

An Open Letter from Moraga Mayor Mike Metcalf: Time to reflect and act

At mid-day Friday, May 18th, a young citizen of our town died from injuries when his motorcycle collided with an oncoming automobile on Moraga Road . This is the third fatality of the year and challenges the notion of Moraga as a safe place to live. Since May 1st , the three cities of Lamorinda have been engaged in an aggressive campaign to slow traffic in the tri-city region. Yet these tragedies continue, and it's apparent many folks aren't taking our safe driving message seriously.

Since January, Moraga police have issued 656 traffic citations and, more frightening, 36 for driving under the influence of alcohol. Many of these arrests have involved under-age kids. During the first two weeks of Slow Down Lamorinda!, some 75 stops were made in the tri-city area for speeding, and these after speed trailers had been operating on the same roads for several preceding days. Just this past

weekend in Moraga , a young lady, who was DUI, luckily escaped serious injury when apparently she became disoriented and crashed her vehicle into a closed metal road gate. And we are only five months into the year!

It's time to think carefully about what's going on. All of us need to reflect on our own behavior when driving a motor vehicle, and encourage our family and friends to do the same. When we drive unsafely — or if we shouldn't be driving at all — it's not just ourselves who are at risk; others on the road are also endangered, even people who just happen to be nearby. It's time for some straight talk, perhaps around the dinner table, maybe in our meeting places, or just in casual conversation. It's time to remind each other that our lives may be lovely right now and we may be happy at the moment, but that it can all go horribly wrong in an instant.

As part of our Slow Down Lamorinda! campaign, a large banner was prominently displayed last week on a police vehicle parked at the intersection of Moraga Road and Rheem Blvd. On Monday morning, it was discovered that vandals had spray-painted over the lettering and written in bold letters: "Speed Up Lamorinda!" This is sick. What kinds of people could have done this? Our police can't possibly patrol everywhere and stop every such senseless act. It's time for each of us to ask what we can do individually and together. Please do your part.

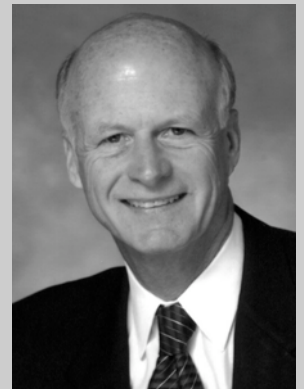


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