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Enlightenment at the End of the Tunnel Project

By *Cathy Dausman*

The latest presentation on the nearly completed Caldecott Fourth Bore tunneling project is scheduled three years to the day that work began. Fourth bore senior geological engineer Chris Ridsen will team with public information officer Ivy Morrison to present a behind-the-scenes overview of tunnel history, geology and excavation at 3 p.m. Aug. 24 at Lafayette Community Hall. The session is presented by the Lafayette Historical Society.

"[The Fourth Bore] is beginning to look more and more finished. We are on schedule for a late 2013 opening," said Morrison. She added that the focus now is on "the installation, integrating, and testing of fire and life-safety systems," including a sophisticated new ventilation system with 19 200-horsepower jet fans designed to remove smoke from the tunnel in event of a fire.

Morrison said the system will operate out of the new Operations and Maintenance Control building.

"Our level of quality assurance [testing] will make this [tunnel bore] as safe as possible for the motoring public," she said, emphasizing that the primary purpose of the Fourth Bore "is to alleviate traffic congestion in the off-peak direction."

Opening the Fourth Bore will allow one dedicated tunnel for each highway lane, Morrison said. Green drapes cover the newly installed but as-yet unseen student designed Art Deco medallions. The castings were installed on site quietly last month, and "likely will be unveiled at the [tunnel] ribbon cutting."

"I love this project," Morrison told Lamorinda Weekly, even as Fourth Bore work nears completion. "I'm going to be sad when it ends." Admission to the LHS presentation is \$10 for members; \$15 for non-members; children under 14 admitted free with paid adult.

For questions or reservations for "A Light at the End of the Tunnel" call (925) 283-1848 or email Lafayette.

History@comcast.net. To learn more about the Caldecott Fourth Bore project, visit <http://www.caldecott-tunnel.org>.

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