

Admires Prola and Cutter for 'No' Vote on City Raises

Editor:

□ Hats off to Jim Prola and to Pauline Cutter. I admire them immensely for having the backbone to say “no” to the city council on giving raises for the next five years to the city manager and the chief of police.

□ The newspaper article (*“Raises on the Way for Spagnoli And Marshall,” Page 1, The Times, Nov. 22*) stated that perhaps both the city manager and the chief were “looking around” at other cities where the salary was higher than San Leandro.

□ In my opinion, if they want to look around and leave, then so do it. Why does the city have to offer them what looks like is a bribe to get them to stay?

□ I do not understand how these two people can take such raises knowing that the rank and file below them in both the city and the police department have not received significant raises in quite a few years. The people that work the hardest to make the city run smoothly, and make their leaders look good, don't get the money.

□ How can these two individuals expect that when they appear to be greedy and not think of others in their prospective departments?

□ Perhaps others on the city council should do some more soul searching and realize that Prola and Cutter were correct.

—**Josephine Copeland Thompson**

San Leandro

Government Upbraided for Contributing to Health Costs

Editor:

□ Recently I visited a VFW club where the bar was filled with veterans drinking alcohol. What does this have to do with the so-called fiscal cliff?

□ For one thing, the veterans who are probably receiving government medical benefits were consuming a product that is harmful to their health. Drinking causes all kinds of medical problems such as liver disease, diabetes and brain damage. If the veterans develop any of these illnesses, the Veterans Administration, Medicare, Medicaid or other government agencies may be required to cover the cost of treatment. By supporting these VFW bars, the government is also increasing the cost of medical coverage and adding to the fiscal cliff.

□ Some steps the nation can take to reduce medical cost and at the same time increase the health of the nation:

□ 1) Smoking costs the nation 440,000 lives and \$155 billion dollars a year. Tobacco products should be declared illegal or at a minimum there should be a federal law banning smoking in all public places and private places where employees are present. Also, we should tax tobacco companies and smokers an amount equal to the cost of smoking.

□ 2) The cost of company or government medical coverage should be based on the amount of coverage a person uses. This will encourage people to live a healthier life style.

□ 3) Companies and governments should not have to pay medical expenses caused by an unhealthy life style. Person who become overweight or obese from eating foods high in sodium, cholesterol, fat, and sugar should pay any medical cost related to their unhealthy life style.

□ 4) Any company or organization that sells or serves food or drinks should be required to list the

amount of salt, cholesterol, fat, calories and sugar in the product. This will encourage the food industry to develop a healthier food supply and allow the public to make healthier food choices.

□ To reduce our medical cost and save lives, we need to go heavy on prevention. Through good health management we can turn the fiscal cliff into a highway toward personal and financial health.

—**Elie Parker**, *San Leandro*

A Special Moment Created By News of Measure L's Passage

Editor:

□ I want to enhance the appreciation and recognitions shared in the letter from the Yes-on-L Chairs (*"Measure L Proves Every Vote Counts," Letters, Nov. 22*).

□ Among the many gifts that I was thankful for this Thanksgiving holiday was a moment at James Garfield Elementary School. Recently, I was sharing the good news about Measure L's narrow passage with a co-worker. He hadn't yet heard the great news, because our school day had yet to begin and my colleague hadn't accessed his e-mail.

□ One of my fourth grade students overheard our conversation and shouted, fist pumping, "Yes! I will learn to play the clarinet!" Thank you, San Leandro voters.

—**Maureen Forney**, *San Leandro*

Fears Ethnic Distinctions Will Continue to Divide the Country

Editor:

□ La Rhonda Crosby's outrage at your neglect to announce the reelection of Barack Obama to the office of President for his second term (*"Angered That Times Ignored Obama Re-election Coverage, Letters, Nov. 29*) made it clear that she voted based on race only.

□ Quite frankly it's undeniable that the country is and has been in a major downturn economically and unemployment has held steady at above eight percent for the last four years. If you ask me, I think Barack Obama was a little surprised that he was reelected.

□ I didn't see this level of outrage when George W. Bush was elected or reelected. People were too busy thinking up names to call G.W. Bush to worry about announcing his winning of the presidency. I think this is a sign of what we have evolved into. We are no longer just Americans with a pride and a can-do attitude.

□ People immigrated to this country from countries all over the world wanting to be Americans. They came here, many with nothing but a prayer. They worked hard and assimilated into the fabric of America. They were Italian, German, Mexican, Chinese and African. They were from all parts of the world; people with a common desire, they wanted to be Americans. Today people are still from all of these countries, however they are different.

□ Every ethnic group wants to be recognized as people from the country that they came from. Now we have African Americans, Mexican Americans and Chinese Americans and so on. All of these groups seem to live in their own neighborhoods and assimilation is the last thing on their minds. They have divided themselves from each other, becoming groups separate unto themselves. We are a divided America; unless we can become one group of people called Americans again we are going to be a country divided against itself.

—**Chuck Heesch**, *San Leandro*