.

Categorized by type of expense the difference is more distinct: Backers of Measure J spent 25 times what Measure K spent on campaign consultants, and 37 times more in legal and accounting fees.

**Funding The Measures**



**Moraga Candidates Forum: Personalities and Alliances Emerge**

By Sophie Braccini

The Candidates Forum organized by the Moraga Citizens Network was a great success. The 175 seats in the Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School auditorium were full, and a hundred more residents stood and spilled over to the outside of the space. For those who missed this memorable evening in the democratic life of our town, the Lamorinda Weekly recorded the event and has posted it online; you can view the entire presentation or select the questions or statements that interest you.

The public was attentive, responsive and respectful. Each candidate was at their best; they were there to prove they are worthy of your vote. Some managed to get a good laugh from the audience – see it for yourself at <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com>.

A solid contender, Howard Harpham exuded credibility. A retired assistant public defender, Harpham knows how the system works, and how to step back and observe what's going on. He was not emotional, and knew when to raise an eyebrow to convey a message.

Karen Mendonca played in the same league, displaying the same calm demeanor. A Berkeley Ph.D., she made a specialty of working with dysfunctional groups and presented herself with confidence, indicating a desire to work for the common good.

As the only incumbent, Mike Metcalf drew on his four years of experience to score points for knowledge and practicality, pointing to the successes of the present Council.

Janice Kolbe used her experience as President of the Moraga Country Club to establish her credibility and prove she could work with a diverse group. Her direct and folksy style added a bit of spice to the debate.

Dennis Wanken was an anomaly, not fitting into any one box. He brought yarns of different colors to the table and drew on his experience on the School Board to demonstrate that he could make a difference on the Council.

By far the least conventional of the six was the youngest contender, Brad Kvederis. Less experi-

enced, more naive, but full of ideas and enthusiasm he was a welcome addition to an otherwise somewhat consensual presentation.

It is interesting to note that some of the candidates have contributed to each others' campaigns. Metcalf and Kolbe contributed \$150 to Harpham's campaign. The three of them were united in their opinion on the land use initiatives, along with Wanken, declaring a clear "no on both" position. Mendonca and Kvederis supported Measure K.

For further details on the candidates' positions, you can refer to the Moraga Citizens Network's questionnaire, online at <http://www.moragacitizensnetwork.org/>, and two of our archived articles, available online at: <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0215/Moraga-Town-Council-Candidates-Discuss-Priorities.html> and [www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0214/Moraga-Candidates-to-Town-Council-on-Participatory-Democracy.html](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0214/Moraga-Candidates-to-Town-Council-on-Participatory-Democracy.html).

See video of the event at: [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com)

**Moraga Road Work Continues**

By Sophie Braccini



Mountain Cascade back on Moraga Road Photo Sophie Braccini

After a summer of road closures and single lane traffic, many Moragans thought they had endured enough for their new water pipeline and watched in relief as the trucks moved to the Lafayette Reservoir. But Moraga's reservoir is up Draeger Drive, so the new pipeline needs to find its way there from where the work had stopped at Ascot.

Mountain Cascade, the East Bay Municipal Utility District's contractor, is digging again, grinding the pavement, trenching, laying pipe, welding,

backfilling, paving, and striping and probably will be disrupting traffic on the main artery until mid-November; longer if they run into difficult dirt or unexpected utilities in the road.

"They are making great progress," says EBMUD's Nora Harlow, "This job was supposed to be completed by Summer 2009, and it looks like they will finish before January, 2009." The contractor will probably complete the work in the Lafayette Reservoir Recreation Area by mid-October.

**Moraga Town Staff: Stressed Out and Struggling**

... continued from page 3

She believes that if the staff is cut back even further, people will notice the difference in the support they will receive: longer delays in for any service requests, and less human interaction to get the information people need.

"Our jobs are challenging," adds Colaso, "we are all wearing multiple hats and striving to bring a high level of service to the community." Unfortunately, with a projected budget deficit as early as next year, and the absence of new sources of revenue in the short term, the fear of lay-offs may become a reality.

Due to recent changes in personnel, portions of the budget were not brought back to the department heads for review and consideration before being taken to the Council. "The department heads were not included in discussing the fiscal concerns and potential solutions," regrets Mercurio. She remembers previous budget cycles when all of the department heads would discuss all of the issues, and help solve problems together.

"I hope that the new Council will consider adding some type of business tax to improve our revenue stream," proposes Colaso.

Other elements have been worrisome for the staff. Normally, government employees sign an agreement called a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that defines their salaries and benefits. Right now, Moraga's employees do not have such an agreement. They have been granted a Cost of Living Adjustment, but for some, like the police officers who have many vacation days that were never taken and could expire, there is still a need for negotiation and agreement.

Despite the uncertainties, the Town staff does its best to make sure that the Town stays in compliance and its citizens receive services. But if rumors come to fruition and some department heads leave, finding replacements in this difficult budget situation may be challenging for the new Town Manager, who is expected to be hired early next year.