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15th Annual MORAGA COMMUNITY FAIRE & CAR SHOW
Saturday, May 11th
 11am to 3pm
 Rheem Shopping Center

Pony Rides
Bounce
House
Basketball
Bot Bash

Wine
Beer
Food
Music
All Day!



Participants cross the finish line at the April 23 Special Olympics event at Acalanes High School. Photo Tyler Krochmal

Community gathers to cheer Special Olympics student-athletes

By Jon Kingdon

Even with a small group of people, it's almost impossible to come together with a single opinion about any one issue. On April 23, there was a gathering of athletes, fans, coaches, volunteers and family members that came together with a unanimous opinion on one issue: The Special Olympics Northern California Contra Costa Schools Partnership Area Games was an event that was both entertaining and inspiring.

For the sixth straight year, Acalanes High School was the host for these games. It was an appropriately sunny day for the special education student-athletes who came from elementary schools up to post-high school transition schools.

Keiko Arzouman, the area manager for the Schools Partnership Program, oversees over 100 events for schools in Northern California throughout the year: "The interschool programs provide the special needs students with an opportunity for sports that they normally would not otherwise have during the school day. There are over 35 classes from all over Contra Costa County, bringing in over 600 athletes. Acalanes is one of our bigger events. The school very generously provides everything for free. Besides the use of their facilities and providing snack bags for the athletes, there are over 100 volunteers from the high

school."

The athletes competed in track and field events. There were wheel chair races, 50- and 100-meter runs, relay races and a mile run. The field events entailed throwing the turbo javelin, softball and tennis ball throws and the standing long jump.

Under the tutelage of Acalanes Leadership Teacher Katherine Walton, seniors Nick Bettencourt and Audrey Glosson led the coordination of the event with the over 100 volunteers from Acalanes. Bettencourt explained how it all developed: "In my leadership class, I was on the community outreach committee which entailed the Special Olympics and Audrey and I decided to spearhead and run the whole event."

Bettencourt and Glosson arrived at 6 a.m. and did not leave until the end of the school day though their efforts began long before the event. Working closely with Sheri Roberti, the coordinator of the Special Olympics Schools Partnership Program, Glosson said meetings began a few months ago and they worked on registering the 60 different schools that came in from Northern California. "We had parents who volunteered and also had 110 student volunteers that allowed us to make this event happen. The students signed up for certain time slots and Miss Walton let the teachers know which period the students would be working and missing those classes."

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Town takes safety measures regarding new Rheem sinkhole

By Vera Kochan

During a special session of the town council, held prior to the regularly scheduled meeting on April 24, the council members voted unanimously to approve a resolution authorizing the appropriation of \$80,000 from the General Fund Reserve to Department 730 Storm Drain Maintenance. This authorization provides the initial technical support necessary to protect improvements to Moraga's storm drain infrastructure and ensure the health and safety of its citizens.

According to the staff report, the town was notified of a depression in a landscape planter near a streetlight pole on March 26 at the Rheem Boulevard and Center Street intersection. Concerns arose about potential problems affecting the town's storm drain system that runs approximately 25-feet below.

The property owners were advised by the town to take precautions to avoid the risk of health and safety hazards, including draining the 500-gallon underground oil tank on the Moraga Star gas station property to prevent possible

seepage into Laguna Creek which flows through the storm drain culvert; removing the nearby streetlight pole to prevent it from potentially falling and injuring someone; and securing the surrounding area to prevent passersby from getting too close to the site.

Almost 10 days later the depression appeared to be a minor concern compared to an approximately 2-foot by 5-foot sinkhole that appeared on the property adjacent to the initial issue. Based on an inspection, it was determined that water, dirt and debris are entering into the corrugated

metal pipe, below the property, that extends roughly 500-feet under the Rheem Shopping Center.

The town has kept regular contact with the property owners by stressing the urgency of the situation and offering technical support toward repairs keeping in line with those made during the 2017 sinkhole restoration process just across the street.

The Rheem Shopping Center property owner's contractor inspected the culvert on April 19, along with their engineering team, only to discover that approximately 20

feet of CMP under the sinkhole had been crushed. Reaching the same conclusion as the town, the contractor agreed that the voids in the pipe should be filled and the pipe should be lined.

Three days later, the property owners shored up the 20-foot section of crushed pipe to prevent a collapse.

Inspectors recommend a prephase to relieve pressure on top of the crushed pipe by excavating the soil above. The shape of the pipe must be restored and reinforced before filling any voids and lining the pipe. ... continued on Page A4

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