

Marilyn Liddicoat Takes A Final Bow

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Santa Cruz County's histrionic Supervisor Marilyn Liddicoat will trod the local political boards no more. The curtain is falling on the four-year role that she has played to mixed reviews.

"I was both symbol and substance of the majority viewpoint of the county and I had no fear of saying what I believe and saying it in a dramatic way," Liddicoat said in her exit interview with The Sentinel.

She credits the press with reinforcing that drama "by continuing to quote me."

She admits to a couple mistakes and says that at times her political enmities and confrontations led to personal hatred for some of her detractors.

"There are some people who have the right to criticize me — those who understand the issues — but there are other people who do not have that right," she says.

"Frankly, I think women take criticism more personally than do men. Women react differently to the pressures of office.

"It begins on the playground where the little girls are protected and the boys fight it out. You can't be equal unless you're willing to fight it out on a man's ground," she claims.

Her decision to join battle came "the first day of law school where our class of 200 had only 10 women," Liddicoat says.

The war she fought then and during the last four years on the board "has hardened me in the public arena, but not so with my home and family.

"At home, I am the mommy and the wife of a male chauvinist and I like that," Liddicoat said.

Born the child of Jewish immigrants from Russia, hers is a rags to riches story.

As a young woman she worked her way through college, married and completed law school. At 32 she was widowed with one child. A few years later, she married eye surgeon Douglas Liddicoat.

"I have the immigrant's deep love of America," Liddicoat says. "Had my parents stopped in Germany I would have been thrown into the oven."



(Sentinel Photo by Bill Lovejoy)

With her controversial four-year-term at an end, Liddicoat welcomes fellow conservative Wayne Moore to the board of supervisors.

She notes, "Ironically, some of the people opposed to me here were from among the few Jewish people in the community."

But, law and politics came into her life after she had taken extensive voice training.

Her early singing was in Christian

churches and she embraced that religion. While not a devoted churchgoer today, she stresses that she carries Christian moral values into her work.

"I believe in God and know that religion is important from a morality standpoint. I have fought successfully

here against pornography and drug abuse because I believe in that morality."

She attributes her flamboyant style to her legal training and years of voice training that gave her "a good, but not great" mezzo-soprano operatic voice.

"Even Gary Patton concedes that I have a unique way of putting things. I'm quick on the uptake and quick on my feet."

Her way of putting things has come across as a little harsh to some

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MARILYN LIDDICOAT

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people as she called those who opposed and threatened her "crummy bums."

She called some welfare clients "parasites."

Liddicoat publicly called a former fellow supervisor "a drunken, immoral bum."

Such terms, she explains, were carefully chosen to bait the press. When printed, her quotes became the talk of the day.

A collection of her utterances, "Liddiquotes and Liddivotes," was a major weapon in last year's unsuccessful attempt to recall her from office.

The recall bid was Liddicoat's biggest challenge. On advice of her campaign managers, Liddicoat fairly well stayed out of the fray. Whether or not that was a reason, Liddicoat survived the recall with 56 percent of her constituents voting to keep her in office.

Of her four-year term of office, Liddicoat says her biggest failure has been "that the planning department is tied up with even more red tape than when I took office and tried to clean it up."

She likes Planning Director Kris Schenk, but believes he has hired

Iraq's Gift To Jordan

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Iraq said Saturday it gave captured Iranian tanks and other arms to the Jordanian army in gratitude for Jordan's support of Iraq in its 83-day border war with Iran.

Baghdad Radio, monitored here, said Iraqi President Saddam Hussein received a message from Bahjat Talhouni, chairman of the upper house of the Jordanian Parliament, thanking him for the weapons.

The broadcast said the gifts were for the "brotherly ties" between the Iraqi and Jordanian armies and "symbolized Iraqi triumphs on the battle front and war booties captured from the Iranians." It did not say how many tanks and weapons were delivered to the Jordanians.

Both the Jordanian and Iranian armies are equipped primarily with U.S.-made weapons. Iraqi armaments are predominantly Soviet-made, although Iraq has been diversifying its arms sources in recent years.

Iran's official Pars news agency, in communiques broadcast from Tehran, said fighting continued in the western and southern sectors of the front.

The Bahrain-based Gulf News Agency, in a report from Baghdad, quoted Iraqi Vice President Tari Aziz as telling Parliament that U.N. special envoy Olof Palme would return to Iran and Iraq later this month in a second attempt to arrange a cease-fire. U.N. officials, who sent Palme on an unsuccessful peace mission to the two countries last month, were unavailable for comment.

Aziz reiterated Iraq's insistence on holding onto captured territory pending a settlement recognizing "Iraqi rights" over the disputed Shatt al-Arab waterway at the northern tip of the Persian Gulf, the news agency said. He also was quoted as saying a settlement would have to include "restoration of Arab national rights usurped by Iran," a reference to the ethnic Arab population in Iran's oil-rich Khuzistan Province.

An Iranian Foreign Ministry communique repeated Iran's vow to continue fighting unless Iraq withdraws all its forces from Iran unconditionally, Iran's official Pars news agency said.

Pars, in communiques broadcast from Tehran, said fighting continued in the western and southern sectors of the front.

back the same type of anti-development environmentalists that were purged when the conservatives came into majority power the third year of her tenure.

Liddicoat also is convinced the conservatives were outwitted by liberal Supervisor Gary Patton during the two years when they should have been able to make a mark on local land use policies.

Between Patton's growth management ordinance in 1978 and influence from the state Office of Planning and Research which has controlled rural land splits this past year, the conservatives were nearly handcuffed.

While two major developments were moved along — Galleon in Boulder Creek and Seascape in Aptos — a large number of developments were held in virtual abeyance.

Even a last-minute rush by the conservatives this month is believed to be an exercise in futility with Patton and a new liberal board ready to retract any decisions in January and environmentalists saying they expect to win reversals in court.

"Gary was every effective in controlling us, even while he was a minority member," Liddicoat admits.

She said there are two mistakes she would like to undo:

"One mistake I made was looking into Ellen Gruys' welfare file and I wish the Matthews' confrontation hadn't happened."

The Matthews' confrontation was started by Liddicoat who said at a mayors' monthly meeting that Watsonville Supervisor Chris Matthews "encouraged crime" in Watsonville.

She made it worse by explaining her attitude about Matthews by calling him "a drunken, immoral bum."

The Ellen Gruys' case, which is in litigation, occurred when Gruys was administrative aide to former county Supervisor Phil Baldwin. Liddicoat had her file pulled to build a case to show that when aides only work part-time, it can force them to also need a government subsidy.

However, the question of the legality of a supervisor broaching confidential files is at issue.

"Other than those two mistakes, I wouldn't have anything done differently than it was," Liddicoat said.

She decided early (August of 1979) to get out of local office "because being as outspoken as I am, the price you pay is dear.

"It wasn't so bad when the price (criticism and threats) was extended only to me, but when it was extended to my family, I decided it was time to get out of local politics."

Liddicoat believes that if she had decided to run for re-election she could have beaten her successor, Robley Levy. She also believes she could have taken the state Senate seat in a race with Democrat Henry Mello.

While she says she is now going to take a "breather" from politics, she does not discount the possibility of she and her husband serving on some federal commission in the Reagan administration or even a federal judgeship for herself. The Liddicoats worked on the president-elect's campaign, with Dr. Liddicoat heading the state physicians for Reagan group.

Whatever the reviews of Marilyn Liddicoat have said, it's clear that the word she uses to express her way of saying things can also be said of her term of office: It was unique.