

# Letters to the editor

## More on fireflow tax

Prolific letter-writer Steve Cohn continues to tilt at the windmill of the fireflow tax rate. (Lamorinda Weekly Aug. 4, 2021.) He continues to argue that Moraga residents are not paying their fair share, even though their rate is the same as Orinda's. What he lacks in analysis, he obscures with a dizzying and dazzling presentation of numbers. But the basic flaw in his analysis continues to be this incorrect assumption: "it is not unreasonable to assume that the cost to provide service to Moraga is 47% of the ... property tax revenue...." The 47% figure is based on the percentage of firefighters stationed in Moraga and the percentage of the total population served in Moraga and Canyon.

But if firefighters stationed in one city only served that city, there would be no reason for a multiple-city district. If a fire station located in Moraga is closer to a fire in Orinda than a fire station located in Orinda, the Moraga station will respond. The

whole point of a unified District was to ignore the line separating Orinda from Moraga. Moreover, one could posit many reasons why Orinda should pay more: higher assessed and market valuation; higher risk due to being closer to likely source of wildfire (the northeast); Orinda having a 12% greater population; among other reasons.

Nick Waranoff  
Orinda

## Photo book for Kenny

Like many of you, I am heart-broken that Moraga Garden Center is closing. In celebrating Kenny's 40+ years of work, I am working to create a photo book for Kenny, with your help. I would like to photograph plants that were purchased from the Moraga Garden Center and which are

now thriving in your garden. If there is a story to go along with the plant(s), I will also try to feature it in the book. The first copy will be for Kenny. If it makes financial sense, I will make a limited run book and proceeds from the sale will be given to Kenny and his wife.

If you would like to share your story and would like me to photograph your plant for the book, please contact me via email at moragagarden-centerphoto@gmail.com. My background is in fine arts and I am a photography professor at Santa Clara University.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Takeshi Moro  
(Submitted by Sandy Burgess, Moraga)

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters must be factually accurate and be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

# 45th Anniversary of the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail celebrated



Photos Sora O'Doherty

## Founders celebrate the 45th anniversary of the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail with EBRPD directors.

### By Sora O'Doherty

The East Bay Regional Park District on Aug. 5 celebrated the 45th anniversary of the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail, one of the first rails-to-trails projects in California, and to unveil a permanent information panel at the site of the original Trail's dedication that occurred on July 4, 1976. The celebration also honored the founders of the trail, who spoke at the event.

Many speakers honored the trail, including representatives of Congressman Mark DeSaulnier and Supervisor Candace Andersen, EBRPD President Dee Rosario, Don Goode from the original trails committee, and Jerry Kent, retired EBRPD Director. Following the unveiling, EBRPD sponsored an ice cream social for all in attendance, as well as trail users who happened to pass by.

The 7.7-mile linear park, now an integral part of daily life in Lamorinda, was conceived by two young women many years ago. Founder Lynn Hiden told the audience that Barbara Grigg had thought of the trail idea about a decade before she became involved. Grigg was looking for a safe route to school for her child at the time. As the idea percolated, the town of Moraga and the East Bay Regional Park District became involved, and there was a grant to build bridges over the creeks crossed by the trail route.

The other trail founder, Avon Wilson, attributed the success of the project to "two PTA ladies who were able to persist." Wilson had moved to Reliez Valley Road with two small children, and was horrified by the traffic along the route to the school bus stop. "With Lynn," she said, they found a way. "Lynn would

have called God," she added, "if it were important to do so." Hiden did all the work on the layout of the trail, Wilson said, while she did all the cost figures. They went to the Lafayette City Council "in our short skirts and bouffant hair." One of the council members asked, "Did you write this yourself girls?" The project was the result of a lot of citizen caring and support, she said. "Moving to Lafayette 50 years ago was the best thing that ever happened to me," she concluded, "and you are part of it."

George Fisher, the chair of the advisory committee, worked for five years on the planning and environmental documents that needed to be prepared. Ed Chu worked on the landscaping, and Moraga Mayor Mike McCluer talked about how the trail came to be extended to Moraga. The whole idea, he noted, is a regional spine connecting to the 27.7 mile Iron Horse Trail, formerly used by trains, that runs from Pleasanton to Concord.

McCluer said that his family has used the trail for over 30 years, and that it has been one of the mainstays of the community during the

pandemic, providing a sense of normalcy and access to the health benefits of interacting with nature. Lafayette Mayor Susan Candell called the trail a lifeline through Lafayette dedicated to extending access to the city.

Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan said that the trail showed that "when women step up and lead, great things happen." She added that the value of the trail is that it shows how to get people out of their cars, to reduce our carbon footprint, and provide safe routes to schools as well. She praised EBRPD as great stewards of the land.

The Lafayette-Moraga trail parallels St. Mary's Road through Lafayette and Moraga. It is intended for hiking, bicycling, and equestrian use. According to the EBRPD website, the trail was once used by mule trains to carry redwood from Oakland to Sacramento. Later, when the mule trains had passed into history, the lumber was carried by steam trains, including the Oakland-Antioch and Eastern Railroad, the San Francisco-Sacramento, and the Sacramento Northern, for which the easement was historically named.

The website also describes the trail: "The north end of the trail begins at a staging area at Olympic Boulevard and Pleasant Hill Road in Lafayette, south of Highway 24, and ends at East Bay Municipal Utility District's (EBMUD) Valle Vista staging area at the outskirts of Moraga, bordering San Leandro Reservoir and Reinhardt Redwood Regional Park. (A permit is required to hike in EBMUD lands; call (510) 287-0469.) The trail makes connections to a variety of schools (including Saint Mary's College), regional trails (Briones-to-Las Trampas), local parks (Moraga Commons), and commercial areas in downtown Moraga."



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