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Being a Part of Moraga Politics

By *Sophie Braccini*

Christine Kuckuk always felt that Moraga was a special place to live in and that investing time in the community was the right thing to do. Kuckuk decided to volunteer, first serving on the town's Beautification Committee and later on the Design Review Board. This month the Town of Moraga is recruiting for positions on the Boards and Commissions that are staffed by resident-volunteers like Kuckuk. "The Town of Moraga depends on its volunteers to assist in a number of venues," says Town Clerk Marty McInturf, "All of the Boards, Commissions, and Committees depend on citizen involvement." Positions are open at the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Planning Commission, the Design Review Board (DRB), the Traffic Safety and Advisory Committee, the Americans with Disabilities Act Commission, and the Urban Forest sub-committee. "The way to keep Moraga a special place is by getting involved, and the town needs its volunteers," says Kuckuk.

"As a member of the Moraga Parks and Recreation Commission for the past three years, I have realized how volunteering for the town can have such an impact on the recreation programs and services offered," says Liz Faoro. The Parks and Recreation Commission has worked on a variety of issues and projects in recent years, such as the development of a sound ordinance, updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and replacing several play structures and the splash pad at the Moraga Commons. "While these are only a few of the undertakings, we also worked throughout the year on supporting Jay Ingram (Parks and Recreation Director) to provide many special town events," says Faoro, who adds that she hopes Moraga residents will consider being a part of the Parks and Recreation Commission, which currently meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

The demand on DRB members is higher as they meet bi-monthly, on the second and fourth Monday of each month. Dick Socolich was part of the Design Review Board (DRB) and after two years applied to be on the Planning Commission. "DRB's primary responsibility is to review projects that are ready for construction," says Socolich, "they have to meet the town design guidelines." Socolich is a retired engineer who felt that his expertise could be put to good use for the benefit of the town. "I enjoyed listening to people, hearing their side of the story and seeing the project once it is finished," he adds. On the same Board, Kuckuk, who is a banker by training, was recruited as a "lay" person. "I find the work on the DRB very rewarding," she says, "it can be complicated when we work on a project such as the Palos Colorados development, but it is very rewarding to have an impact." Kuckuk estimates that she spends a maximum of ten hours of preparation before each monthly meeting.

Now on Planning Commission, Socolich enjoys working on the big picture. "We've been working on the Specific Plan and the Housing Element for the Town," he explains, "our guidelines are the General Plan, and the Open Space Ordinance." Next year projects such as the Rancho Laguna development or the Hetfield project will be reviewed by the seven-member commission, and possibly the specific plan for the Rheem Center as well.

"I feel that I have an impact," says Socolich, "there are seven of us on the commission; sometimes my point of view is shared by others, sometimes not."

"Moraga needs its volunteers," concludes Kuckuk, "the recommendations of the commissions are important and working for the town raised my awareness about what is happening here."

For more information on the open positions or to send an application, go to

<http://moraga.ca.us/production/>

[moraga_employment_volunteer.php](http://moraga.ca.us/production/moraga_employment_volunteer.php)

?mn=6. The deadline to submit an application is Friday, January 8th.

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