

To: Marianne Ratcliffe, Assistant Opinion Page Editor—Ventura County Star
From: Roseann Mikos, Ph.D. (Co-author, Moorpark S.O.A.R.)
RE: Answer to Pulse Question (from 11/22/98)
Working Title: "Lessons of the Moorpark November Election"

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Submitted on November 26, 1998
Published on December 7, 1998

Nov. 3 Election Encourages Moorpark SOAR Supporters

Monday, December 7, 1998
By: ROSEANN MIKOS

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What were the lessons of the November election? I'm sure they were different for different people.

I decided to look at the detailed Moorpark election results first—to see what they tell me. When you look at the tallies for the City of Moorpark alone, it's quite interesting—especially since we in Moorpark have another very important special election coming up in about six weeks, on January 12, 1999. In effect, our January 12th election is like Part II of the November 3rd election because we'll finally get to vote on what we wanted to see on the November 3rd ballot.

Nevertheless, here are a few things I learned as I reflect on the November 3rd election, its results, and the aftermath:

- People in Moorpark, just like those all over Ventura County, overwhelmingly approved of the PEOPLE's county-wide S.O.A.R. (Measure B) and its advisory cousin, the weaker, but still important Measure A (61% and 65% respectively).

This tells me that Moorpark citizens firmly want to require voter approval before farmland and open space can be converted to urban uses.

- People in Moorpark were generally skeptical about the city's Measure F, a weak alternative to the PEOPLE'S Moorpark S.O.A.R. Moorpark residents barely passed Measure F with 52.5% of the vote.

I think this shows a largely astute electorate—one that knew that the REAL Moorpark S.O.A.R. did not even appear on the November 3rd ballot. Most Moorpark citizens know that they will have to wait for the January 12th special election to vote on the real Moorpark S.O.A.R. (Measure S)

While the majority of the "old" Moorpark City Council could have placed the real Moorpark S.O.A.R. on the November 3rd ballot, as did every other city that had the chance in their respective jurisdictions, Moorpark chose not to do so. That's why Moorpark voters will have a special election. No, it wasn't illegal for the prior Moorpark council to decline to place S.O.A.R. on the ballot till January, but it did show surprising insensitivity to the desires of a large constituency.

- More than 63% of those who voted confirmed that they liked the leadership provided by Mayor Patrick Hunter and want to keep him as our Mayor. I fully concur with that assessment and am glad that Hunter will remain Moorpark's mayor. The people of Moorpark have shown a very strong vote of confidence in Mayor Hunter.

Why? I think it is because when he votes for or against something, he typically explains the reasons for his votes more clearly than have other council members—and with less hyperbole than we hear from certain more vocal councilmembers. Whether you agree or disagree with some of his votes, when Hunter votes, people know why—they know where he stands and his reasons for those stances.

For example, Hunter was the ONLY councilmember who provided clear, detailed justification for his vote on the massive, proposed Hidden Creek/Messenger project (He voted "NO"). I think his "NO" vote carried a lot of weight with the majority of Moorpark voters—who are glad Hunter disapproves of sprawl development like Hidden Creek/Messenger—just like they do.

- Of the 8,643 people who cast votes in Moorpark, some 3,670 of them voted for the incumbent, John Wozniak, for City Council—making him the top vote getter of the six candidates running for council.

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Yet 4,973 people, or 58% of those who voted, voted for someone else. This suggests that 58% wanted to see two different people serve on the council than had served on the previous council. Interesting, isn't it?

- Of the candidates representing change, the top two vote getters were Clint Harper and Roseann Mikos (this writer). Mikos and Harper were the ONLY council candidates who (1) endorsed S.O.A.R. (Save Open-space and Agricultural Resources) and (2) worked and are still working to get Moorpark citizens the right to vote on the sprawling Messenger/Hidden Creek Ranch development deal—by leading the referendum drive against the development deal.

Nevertheless, as often happens in races with a healthy number of challengers, the candidates with the most recent experience in public office win. This happened on November 3rd when incumbent John Wozniak and School Board member and former mayor Clint Harper won the election. I wish John and Clint well on the new council.

As for me, I will now apply for a seat on the Planning Commission. It's important for me to do this because the people of Moorpark have shown me, by their votes, that they want to hear my voice represented more fully in the planning process. No matter what happens though, I intend to stay involved so that my voice can continue to be heard on the important issues facing Moorpark.

As the first runner-up, I learned a lot from this campaign that will serve me well in the future:

- A whole lot of people in Moorpark pay careful attention and know what is going on—especially about S.O.A.R. and about the proposed Hidden Creek/Messenger sprawl development.

They emailed me and called me on the phone in large numbers to tell me they supported me and were glad that I made it clear where I stand on the issues. They asked good, intelligent questions not only about S.O.A.R. and Hidden Creek, but also about many other important Moorpark issues.

They confirmed for me that it was right for me to run for Moorpark City Council and that I was right in having faith in the people of Moorpark to be able to sort through the misinformation put forth by many who are opposed to S.O.A.R. and who are for sprawl-type developments like the massive proposed Hidden Creek project.

- My actions to become involved with S.O.A.R., to co-author the Moorpark S.O.A.R. initiative, to help qualify it for the ballot, and to lead the charge against the Messenger/Hidden Creek Ranch Development Deal were well worth doing.

I believe I made a big difference here in Moorpark by helping to raise the consciousness of our city about what kind of city we want to be. The lesson that "one person can make a difference" was reinforced for me during this election season as I worked hard to raise the level of debate about what vision Moorpark citizens have for our city.

- The groundwork laid during my November 3rd grassroots campaign will provide the impetus for our next victory on January 12th when we pass Measure S and defeat Measure T.

In combination, by passing Measure S (the PEOPLE'S Moorpark S.O.A.R.) and by defeating Measure T (Hidden Creek), it will guarantee that Moorpark voters can decide the fate of what does or doesn't happen in the Hidden Creek project area and in other farmland or open space areas outside the original Moorpark City limits.

If anyone has any questions or wants to help to educate the voters before January 12th, contact me via email at contactme@roseann-mikos.org or at 529-3216. We can use your help. And finally, to all my supporters for council: a great big THANK YOU!

Roseann Mikos, Ph.D. was first runner-up in the November 3rd Moorpark council election, is a 17 ½ year Moorpark resident, and is co-author of the Moorpark S.O.A.R. initiative that will be on the January 12th special election ballot.