



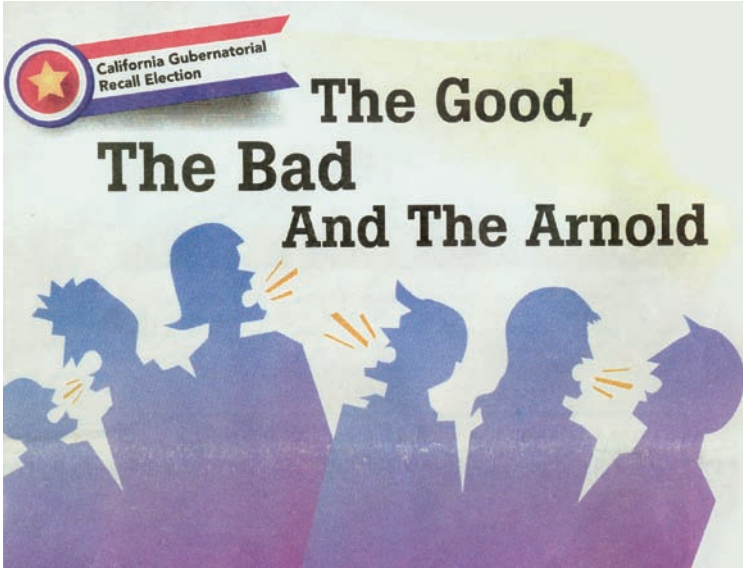
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BY SAMANTHA PARENT

Local residents sound off on the recall election, the economy and Schwarzenegger for Governor.

The Tiburon Peninsula was abuzz with chatter last week as local residents voiced their opinions on the October 7 election to recall Governor Gray Davis. From Sweet Things bakery to Jeanie's Java Coffee Shop, people weighed in on the unprecedented recall election, the ailing economy and the host of prospective candidates including action film star Arnold Schwarzenegger.

In an informal poll of 25 Belvedere, Tiburon and Strawberry residents, 10 were in favor of recalling Governor Davis, 13 were opposed and 2 were undecided.

Although most people agreed that California's \$38 billion budget deficit was a serious matter and that Gray Davis has been a disappointment as Governor, many locals expressed concern over the cost of the election, the negative publicity the effort is producing and the precedent that it sets for future campaigns.

"My feeling is that the majority of California voted Gray Davis into office for the term, and he should be able to finish out his whole term," said Jeannie Brown, owner of Jeanie's Java Coffee Shop in the Boardwalk courtyard. "With the financial position California is in now, a recall election costing millions of dollars is foolish. We can put that money to use in a better way."

Linda Soofer, who is not in favor of the recall, says "It [the election] has become a circus, with characters like Arnold Schwarzenegger and Arianna Huffington jumping into the ring." Ms. Soofer says that this should be a lesson to voters to be more cautious about whom they vote for, rather than just getting out to the polls. "I'll be more wary of who I vote for next time," she says.

Other locals were more upbeat about the recall election, calling it "democracy at work." Christine McGuinness, a local landscaper and Tiburon resident, says it is an example of "people not settling for the status quo." In addition, she contends, it is educating people about politics and the economy.

"I find it all fascinating," says Katie Bechard, a real estate agent and Tiburon resident. "It shows what a great country we live in. I'll vote on October 7, whether for Gray Davis or not, I'm not sure yet."

Most are in agreement that Gray Davis has done a poor job as governor of California. His tenure as governor has overseen an energy crisis, the collapse of the dot-com economy and severe cutbacks in education that have affected many Tiburon residents. Californians now face the prospect of higher car taxes and college fees to close the state's budget gap.

Still, not everybody is pointing a finger at Davis alone.

Although worried about the economy, Arthur Barton of Tiburon does not feel the blame rests solely with the governor. "On the one hand, I feel that Gray Davis is incompetent and a poor communicator. On the other hand, the big deficit is not his fault. It's just part of a bad business cycle that we are experiencing in California. I won't be sorry to see Davis go, but the recall is not the way to do it."

Another resident, who wished to be identified as "Somerset," expressed concern over California's "tarnished image." "People are leaving California because they do not view it as a desirable place to live anymore," she said. "On the other hand, I don't think you can blame Gray Davis alone for the mess. He is not a dictator, after all."

So who will locals vote for on October 7?

In true California style, the election ballot will include the famous, the infamous and the unknown. In addition to Schwarzenegger, others whose names will appear on the ballot include porn magazine publisher Larry Flynt, child actor Gary Coleman, businessman and former Olympic organizer Peter Ueberroth and billboard pinup Angelyne.

Charles Orr, a long time Tiburon resident, favors

Schwarzenegger. “The nice thing about Schwarzenegger is that, unlike Gray Davis, nobody owns him. He is his own man, and he’s a good businessman. He obviously doesn’t have the presidency is mind, so this isn’t just a stepping stone for him.”

Anne Drew of Tiburon says she will back Ueberroth, considered a dark-horse candidate in the crowded race, because she is impressed by the way he organized the Olympic Games in Los Angeles a few years back.

Karen Carrera, a Tiburon resident and lawyer with local law firm Talamantes and Villegas, will back Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante because, in her view, he is the most qualified to do the job. “Even though I don’t believe in the recall, I won’t vote for Davis at this point,” admitted Carrera.

Whatever happens on October 7, Tiburon Peninsula residents are hoping that the recall election will lead to economic recovery and political reform.

One thing is for sure, this summer blockbuster is far from over.