

d tilted balance against city

'Winners' don't have a city to govern

By Cindi McMenamin
News Staff Writer

Ordinarily, candidates elected to a city council feel a sense of pride and accomplishment.

But, ordinarily, they have a city to govern.

Not so with the five candidates elected last week to the non-existent Laguna Hills City Council. Candidates Herbert Schwartz, Craig Scott, Melody Carruth, Leon Bosch and Allan Songstad got the most votes, respectively, in the incorporation election to win seats on the new city's council. But, because the incorporation measure failed, there's no city, and therefore, no council.

Schwartz, who collected 11 percent of the votes cast, said he is disappointed that there's no city, and no council because he would have enjoyed serving.

"I would've been mayor, probably," Schwartz said.

But the Leisure World resident refuses to let it get him down.

"I'm not one to dwell on what could've been," he said. "There's a whole world out there."

Schwartz intends to keep busy with his membership in several clubs and activities. But, as far as politics in Leisure World is concerned, he said he's had enough.

"I'm not going to be involved in anything anymore affecting Leisure World, politically," he said. "I'm through."

Unlike the other candidates, Tuesday's election results marked the second time Scott has been elected to a non-existent city council.

Scott ran as an opposition candidate in the proposed Saddleback Valley City Council race in November and was among the top three vote-getters.

But, because he opposed the formation of a valley-wide city, in favor of a smaller city of Laguna Hills, he was pleased that he never got to serve on that council.

His feelings this time around are just the opposite.

"This is the seat I really wanted," Scott said. "This is the office that I have been running for for the last 18 months."



Herbert Schwartz says he would have been mayor.

Like Scott, Carruth and Songstad wanted the city of Laguna Hills more than they wanted the city council position.

Carruth said the passage of cityhood was her main concern, and she ran for city council as a way to speak out for the city. Although being elected to the council means nothing now, she said, "I was shocked that I placed that high (among the other candidates)."

"It's pretty meaningless," Songstad said of his elected position.

"My first concern was the city. I would much rather have seen it the other way around—the city winning and my not being on the council," he said.

Bosch was delighted with the whole package of results, however. Bosch ran as an opposition candidate for the Laguna Hills City Council. He's certainly not disappointed he can't serve in his elected post, he said.

"I didn't want a city anyway. I was hoping for that (defeat) all along," he said.

And his seat on the non-existent council? "I won't miss that," he said.