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Moraga Rotary funds portable two-way radios for Moraga School District

Submitted by Stephanie Dickerson



Superintendent Bruce Burns receives the check to fund 105 multi-channel radios for the Moraga School District from Rotary Club of Moraga from the people who made it happen. From left: Rotarians Evie Michon, Stephanie Dickerson, Debbie Koo, and District Governor-Elect Mark Edwards; Superintendent Bruce Burns, Moraga-Orinda Fire District official Dennis Rein, Moraga Police Chief Jon King, Rotary Assistant Governor Joy Alaidarous, and MOFD Board President Steve Danziger. Photo provided

as a substantive and highly positive achievement."

Teachers and staff members in the Moraga School District will all be provided with portable two-radios which will allow direct two-way communication with each other and with first responders such as the Moraga Police Department, Moraga-Orinda Fire District, CERT, and others. The Rotary Club of Moraga has funded these 105 devices with a donation of \$12,000. These multichannel portable radios were recommended by both the MPD and MOFD as the most appropriate device for the school district and will improve safety in emergency situations, even when phone systems are inoperable.

Bruce Burns, MSD superintendent, stated, "Portable radios, per emergency preparedness experts, are among the most reliable, rapid, and effective means for school staff to communicate in a crisis event. They have redundant trunk systems to allow staff and emergency responders to communicate directly with one another. They also provide day-to-day benefits that can enhance the efficiency of operations of a school. Portable radios can be used to enhance student supervision, communicate the need to lock a gate, or to report the presence of a suspicious vehicle on or near a campus. They are easy for people under extreme stress to operate reliably. While it is quite common to see schools have radios, it is not common to see many radio systems that have interoperable capabilities, such as the radios purchased by Rotary. The MSD sees the radio capability

Local safety partners are pleased with the Rotary donation of portable two-way radios to the schools. Dennis Rein, MOFD emergency preparedness coordinator stated, "During a disaster the ability for the school staff and first responders to communicate directly will be key to keeping the children safe." Moraga Police Chief Jon King added, "Although we all hope we never have to face a disaster or emergency at our schools, we are excited that our teachers will now have the ability to call for help and communicate directly with police and fire personnel who are responding to assist with an emergency situation or incident."

The MSD was unable to purchase radios because of state funding challenges, so Debbie Koo, co-president of the Rotary Club of Moraga, and Rotarian Stephanie Dickerson, a parent member of the MSD Safety Committee, obtained a grant of \$8,000 from Rotary International. The Rotary Club of Moraga donated the additional \$4,000 to provide the full \$12,000 needed to cover the cost of the radios.

"In today's world, the safety of our children and grandchildren is extremely important," Koo said. "Stephanie's passion for school safety made this a very easy decision for the Rotary Club of Moraga. We are proud to be able to help with the purchase of these two-way radios."

Rotary Club of Moraga is a 52-year-old service club within Rotary International, one of about 33,000 Rotary Clubs in about 200 countries. Regular meetings are held on most Tuesdays at Moraga Country Club. If you are interested in joining Rotary, please contact moragarotary@comcast.net or visit the website at moragarotary.com to get in touch with Brian South, membership chair.

Save the date for the Rotary Club of Moraga's annual fundraiser, Nite at the Races, on March 7. One of the primary beneficiaries will be the Moraga School District.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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