

September 30, 2014

This is Erin Dunn of the Fortuna Chamber of Commerce with a Community Comment.

It's the last day of September. That's the signal for many upcoming activities. It means it's Apple Harvest this Saturday with Harvest Market on Sunday; it means Halloween marketing begins in earnest—no wait, that's already in full swing; and that campaign ads are about to explode.

Signs are already up. Some television ads have already started. But now, it all heats up.

Fortuna has two local issues to consider. Measure W, the Elementary School District Bond, and Measure V, the 1 cent sales tax. And of course we vote for the County tax measure and on the GMO issue as well.

In addition, Fortuna has an interesting City Council race this year. There are three seats open, four candidates and only one incumbent.

And, we have three women and one man running for office.

That means that no matter what happens with the election, women will out-number the men on the Council. That's a far cry from the all-men Council we had for several years not all that long ago. Sue Long joined the Council four years ago and Tami Trent was elected two years ago.

If the three women who are running are elected, that will leave the Mayor—Doug Strehl—sitting with four women council members.

I want to encourage Fortunans to vote for the three women if you are so inclined and not be apprehensive about a four-woman one-man Council.

Why would that be different—or worse—than the all male Council that we had a few years ago? I think Mayor Strehl can handle it.

In fact, an all-woman elected council is not unprecedented in the United States. The first time it happened was over 100 years ago in Kanab, Utah. Utah was the first state to allow women to vote and at that time was the only state that allowed women to vote. Jackson, Wyoming, followed in 1920 with an all-women City Council.

I urge Fortunans to vote for the best candidates—without taking gender into consideration. Who best represents your views? Who will help move Fortuna forward economically? That may be two women and a man, but it may well be three women.

Gender as a qualification doesn't really have a place in elections, it's not just the best man for the job any longer.

The Fortuna Chamber of Commerce is having a City Council Candidate Forum at our regular Monday meeting on October 6. I urge you to attend if you can and hear the candidates for yourself. We take questions from the audience—so you have an opportunity to raise your concerns and let the candidates' answers help you make your important decision.

The Chamber meets Mondays at the Monday Club from Noon – 1 p.m. Lunch is optional but there is a catered lunch available for \$10.

Again, our City Council Candidate forum is next Monday, October 6. You don't have to make a reservation, just stop by the Monday Club at Noon.

This has been Erin Dunn with a Community Comment.