

Petition's financial backing questioned

By Donna Jones
Santa Cruz Sentinel (MCT)

WATSONVILLE — Questions have emerged about the financial backing of a group pushing a trio of initiatives that would curb the power of Watsonville's City Council.

Petitions aimed at getting the initiatives on the ballot in 2014 are circulating.

A complaint has been with the California Fair Political Practices Commission, alleging the group has raised money to

hire signature gatherers, but has not filed the required campaign finance documentation with state and local election officials.

"It's great that people are supporting a cause they believe in, but that's not the issue," said Isaac Rodriguez, who filed the complaint. "To be fair with the public and fair to everyone involved, it should be public knowledge of who's funding what."

If the initiatives make it on the ballot and are ap-

proved by voters, the council would no longer be able to make appointments to fill vacancies, choose the mayor or name city property. Instead, the mayoral position would be rotated among council members, and filling vacancies and naming city property would be subject to a vote of the people.

In July, when backers began to gather signatures, proponent Rhea DeHart said all three were aimed at increasing public participation in city government.

The complaint alleges DeHart and eight other Watsonville residents behind the petitions did not file organizational statements required after receiving contributions of \$1,000 or more.

Further, it alleges that the Capitola nonprofit, California Senior Alliance, did not report financial contributions to the group, and is using its nonprofit status for political purposes.

Rodriguez said he talked to a man gathering signatures in front of Nob

Hill earlier this month. He said the man told him he was from Fresno and was contracted by the California Senior Alliance at a rate of \$2.50 per signature.

Rick Danna, a real estate broker who is taking a lead on the initiative related to council vacancies, said he hasn't had any dealings with the California Senior Alliance.

As for the finance filing, he said the group has received conflicting information about whether such action is required be-

fore initiatives are on a ballot. But if there's an issue, he said, it's an honest mistake by a group of volunteers.

"This isn't presidential politics," Danna said. "If novices make mistakes, and it's not malicious, let's fix it and get beyond it to (the question of) do the people of Watsonville want it or not."

"I think the question is, is this a grass-roots campaign, or is it being financed by a special interest group?" City Councilman Daniel Dodge said.

Ton of turkeys, fixings



Volunteers load turkeys and other food items for delivery during the Turkey Trot charity drive Saturday in Salinas. PROVIDED PHOTO

Nearly 100 motorcyclists roared into action Saturday at the 7th annual Turkey Trot charity drive hosted by Monterey Bay Harley Owners Group. The bikers rode down Main Street on their way to Star Market in south Salinas. Each year, the event provides holiday turkeys and other food items to the Food

Bank for Monterey County. Star Market donated 29 cents per pound for every turkey purchased. In all, the bikers delivered just under 3,000 pounds of turkey and boxes of groceries to the Food Bank. The riders also collected \$1,300 in cash which translates into \$9,100 in buying power at the Food Bank.

Among the volunteers were American Legion Riders, Ambassadors for Christ Riders, Santa Cruz HOG riders. The Gold Coast Rodders also joined in. "We do this every year to help those families in need within Monterey County," said Tommy Moffitt, member and past officer of MB HOG.



Nearly 100 bikers turned out for the annual event.

Wells Fargo Bank awards local grants

Wells Fargo has awarded \$50,000 in grants to schools in the Salinas area.

Ten schools in Gilroy, Hollister, Salinas, Watsonville, and Monterey were funded to promote academic achievement for low- and moderate-income students. Each school received a \$5,000 grant to help offset the cost of materials needed to address student's unique learning needs and help them succeed academically.

Schools were nominated in September. To be eligible, they must have had 51 percent or more of their students on the free and reduced-price lunch program and a score of 800 or better on the state Academic Performance Index.

These school received grants: Bardin Elementary and Alisal High in Salinas; Rolling Hills Middle and Calaveras Elementary in Watsonville; Highland Elementary; JC Crumpton Elementary; Marina High, Seaside High; McKinnon Elementary and El Roble Elementary in Monterey.

Hartnell speech team places in tourney

Members of The Hartnell Speech Team fared well at the Mustang Invitational Tournament held at Sacramento City College on Nov. 4.

These are the winners and categories:

- » Andrea Cervantes, first place, dramatic interpretation.
- » Andres Aranda, first place, poetry interpretation.
- » Karina Neeley, third place, oral interpretation.
- » Marc Dover, fifth place, oral interpretation.
- » Ariana Valencia, fifth place, poetry interpretation.

The tournament included 24 schools, both two-year and four-year programs from Arizona, California, Oregon and Utah.

Other Hartnell partici-

EDUCATION DIGEST

pants included: Julia Felice, Maria Hernandez, Daniel Ibarra, Angelica Jubane, Richelle Mendez, Miguel Padilla, and Alyssa Rendon.

Hartnell board calls special meeting

The Hartnell College Governing Board will meet at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday in special session.

The meeting, in Building B, Room 208, will follow a development session scheduled that same evening in the same room starting at 5 p.m.

The agendas and supporting materials are online at: www.hartnell.edu/board

The Hartnell Main Campus is at 411 Central Ave., Salinas.

MCOE holds summit for educators

Scores of Monterey County school board members were invited last week to an Educational Leadership Summit hosted by the Monterey County Office of Education and held at the Spanish Bay Inn in Pebble Beach.

The event included two general sessions and breakout sessions discussing educational topics such as: Effective and Engaging Districtwide Long-Range Planning Process, Higher Expectations: Achieving the District's Vision and Mission, Communicating with the Media, What Every Board Member Needs to Know about Local Control Funding Formula and Local Control Accountability Plan and What Every Board Member Needs to Know About Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balance, the New Assessment System.

Teacher contest worth \$25,000, residency

TNTP, a nonprofit devoted to teacher excellence, is accepting applications for its third Fish-

man Prize for Superlative Classroom Practice. Teachers working with low-income students are eligible. Winners receive \$25,000 and participate in a six-week summer residency.

TNTP is looking for public-school teachers "who demonstrate exceptionally effective teaching with students from high-poverty communities," according to a press release. The organization received more than 570 applications from 42 states in the 2013 competition.

The early deadline for the 2014 Fishman Prize is Dec. 3. The final deadline is Jan. 21.

TNTP was formed in 1997 as The New Teacher Project with the aim of giving poor and minority students equal access to effective teachers.

To apply online, go to tntp.org.

Student wins organ donor art contest

A card designed by Robbie Carroll, a Watsonville High School student whose father received a heart transplant, has won second place in the California Transplant Donor Network's Holiday Card Art Contest.

"Organ Donation Affects The World ... Be someone's hero. Sign up to be a donor," was among more than 50 entries submitted. The Network is a nonprofit which educates the public about organ and tissue donation in Northern California and Northern Nevada. The contest theme was "Miracles Happen through Organ and Tissue Donation."

Carroll's father received a transplant at age 36 but died of complications only a few months later. Robbie and his younger sister, Jazzlyn, have been on Facebook and others sites encouraging people to become donors. Their mother is Samantha Carroll.

Online: See all the winning entries on CTDN's

See EDUCATION, Page 7A

BUSINESS NEWS

Monterey College of Law dean appointed to panel

Monterey College of Law President and Dean Mitchel Winick has been appointed by State Bar President Luis J. Rodriguez to the Task Force on Admissions Regulation Reform.

The task force is charged with implementing three major changes to the regulation of legal education and admissions to the California Bar.

The proposed changes will mandate additional skill-based competency training in law school, new pro bono (free) legal service requirements as a condition of licensure, and additional continuing legal education requirements during the first year of practice that focus on law practice competency.

The State Bar Board of Trustees adopted the proposals in October and created a special committee to develop a plan for the three recommendations.

Winick, dean of Monterey College of Law since 2005, has been active in regulatory reform of the California accredited law schools.

Bonura joins insurance firm

Joe Bonura has joined Leavitt Central Coast Insurance Services as a broker focusing on commercial insurance.

Bonura has a long history in sales, most recently as an ad executive for the Monterey Herald.

California Rodeo names new board member

Following in the footsteps of his mentor, Doc Etienne, who served as past president and long-time director of the California Rodeo, Tim Baldwin was installed as a new director to the Board of the California Rodeo during the annual stockholders dinner and meeting Oct. 17.

Baldwin has volunteered at the Rodeo for

more than 10 years. He became chairman of the Credentials Committee in 2007 and is now chairman of the Carnival and co-chairman of the Credentials Committee.

Baldwin is a partner in the law firm of Noland, Hamerly, Etienne and Hoss.

Honors mount at Alvarez Technology Group

Alvarez Technology Group, Inc. has announced its president-CEO, Luis Alvarez, was selected for Nine Lives Media's sixth annual MSPmentor 250.

The global list identifies the world's leading Managed Services Provider executives, entrepreneurs, experts, coaches and community leaders.

The MSPmentor 250 report is based on a global survey of MSPmentor site readers conducted in the first half of 2013.

Visit Alvarez Technology Group, Inc. online at www.alvareztg.com.

The Salinas Californian

SERVING THE SALINAS VALLEY AND MONTEREY COUNTY

The Salinas Californian (USPS 478-120) is published Monday-Saturday morning by Salinas Newspapers, Inc., 123 W. Alisal St., Salinas, CA 93901. Phone (831) 424-2221 or (831) 649-6626. TTY: (831) 754-4296. A Gannett Newspaper.

Periodicals postage paid at Salinas, CA, postmaster. Send address changes to The Salinas Californian, 123 W. Alisal St., Salinas, CA 93901.

Management
Paula Goudreau
President & publisher.....754-4100
pgoudreau@thecalifornian.com
Pete Wevurski
Managing editor.....754-4280
pwevurski@thecalifornian.com

Local News
8 a.m. to 1 a.m.....754-4260
FAX machine.....754-4293
Sports.....754-4265
Features.....754-4167
Email.....
newsroom@thecalifornian.com

Circulation

Customer service
Toll free.....(877) 424-4917
Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Full Access Subscription rates:
Digital Access Only (excludes home delivery of the print edition): \$8.00 per month with EZ Pay. Including Monday-Saturday print edition delivery: \$12.27 per month or \$11.25 with EZ Pay. Including Wednesday and Saturday only print edition delivery: \$5.28 per month with EZ Pay. Slightly higher in outlying areas. Plus tax where applicable.
Rates that include print edition delivery apply to areas where carrier delivery service is available. The Thanksgiving Day print edition is delivered with every subscription that includes print edition delivery and will be charged at the then regular Saturday newsstand price, which will be reflected in the November payment.
EZ Pay is a convenient method for automatically paying your subscription. To start or switch a subscription payment to EZ Pay, call toll free (877) 424-4917 or go to www.thecalifornian.com. Terms and conditions apply.
If you miss delivery of the

Saturday print edition, a replacement may be requested by calling (877) 424-4917. Redelivery service not available Monday-Friday.

Each Full Access subscription includes access to www.thecalifornian.com, tablet, mobile and the e-Newspaper. For more information, contact (877) 424-4917.

Advertising
Monday-Friday7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Classified
Help Wanted.....754-4124
Real Estate.....754-4147
Display
Retail Advertising.....754-4133
Monday-Friday8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Out of the area.....(800) 300-6397
FAX.....754-4221

Corrections

The Salinas Californian strives to maintain accuracy and fairness in all stories, graphics, photographs and other materials that appear in the newspaper. If you have a correction or clarification request, please call the newsroom at 754-4260. Corrections run on this page.