

# Lamorinda Community

- Calendar**
- Town Council 7:30pm**  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School  
1010 Camino Pablo  
Wednesday, January 28
  - Planning Comm. 7:30pm**  
Hacienda, La Sala Room  
2100 Donald Drive  
Tuesday, February 2
  - Design Review 7:30pm**  
Hacienda, La Sala Room  
2100 Donald Drive  
Monday, January 26
  - Park & Rec 7:30pm**  
Hacienda, Mosaic Room  
2100 Donald Drive  
Tuesday, February 17
  - Liaison 8:00am**  
Fire Station  
1280 Moraga Way  
Friday, February 13
  - Town of Moraga online:**  
<http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us>
  - Chamber of Commerce:**  
<http://www.moragachamber.org>

**Lamorinda Teen Center General Meeting**  
Wednesday,  
February 11th, 7:00 pm  
Orinda Community Center  
(see story on page 4)



**Stupid bike thief, 1/11/09** A young man reported his white custom BMX bicycle stolen while he was shopping at Safeway. Oddly enough, not long after the call came in, a suspect that matched the thief's description was seen riding a white custom BMX bike on Moraga Way. Man on bike was detained by police.

**Bank account theft, 1/11/09** A Russell Drive resident checked her Bank of America account electronically and discovered that \$35,000 had been withdrawn without her permission. Bank customer service personnel told her that her account had been accessed by a banking center in Williamsburg, Virginia. A fraud claim is being filed. Perhaps there's a little bit of truth in the state motto "Sic Semper Tyrannis" Latin for Thus Always to Tyrants.

**Truck stolen, 1/13/09** A Miramonte Drive resident who was out of town between January first and the thirteenth returned home to find her red 1988 Toyota pick-up stolen from her carport, California license plate number 3K39288. A tough way to start the new year.

**Manicurist drama, 1/14/09** Officers responded to a disconnected 911 call coming from a Moraga Road nail shop, and found the owner in a highly agitated state. The proprietor was crying and appeared to be hyperventilating as a result of a negative inspection by an administrative agency. EMT's arrived and advised owner to be seen by emergency room staff, she declined and agreed to have an employee drive her to the hospital if her condition worsened.

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# Moraga

## Larch Residents Prepare to Calm Traffic

By Sophie Braccini



A-frame on Larch advertises the public meeting on January 27th  
Photo Sophie Braccini

Residents on Moraga's Larch Avenue have been active for years, lobbying to keep their residential street safe. But it has been hard to maintain the 25 mph restriction on this street that runs parallel to Camino Pablo and features long straight stretches, as well as some serious slopes. The raised crosswalks on Camino Pablo diverted additional traffic onto the favorite street for students walking from and to the nearby elementary and middle schools. As a result, residents are proposing a new traffic calming plan and are inviting the community to a public meeting on January 27th.

The group that calls itself the Larch Avenue Traffic Team surveyed 350 homes at the end of 2007 to identify problems as well as possible solutions. The results showed that speeding was the #1 concern of all the residents, the volume of motor vehicles being the second. The team identified wide support for stop signs and increased neighborhood signage.

Robin Felix, one of the members of the Larch team, presented the plan at the last Traffic Calming Advisory Committee (TSAC) meeting on January 7th. The proposal includes the installation of two new stop signs: one at the crossing of Dickenson and Larch (at this time only Dickenson has a stop sign) and one at the crossing of Shuey and Larch. Pedestrian walkways could be added.

## A Roundabout on St. Mary's Road?

By Sophie Braccini

Bluffs residents came in number as Moraga's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) met on Jan 7th to hear the first presentation of a calming traffic plan proposed by the Town's traffic consultant Fehr and Peers, for the intersections of St Mary's Road at Rheem Blvd. and Bollinger Canyon. The hope of Public Works Director Jill Mercurio is to get a plan approved in time to qualify for funds from the anticipated federal stimulus package and solve traffic difficulties at two of the worst intersections in town.

The report focused primarily on the solutions proposed for the Rheem/St Mary's intersection, and declared the Rheem/Bollinger crossing to be Class A (good quality of service). Bluffs resident Frank Comprelli challenged this conclusion. "When you look at the intersection of St Mary's Road and Bollinger Canyon, traffic flow figures are not enough," he said, "The Bollinger Canyon Road-St. Mary's Road intersection is essentially a single chokepoint through which 153 homes must currently pass to access anywhere or anything in Moraga - shopping, banks, schools, parks, libraries, etc. - or other communities. There is no other choice - it is not a matter of preference." Comprelli said the main issue is not the average time spent waiting to enter traffic

The traffic-calming guide adopted by TSAC in September of 2008 describes the approval procedure. The plan proposed for Larch appears to be a "type 2" as defined in the guide. This level of change requires that the group secure the approval of 75% of the homeowners abutting a proposed change, and a 70% approval of homeowners within 300 feet. At this time the Larch team is organizing to get these endorsements.

"We will go door-to-door, after the public meeting, to gather signatures," stated Felix, "our only concern is reaching some owners who are not living in Moraga, one of them residing out of the country."

TSAC members recommended that the cost for the signage be included in the document that homeowners are asked to sign, as it is they who will be responsible for the cost of the signs' implementation. The price tag was estimated at about \$500 per stop sign and \$200 per crosswalk.

The approval procedure calls for a public meeting to be held and advertised with visible signage on A-frames in the neighborhood of the changes. This meeting will take place on January 27th at the Hacienda de las Flores at 7 p.m. TSAC should make a decision to approve the plan or not during its March meeting after it receives the petition. The plan will then move to the Town Council for final okay, via consent agenda. This procedure allows for fast decision-making without discussion; a single vote may be taken for the approval of all the items placed together on the consent agenda.

The Larch Avenue plan is the first real life test of the efficiency of the new TSAC and its Traffic Calming Guide. If all goes according to plan, it will save the Council a lot of time and possibly some headaches. At its last meeting, the Council appointed Howard Harpham to be the Council's liaison to TSAC; he will keep his colleagues informed of the committee's progress.

traveling along St. Mary's Rd., but the safety of doing so.

Other Bluffs residents concurred, reminding the committee that a proposal has been submitted to the Town to construct an additional 126 homes in Bollinger Valley, the resultant 279 homes representing 2957 auto trips to and from Bollinger Canyon every day through the chokepoint. "I agree with the consultant that the intersection is of category A," said Comprelli, "but that's for about 20 hours a day; during 4 hours it deserves an F."

When the question of the pedestrians was raised, residents were even more concerned about safety. "Pedestrian safety at the intersection of Bollinger Canyon Road and St. Mary's Road, as well as along Bollinger Canyon Road leading to the intersection, ranges from pathetic to non-existent. The juxtaposition of the words 'pedestrian' and 'safety' in this context is a true oxymoron," explained Comprelli.

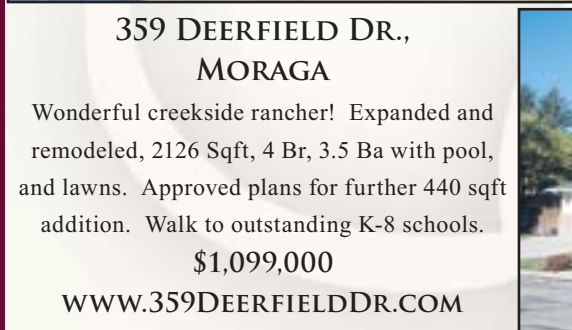
The report proposed several possible solutions, from the least expensive, creating pockets to facilitate left turns, to stop signs, to roundabouts without stop signs. The ultimate option would divert the end of Bollinger Canyon as it is now, to end at the crossing with Rheem.

... continued on page 6

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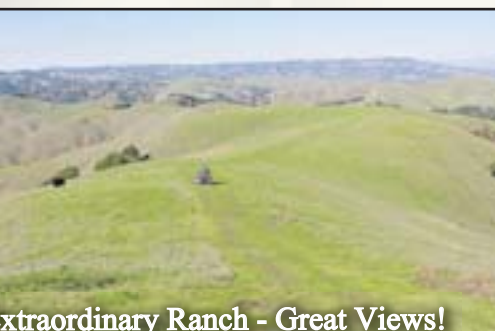
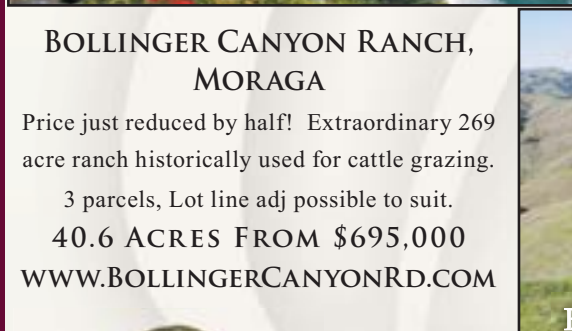


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2/8: "The 7 Habits Series", Part 4  
2/15: "The 7 Habits Series", Part 5

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- Dinner Dances at the Hacienda Dad/Daughter (2/20) & Mom/Son (3/20)
- New Year's resolution? Moraga Triathlon 4/25
- New classes starting NOW for all ages and interest