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## Candidates Congregate at Community Center

By Cathy Tyson



Traci Reilly, Don Tatzin, Brandt Andersson and Dino Riggio Photo Cathy Tyson

between more mature incumbents and younger contenders. As expected, well-spoken incumbents Andersson and Tatzin reviewed their qualifications and pointed out their accomplishments over the past four years. Andersson reminded voters that The Lafayette Library and Learning Center has opened, priorities for obtaining open space have been established, and an unprecedented group effort collaborated to purchase the 22-acre Acalanes Ridge parcel. Tatzin focused on the current financial health of the city: AAA credit rating, self supporting Parks and Recreation Department and a fully-funded city employee defined contribution retirement program.

Newcomers Traci Reilly and Dino Riggio promised a fresh perspective and a new generation in leadership. Riggio, 29, was clearly nervous speaking in public and wasn't specific about what that fresh perspective translated to, but a confident Reilly made points that seemed to resonate with the audience.

She is against the Downtown Specific Plan, calling it "three years and \$2 million on something resident's don't want" and the currently off-the-table Charter City/Property Transfer Tax Measure.

In response to the question regarding running the city as efficiently as possible, none of the candidates answered yes or no. Tatzin acknowledged that the Council implemented most of the recommendations of the Finance Committee, composed of savvy Lafayette business-people. Andersson explained that they may eliminate one engineering position since there have been fewer planning applications, adding that the city is providing services that residents ask for.

Reilly commented that it is reasonable to look at staffing levels and that no one is entitled to a job for life. Riggio agreed with Reilly but also mentioned that the budget was balanced this year with \$500 to spare.

"This is your chance to view democracy in action," said moderator and Lafayette Homeowners Council President Marie Blits in her opening remarks. Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, November 2. New voter registration cards must be post marked no later than October 18. For U.S. Citizens that are over 18 registration forms can be found at most post offices, the library and city offices or go to [www.sos.ca.gov](http://www.sos.ca.gov) to register online.

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Although originally scheduled for the Sequoia Room, an overwhelming turnout made proceeding there impossible, so candidates and guests picked up chairs, complimentary cookies and coffee and moved to the significantly larger Manzanita Room for the candidate presentations sponsored by the Lafayette Homeowners Council.

This helpful, neighborly gesture illustrates the difference between local races and generally more divisive state-wide contests. While Jerry Brown and Meg Whitman duke it out on the airwaves, more civility is required for School Board and City Council candidates that live in the neighborhood, coach your kid's soccer team or are a member of your church.

Following School Board candidates, and presentations on Proposition 22, City Council candidates took turns at the podium highlighting their experience and their platforms if elected. Wrapping up the event were questions and answers that ranged from innocuous - changing a traffic signal on Pleasant Hill Road, to an emotional resident asking if city government is run as efficiently as possible.

Although there were no big surprises, there was a clear divide