

Supervisor candidates flash community credentials

By **KURTIS ALEXANDER**
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

The two leading candidates in the crowded field to replace Supervisor Jan Beautz agreed this week, if elected, to promote affordable housing, social services and public safety in Live Oak, Soquel and the rest of the county.

The commitments by Live Oak resident John Leopold and Santa Cruz Gardens resident Betty Danner came before a crowd of about 350 gathered Monday night to pitch the community-driven agenda of COPA, or Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action.

"We developed this agenda out of our families' concerns. It's based on our priorities and

what we as citizens think our community needs" said Karen Mallory, a member of COPA, a coalition of faith and nonprofit organizations.

The brief statements made in support of COPA by the two District 1 candidates, both registered Democrats, reinforced their credentials as neighborhood advocates. But they offered little to distinguish one from the other, providing, at most, a glimpse of what the candidates' priorities might be in office.

"These are issues I've been working on all my life," said Leopold, a fundraiser at UC Santa Cruz who has worked for nonprofits in health care and served on school boards, including his current tenure as a Cabrillo College trustee.

Danner, a business consul-

tant, took her moments at the microphone to reflect on her experience leading the county's Criminal Justice Council.

"I've never seen a crime problem like I've seen today," the Santa Cruz native said, vowing, like other candidates, to address the recent rash of violence in Live Oak.

The district includes not only Live Oak and Soquel, but Branifforte and a swath of the Santa Cruz Mountains from Highway 17 to Nisene Marks.

Candidate and environmentalist William Hay, who said global warming was a top priority, also signed on to the COPA agenda.

Candidate Carolyn Busenhart, however, took aim at the nonprofit's call to renew the county library tax, saying in her statements that spending needed to be kept in

check. Supervisor hopeful Michael Piseni also expressed reservations with the COPA agenda.

The so-called Shared Prosperity Agenda urges county Board of Supervisor candidates, among other things, to push for educational and vocational training, high-density housing with affordable units, health care assistance and after-school programs countywide. Most of the items are rather broad.

Beautz, who has not always agreed with COPA's positions, said she thought most of the agenda items were positive for the district and county, and that many were already being worked on by the current Board of Supervisors.

But not all of the nonprofit's stances, she said, have been popular.

"I know some of the other things COPA has advocated, like putting high-density housing in neighborhoods and putting a day laborer center in Soquel, are controversial in the community," Beautz said.

Beautz is leaving the District 1 seat after 20 years on the job. Leopold and Danner, as candidates to replace her, have shown a sizable edge over the others in terms of endorsements and monetary contributions.

Supervisor candidates in District 2 and 5 also spoke Monday at Live Oak Elementary School, but political observers say those races are less competitive with incumbents, both who agreed to support COPA's agenda, in the running.

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PISENI



BUSENHART



LEOPOLD



DANNER

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Feds arrest 7 county residents in Bay Area immigration sweep

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WATSONVILLE — Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents arrested 25 illegal immigrants throughout the Bay Area Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, including five in Watsonville and two in Capitola, an ICE spokeswoman reported Wednesday.

A San Francisco-based ICE fugitive operations team arrested illegal immigrants who failed to comply with a court order for deportation, according to Lori Haley, an ICE spokeswoman in Laguna Niguel.

Six of the people arrested had criminal convictions, said Haley, and three were sexual predators. Haley could not immediately identify those arrested.

"Our priority is to enforce the immigration laws as they are," she said. "People who are living in the country illegally and have been ordered to be deported are breaking the law."

Fifteen illegal immigrants were arrested in Seaside, two

in Salinas and one in San Jose, said Haley. She did not provide specifics on how the arrests were made, but said fugitive operations teams normally go to residences and serve administrative, rather than criminal, warrants, meaning agents cannot enter the homes without the occupants' permission.

Local law enforcement agencies from Watsonville, Capitola and Monterey County said Wednesday they did not participate in the raids. It is not usually the habit of local law enforcement to assist federal agents in immigration raids.

So far, in fiscal year 2008, the three San Francisco-area fugitive operations teams have made 1,620 arrests, 300 of which are "criminal aliens." According to ICE, fugitive operations teams give top priority to aliens who pose a threat to national security and community safety, including members of street gangs, child sex offenders and those with convictions for vio-



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SANTA CRUZ
COUNCILMAN

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lent crimes. There are currently 75 fugitive operations teams nationwide. They made 30,408 arrests during fiscal year 2007.

"As you can see from the arrests we made, a lot of these people in addition to being in the country illegally, are actually criminals and they have no business being here," Haley said.

Local immigrant rights advocates responded angrily to the bust Wednesday, saying the raids cause people to live in fear, affect the local economy and don't just target criminals. Some advocates said plainclothes agents arrived at houses in unmarked cars.

Karen Mallory, an organizer with Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action, or COPA, said she was working Wednesday with the wife of one of the men who

was arrested in Capitola. Mallory said agents weren't looking for the woman's husband, but took him because he was undocumented and living where the wanted man had lived previously.

"It makes it hard to be proud to be an American the way we're taking people out of their homes, away from their families," Mallory said.

Santa Cruz City Councilman Tony Madrigal, meanwhile, said the raids go against the values of the community. Resolutions have been passed in Santa Cruz and Watsonville opposing immigration raids and directing police to not cooperate with ICE agents.

"I'm just concerned that there's going to be panic again amongst parents, workers, families and children," said Madrigal, a member of a county-wide committee called Stop the Raids. "Our local economy can't continue to take these kinds of hits."

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