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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

On June 23 my dog and I returned to my car after walking on the trail. The car would not start. I am 80 and Precious is 12. It was very hot. We walked to the Commons. A lady called Ron at Moraga Motors in Rheem.

Ron started the car. The gear was not all the way in park. I offered to pay him. He refused. I asked if he should check out the car. He said there was nothing wrong with it.

I have been going to his shop for over 10 years.

Sincerely,

Shirley Lawrence

Moraga

Editor,

There are a few things that have been overlooked with regard to comments made about Rancho Laguna Park's off-leash hours. I would encourage putting a short fence around the playground, not just to protect children from dogs, but to keep them from

running into the parking lot right next to both play areas. I have seen this happen several times and have corraled other people's children myself.

The limited hours for dogs to be off leash (before 9 am and two hours prior to sunset) are not prime hours for small children to be playing at the park. Those of us who do take both our children and our dogs to the park during those hours want the dogs and children to play together, but are not naive enough to hand tuna sandwiches to our children at that particular time.

Dogs who are adequately socialized and exercised are far less likely to bite anyone than dogs that are not. A dog that is on leash tends to be more defensive, and frankly, can still bite.

Rancho Laguna is most heavily used during the off-leash hours. If the Parks and Recreation Committee and the City Council really want the park to be used as they claim, they have their wish before 9 am and two hours prior to sunset. There is a lovely community of dogs and their people using that park every day.

Diana Stephens - Rancho Laguna regular for almost 10 years

Orinda

Editor:

BART employees average nearly \$100,000 a year in salary. Booth attendants make over \$65,000. Factor in health care, defined benefit pension plans and fringe benefits and average compensation tops \$120,000. Now BART employees want to strike because officials want to freeze raises for 3 years, with a guaranteed increase in the fourth year. What?! How arrogant, when so many people can't find work!

Let them strike and replace them all; it wouldn't be too hard. We pay high ticket prices, property tax, 1/2% of our sales tax, and income tax, (through state programs) into BART's kitty. We shouldn't be asked to pony up more. Instead, BART needs to look at other transit agencies like Tri-Delta Transit and West Cat. They contract out to provide decent, living - but sustainable - wages and benefits to a unionized staff. Why can't BART do the same?

Sincerely,

Gabriel Froymovich

Lafayette

Editor,

Orindans should be aware of the terms of the pension of the last Fire Chief to retire from the Moraga/Orinda Fire

District (MOFD). This Chief is in his early 50's. Before retirement he was the MOFD Fire Chief for approximately 3 years.

On July 2, 2009 the Fire Fighters' Union wrote a letter to the MOFD Board of Directors. According to this letter the MOFD Board Directors amended the Chief's contract on 12/10/08. This amendment used tools such as backdated vacation accrual, etc., to increase his last year's salary compensation from \$184,000 to \$241,000. This hefty \$56,000 pension increase was all done by amendment three (3) days before the Chief announced his retirement and started drawing from his newly inflated pension.

This \$56,000 bonus spike over the Chief's original \$184,000 contract increases his retirement pay by approximately \$2.8M over 30 years with cost of living increases.

After the Chief retired and started collecting his \$241,000 pension, the Board hired him back on a 9-month contract at approximately \$14,000 per month.

It is unfair that Orinda annually pays approximately \$800,000 more for each of 3 Orinda fire stations than Moraga pays for each of their 2 stations. Orinda could use this \$2.4M (\$800,000 x 3) to fix roads if Orinda detached from MOFD and formed an all Orinda Fire District.

Each Orinda household annually pays approximately \$400 more for MOFD than each Moraga household pays. The fleeing of Orinda taxpayers has gone on too long.

Vince Maiorana
Orinda

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