

“It Doesn’t Have to Happen” at Campolindo

By Sophie Braccini

Moraga Police Chief Mark Ruppenthal was among many staffing a new information table at Campolindo’s Cougar Days on August 22. Ruppenthal was there to support the “It Doesn’t Have to Happen” campaign sponsored by the Campolindo Parents’ Club Healthy Choice Committee.

“It Doesn’t Have to Happen” is sponsored by Friday Night Live (FNL), an agency funded by the California State Department of Alcohol and Drugs and the Office of Traffic Safety. The core of this prevention program is aimed at encouraging teens to stand up for their friends. Its message is “Friends ask friends to drive safe.” Program Coordinator Al Crancer explains, “Friends are the first line of defense, along with family, to prevent unsafe behavior; friends that ask for a change often get it.”

Chief Ruppenthal wants his department to be at the forefront



Moraga P.D. Chief Ruppenthal, Campo student Scott Fournier, Program Coordinator Al Crancer and Healthy Choice Committee Co-chair Margaret Qualls during Cougar Days Photo by Sophie Braccini

of prevention, and comments, “The Lamorinda community has had enough tragic events, we need to foster prevention and part of this is supporting this program that educates kids into making the correct choices.”

For the program to work it’s essential that kids feel comfortable making the right decision, so it’s hoped that a large number of teens will take the It Doesn’t Have to Happen pledge: “I pledge to do my best to act when a friend is about to drink and drive, speed too

fast for conditions or ride unbuckled.” Teen who take the pledge receive a coupon from Subway, Nation’s or Burger King.

Margaret Qualls, Co-chair of the Healthy Choice Committee at Campolindo was happy with the response during Cougar Days, “This was very successful, the parents were extremely interested and the awareness of their children was definitely increased. Safe driving is really a priority of the Healthy Choice Committee this year as well as stress reduction.”

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