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## Bandshell rental fees adjusted to encourage more socially distanced activities



Moraga Commons Park bandshell

Photo Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

Currently the rental rate for the Moraga Commons Park

bandshell is \$555 for a 4-hour time block as adopted in the 2020-21 Master Fee Schedule. Staff has recommended that the town council adopt an hourly rental fee to accommodate users who wish to book the facility for a shorter period of time.

Due to coronavirus restrictions regarding social distancing many organizations and businesses are finding innovative ways to conduct business as usual, albeit with a slightly fractured model.

The Hacienda de las Flores has begun to fill its booking capacities thanks to the gradual reopening and easing of some health department restrictions. To meet the demand for more open space

activities, town staff feels that a reduction in mandatory booking hours would increase usage of a large venue, such as the bandshell, which can accommodate up to 12 socially distanced people.

According to a presentation by Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt during the Aug. 26 town council meeting, "Gym and fitness activities are now sanctioned for outdoor use, so we expect to get more requests in the coming weeks. We've had a handful of conceptual conversations with private members who are looking to host some outdoor P.E. for their pandemic pods; fitness groups who are looking to do outdoor yoga or Pilates." Brandt added, "We recom-

mend that the bandshell space would be a suitable location and just let the community know that the town is responsive and flexible in meeting their changing needs."

The town council unanimously approved the new hourly rental fees: nonprofit \$40/hour; private resident \$50/hour; and commercial (reservations required) \$70/hour. Staff estimates that the Moraga Commons Park would see an increase of approximately \$5,670 for the 2020-21 Fiscal Year based upon an average of three one-hour rentals each week (November through June with a December closure).

## Restaurants and cafes turn to food trucks to expand reach



Photo Vera Kochan

Bridge & Tunnel Coffee Company's co-founder Greg Fulcher, left, and barista Andrew Samuelson

By Vera Kochan

Many restaurants are going the reverse route to stay in business during coronavirus mandates. Finding that delivery, takeout and outdoor-dining-only isn't enough to sustain a business in these times, some restaurant owners are purchasing food trucks and hitting the road.

According to a Business Insider article by Ross Resnick, the CEO of Roaming Hunger, a food truck catering company, "With the restaurant industry on hold for the foreseeable future, innovative brick and mortar establishments are pivoting to mobile dining to navigate the new market." Resnick added, "We've seen an increased demand to bring food into communities, specifically neighborhoods and apartment buildings. People still crave the community aspect of eating out, even if they're just walking outside to pick up their dinner." The same holds true for coffee houses.

Business partners Greg Fulcher and Phil Tillotson turned their love of coffee

and community into something never before seen in Lamorinda – a pop-up coffee café on wheels. Although its name may sound like directions on a GPS, the Bridge & Tunnel Coffee Company is making a splash wherever the neon yellow vehicle sets up shop.

Tillotson lives in Atlanta and manages the acquisition of Central American and Ethiopian coffees while Fulcher, a Lamorinda resident, drives the coffee truck around town and serves as the barista.

Fulcher comes to coffee after a 30-year career in the film industry. "I just love coffee," he replied. "It's my favorite drink, and it's the culture surrounding it that makes it better."

The coffee truck's first incarnation was as a linen truck making deliveries at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport. With only 28,000 miles on it, the yellow truck (yes, that's its original color) was put out of circulation.

When Fulcher and Tillotson purchased it they turned it over to a catering truck

manufacturer who took two months to transform it into the coffee truck. However, the interior still lacked enough electrical power to support an espresso machine, a commercial Kegerator, flake ice machine, a beverage refrigerator, coffee brewer, two big coffee grinders, water heater and pumps, lights, fans and more. "We designed the power system for the truck during 2019's power-shutoffs, with the goal of full functionality without the grid," explained Fulcher. "Sparing you the technical details, our truck is capable of full off-grid operation with the help of a powerful hybrid lithium polymer battery/inverter system."

Like all good businessmen, the partners mulled over many catchy names to call their new venture. On Fulcher's way home from the San Francisco International Airport one day, a friend called his cell phone to ask if he was there yet. Fulcher replied that he was still stuck on the Bay Bridge and wouldn't be at the Caldecott Tunnel for probably another hour. Suddenly the idea light bulb went off, and a company name was born. "I immediately thought of the pejorative term 'bridge and tunnel people' used in New York for commuters," he said. "I felt that it didn't really apply, because good things happen on this side of the Bay."

Bridge & Tunnel Coffee Company sells single-estate hot coffee, espresso drinks (Panamanian roast), craft ni-

tro cold brew, non-caffeinated drinks and small-batch whole bean coffee.

For the coffee truck's schedule visit: [www.bridgetunnel.coffee](http://www.bridgetunnel.coffee) or call (925) 388-6288. Having only just begun serving coffee on

wheels in early August, Fulcher and Tillotson have plans to eventually open a brick and mortar coffee shop in Moraga. Fulcher stated, "Great coffee is a destination for those who love it."

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**Town Council**  
Wednesday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.  
**Planning Commission:** Tuesday, Sept. 8, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.  
**Park and Recreation Commission:** Tuesday, Sept. 15 7 p.m., Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.  
**Moraga School District Board Meetings:**  
Special Board Meeting Tuesday, Sept. 8, 6 p.m.  
[www.moraga.k12.ca.us](http://www.moraga.k12.ca.us). See also AUHSD meeting page A2