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Weed abatement is needed in a big way at this Moraga property.

Photo Nick Marnell

# Fire officials issue defensible space guidelines

By Nick Marnell

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, defensible space is the buffer you create between a building on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs or wildland areas that surround it. This space slows or stops the spread of wildfire and it protects your home from catching fire – either from direct flame contact or

radiant heat. Defensible space is also important for the protection of the firefighters defending your home. After the horrors of the 2017 North Bay wildfires, both Lamorinda fire agencies are pushing extra hard this year to convince residents of the importance of this fire safety measure. “Your home is your most important asset,” said Kathy

Leonard, fire marshal of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. “Not just the building, but the contents. The loss of life’s memories – you can’t put a price on that. In the North Bay, it’s all gone. The entire community – no more neighbors, churches, schools – they’re gone. It is well worth the investment of time and energy to prevent this.” ... continued on page A12

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## Del Rey custodian sweeps up accolades at his own retirement party

By Cathy Dausman



“Mr. Steve” surrounded by admirers at May 24 off-site party.

Photo Cathy Dausman

With the crowd, laughter, food, games and toasts, last Thursday’s reception was fit for a rock star. As far as Del Rey Elementary students, faculty and parents past and present were concerned, it was.

His name is Steve Eydam, but to the Del Rey community he is simply known as “Mr. Steve.” Eydam started work for the Orinda Union School District in 1978 and spent two years as night custodian at Orinda Intermediate School

before coming to Del Rey. He was new to the school when Glen Fuller entered first grade. Fuller has since come full circle as a Del Rey parent, but remains devoted to his elementary friend and mentor. “He’s a pretty amazing guy,” Fuller said, explaining that Eydam learned every student’s name, built and operated the school theater technical system, and manned a legendary trick-or-treat table on school grounds for years at Halloween. ... continued on page A14

## Lawyers battle over Measure L at Lafayette city council meeting

By Nick Marnell

A key tipping point for Lafayette voters on Measure L, an ordinance approving the Homes at Deer Hill development, is whether failure of the measure will automatically trigger approval of the Terraces of Lafayette Apartment Project, a 315-unit affordable housing complex, or if approval of the Terraces project would be subject to a referendum. Lawyers from both the city and Save Lafayette, a community organization favoring limited development, presented their arguments at the May 14 city council meeting, the city stating that the construction of the apartment complex could be resumed without being subject to a referendum, with Save Lafayette asserting an opposite legal interpretation.

When the city and the developer suspended the processing of the Terraces of Lafayette Apartment complex while the council considered the Homes at Deer Hill project, both parties entered into a process agreement which allowed the

developer to terminate the agreement if it so chose for a variety of reasons. Upon termination, the city could immediately resume processing the Terraces project, and according to city attorney Mala Subramanian, the city would need no new application from the developer, as the application for the apartment complex was deemed complete in 2011. Subramanian said that the only action remaining for the council is to approve the permits sought by the Terraces to complete the project, including land use, hillside development and design review permits, which are considered administrative acts and not legislative acts. “Therefore, they are not subject to referendum,” she said.

Subramanian also determined that the resumption of the Terraces complex would not require a general plan amendment or rezoning and as a result, no legislative act that is subject to a referendum is required to develop the project. ... continued on page A13

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