



# Moraga Civic News

## Public Meetings

### Town Council

Wednesday, September 28, 7:00 pm  
 Wednesday, October 12, 7:00 pm  
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,  
 1010 Camino Pablo

### Planning Commission

Monday, October 3, 7:30 pm  
 Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

### Design Review

Tuesday, October 11, 7:00 pm  
 Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

### Liaison

Friday, October 14, 8:00 am  
 Fire Station, 1280 Moraga Way

### School Board Meeting

**Moraga School District**  
 Tuesday, October 11, 7:30 pm  
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate  
 School Auditorium  
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
 www.moraga.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

#### Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us

#### Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

#### Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



## Police Report

**Stolen credit card number, 9/20/11** A Woodside Drive resident had a surprise when he found out that his debit card had been used to make purchases for someone else. The shopping spree, totaling \$1,200, was reported to the bank.

**Mailbox hit and run, 9/17/11** At 3:45 in the morning a Hardie Drive mailbox valued at \$1,700 was struck by a car that fled the scene. Moraga police checked the area and found the car and adult male driver nearby. The case is currently under investigation.

**Caught allegedly in time, 9/16/11** Moraga police were dispatched near midnight to Saint Mary's College for three adult men who possessed burglary tools. The Saint Mary's College Public Safety officer reported that no burglary had occurred on campus. The detained men offered to give the cops their burglary tools. Since there wasn't a crime, the fellows were free to go.

**Cash Maximized?, 9/16/11** A Woodminster Street resident contacted police because someone withdrew \$250 from her "Cash Maximizer" account. The slightly poorer card owner has no idea who is involved and how her account number was pilfered.

**Car broken into, 9/16/11** The front window of a Volvo was smashed at the Moraga Swim Club and a red Cole Haan purse was taken along with the usual wallet-related contents. Bank cards were cancelled, although only after one bank card was used at the Concord BART station. Silly thief, cops requested security video from their pals at BART.

**Car vanished, 9/15/11** On a random Thursday night, the daughter of a Hardie Drive home and car owner parked and locked her Honda Accord in their driveway. Daughter was ready to leave at 7:30 the next morning, but the car was gone. No sign of the car in the area.

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## Should Rancho Laguna Park Stay Untouched?

By Sophie Braccini

"We have a beautiful park, why fix what is not broken?" asked Diane Renton at the Town Council meeting on the evening of September 14. Her statement was echoed by about 20 Lamorinda residents who came in protest of a plan by Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram to hire a consultant to re-think the design of Rancho Laguna Park to include sports fields and a dedicated dog park. Most of the people who spoke urged the Council not to spend \$7,000 on a study. The Council, wanting to see a park design where dogs and playgrounds would be physically separated, approved the spending with a requirement than an option that did not include sports fields also be studied.

"Callander (the consultant) was asked to consider a design that could accommodate a three acre dog park and a 'U-12' (50 x100 yards) soccer

field within existing park boundaries," stated the staff report presented by Ingram. That sentence and preliminary drawings that proposed a separate dog park led many residents to believe that the Town had decided to try to do away with the present multi-use park where, depending on the hour, dogs, sports teams, families and community groups all share the same grass. Opponents came from all strata of the population.

"I am not a dog owner or a soccer player," said former mayor, Parks Foundation and Parks and Recreation Commission member Cherie Grant who revisited the history of the park for the benefit of the Council, "this is a rustic park, made for inclusive multi-generational use. Over the past 20 years it was always decided not to use it as a sports facility because of limited parking and remoteness in case of emergency."

Other opposed to planning for sports fields indicated that it would be too expensive to amend the park. "The slope of the park would not allow proper soccer fields," said Steve Smith, a builder and sports coach, "it would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to grade the park and insure proper drainage."

Many residents just expressed their love for the park as it is, "Rancho Laguna is the nearest thing to heaven I've seen on a public property," said Doug Home, the father of three and dog owner, "don't waste a dime on a study."

Finally, members of the organization Lamorinda Dogs, who will present their plan for the park in the near future, felt they had been undercut. "Entering an agreement with a designer before seeing our proposal does not make sense," said Jeanne Moreau. Bill Carman added that it

would seem fairer to look at their ideas before hiring someone else.

Members of the Eclipse Soccer Club, a new elite soccer club in Moraga, spoke in favor of hiring a consultant. They already use the park for practices, but will have to stop when the sun goes down earlier and Rancho Laguna becomes an off-leash park at 4:00 p.m.

In proposing that a consultant be hired but that a proposal that included no sports fields at all should also be evaluated, Council Member Dave Trotter noted, "I think this is probably going to be the least expensive alternative."

The Council reminded the audience that its initial request to the Parks and Recreation Commission was to find a way to physically separate the playgrounds from the off-leash dogs and that getting professional designs to achieve that result, including the cost of each option, was a good idea.

## LED: Let Moraga be Light

By Sophie Braccini



Picture provided by Town Staff

Who knew that along the same streets in Moraga some of the lights are owned by the Town while others are owned by PG&E? It's no problem most of the time, but when the Town decided to install LED (light-emitting diode) streetlights to reduce its utility bill by taking advantage of stimulus money that can be used only for Town property, it became a bit complicated.

"When we got the EECB Grant (Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program, stimulus money), we could apply it only to our own property, and when I looked at who owned what lights in town, it

looked like a patchwork," says Moraga Staff Engineer John Sherbert. He researched the effect of changing light patterns and found it was dangerous for drivers whose eyes need to adjust very rapidly. But the opportunity of 'free' money, lower electricity bill and better lighting was not something to be passed up.

LED lights have been tested by PG&E and are deemed to last 50,000 hours. They use less electricity than old technology and the light they shine is closer to that of the sun, but that is not all. "One of the advantages of the new lights is that they can be very tightly focused," explains Sher-

bert, "they emit a rectangle of light that can be focused just on the road/sidewalk and will not shine into neighbors' properties like the large round yellow radiance of the regular lights."

After lengthy negotiations, PG&E and staff agreed on a program that will upgrade all of the streetlights along Moraga Road, Moraga Way, St. Mary's Road, Rheem Boulevard and Camino Pablo using a combination of funding from the EECBG, a low-interest energy loan and the Lighting

Assessment District funds. According to staff's calculations, the upgrade will save the town approximately \$5,500 per year in energy costs alone. "That does not include the maintenance and is based on the current 5% increase in energy cost," adds Sherbert, "the pay-off might end up being faster than the 20 years we initially forecasted."

Look out for PG&E trucks in the coming weeks. The utility company agreed to work on weekends to minimize the traffic impact.

## Temporary Reprieve for Moraga Art Gallery

By Sophie Braccini

Comcast has agreed to allow the non-profit Moraga Art Gallery to remain in its Rheem Center spot for free until the end of the holiday season. "We are grateful that Comcast has given us the added time to find a new space as well as to offer one-of-a-kind, unique gifts through the holiday season," said Gallery volunteer and artist Nancy Slack.

For the last ten years Comcast offered the art collective use of the storefront at no charge, but the group was recently told that it must move out in October or begin paying \$2000 a month in rent, due to an increase in the rent that Comcast is required to pay Kimco. Comcast uses the space at the Rheem Center to house telecommunications equipment.

**MORAGA PARKS & RECREATION**  
 925-888-7045 • www.moraga.ca.us

**OKTOBERFEST IN MORAGA!**  
 Hosted by the Hacienda Foundation of Moraga and Moraga Parks and Recreation  
 Sunday, October 16, 2:00-6:00pm at the Hacienda  
 Food and drink, music, fun for the entire family

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