

Lamorinda Community

Calendar, Notes, News

Lafayette

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, Jan 14	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, Jan 17	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, Jan 22	
Park, Trails, Rec.	7pm
Community Center 500 St Mary's Road Wednesday, Feb 13	
Circulation	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, Jan 22	
Emergency Prep.	9:15am
City Offices 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 265 Wednesday, Feb 13	
Senior Services	3:30pm
Community Center, Alder Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, Jan 24	

check online:
Town of Lafayette:
<http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us>
 • all meeting notes
 • calendar updates
Chamber of Commerce:
<http://www.lafayettechamber.org>
 • local businesses
 • upcoming events



Stolen car, 12/29/07 An older woman drove to Diablo Foods to do some grocery shopping. She accidentally left the keys to her car in the trunk lock of her silver 2-door 2002 Honda Accord. Upon exiting the store she had her groceries, but she didn't have her car. There aren't any leads or witnesses.

Stolen car, 12/29/07 A car that was locked and parked along Second Street was stolen sometime during the afternoon of the 29th. No suspects or witnesses.

Another stolen car, 12/26/07 A green 1991 2-door Honda Accord was taken from Hough Avenue. The car's owner last saw his vehicle parked outside of his apartment around 11:00 p.m., when he was ready to take off in the morning, the car was gone. To add insult to injury, there was a case of beer and Christmas presents in the trunk.

Credit card fraud, 12/12/07 – 12/24/07 A young, female Lafayette resident received her CitiBank Visa card statement and saw several fraudulent charges made by an unknown suspect. She did not give permission to for anyone to use her card. All the purchases were made via the internet. No known suspects or leads.

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Meet Lafayette's New Mayor

By Cathy Tyson
Mike Anderson: Assistant General Manager Planning/Stewardship & Development of the East Bay Regional Park District by day, Mayor of Lafayette by night. If keeping an eye on 97,000 acres of parks, spread over two counties, with 1,100 miles of trails wasn't enough, Anderson is busy at his night job, attending countless meetings for the benefit of Lafayette.

He started on the General Plan Advisory Committee a number of years ago, moved onto the Planning Commission, then served three years on the City Council, last year as Vice Mayor. This will be his fourth year of service on the City Council and first year as Mayor. The pay rate for all this hard work? Some would say it's priceless, but actually there is no monetary compensation, just all the coffee he can drink and the sincere thanks of residents.

In a wide-ranging discussion at Papillon, Anderson cov-

ered many topics to be addressed in the coming year.

First and foremost is the Lafayette's Downtown Strategic Plan, which will determine where to allocate funds to invest in projects downtown. After holding community workshops, public meetings and tabulating survey responses from over 2,000 residents, the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee which Anderson chairs, will have a meeting in late February with Wallace, Roberts and Todd, Lafayette's urban design consultant. Anderson noted, "There should be some interesting ideas and options" for the City. "We need a plan for the downtown that is sustainable," especially considering the City's current financial situation.

"I'd like to have a downtown that has a certain amount of walkability. To be able to park your car, walk to a coffee shop, do errands - this enhances a sense of community. We

have a real opportunity with the Strategic Plan to make these things happen. The challenge is to find a balance between residential and business uses." Anderson believes everyone can win, by encouraging businesses that would benefit residents and increase the tax base at the same time.

Also a priority is the, "Budget goal-setting process, I want to break down and re-assess all services for discretionary money within the budget, and encourage public involvement." When asked what would happen if 500 people showed up at the February 4 meeting, Anderson responded, "that would be great, that level of interest." If the Lafayette Community Center couldn't handle the crowd, he suggested the meeting could be re-scheduled at a larger venue.

Noting the recent video posted on the City's website, www.lovelafayette.org, Anderson encourages residents to get involved and educated about

the limited amount of discretionary budget dollars the city has available. As part of the budget process he wants, "a chance for people to talk about what's important" regarding where discretionary money is allocated.

Lafayette's roads are also major concern. Explaining that the current process emphasizes the maintenance of the better-quality roads over the reconstruction of the poorer-quality roads, Anderson believes that the reconstruction of the poorer-quality roads needs to be a priority. "We need to find a reasonable way to apply funds fairly and best use our resources."

Especially in these lean times, Anderson sees a crucial role for volunteers, noting that there is a lot of experience and knowledge among the residents in our community. Quite a few folks already serve on Design Review, Circulation, Parks and Recreation, and many other commissions. More volunteers

are always needed and appreciated.

Finally along the same lines, the Youth Commission is run by local teens who could be a great resource for employers in the City. Currently they raise money through events, using the money to fund a haunted house, high school dance parties and an annual retreat. "My point is that these are sharp kids, who have really bright futures, a wonderful asset of the community. I'm working with the Chamber of Commerce and the Youth Commission to create an opportunity for internships, shadowing and other job experiences in Lafayette. Young people would benefit from a job that lets them learn about work, and hopefully they'll be coming back to the area after college."

Throughout all of his service to Lafayette, Anderson would like to thank his very patient wife, Courtney, for being supportive.

Going to the Doctor is Fun!

By Jean Follmer



Dr. Maria Steelman, Basil the Pig & Roxy the Dog Photo Jean Follmer

Four years ago, Dr. Maria Steelman opened Lafayette Pediatrics. She studied medicine at the University of Southern California and found pediatrics was a "perfect fit" during her rotation. As an only child, she wasn't around many children growing up. With three of her own kids plus the practice, she's discovered she loves working with children. Dr. Steelman says she "likes the emotional intensity - it gives me a thrill, it fills me up." Prior to starting her own practice, Dr. Steelman worked

with Lafayette Doctor Stephanie Bennett-Strauss for years. Dr. Bennett-Strauss specializes in child development and behavioral pediatrics and Dr. Steelman still consults with her.

As a child she didn't dream of being a doctor. In fact, some of her early memories of medical care are not pleasant. She has memories of sterile offices. She remembers screaming while her pediatrician cleaned her ears because it hurt so much; yet he didn't stop. Steelman says "I try to make my office comfortable for

kids. If they're comfortable, it empowers them when they're older...they'll be more in touch with their own health when they're older." She definitely has comfort down. Her office has pleasing colors, cozy furniture and the feeling of "home". On occasion, she even brings her pets to visit the office. The young patients are thrilled to see Basil the pot belly pig and Roxy the dog. She "brought the animals as a trial" and it went over so well that the kids are always asking where they are.

Steelman lets her patients dress up as doctors if they want to during an examination and she'll "look for butterflies in their ears." Kids will walk into the office shouting "Dr. Maria, where are you?" She said, "Because I put a little extra effort into the environment, people come here a little happier." While at a medical conference years back, she attended a pediatric hypnotherapy session. It "made me become more careful with language" and made her recognize the importance of "positive focus language." Steelman also believes in accessibility, so the office answers its own calls. If you call after hours, Dr. Steelman an-

swers the call herself. She feels parents should be able to reach their pediatrician. She "puts parents in the center and listens to them," because they

often notice the subtle changes in their children.

For more information, contact lafped@yaho.com or 925-287-0120.



Dr. Maria Steelman & patient Hailey Urteaga Photo Jean Follmer

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