

Alameda

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Locally Owned, Community Oriented

Candidates Make Final Appeal

By Dan Abbott

In a final public campaign event for Alameda County's District 3 Supervisor seat, candidates spoke at an Island forum May 24, fielding questions from a meager crowd of the politically interested.

While only 15 citizens showed up for the event organized by the Alameda League of Women Voters (LWV), the three candidates in attendance put on their best faces in an attempt to win over the crowd before the June 6 election.

Incumbent Alice Lai-Bitker was joined by challengers Jim Price and Lou Filipovich, who outlined their priorities if elected to the supervisor position. Two other candidates, San Leandro Mayor Shella Young and San Leandro city council member Glenda Nardine, were not in attendance.

The candidates presented contrasting views of the role of the supervisors — a group of five that manage Alameda County's medical, social and law enforcement services. Lai-Bitker presented herself as mild-mannered and approachable, with the quiet confidence of an incumbent. Filipovich was slightly prickly, objecting to the LWV's use of a video camera and demanding at one point that all members of the press identify themselves. Price was noticeably energetic and articulate, giving perhaps the most tangible answers to many of the questions. Both Price and Filipovich criticized Lai-Bitker's style of management, claiming a less passive approach was needed for the super-

visor's seat.

"We need a supervisor who can build consensus and not be marginalized by other board members," Price said.

Lai-Bitker, an Alameda resident and former social worker, touted the improved social services she helped push through, including the No Wrong Door health insurance program and the Family Justice Center, which streamlines social services for victims of domestic violence. Lai-Bitker promised to expand services for those in need and to streamline the budget.

Price, also an Alamedan, with roots in community activism and Democratic campaigning, said his focus would be on making government more transparent, vowing to push through a "sunshine law." Price also emphasized the county's medical system, which is plagued by debt and the looming costs of mandatory seismic retrofits that must be completed by 2013.

Filipovich, a boisterous Republican and veteran of the San Leandro political scene, was short on details about his campaign, complaining that the issues were too complex to address with short answers. Even so, Filipovich, who several times went over his allotted response time, promised the audience, "You'll see changes if I get in there."

Questions submitted by the audience ranged over a wide swath of topics, including instant runoff voting, the county budget and the new \$100

million juvenile detention center currently being built.

"We need to focus on keeping kids out of juvie," Price said. "We need to do more to show kids there's a light at the end of the tunnel."

Price said one solution is connecting students with local employers in construction and health care, trades which Price said can offer decent wages without a college degree.

Asked about the difficulties of securing construction bids for the county medical center's seismic upgrade, Filipovich was plain-spoken but rather vague about the solution.

"You've got to make a deal with a hundred different contractors, and they all want a piece of the action," Filipovich said. "It's a matter of regulatory control."

The two Alamedans seem to be the front-runners for the supervisor seat, and both are heavily courting their hometown vote. Lai-Bitker, an incumbent with several high-profile programs to her credit and endorsements from Alameda Mayor Beverly Johnson and Rep. Barbara Lee, seems the favorite to win. Price is mounting an enthusiastic grassroots campaign, however, and recently landed the endorsement of Alameda planning board member Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft.

Lai-Bitker will be with supporters at Tucker's Ice Cream on Park Street as the votes are tallied. Price will be watching election results with supporters at Linguini's Restaurant on Park Street.



Horne

Boy Scout Troop
Memorial Day
Navy Cmdr. J.
CEO Jon Star
given a flower
loved ones.

Coun Budg

By Eric Tur

At a special city council meeting Tuesday evening, City Manager Debra Kurita introduced the city budget, with the focus on falling on deferred maintenance and unfunded city staff.

City Appoints New Top Cop

By Dan Abbott

Alameda chose a former Alameda cop and current San Jose



erred for the position.

After winnowing down the candidate pool, City Manager Debra

Continues on the back