

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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SUMMER WINE & BEER FEST

SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE OF CALIFORNIA

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12
2-5 p.m.

WINE AND BEER TASTING
SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIPS
AT SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE

TICKETS ON SALE NOW



Families find a cool spot to set up camp July 15 at Rancho Laguna Park in Moraga.

Photo Jeff Heyman

Water fun at Family Camp Out helps beat the heat

By Jeff Heyman

The mercury stood at the century mark. But the scorching heat didn't dissuade 162 kids, parents and grandparents from attending the annual Moraga Family Camp Out, held this year on Saturday, July 15 at Rancho Laguna Park. And hot fun it was! Camp tents were erected in the shade and kids – plus no small number of toddler-toting adults – frolicked in the plentiful water features thoughtfully set up by the Town of Moraga's Parks and Recreation Department. Most popular for beating the heat was a gigantic green water slide and an almost cuddly – if it weren't

so slippery – water spouting aqua-colored hippo. To the merriment of families, there was no lack of activities to keep the campers entertained: arts and crafts tables, lawn games, and exceptionally popular rocket building and launching. The kid-made "rockets," colorful cardboard tubes with safe foam tips, hurtled through the air as children and parents alike scrambled to retrieve their precious payloads. A particularly well-launched projectile made a surprising splash landing in one of the blue kiddie pools set up on the park's main lawn, delighting kids throwing water sponges nearby.

As chicken, hamburger and hot dog smoke

wafted over the park, it became clear that it's never too hot for a good, old-fashioned family barbecue. This one was held under Rancho Laguna's towering redwoods and was followed by – what else? – a S'mores station for families to make their own version of the traditional camping delight. Before a "strictly enforced" quiet time set in at 10 p.m., families had an opportunity to stargaze through the telescopes of the Mt. Diablo Astronomical Society. Moraga's Family Camp Out is sure to be remembered by all who attended it as the most fun day (and night) of what promises to be a long, hot summer.

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Orinda Planning Commission approves Chevron project with creek access



Rendering courtesy City of Orinda

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda Planning Commission on Wednesday, July 12 approved a major development for downtown Orinda. In the works for some time, the renovation of the Chevron gas station on the corner of Orinda Way and Santa Maria Way, will see empty

service bays converted to an Extra Mile convenience store, the addition of an electric vehicle charging station, and a deck overlooking San Pablo Creek, with creek access along the side of the station.

There were two controversies concerning this development. City staff recommended that the city of Orinda not accept ownership of the land behind the station, which Chevron wishes to donate to the city. The planning staff had recommended that the city take only an easement over the property to avoid potential liability issues. However, Chevron said that they would not agree to such an arrangement and that if the city did not accept the dedication of the property, Chevron would not allow access to San Pablo Creek over its property.

Having heard public comment on the issue of liability, and in consideration of Chevron's stated position, the commission voted to approve the project including the dedication of the creek and trail portion of the property to the city.

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Moraga School District office experiences a '1st amendment audit'

By Sora O'Doherty

Moraga School District staff were working on June 28 during the summer break when a tall man, wearing a black mask, dark glasses and a hat came into the district office. The woman at the desk inquired if he needed anything, but he said he was "just going to take some pictures, grab a couple of forms." Identifying himself only as "Jay" he proceeded to engage with the staff, saying that he did not have children in the district but was just "driving through and decided to stop" at the district office. Later in his video, which appears on YouTube, he suggests that someone who had had a bad experience with the district has requested him to come.

This was the start of a "first amendment audit," a phenomenon that has been sweeping the country over the past few years. During such encounters, someone visits a public location,

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