

MISSION VIEJO

BUZZ

Keeping the California Promise

Week of November 11, 2006



The Patriot Post Founders' Quote Daily

"Laws for the liberal education of the youth, especially of the lower class of the people, are so extremely wise and useful, that, to a humane and generous mind, no expense for this purpose would be thought extravagant."

-- John Adams (Thoughts on Government, 1776)

Reference: The Works of John Adams, Charles Adams, ed., 199.

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ELECTION AFTERMATH STAFF EDITORIAL

With Mission Viejo's 72 precincts counted, incumbents Trish Kelley and John Paul Ledesma retained their council seats. To be determined is the third seat, with 30 votes separating incumbent Lance MacLean and challenger Diane Greenwood. Provisional ballots and late absentees are being counted by the Registrar of Voters, and the outcome could go either way.

The totals as of Friday morning were Kelley (9,644), Ledesma (8,431), MacLean (6,817), Greenwood (6,787), Barker (5,053), Lonsinger (5,046), Ferrall (4,883), McCusker (4,461), Woodin (4,305) and Skalsky (3,784).

The city election didn't offer surprises. Incumbents had an advantage from the beginning, with voters largely unaware of problems facing the city. Despite the incumbents' deficiencies, voters didn't perceive any issue big enough to warrant a revolution. Adding a twist was an out-of-towner – lobbyist John Lewis – who "masterminded" a failed attempt to buy three council seats by stuffing voters' mailboxes with false information. On Lewis' agenda is a city takeover of Southern California Edison's power lines. Except for

a small percentage of residents in north Mission Viejo, few people care about power lines. Also evident from Lewis' hit pieces, he's still angry that his ambulance client didn't get the city contract, which also doesn't register with Mission Viejo voters.

Beyond support for Ledesma, blog staffers favored Michael Ferrall and Jim Woodin as issue-oriented, ethical candidates offering change without vitriol. Although Ferrall and Woodin didn't place high enough to threaten incumbents, the votes they received – plus those going to Lonsinger – likely took votes away from Greenwood and held the lobbyist's other candidates at bay.

No "winner" had an impressive following, nor was there an appreciable margin of victory. If MacLean prevails, it will be politics as usual with continued animosity, childish behavior, favors for special interest and big spending. If Greenwood wins, the council will likely decline even further.

As time grew closer to the election, Greenwood and her handful of supporters went on daily attacks of anyone who opposed her.

Many observers noted that Greenwood's lobbyist-funded hit pieces were unethical misrepresentations of facts, and her campaign antics on street corners were embarrassing. On Saturday morning prior to the election, Greenwood and MacLean faced off at La Paz

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and Marguerite. Greenwood dialed 911 to report MacLean had touched or moved one of her campaign signs. Two squad cars showed up, and officers spent nearly an hour sorting out differences of opinion between Greenwood and MacLean. On Monday, Greenwood and her four supporters spent the entire day at La Paz and Marguerite. They put up a large sign, "Stop the hate and lies." If any slogan took enough votes from Greenwood to keep her off the council, the sign may have done it. Voters don't want to hear about hate and lies, particularly when many residents believed the most serious problems were emanating from Greenwood.

While improvement on the council is out of reach, the outcome could have been worse if the lobbyist's other choices – Bill Barker and Justin McCusker – had won. The campaign seemed to bring out the worst in Barker, who became increasing belligerent. Justin McCusker wasn't previously involved in the community, and "Justintime" will likely "Justgoaway." According to his neighbors, McCusker's house has been on the market for months, and he may be gone with the political wind.

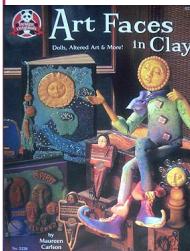
The mighty Orange County lobbyist, John Lewis, again struck out in Mission Viejo. A fortune in out-of-town money couldn't buy a council seat for McCusker or Barker. Councilman Frank Ury as Lewis' puppet is also out of luck; however, if Greenwood gets on the council, she would at least second his lobbyist-serving motions. Also ending is Lewis' self-perpetuated myth of influencing past Mission Viejo elections.

Mission Viejo residents who are uninformed are well represented on the council. Trish Kelly is the champion of the uninformed, and Diane Greenwood as a potential new council member lacks talent and ideas. With Greenwood, hostile and angry residents – few as they are – would also have their very own representative.

According to the Registrar of Voters, results of the provisional and late-absentee count will be known within two weeks.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR CITY HAS LOST ITS SENSE OF HUMOR



Some names and faces on the council have changed, but I can't tell the difference between the current council members and those who were sitting there more than four years ago. What's missing is a sense of humor about it. People are increasingly annoyed by the whole thing, and it used to be a laughing matter.

A few of those involved take it too seriously instead of appreciating the entertainment value. Once in awhile someone writes a funny letter to the blog and everyone has a good laugh. That's the attitude needed.



If the city is getting the same people on the council after all the effort to get rid of them, the situation is approaching that of years ago with Sherri Butterfield and Susan Withrow. I hope a sense of humor about it can be recaptured.

Nadine Harder
Mission Viejo



A city with a sense of humor

Residents casting their votes at Los Alisos Middle School reported an incident to the blog on Election Day. According to the report, Trish Kelley was cam -

If you have a concern regarding voter fraud, voter intimidation or any other irregularity involving voting, please contact either the Secretary of State's Voting Information Hotline at 1-800-345-VOTE, or your [county election office](#).

her attorney if he disagreed. Consider that Kelley blatantly campaigns on "her" Capistrano school district turf while reporting others to the administration to get them removed by the police if necessary. Is Kelley still promoting herself as Mission Viejo's queen of character?



More than 10,000 campaign signs are coming down quickly. Slowest to remove signs are Kelley and Neil Lonsinger, who both posted extraordinary numbers of signs. Throughout the campaign, a city contractor ("Chuck") was on duty to confiscate signs for the city, taking them by the Jeep-load to a secured area near city hall. According to one campaign volunteer who followed him, Chuck made no distinction between signs on public or private property. He showed the volunteer a copy of his contract, outlining that he was to take signs from public property along city arterials. The volunteer also said Chuck was counting the signs he delivered, as if his pay were based on how many signs he bagged.



The Registrar of Voters' tally for Election Day gives the following information: total number of voters registered in Orange County – 1,497,397. Total votes cast in this election – 588,335. Turnout was 39.3 percent, which is abysmal. Of the 39.3 percent, those who went to their polling place accounted for approximately 24 percent, and absentee ballots accounted for approxi-

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paigning on campus – trolling for votes as residents arrived at the neighborhood polling place – and the principal asked her to leave. He told her classes were in session and it was inappropriate for her to campaign on school property. Kelley allegedly told him it was her right to be there, and he could call

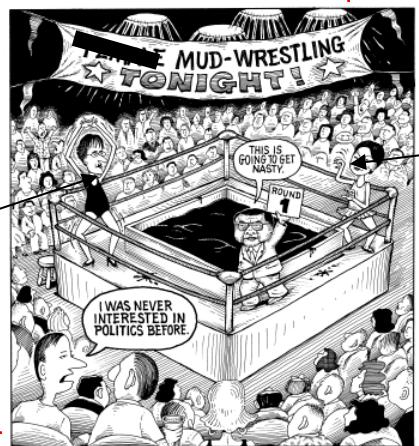
City council candidates totaled 59,211 votes as of Friday morning. Individual tallies on Friday morning were Kelley (9,644), Ledesma (8,431), MacLean (6,817), Greenwood (6,787), Barker (5,053), Lonsinger (5,046), Ferrall (4,883), McCusker (4,461), Woodin (4,305) and Skalsky (3,784). Given that each voter had three votes to cast in the council race, the potential total was approximately 180,000 votes. Despite having 10 choices, voter enthusiasm about the council race was clearly lacking.

mately 15 percent. Republicans who commented to blog staffers indicated three factors discouraged their base from voting: 1) the war in Iraq, 2) Republicans turning into big spenders, 3) failure of Republicans in power to stop illegal immigration. Democrats who contacted the blog commented only about their dissatisfaction with the city election, specifically the prospect of incumbents back in office.

Mission Viejo's total number of registered voters was 59,235 in July, and the number likely rose by the Nov. 7 election. The number of eligible voters isn't known because the Registrar of Voters' rolls include a substantial number of dead people. This is not an exaggeration.



The Registrar of Voters has 28 days to certify the election. Interested residents can then get details about how their precincts voted or other breakouts of election data in the RoV's official Statement of Votes. MacLean was quoted in the Nov. 10 Saddleback Valley News, indicating a recount will likely follow the "final count" for the third council seat. Considering the contentious nature of MacLean and Greenwood, residents should be thankful if they don't determine the outcome with a mud-wrestling Greenwood match in front of city hall.



MacClown

the end