

New Men's Basketball Program Kicks off at Joaquin Moraga

By Jennifer Wake

Players from throughout Lamorinda met at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate on Jan. 19 to kick off the start of the new Men's Basketball Program. Sponsored by the Town of Moraga, the program is open on Saturdays from 7 to 10 p.m. for local residents ages 18 and older.

Currently an open gym format, the Men's Basketball Director Gerald De Venuta hopes to build the program into a year-round league and expand the age categories to include a 35 and older group.

Nearly 15 players showed up on the first night of play,

and De Venuta expects the numbers to increase as word spreads about the program. "We're averaging about 12 to 15 players on the weekends," he said. "January is a tough month. It's raining, people are working extra hours. In March, hopefully we'll add Thursday nights, too."

De Venuta has overseen similar programs in other cities and states for the past eight years, running a successful basketball program for the past five years in New Jersey.

Although the program has no various competitive levels, De Venuta plans to build

the program to be more competitive, including playoffs once they start a league. For now, anybody 18 and older can play.

"Right now, it's just about everybody coming out and having fun," he said.

Cost to play is \$5 per player/per night. Starting the week of March 10, Moraga will begin its first official Spring Men's 5-on-5 League.

For more information, you can contact De Venuta at (925) 817-8429 or the Moraga Parks and Recreation Department at (925) 888-7045.



Men's Basketball Director Gerald De Venuta in yellow

Photo Andy Scheck