

# Belmont Watchdog

by Waldo

Volume 1, No. 3

April 2000

## **IF THIS DOESN'T GET YOUR ATTENTION...**

Waldo thinks you deserve what you get! PAM RIANDA TOOK OVER THE ENTIRE CITY GOVERNMENT LAST MONTH while we were busy surfing our webs and our 999 digital TV channels. Do you understand? That power-driven egomaniac who gets off on "punishing" her perceived enemies (she has an ever evolving list) with the ferocity of a crazed animal, has even more control over your hearth and home than she did before. Now, instead of just obstructing growth, she can stop it. She will prevent more landowners from building on their own properties, and prevent more parents from adding a bedroom. She will tell you where to park your car, what trees to plant, who can live in your house and the next thing you know she'll come to arrange your furniture! Rianda will not be a benevolent despot, she is a cruel tyrant. Waldo says that we must put a stop to this woman's reign of terror and do it now!

### **-----LETTER INTENDED TO DESCRIBE DETAILS OF COUP-----**

It will take volumes for Waldo to describe the path of destruction that has followed this power-driven, hostile, raging person, and he plans to do it in subsequent issues. But Waldo's intent in this abbreviated letter\* is to describe the viciousness of the coup, and show that her rampage of terror has essentially shut the City down. The vindictiveness of her actions will show you the horrible truth. Rianda feeds on power and control and recognizes none of the limits of decency or morality that the rest of us respect. She is extremely dangerous, and with her latest power fix, is out of control! \*printer and page designer too busy. Forgive tiny print, please.

### **-----RIANDA TAKE-OVER FOILED TWO YEARS AGO-----**

Two years ago Adele Della Santina was the only independent thinker left on the Council and Waldo thought the Rianda coup was due any minute. He breathed a sigh of relief when two of Rianda's disciples, Coralin Feierbach and Terri Cook, defected from her stranglehold, denying her control of the Council majority. Rianda still had her mindless echo, Eleanore Hahn, toeing the mark, but Rianda's hope for majority control had to be shelved.

### **-----WARDEN JOINS HAHN AND RIANDA FOR MAJORITY CONTROL-----**

The election of last November, Waldo thought, would bring some bi-partisanship to the Council when Paul Wright, a proponent of controlled growth, and David Warden were elected replacing Della Santina who declined to run and Feierbach who lost the election. Although Warden is a protégé of Rianda's group, Waldo thought that he would do that male-bonding thing with Wright and at the very worst be a swing voter. Warden turned out to be a wet-behind-the-ears, emotionally out-of-control kid. When he had his third temper tantrum during the public meeting, Rianda said, "Aha, he's my kind of guy!" So your City Council is now controlled by an unstable kid, a woman who never had an original thought, and Rianda! Yipes!

### **-----RIANDA LEVELS CITY COMMISSIONS-----**

There is something about March and despots. Remember Brutus and the Ides? Rianda didn't wait till the Ides because she, unlike Brutus, had multiple stabbings to do. She took out four long-term Park and Rec Commissioners with the first, wide swing of her sword, intentionally felling one of her own friends and defenders, Judy King, (King still doesn't know what her crime against Rianda was!) With her next swing Rianda emasculated the already compliant Planning Commission by taking design review and project management unto herself. While she was on a roll she decided to take a swipe at the Chamber of Commerce, but thought better of it. The Chamber was too easy a mark. All she has to do to kill it is to withhold City funding which she can now accomplish with the flick of her wrist.

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-----MOVES TO TAKE OUT LAST TWO OBSTACLES-----

With adrenaline still surging, Rianda turned her attention to the only TWO REMAINING OBSTACLES IN HER PATH TO TOTAL DOMINATION—Susan Westman, our City Manager and Dan Vanderpriem, eighteen year veteran and our Chief of Planning

-----VANDERPRIEM ENDURED TORTURE-----

Vanderpriem's demise took the shape of an extended torture. Rianda had targeted him early recognizing that he was a consummate professional who had the knowledge and the guts to oppose her. She started with her threats and intimidation her first week on the job and they became bolder and sharper with each passing month. Vanderpriem tolerated this harassment because of his devotion to the City, and when Westman came aboard he knew he could get some projects going over Rianda's objection. Together, they were the driving force that got the Ralston Ave. and Harbor Blvd. grade separations, the downtown mall and the senior apartment complex on track, and these accomplishment are what sealed their doom!

-----FIRED OVER A LOTTERY TICKET-----

The town was booming and it would look bad if Rianda were to fire Vanderpriem. However, when the card with her children's names was not drawn as a winner of the low income housing lottery, Rianda accused Vanderpriem of gluing their ticket to the bottom of the box. She was so incensed that she fired him on the spot. Wait a New York minute here! Waldo had a letter-writer who tried to get in that lottery and was told by the City Clerk that Belmont had no low-cost housing. How did Rianda's children qualify? Her son has a job and her daughter lives in Berkeley. Was there some collusion with the City Clerk? How many other city employees are coerced by this opportunist? There's talk of a city property give-away which Waldo will tell you about in another letter. Vanderpriem stayed through March.

-----WESTMAN IS NEXT TARGET-----

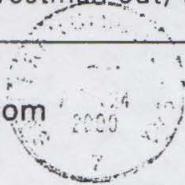
Rianda's treatment of Westman, the best city manager on the Peninsula, was brutal, and typical of the manner in which Rianda had (according to documentation) run off the six managers that preceded Westman in the last ten years. Like Vanderpriem, Westman endured constant interference and intimidation until the stress started taking a physical toll. In her letter of resignation, Westman offered to stay until September to effect a smooth transition. Waldo found out that Westman was told by Rianda to leave immediately and that if Westman tried to go to her office the next day Rianda would have the police usher her out of the building and take away her keys! The City Attorney pointed out that Westman's contract had a 45-day grace clause, saving Westman the indignity of being forcibly expelled.

-----RIANDA ACCUSES CITIZENS OF EMBARRASSING WESTMAN-----

At the public meeting that followed, a dazed Westman sat in shock while citizens commended her and criticized the terrible three for their destructive actions. Rianda had the effrontery to scold those who spoke for publicly discussing the resignation and embarrassing Westman. Isn't that just like Rianda. After she wipes Westman out, she blames her defenders.

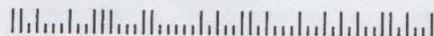
Waldo E-Mail- [belmontwatchdog@juno.com](mailto:belmontwatchdog@juno.com)

Waldo Snail Mail- 840 Old County Road  
Belmont, CA 94002



*Rianda fires City Manager  
Rianda fires Chief Planner  
City-employees fleeing*

Concerned Belmont Citizen  
107 Rose Ln  
Belmont, CA 94002-3724



CITY GOVERNMENT IN CHAOS

**anyone wishing to financially support this letter, please send \$5 cash!**

# NOBODY: Waldo challenged

Continued from 1A

old standby, Al Teglia, is chairing the facilities advisory committee. Weinberger has taken a job as legislative aide to Alameda County Supervisor Gail Steele, who represents Hayward, Newark and Union City. So send him a congratulations card and mark him down as a possible candidate for a future job in the county supervisors' office.

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In the interest of accuracy, allow me to give a blow-by-blow description of Waldo's indecent exposures. That's the infamous phantom who writes the Belmont Watchdogs newsletter — which made accusation after accusation against the City Council two weeks ago.

Two calls came from members of the Rianda recall committee, George Metropolous and former mayor Gary Harris. Metropolous said this Waldo newsletter was not the kind of publicity he needed or wanted and that the item on Feierbach was despicable. He denounced the piece, saying it was twisted, distorted and not good for the city.

Harris said I made the mistake of identifying the recall people as behind the newsletter, which was not true. He's right, as expressed by Metropolous and his denunciation of the scurrilous charges. But it is obvious that some members of the recall movement are behind the newsletter.

And away we go with a blow-by-blow.

Waldo sez: Although Rianda didn't get control of the council until March 2000, she has been running the city for the last 10 years, 8 months, etc.

FACT: That would make Nancy Levitt, Adele Della Santina and Gary Harris incompetent. They served together for four years. What were they doing while Rianda was running the city into the ground?

Waldo sez: Rianda spent the city into bankruptcy and is responsible for losing Oracle taxes that would have put Belmont on easy street.

FACT: Belmont has \$2.3 million in reserves, hardly broke. The record shows that Rianda and Feierbach negotiated a pretty good agreement, if I have to say so myself. The city took a loan from Oracle — \$2 million roadway improvements for direct access to 101 and \$1 million for City Hall retrofitting. These are to be paid back from Oracle sales tax. If after 25 years the sales tax does not cover the loan, Oracle has agreed to forgive the difference.

On direct access costs, the city put in \$1 million that it received from KG Land for the improve-

ment of the 101-Ralston interchange. And if the cost of direct access goes over \$4 million, Oracle comes back to the table with the city.

Oracle will build a public bridge over the slough, has guaranteed a minimum of \$100,000 a year for the next 10 years in addition to the loans for direct access; \$500,000 for Fire Station 14 improvements, \$50,000 for sports complex improvements and a bike path.

In return, Oracle receives three structures in phase I: one in Belmont, one in Redwood City and one parking lot in Redwood City.

In phase II, three structures: two office buildings in Belmont and one parking structure in Belmont. Total square footage in Belmont is 410,000.

Waldo sez: Just recently Rianda let San Carlos annex the lion's share of the tax-rich Harbor Industrial Area, leaving us with a few acres.

FACT: Is this revisionist history? The Belmont council has mistreated the HIA for a long time and LAFCO actually split the area in

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about half, with Belmont losing to San Carlos. It happened when Adele Della Santina, Nancy Levitt and Gary Harris were in the majority on the council and I consistently warned them this would happen.

Harris, in fact, negotiated for the city of Belmont and the results could have been even worse. The city could have lost everything to San Carlos, but Paul Koenig, executive director of LAFCO, compromised the deal. It was messy and political, but all Belmont councils screwed up and, yes, Rianda was a part of it, but only a part of it.

Waldo makes a number of accusations regarding the San Juan Canyon Trust and its misuse of money from the city.

FACT: If those charges were true and Feierbach was using trust money to build a castle, the information should be sent to the D.A.'s office and the guilty prosecuted. That won't happen because all that stuff about the trust was recklessly made up. And I don't support San Juan Canyon, but if residents want to buy land for open space, why not?

Waldo sez: The city went through seven managers in 10

years, all of whom named Rianda for harassment.

FACT: The city has had Ed Everett, Rick Haffey, Sandy Salerno, Damon Edwards, Bill Zanger, Susan Westman and Tom Lewcock. But Salerno, Zanger and Lewcock were acting managers and everyone knew that Zanger and Lewcock would not remain in the job. So four is not seven.

Waldo sez: The most recent totlot settlement was for \$125,000 to the school board.

FACT: The settlement called for between \$60,000 and \$75,000.

Waldo sez: Granada firehouse has been boarded up and for five years the east side elderly have had no fire protection or emergency care.

FACT: Fire station 14 closed in November 1999, after Harbor Boulevard reopened.

Waldo sez: Emmett House, same old eyesore. We taxpayers paid \$580,000 for that 85-year-old mother.

FACT: The city paid \$750,000 with Della Santina, Feierbach, Hahn, Cook and Rianda all voting for Denny Lawhern's monstrosity.

Waldo sez: Did you know Belmont lost \$160,000 on the sale of Sue Westman's house? Rianda forgot to list the city as part owner on the deed.

FACT: No such thing happened. The city provided a loan with an interest rate based on the city's investment earnings rate. The city never had an equity sharing arrangement, but was paid back for its loan and the interest.

Waldo sez: Terri Cook trying to straddle the fence with a resolution that all council members stick together during recall.

FACT: Terri Cook was not the councilmember who offered that resolution. It was Eleanore Hahn.

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Constance Quirk Cohen sent me an ordinance from Larkspur she would like to see adopted by the Burlingame council. The ordinance says, "Even if a legal conflict does not exist, it may be inappropriate to participate in a decision for personal reasons to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest." The policy of the Larkspur council is that even if there is no legal conflict, councilmembers may not vote if there is the appearance of conflict. Cohen is still smarting from the Coyote Point office complex vote.

Jerry Fuchs has been in the newspaper industry for 42 years, beginning in New Jersey. In 1980, he founded Fuchs Publications, which included the Hillsborough-Burlingame Boutique & Villager, the Millbrae Sun, the San Mateo Weekly, the Foster City Progress and the San Carlos-Belmont Enquirer-Bulletin. He may be reached by fax at 692-7587.

for the recall  
Aug 21-00