



Moraga

Public Meetings

Town Council

Wednesday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 23 canceled

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School,
1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission

Monday, Sept. 21, 7 p.m.

Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

Design Review

Monday, Sept. 14, 7 p.m.

Moraga Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd.

School Board Meeting Moraga School District

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 7:00 p.m.

Joaquin Moraga Intermediate
School Auditorium

1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga

www.moraga.k12.ca.us

See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us

Phone: (925) 888-7022

Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org



Moraga Police Department

Welfare check 8/25/15 Moraga officers responded to Sullivan Drive to check on an elderly female resident. The cops tried to make contact with her, but were unable to. They finally forced entry into the home and found the woman alive and in need of medical attention. The fire department responded, and took her to a local hospital for further evaluation and treatment.

Possession of alcohol 8/25/15 It was almost midnight when police made contact with an 18-year-old male driver and his four passengers parked in front of a local supermarket. Through investigation, cops determined that the driver had several cans of unopened beer and an open container of liquor. The driver was cited and released at the scene along with his passengers.

Library heist 8/27/15 An unknown suspect entered a locked storage area of the Moraga Library and removed property, (perhaps books?) valued at over \$200. There was no sign of forced entry and nothing was seen or heard. No suspects or leads at this time.

Public drunkenness 8/29/15 Maybe it was the late hour, almost 2 a.m., but cops were concerned about the 18-year-old male who was hitchhiking on Moraga Road near Corliss Drive. Cops determined he was unable to care for himself due to his intoxicated state. He was arrested for being drunk in public and taken to the Martinez Detention Facility for booking.

Auto burglary 8/31/15 Sometime during the night, an unknown suspect smashed the right front window of a Toyota Corolla parked in front of a house on Camino Ricardo, reached in and removed a small bag from the front seat. The stolen bag contained exercise weights that cost around \$10. Unfortunately, the cost to repair the broken window is estimated to be \$175.

Another auto burglary 8/31/15 Sometime during the night, an unknown suspect smashed the rear window of a Honda Civic parked on an unspecified street. The person reporting the incident stated that it appeared nothing was taken.

Council Waives Rheem Valley Manor Sign Fees, Defers Maintenance Contract

By Sophie Braccini

Rheem Valley Manor residents and volunteers who constructed a monument sign at the entrance of their neighborhood using donated materials gathered at the Aug. 26 Moraga Town Council meeting to learn whether fees would be assessed for the construction, as well as if they would need to sign a maintenance agreement prepared by town staff.

After being told staff did not have the time or resources to take care of it, several of the residents decided to clean up the entire side along Stafford Road and to build the sign, choosing the design and organizing fundraising and teams of workers. "This project has been three years in the making," said neighborhood organizer Linda Foley. "We removed poison oak on both sides, planted trees and other plants, and covered the area with mulch." Unfortunately, the neighbors did not undergo the required application process for the sign, which is located on town property.

The residents wanted something similar to the monument sign and landscaped area also on St. Mary's Road, west of Stafford, that says "St. Mary's Gardens" to welcome residents to that smaller development. The 450-home Rheem Valley Manor neighborhood was built some 40 years ago. One of the original resi-

dents told the audience at the meeting that the developers at the time had only planned for exits toward the Rheem Shopping Center, "but we wanted an outlet to go to the Moraga Center, and Stafford was added."

Discussion between the group and town staff began to escalate when residents did not understand why they would be required to pay fees when they had already volunteered their time and donated the materials for the sign. But building a monument sign on town property requires an encroachment permit with an annual fee and a review by the Design Review Board in order to be "legal."

The town council decided there was no reason to add extra bureaucratic layers to something so well done.

"My faith in organizations has been revived," said Foley after the meeting. "The best part about our volunteer work on Stafford has been to interact with neighbors. At times, kids and grandkids showed up along with newly-moved-ins who thought what we were doing was welcoming – probably (something) quaint and outdated, too."

In her report to the council, associate planner Ella Samonsky indicated that the sign followed all town requirements for monument signs and that



Neighbors surrounding the Rheem Valley Manor sign they erected, from left: Larry Briggs, Kathy Flett, John Moulton, Linda Foley, Lew Edwards, David Munson, Tad Slocum and Rena Munson. Photo Sophie Braccini

staff's recommendation would be to accept the sign and waive fees. But there was still one element staff wanted to finalize: the issue regarding signage of a maintenance agreement. The neighbors stated they intended to continue the beautification of Stafford, but were reluctant to sign an agreement.

Councilmember Dave Trotter proposed applying the town's donation policy to the monument sign and asked how long before the sign would require maintenance. The residents said 25 years. The councilmembers then decided that signing a mainte-

nance agreement for something that will not require attention for 25 years was not needed, but asked that it be noted somewhere that the town would not maintain the donated sign when the time came.

"The topsy-turvy world we live in today calls for rebuilding our own sense of safety, caring and basically, Americana," said Foley. "It starts with connecting with your neighbors (in my view)."

All were grateful that the council did not bury their Americana under piles of paperwork.

Bringing Down 'Hotel Wandel'

Amendments to party ordinance give police more leverage

By Sophie Braccini

The infamous party house on Wandel Drive in Moraga was once again the topic of conversation at the Aug. 26 Town Council meeting, but this time it was part of a discussion regarding three amendments to the town's loud and unruly party ordinance. Chief of Police Bob Priebe, overwrought neighbors and council members all agreed that police officers needed better tools to bring a stop to when off-campus student housing becomes party central, disturbing quiet neighborhoods.

The three amendments to the ordinance would extend the timeframe between subsequent police responses from 180 days to 12 months; increase the first fine from \$100 to \$200; and codify the town's ability to enforce this in either a criminal manner or an administrative civil matter, said Priebe.

He added that now every time there is a police response to a disturbance, the property owner will also get a notice, and if a citation is issued, the property owner will also receive a citation "because they are the person responsible for what happens on their property." A new report management data system will allow police officers to pull up information showing the history of any previous loud or unruly parties at a location, thus reducing the possibility of missing when a citation should be issued for a second offense. The first violation would be considered much like a traffic ticket, while the second violation would be a misdemeanor, and would be forwarded to the district attorney for consideration.

The council requested the strengthening of the existing ordinance in June, following repetitive complaints by neighbors on Wandel Drive who for years have been seriously impacted. Saint Mary's Col-

lege representatives indicated they were supportive of the new text.

One Saint Mary's student, Emily Wood, said as a student she did not want to be criminalized. "Positive reaction to negative complaints would be better than criminal action," she said. She noted that the peer council at Saint Mary's College has a rule that if someone is cited for a noise complaint, the students and neighbors are brought together for a discussion. "I think this is a more positive solution." But councilmem-

ber Phil Arth asked Saint Mary's representatives how long the peer conduct council has been in place, because if it has been going on for years, it was not working.

Megan Karbley, Saint Mary's College director of community life, said new policy sanctions were added for the 2015-16 school year, explaining that once her office is notified of a problem, including if neighbors contact her directly, the student would go through a hearing process. "Once the college is notified of a citation, a stu-

dent goes through the process, starting with a meeting with the neighbors, then next to college probation, to suspension or even to expulsion," she said.

Councilmember Teresa Onoda made note that the town appreciates the college and its students, and asked Karbley if students who live off campus will get a copy of the ordinance "so they know what they're getting into." Karbley said they would ensure students are aware of the ordinance. ... continued on page A11

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5 bedroom + office, 4.5 bathroom, 4070± sq. ft. home on .69± acres.

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