

In Memory

Marilyn Smith Van Stralen

Aug. 14, 1933 - Nov. 13, 2021



Marilyn Smith Van Stralen, born August 14, 1933, beloved mother and grandmother, passed away at the age 88 on Nov. 13 in Moraga, California.

Marilyn's beauty and sophistication were admired by all but it may surprise you to know she was born in Wibaux, Montana and grew up on a farm. She helped her mother and brother work the farm without her father who died when she was 2 years

old. She loved her farm life, which toughened her but did not harden her. She shared fascinating and funny stories about farm life such as backing up into the chicken coop when learning to drive and making ice cream in December with the fresh milk she collected from the cows. We learned that you do not wash the dishes you "warsh" the dishes. We also learned that dinner was served in the middle of the day for extra sustenance during the long days harvesting the wheat fields. Supper was a lighter meal served in the evening. Marilyn's Midwest work ethic was passed on to her children.

Perhaps it was on the farm that she developed her love for all things pigs. She used pig cocktail napkins, pig spatulas and had an entire wall artfully decorated with pigs of every shape and size. If you were lucky, she sent you a pig birthday card.

Her mother, Kathryn A Smith, encouraged Marilyn to pursue new opportunities and attend college. She entered the University of Colorado and joined the Alpha Delta Pi sorority. There, she met a meal hasher named John C Van Stralen, who became her husband. Marilyn had a respected resiliency which served her well throughout her many life challenges. After raising two children she went back to college to finish her education. She boldly moved to new cities for new adventures making a home in Sacramento, California, Moline, Illinois, Ithaca, New York, and finally Moraga, California. In each place she developed cherished friendships because of her generosity, genuine concern for others and her sparkling presence. She left a special mark on all she met.

Marilyn adored her grandchildren and she was a tireless cheerleader at all their activities. You could see her bundled up at lacrosse games, soccer games, cross country races, and water polo games. She never missed a musical or a concert and was ready to greet each performer with flowers.

Marilyn was the ultimate entertainer which was her way of demonstrating just how much she cared for each and every person who stepped into her home. Her dining table was set to perfection always with a beautiful flower arrangement which she created. Holiday gatherings were joyous and yummy. Her tasty recipes for soft ginger cookies, seasoned oyster crackers, and our favorite chocolate wafer roll will be recreated by the entire family. Creating a beautiful experience for everyone extended into her garden, which was her ultimate passion.

Known by all was Marilyn's impeccable sense of style, simple but elegant. Her fashion sense was fostered by her mother who ordered beautiful clothes from Chicago for her. Marilyn paid attention to the details: a gold bumble bee pin on her shoulder, a beautiful flower added to any outfit, her strict adherence to gold but not silver.

Marilyn has left a legacy of love, generosity and creativity that will long be cherished and remembered by family and friends.

She is survived by her daughter Kim, her husband Brian and their three daughters Leahna, Rachael and Jocelyn; her son, Kris, his wife Mollie and their three children Lauren, Nicole and Owen.

She was preceded in death by her parents Jesse and Kathryn A Smith, her brother Earl Smith, and her loving partner of 14 years Ron Ertola.

Marilyn's memorial will be held on Jan. 8, 2022 at 2 p.m. at Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church, 10 Moraga Valley Ln., Moraga, California.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Animal Rescue Foundations (ARF). Be sure to check the box "Make this a memorial gift for Marilyn Van Stralen." <https://give.arflife.org/page/35246/donate/1>

In-person CERT classes resume in Orinda



CERT members at a recent training session.

Photo provided

By Sora O'Doherty

After a hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) classes will resume, in person, in the Orinda library auditorium in January. This will be the second live class in the Lamorinda area; the first class, which was offered in Lafayette, just completed training Nov. 4.

Lamorinda CERT had just finished a class in March of 2020, just before things shut down for the pandemic. Since resuming in-person training, CERT is following all COVID-19 protocols. All participants must be fully vaccinated and must show proof with a QR code. They will wear masks and sit six feet apart. The only exception to the masking requirement is for the instructors, who are far from the trainees and even from the other instructors.

Nevertheless, Registrar Julie Sparks notes that the situation changes frequently, and, if necessary, the classes can be converted back to Zoom meetings, although in order to be certified, the Federal Emergency Management Agency requires at least 16 hours of in-person training.

Trainees will be coming back to a significantly updated program. At the end of 2019, FEMA published major changes to the CERT program. Lamorinda CERT Program Manager Duncan Seibert was on the Contra Costa County CERT Coalition subcommittee to implement the changes. A doctor from Walnut Creek

updated the medical portion of the training, and the HAM radio operators updated the section on communications, Sparks said. FEMA recommended an updated font for the slide deck, so Seibert updated all the slides that will be used throughout the county, and also by Alameda County and San Francisco.

The local CERTs take the FEMA material and specialize it to focus on those disasters that are more likely to happen here, so the local classes focus less on tornados and hurricanes, and more on earthquakes and fires. Although the section on triage, the assignment of degrees of urgency to wounds or illnesses to decide the order of treatment of a large number of patients or casualties, was cut from FEMA, local groups are allowed to include additional sections. Lamorinda CERT has added back the section on triage, as well as keeping sections on pets and adding a section on communications.

Lamorinda CERT Public Information Officer Virginia Merrifield noted that CPR is not included in the CERT training, and never has been, although people are encouraged to seek it separately. CPR classes are offered by several groups, including the Red Cross, which is the main provider, but also by the YMCA, Adult Ed, and Parks and Rec, for example.

During the pandemic, Lamorinda CERT strived to fulfill its mission, which is to do the greatest good for the greatest number. CERT members volunteered at COVID

vaccination sites and testing sites, sold and distributed water drums and fire extinguishers, and assisted at events such as the Lafayette Reservoir Run, spending hours in the rain that day.

A lot of work continued behind the scenes. In addition to revising the slide deck, time was also spent educating instructors. Monthly Zoom meetings were very well attended and allowed CERTs to keep their skills somewhat refreshed, according to Merrifield. The meetings occur at 7 p.m. the second Monday of each month, except in December. Currently on Zoom, the meetings usually last about an hour. The convenient meetings have seen a great turnout. While in-person meetings would have had 25 to 50 people in person, the Zoom meetings have attracted from 45 to 60 or more people on Zoom. On two occasions they had over 100 attendees, and had to use the MOFD Zoom license.

The new class in Orinda will start on Jan. 12, 2022 and run through March 9, meeting on Wednesday nights from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the Orinda library auditorium. The penultimate class is a hands-on drill conducted at the Contra Costa County Fire District training grounds in Concord. The drill allows the new trainees to go through a series of training exercises to put into practice the skills learned.

Thus far, 11 people have registered, and the class size is limited to 50. Before the pandemic, class size was up to 60, but CERT is returning to in-person training slowly. There will be a ratio of 1 instructor for every 12 students. The first in-person class was very small; although 45 persons signed up, only about 20 actually attended.

Persons wishing to sign up for the next training can do so on the Lamorinda CERT website where there is a register for training button, or by emailing Julie Sparks at registrar@lamorindacert.org

CERT Website: www.lamorindacert.org/training/classes/

Toys for Tots drive continues in honor of the late Detective Kevin Mooney

Submitted by Cathy Ghiselli



The Moraga Police Officer's Association, in partnership with the United States Marine Corps, will be collecting new unwrapped toys for its annual Toys for Tots Toy Drive in honor of Detective Kevin Mooney, who passed away Aug. 21 from COVID-19 and related complications.

Besides being a rangemaster, a field training officer, and president of the Moraga Police Officers Association, Mooney was the local organizer for the annual Toys for Tots drive - a cause that was very close to his heart.

Barrels will be available for toy donations at OSH, Safeway and the Town of Moraga offices through Dec. 10. Monetary donations can be made through Moragarotary.org.

Fire District Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District
Board of Directors
Wednesday, Dec. 15, 6 p.m.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.mofd.org

ConFire
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting: Tuesday, Jan. 18, 1 p.m.
For meeting times and agendas, visit www.cccfpd.org



Public Safety

Emergency response:
Emergency: 24 Hours 911
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours 925-284-5010
Nixle: Text your zip code to 888777 or go to www.nixle.com
Lafayette Police Department:
3471 Mt. Diablo Blvd. 925-283-3680
Chief of Police, Ben Alldritt 925-299-3221
Police Department Tip Line 94549Tip@gmail.com
Police Department Traffic Issues 94549Traffic@gmail.com
Moraga Police Department:
329 Rheem Blvd., 925-888-7055
Chief of Police, Jon King ext. 7049
Orinda Police Department:
22 Orinda Way 925-254-6820
Chief of Police, Ryan Sullivan 925-254-6820
Orindatip@cityoforinda.org
Lafayette Police Department Incident Summary Report
Nov. 21 - Nov. 27



Alarms 29
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 7
Traffic 33
Suspicious Circumstances 6
Suspicious Subject 11
Suspicious Vehicle 9
Service to Citizen 14
Patrol Req./Security Check 18
Public/School Assembly Check 0
Supplemental Report 5
Vacation House Check 10
Welfare Check 9
Ordinance Violation 0
Vehicle violations
Hit And Run Misdemeanor Pleasant Hill Rd./Deer Hill Rd. 3200 Block Old Tunnel Rd.
Reckless Driving Mountain View Dr./Mariposa Rd. Moraga Rd./Via Granada, Mor. Pleasant Hill Rd./Shulgin Rd.
Tc - Property Damage St Marys Rd./Glen Side Mt. Diablo Blvd./Oak Hill Rd.
Throw Moving Vehicle Mt. Diablo Blvd./2Nd St.
Vehicle Theft 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Other criminal activity
Fraud Credit Card 3100 Block Stanley Blvd.
Fraud False Pretenses 900 Block Kelley Ct.
3300 Block Moraga Blvd.
70 Block Lafayette Cir.
10 Block Gable Ln.
Grand Theft

1200 Block Vacation Dr
Identity Theft 500 Block Michael Ln.
Misc Burglary 1200 Block Upper Happy Valley Rd.
Panhandling 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. Moraga Rd./Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Petty Theft 3400 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
Shoplift 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (3)
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic 1000 Block Oak Hill Rd. 3300 Block Betty Ln. 3500 Block Brook St.
Disturbance-fight 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Disturbing The Peace Pleasant Hill Rd./Eb Sr 24
Loud Music Franklin Ln./St Francis Dr
Loud Noise Yorkshire Ct./Ridge Rd.
Loud Party 3800 Block Palo Alto Dr. 3800 Block Quail Ridge Rd.
Public Nuisance 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Vandalism 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. 3700 Block Happy Valley Rd.
Other
Harassment

800 Block Reliez Station Rd. 3300 Block Mildred Ln. K9 Outside Assist Request 1000 Block S 57Th St., Ric 3300 Block Willow Pass Rd., Bpo
Threats 3600 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Trespass 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd.
Unwanted Guest 3200 Block Mt. Diablo Ct. 3500 Block Mt. Diablo Blvd. (2)
Moraga Police Department Incident Summary Report
Nov. 23 - Nov. 28
Alarms 6
911 Calls (includes hang-ups) 6
Traffic 21
Suspicious Circumstances 2
Suspicious Subject 3
Suspicious Vehicle 5
Service to Citizen 16
Patrol Req./Security Check 5
Supplemental Report 6
Vacation House Check 0
Welfare Check 3
Public/School Assembly Check 1
Ordinance Violation 1
Vehicle violations
Abandoned Vehicle



1200 Block Rimer Dr. Accident Fatal 500 Block Moraga Rd. Excessive Speed Moraga Rd./Alta Mesa Dr.
Other criminal activity
Burglary Safeway
Fraud False Pretenses 20 Block Carr Dr.
Identity Theft 50 Block Gaywood Pl.
Shoplift Seven Eleven
Nuisance to the Community
Disturbance-domestic Not Available
Loud Music Country Club Dr./Canyon Rd.
Loud Noise 10 Block Benedita Pl.
Other
Failure To Obey Moraga Way/St. Andrews Dr.
Violation Custody Order 2100 Block Donald Dr.
ORINDA POLICE
Orinda Police Department Incident Summary Report will be back soon