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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Lafayette Comes Through Again
Down that Lafayette hill those telltale markers flow.
To the busy traffic's edge we've watched them grow.
Row after row of shining white crosses,
Intermingled with white stars for Sons of David losses.

It is quite fitting and proper that this Memorial be placed here,
In a beautiful quiet town, named for a man we all hold dear.
One who didn't turn his back when we badly needed a strong hand,
To help us fight for our freedom in this far distant land.

A Patriot whose name we will never forget,
From far-away France, The Marquis De Lafayette.
And now I am sure he looks down in total assent
Of how we have handled this entire, trying event.

We,too, are all saddened by the price they had to pay,
But when diplomacy had failed,there was no other way.
So ,Shine on you Crosses and Shine on you Stars!!
They paid their full last Devotion for a similar Noble Cause!!

Samuel N. Etheredge M.D.
World War II Veteran
Orinda

Dear Editor:

We would like to express our appreciation to Orinda Voters for their strong support for Measure B in last Tuesday's election.
Measure B will provide much needed resources to lessen the burden of significant state budget cut to our schools. It will protect quality academic programs that have provided our children with an excellent education.
More than 70% of Orinda voters have agreed to pay higher taxes despite the difficult economic conditions. We are sincerely grateful.

Riki Sorenson, Lynne Molloy, Steven Glazer
Co-Chairs, Yes on Measure B

Dear Editor:

I am a naturalized citizen of Chinese descent who has lived in Orinda for nearly 2 decades. I've found most people in Orinda (and Moraga) extremely friendly, helpful and tolerant. Therefore, I have a hard time understanding Bob and Kim Larsen's complaint expressed in their letter of March 4. Are they saying that residents of Orinda are not tolerant enough because most voted for Prop 8 and/or because blacks and Hispanics represent less than 2% of the city's population? If they want to live in a city which strongly supports Prop 8 and has a very "diverse" population, maybe San Francisco is more suitable for them. (By the way, if my recollection is correct, most blacks, Hispanics and Asians voted for Prop 8 according to polls.) It is my belief that people who are truly tolerant and inclusive are color blind. In addition, they do not impose their values on other people around them.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Yeh Feinberg
Orinda

Editor:

In response to your article on the February "Tri Agency" (Moraga; Orinda; MOFD) meeting, specifically regarding the allocation of costs between Orinda and Moraga vs. the benefits each city receives. As stated in your article, Orinda pays about 65% of the total property tax going to the district (\$11M out of \$17M). However with 80% of the districts costs being personnel costs; and with 58% of the firefighters (11 of 19) being in Orinda; and assuming the administration for the two equal sized cities are split 50-50 (52% of the district's calls are from Orinda); Orinda should accrue 57% of the total cost. With Moraga's \$6M in tax fixed by Proposition 13, this means Orinda should be paying only \$8M, not \$11M. However, MOFD contends that since 675 homes in south Orinda are served by the Moraga stations, Orinda should pay a higher percentage of the total. These 675 homes produce about 90 priority calls annually and 50 non-priority calls. Even if all calls "cost" the same, that would mean these 140 calls would cost Orinda over \$20,000 each if this extra service is, in fact, worth \$3,000,000. In a letter that Chief Nowicki sent to the Orinda City Council in January, he pointed to a similar situation where San Pablo paid Richmond for calls the Richmond Fire Department made into San Pablo. The charge was \$500 per call. I believe there is an equitability disconnect here.

Steve Cohn
Orinda



Brian Luke carries cookies to a waiting car

Dear Editor,

Early in December of 2008, we embarked on a new adventure and new commitment to the Girl Scouts of the Orinda/Moraga Service Unit (60 to 70 troops with 900 girls) by managing the 2009, yearly Cookie Sale. We want to thank the Orinda/Moraga Fire Department for their assistance in accomplishing our goal of distributing over 3500 cases of cookies to the troops one rainy, blustery day, February 22, 2009.

Station #42, located at 555 Moraga Road in Moraga, CA was kind enough to once again open their doors (literally) to us. The crew at that station was so helpful, beginning before 6:30 AM that morning with the acceptance of the sky-high pallettes with the cases of cookies. With the rainy weather, Fire Captain Felipe Barreto made the decision to have parents drive through the station to help keep everyone and everything dry. Over 30 volunteers showed up with eager attitudes and a generous spirit to help load the cookies.

We want to thank those volunteers and the Moraga/Orinda Fire Station men who helped us: Captain Felipe Barreto; Firefighter Ken Mannshardt; Engineer Steve Campisi; and Firefighter Reserve Brian Luke. Special kudos and thanks to Brian, who enthusiastically helped disassemble pallettes of cookies only to reassemble them into individual troop orders and load them into waiting cars, staying engaged the whole time we were there. Also, thanks to Ken for taking pictures documenting the incredible day and to Grace Santos who facilitated the process.

Often times we know how thankful we would be for such a wonderful crew in times of an emergency such as a natural disaster, fire or other calamity, but we also know how thankful we are to have their cooperation and enthusiasm to support our community in many other ways. Three cheers for our Moraga/Orinda Fire Department!

For more information on Girl Scouts or to find a local cookie sale booth, go to www.girlscoutsnorcal.org.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Gustafson
Jeanette Fritzky
Co-Managers of the Orinda/Moraga Service Unit
Girls Scouts of Northern California

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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