

Dam Boat Fun

By Cathy Tyson

Looking for an entertaining, last minute outing with the kids this summer? The San Pablo Recreation Area has relatively inexpensive boat rentals available, no reservation necessary. For as little as \$12.00 an hour, a rowboat can be yours to paddle around and enjoy the sunshine. Even adding in the user fee of \$6.00, reduced to \$2.00 after 4:00, it a pretty good deal and so darn close to home for Lamorindans.

Rental rowboats, kayaks, motorboats and pontoon/patio boats are available for hourly, half day and full day use. Renters must be 18 years old, have a driver's license, and provide a deposit via credit card or cash. During the week, it's usually quiet, with plenty of available space for picnics, hikes, and a playground for the younger set. There's even a snack bar, open daily, near the boat rentals that has ice cream, sandwiches, even beer and sodas for pooped paddlers. Because this is an EBMUD drinking water reservoir, no body contact with the water like swimming or wading is allowed. Call (510) 223-1661 for more information.

Dam Retrofit

Some time ago, it was found that the dam was vulnerable to earthquake damage, after all it was constructed in 1920, and it's done well these last 87 years. In the 1960s and again in the 1970s retrofitting was done, but according to new testing the soil has shown some weakness that could cause flooding. So starting in January of 2008, and scheduled to be completed in 2010, seismic retrofitting will begin on the outer side of the dam. "The EIR is complete and community meetings have been held," EBMUD spokesperson Charles Hardy says. "It's in better shape than we thought." Until construction is completed the usual water level of 13 billion gallons has been drawn down to 8 million gallons for the safety reasons and in anticipation of the upcoming repairs.



Left to right: Adventure Day Camp's Jaime, with Katie, Alison and Eleanor



Front: Alexis Odei, Oakland; Middle: Samantha Jones, Concord; In the back: Katie from England, Adventure Day Camp

With the water level down, the fish are more concentrated, a boon to fishermen. In addition, with the economy down, and gas prices up the reservoir is a bit quieter than usual. Just follow Camino Pablo northbound out of Orinda. The road changes names to San Pablo Dam Road, look for the large body of water, you can't miss it.



Oni Massi (9) of Oakland at camp for her 3rd summer

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