



Mendocino County attorney running for 5th District

By Ariel Carmona, Jr.

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Alan Rodier, a 20-year resident of Mendocino County, is running for the soon-to-be-vacant 5th District seat on the Board of Supervisors following Dan Hamburg's announcement that he is retiring next year following the completion of his third term on the board.

Born in Perth Australia, Rodier was raised in San Francisco. He married at 19 and had a daughter. He worked as a grocery clerk in Southern California and started practicing law in 1979. He left San Francisco and bought a 40-acre farm in Mendocino County in 1998, before moving to the Russian River Estates in Ukiah in 2007.

His wife, Margaret Rose, works as a career counselor in Ukiah for the Department of Rehabilitation, helping disabled people find work. They are both very active in the community.

Rodier said he announced his candidacy last month after wondering if he would like to seek a position on the board following Hamburg's last election victory. He said he chose to run for supervisor to serve the community of Mendocino County.

"I think I could be helpful in the county's decision making and planning," he said, adding he believes there is more room for expansion of industry in the county.

In addition to farming grapes and olives in the northern end of Alexander Valley in Sonoma County, Rodier is a homeowner and has experience as a business manager, budget administrator and as homeowners' association nonprofit president and treasurer for nine years.

As a farmer for close to a decade in the region, he said he has fostered relationships with clients out of Point Arena and Gualala and had great people working for him at vineyards near Geyserville.

Rodier has 38 years of experience as a successful practicing attorney after having attended J.D. Lincoln Law School in San Francisco and earning a Bachelor's in Political Science at UC Berkeley and still practices law.

He said he has done everything a lawyer can do during his career, including working on civil cases, probate, car accident cases, personal injury and workers' compensation. Rodier credits his law career with helping him learn about the "ups" and "downs" people experience. Rodier recently outlined his motivation for running for a spot on the Board of Supervisors.

"I would like to try to do something different," he said. "I want to use my skills to help analyze and help people. I am willing to try some exciting things being a supervisor."

CHALLENGES

Although Rodier said he believes the county is in a state of transition, he thinks it will start to flourish in the next 20 years. He said there is still room for more development and more industry to come into the area. *Rodier cites farming incomes, a need for housing, and the financial plight of workers in the crab industry and fishermen on the coast as diverse challenges, which he will address if elected.*

One challenge all public officials face is earning people's trust and, according to Rodier, temperament and demeanor play a big role in earning that trust.

"My wife has told me that people talk 70 percent through body language," he said. "I think trust comes from evaluating a person. Factual checkpoints: Are they correct when they say something? Exposing a person's demeanor plays a factor in whether you like them as much."

According to Rodier, he has the demeanor and temperament to live up to the expectations of his potential constituents.

"I was told my temperament is real good. I applied to be a judge in approximately 2008; people in San Francisco told me 'you have the temperament; go for it.'"

GOALS

Rodier said one of his main goals if elected is to attract more industry into the county. He said he would like to attract more software and digital companies. Rodier said he believes more participation from the construction industry is also needed.

He cited the Tesla charging center in Ukiah and electric cars as the type of progress that the county can cater to and the type of industry he would invite into the region.

“People are spending time here, it’s a great place to live and to raise a family,” he said, adding there is ample opportunity to solicit companies like Tesla that are on the cutting edge of technology and innovation.

“Ukiah is going to open up with self-driving cars,” he said. “Commuting won’t be a problem in the future with smart cars. The whole picture looks like we are heading towards more development. There are a lot of beautiful things you can do in our county.”

The Board of Supervisors 5th District candidate said he is willing to work with the state to make things better for people, not just for farmers, but for everyone involved. He said he has plans to add positive elements to the community.

He cited among his personal concerns the need to create measured progressive growth while preserving the environment, building a structure for the cannabis industry that follows the law, protecting the coastline from oil drilling while supporting the fishing industry, and improving efficiency in county infrastructure while fostering agency collaboration.

“I am looking forward to it,” he said. “I have had many challenges in my life, I went to law school, but I never thought growing up I would be a lawyer, or live in suburban San Francisco and work with Italian farmers in a rural area. Mendocino has the wildlife and the outdoors, it’s an interesting place to grow up.”