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Anne Grodin Takes a New Direction

By Andrea A. Firth



Anne Grodin Photo Andy Scheck

About every ten years, Lafayette resident Anne Grodin makes a shift. "I believe in moving on and trying new things," says Grodin—a familiar name and face in Lafayette where she has lived for 27 years with her husband Marshall.

Grodin spent the 1990's as an elected volunteer serving two terms on the Lafayette City Council and acting as Mayor in 1994 and 1998. Over the course of the next ten years, Grodin was a tireless fundraiser simultaneously working on three capital funds campaigns for the Lafayette Community Fund, Cal Shakes, and the John Muir Health Foundation.

And with the dawn of a new decade, Grodin has signed on as Assembly member Nancy Skinner's Field Representative for Lamorinda and Pleasant Hill helping the 14th District representative stay connected with her constituents on the east side of the tunnel. Skinner's District also extends west into Alameda County and includes Albany, Richmond, Berkeley, and Emeryville.

"The District is so diverse," notes Grodin, "The unifying thread is Nancy's commitment to the environment," she says, adding, "I understand how residents in Lamorinda feel about open space, hills,

and creeks. It's really important and they want to preserve this lifestyle."

Grodin joined Skinner's team in June and was immediately thrust into the nebulous world of the State budget process. "I quickly learned a lot about school finance which comprises a significant portion of the State budget," says Grodin. As part of Skinner's outreach efforts, Grodin attends many local meetings and events both with and without the Assembly member.

It's been an interesting transition for Grodin, who seems to have the Midas touch when it comes to raising funds for the community and the arts. "Raising funds is its own art. You have to ask people face to face," says Grodin, adding, "We are very fortunate here. We live in a community that really understands philanthropy."

Often attributed as the founder of the Lafayette Community Foundation, Grodin is quick to point out, "You never accomplish anything like this by yourself." What she brought to the process, says Grodin, were connections to people that knew how to fundraise, which in turn helped the Foundation to raise over \$12 million for the construction of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. The Foundation has grown to serve as a vehicle for philanthropy for the City of Lafayette.

Grodin was a quick study when it came to fundraising, and she soon found herself working on two other highly successful campaigns for Cal Shakes, which raised over \$8 million for upgrades to the Bruns Amphitheater, and the John Muir Health Foundation, which has raised \$50 million so far for new medical facilities and renovations at the Walnut Creek and Concord health care campuses.

Reflecting on these successful fundraising efforts that are now winding down, Grodin remains committed to these causes, "Every campaign that you do is so interesting." But she is also energized and enthusiastic about her new venture. "Working with Assembly member Skinner is a good way to try something very different," says Grodin. "The job is different everyday."

Grodin encourages Lamorinda residents to take advantage of Assembly member Skinner's mobile office hours Pleasant Hill where Grodin and other staff are available to meet with residents to answer questions about State issues, gather feedback, and assist with issues involving a State agency. Appointments can be scheduled by calling (510) 286-1400 or by walk-in. Mobile office hours are held at Pleasant Hill City Hall, 100 Gregory Lane in the small conference room, every fourth Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. starting in January.

Reach the reporter at: andrea@lamorindaweekly.com

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