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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

I cannot believe what I really read about Lafayette parking in the August 19 issue. We just had several meetings discussing the town plan for the future. While there were a host of opinions on the issues, any parking structures were treated with scepticism and not considered disireable.

Yet, I read that a prime property, such as the one on Mt. Diablo and Dewing is being considering for a parking structure. Whoever thought this one up needs a reality check. A new building that has added to the life in this area with resturants and shops is still new. It would seem to me that adding to the life of this area would be to continue the fashion of this building and also playing into the future plan by creating a building that adds to the ambiance of the area, not detract.

Parking in such a prime location is just plain nuts! Whoever floated this ballooon needs a reality check.

Leonard Dorin
Lafayette

To the Editor:

Since MOFD's Fire Chief Pete Nowicki's egregious pension benefits have received attention locally and nationally in the Wall Street Journal, I feel it is incumbent on the citizens of Moraga and Orinda, who will be paying the approximate \$2.4 million in spiked benefits to Chief Nowicki , to look for the root cause. The chief was only looking out for his self interest which is to say he had the opportunity to raid the cookie jar and he succumbed to the temptation. It is apparent to me that the Board of MOFD is highly culpable in this matter and in my opinion, they should resign. This would allow a new slate of board members to clean up the fiscal irresponsibility that now permeates the culture.

There are no term limits in the MOFD good old boys club. Consequently the board has been running MOFD like it was a rich man's hobby spending the tax payers money without restraint. I was a member of Orinda's Revenue Enhancement Task Force. While serving I learned that the MOFD board had a long range plan to spend \$30 million for building projects including a new administration building and a new training facility. But, very little was planned for water pipe rehabilitation which was promised to Orinda back when MOFD was formed. That they were even thinking such thoughts points out that they certainly were not thinking about ways to deliver the needed services to the community on a cost effective basis. It surely never occurred to them to ask the basic management question: Is it possible to deliver our services in a more economical way? Until such questions are asked, possible solutions vetted and appropriate actions taken, the tax payers of Orinda and Moraga are going to continue to get a bum deal.

Bill Schmicker
Orinda

To the Editor,

Any longer-term resident of Orinda would certainly notice the enormous increase in neighborhood noise caused by the widespread use of gas and electric leafblowers. We've lived in Orinda 15 years, and in the past three years or so, it seems most homeowners employ a "landscaper" who visits weekly. Every one of these mobile gardeners has the backpack leafblower, and they spend from 15 to 45 minutes spewing dust and exhaust, and broadcasting that grinding shriek caused by their machines.

From inside our home, we can hear the blowers' noise emanating from homes and streets a

quarter mile away! Just one single leafblower sends noise throughout the hilly topography of Orinda, permitting its uniquely irritating loudness to blanket several neighborhoods at a time. Literally dozens of households put up with just one leafblower's use.

A couple of years ago, we told our gardener to switch to rakes and brooms. We could not in good conscience subject our neighbors to such unnecessary and intrusive noise. There's simply no justification for willfully infringing on my neighbors' right to the quiet enjoyment of their property!

Friends from nearby Piedmont visited recently, and they were astonished at how loud and frequent the leafblower episodes were! Piedmont banned their use several years ago; similarly Berkeley, Santa Barbara, and numerous other communities have outlawed leaf blowers. Orinda enacted a ridiculously ineffective "noise ordinance" back in 2004, that only bans gasoline-powered leafblowers on Sunday (but permits electric blowers on Sunday, which are nearly as loud!).

Orinda permits their use Monday to Friday from 8 am until 6 pm; and on Saturday from 10 am until 5 pm. We often hear them outside of these hours, particularly Saturday mornings and sometimes on Sunday afternoon.

It is high time the city of Orinda moved to ban the use of these obnoxious and stress-causing machines entirely. Rakes and brooms do a fine job, don't pollute, and cost less.

Sincerely,
Susan and Peter Kendall
Orinda

Dear Editor,

Thanks Moraga-Orinda Fire District!

Daily we are bombarded with bad news, and so I hope that you will find fit printing this one. On July 30 at 1:10 pm, while working in my office at home, I felt that something snapped in my chest, followed by an excruciating pain. I assumed I had a heart attack and asked my wife to call 911. I don't know which station from MOFD responded, but they were at our front door within three minutes. My office is on the second floor and the crew had to carry me down in a special chair to the rescue truck. That is the last thing I remember. They must have put in on the way to John Muir Hospital an I.V. in my right hand (a real professional job the nurses in J.M. commented) and administered whatever medication they thought I would need, after which I passed out. My wife told me the rest of the story. In the Emergency Room Dr. Jacobs and her colleagues have quickly determined that I did not have a heart attack but a ruptured aorta leaving my heart requiring immediate surgery, which I found out later is much more serious than a heart attack. From the E.R. they transferred me to the Concord campus of John Muir where I underwent an extensive open heart surgery by Dr. Kamlot and his team the same night lasting nine hours. They were not sure until early next morning when I woke up in the I.C.U. if I will make it. I am now well on my way to full recovery and hope to resume my normal life within a month or so. I would like to express my sincere thanks to MOFD and particularly to the rescue team that took me to the ER for their quick and professional response. They were instrumental in saving my life.

Laszlo G. Bonnyay
Moraga

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