

Valley Times Jan. 29 letters to the editor

Letters from our readers

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Some Alamo incorporation opponents say the devil we know is better than the devil we don't know.

I don't see Contra Costa County, Alamo's local government, as the devil. My experience with local government shows me the five members of the county Board of Supervisors are smart, knowledgeable, responsible, hard-working officials.

But they wrestle with a legacy of problems far beyond the scope of issues important to Alamo — a \$1.7 billion unfunded liability for employee benefits, a 2008 \$1.3 billion loss in pension investments they must compensate with taxpayer dollars, and falling housing assessed valuations in other parts of the county.

Their choices are to cut services, to increase revenue-generating development — for which they must mitigate traffic impacts in developed areas with road and intersection widening projects — and to try to raise taxes in unincorporated areas.

They've already cut the sheriff's budget three years running, and they've tried to widen Alamo's downtown intersection to accommodate overflow freeway traffic.

The county is big local government trying to meet its responsibilities to all its constituents and thousands of employees. Alamo needs to incorporate as small local government, with minimal employees, to meet its responsibilities to its own property owners and taxpayers.

Grace Schmidt

Alamo

Schmidt for council

Having spent her entire career in the public sector, Grace Schmidt is outstanding among the 15 candidates.

As a former congressional field representative for the 10th District, she has experience and knowledge of governmental planning, funding and budgeting and will be able to hit the ground running, no on-the-job training.

Working with her for many years on neighborhood issues we have seen her abilities first-hand. She always comes to the table prepared.

In a group dynamic she is a natural leader who is solution-oriented while making certain all views are heard and all sides of an issue explored. Alamo is fortunate to have Grace running for the council and we will all benefit from her expertise, dedication and passion.

Bruce and Ellen Miller

Alamo

Editorial inaccurate

The Jan. 8 editorial defending Israel's actions in Gaza is inaccurate. The cease fire agreed upon in June had three main points. One is that Hamas would stop all rocket attacks on Israel. The second and third were Israel would halt all military actions in Gaza and significantly ease the tight military blockade.

The first four months of the cease fire rocket attacks

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launched against Israel were significantly reduced. Israel's defense minister Barak told the Israeli newspaper Haaretz this past summer the cease fire was good for Israel.

Unfortunately, Israel did not live up to its commitment to ease the military blockade of Gaza, which was to allow more food, medicine and fuel supplies to reach Gaza.

In early November Israel launched an incursion into Gaza that was a direct violation of the cease fire agreement verified by CNN on Jan. 5 that it was Israel who violated the cease fire.

U.S. News & World Report confirmed that this Israeli attack started the breakdown of the cease fire agreement.

Israel is violating the Fourth Geneva Convention where it specifically states that it is illegal to transfer a civilian population onto territory occupied in a military conflict.

UNSC resolution 465 states the settlements Israel has built are invalid and demands that Israel remove them. Israel's response has been to build more settlements, expand existing ones and confiscate more Palestinian lands.

Israel's actions make Palestinians question whether Israeli is sincere about peace or is more interested in confiscating as much land in the West Bank as possible.

Bill Zeid

Livermore

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