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Animal Services and Fish & Wildlife agencies overwhelmed with calls from the public

By Vera Kochan

In October, Lamorinda Weekly received an email from a concerned resident wanting to draw attention to a dead deer that had been lying along the side of Moraga Road between Moraga and Lafayette for what she had determined to be approximately two weeks. Others on social media mentioned they had seen the animal within that same time period. The resident had apparently called public agencies for its removal – which did not come swiftly.

According to Contra Costa County Animal Services Department Information Officer Steve Burdot, “For quite a while we had only one person covering the entire county for deceased animal removal. The pandemic played a big part in that. We’ve recently added a second person.” Typically animals are removed anywhere between four to 72 hours of receiving the call, but with staff shortages the times have lengthened.

The CCAS website (www.ccasd.org) states: “We prioritize all of our Field Service calls based on public safety. Deceased animal reports will be handled as quickly as possible, though it

may take up to seven days for removal. Please note that CCAS will not perform deceased animal pickups in areas that pose a safety risk to our officers. These areas include crawl spaces, attics, cliffs, condemned buildings, creek beds, hillsides and other unsafe locations.”

Despite the record-breaking rainfall from the “bomb cyclone” that recently hit the Bay Area, experts say that the drought is not over, and La Nina conditions are expected to continue this winter. This comes as bad news for creatures great and small, because wildlife will continue to come down out of the hills to forage for food and water within our neighborhoods.

Sightings of feral pigs tearing up lawns in search of grubs had been occurring in San Ramon, Lafayette and Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School during late September. While the term “feral” gives one the impression of porkers foaming at the mouth with a crazed look in their eyes, the definition refers to an animal that lives in the wild but is descended from domesticated specimens. They could have escaped from a captive environment and are now living as a wild animal.

During a September ABC7

News interview about the recent feral pig problem, California Department of Fish & Wildlife Information Officer Ken Paglia stated, “Their food resources will dry up, so they’ll start to expand their search for food and water; and they’ll end up in people’s yards and gardens. If a wild pig or a group of wild pigs destroys your property you can file a Wildlife Incident Report on our website (https://wildlife.ca.gov), and one of our staff will reach out to you and discuss options.”

In the summer and fall months of 2020, Moraga and Lafayette experienced an eight-month spree of coyote attacks by one animal, not to mention several others that were caught and later determined not to be the main culprit. The many sightings stemmed from the species’ search for food and water, according to wildlife experts.

For anyone who has found an injured wildlife animal contact the Lindsay Wildlife Hospital Hotline at (925) 659-8156 or visit: https://lindsaywildlife.org/found-animal/. They accept and treat all native California wildlife with the exception of turkeys, red foxes, adult deer and a few others. They recommend that you call ahead to confirm.

New council member, Sona Makker

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To allay any fears as to her commitment to the job she poured over town agendas, documents and staff reports in addition to taking meetings with towns-people. “There’s a learning curve, as with any new position, but I feel confident that I will be able to get up to speed quickly. I am leaning into being new, offering to bring a fresh perspective and coming into discussions with curiosity and inquisitiveness.” She appreci-

ates the current council’s “objective advice and recommendations.”

Planning on having an open-door policy (or “open email inbox”), Makker hopes to engage with other young, working professionals to encourage involvement in local government.

When asked whether Makker is giving any thought to running for election in November 2022, she replied, “Right now I am focused on the work of getting integrated and ramping up to make ef-

fective policy decisions as a council member. That’s my number one priority. It’s a bit early to make a commitment, but I am certainly evaluating what’s coming next to continue to be involved in the long-term.”

Much-loved Moraga mail carrier retires



Grant Bond on his last day of work

Photo provided

After 33 years of delivering the mail, Grant Bond hung up his postal hat on Oct. 23. Pictured on his last day at work, heading out to his route one last time, Bond said he will miss the people he developed friendships with during his time on the job. “Many customers took a personal interest in me and my family,” Bond said. “My favorite thing was sharing photo cards of me and my wife and two kids every year with many of my customers. My faith in God

and my family sustained me through many long days of work. The heartfelt expressions of gratitude I received on my final days of work was overwhelming. I am happy to look back on my career as a mail carrier with gratitude.” Bond is looking forward to spending more time with his family during his retirement and, for now, is enjoying relaxing and doing projects around the house.

– J. Wake

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