

What Were They Thinking? Slow Down, Lamorinda!

By Lee Borrowman

Although many believe the risk of getting caught to be a strong deterrent against breaking the law, it seems that more than a few drivers out there don't agree. Despite a massive effort to notify the public of the enforcement efforts, and speed trailers strategically positioned in advance, 50 speeding tickets were issued in the Pleasant Hill Rd. crackdown during the first week of the "Slow Down Lamorinda!" public awareness, education and enforcement campaign, and 28 tickets were issued (after 39 stops) on St. Mary's Rd. in Moraga last week. Evidently, not everyone has signed the Safe Driving Pledge that the Mayors, Police Chiefs and City Managers of our three communities all signed publicly on May 1.

"Slow Down Lamorinda!" is intended to make drivers more cognizant of their travel speeds and improve driving behavior through non-traditional education and enforcement efforts, and was developed in response to the fatal accidents earlier this year. The campaign partners, our local governments and police departments, spent much time last week engaging in getting the word out in addition to dispatching several police cars to wait for speeders in the target areas. The school districts are supporting the campaign and parents' clubs have organized Slow Down rallies and events this week.

Moraga Mayor Mike Metcalf said, "Our problem is that some people just don't have it high enough in their consciousness that there's a real problem in our communities with speeding and driving under the influence. We've lost

sight of the ball, and we need to raise awareness by continuing to place an emphasis on this issue."

We all remember those accidents. We all drove a little bit more slowly for a few days after each one. Slow Down, Lamorinda! is about the need to drive more slowly all the time. Consider this: If you drive five miles, which is roughly the distance from downtown Orinda to the Moraga Center, or from the Moraga Center to Lafayette, at 45mph rather than 35mph, you save less than two minutes of driving time. And the same car that was behind you when you passed through the last intersection will still come up behind you when you stop at the next red light.

According to Detective Nate McCormack of the Orinda Police Dept., when you are pulled over you will spend 10-20 minutes waiting for that personalized speeding ticket, assuming you have all of the required documents with you. Then there's the price tag on the ticket, which varies widely depending on your speed and driving history, and if you factor in the time and money for court costs or maybe traffic school, the cost of a speeding ticket may not be negligible.

So you're two minutes late to that meeting; chances are, you still won't be the last one through the door. The last-minute item you need at the store will still be there two minutes later, as will your teacher. You can flash your 'Slow Down Lamorinda!' bumper sticker at her – it might even work, once, before she tells you to get out of bed two minutes earlier. And it's a dirty job, but someone has to be last in line at the carpool pick-up after school, despite the protestations of your children.

The Lamorinda Weekly endorses this campaign. Safety is no accident.

Slow Down, Lamorinda!



Carol Federighi addresses the audience on May 1st, including Leah Greenblat, Mike Metcalf, Steve Falk, Mike Hubbard, Steve Glazer, Mark Ruppenthal, Phil Vince and Bill French (not pictured, Janet Keeter)

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