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Lamorinda's Religious Services



Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, 433 Moraga Way Orinda

8:15 a.m. Traditions Worship Service
9:15 a.m. Coffee Fellowship
9:40 a.m. Education for all ages
10:45 a.m. Celebrations Worship Service
Childcare available for ages 5 and younger
925-254-3422

Our Savior's Lutheran (ELCA)
1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette
283-3722 • www.oslc.net

Sunday mornings at OSLC:
Classic Worship, 8:15 am
Education Hour, 9:30-10:20 am
Contemporary Worship, 10:30 am

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church
A Loving Community

Sunday Services: 8 and 10 AM
Active Youth Program, Childcare

682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, 284-7420, www.stanselms.ws

St. Giles Episcopal Church of Moraga

Worshipping at St. Mary's College Chapel. All are welcome at our services.
9 a.m. Sunday Service: Holy Communion - with St. Giles' Choir.
Child care is available all year.
1928 St. Mary's Road, Moraga. 925-376-5770

Willow Spring Church

1675-1689 School Street, Moraga
www.willowsspringchurch.org
(925) 376-3550

Sunday Service Times:
Prayer @ 8am, Traditional @ 9am,
Contemporary @ 10:30am

Weekly Activities:
Wednesday Community Bible Study @ 10am
REVERB (youth) @ 7pm
Friday Night BLAST! Kids Club @ 6pm
Saturday Night Catalyst (Young Adults) @ 7:30pm

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE
Church Services and Sunday School (up to age 20); 10 - 11 AM
Informal Testimony Meeting, Wed 7:30 - 8:30 PM
24 Orinda Way www.christianscienceorinda.org

Visit our Reading Room and spiritual bookstore
across from the Orinda movie theater.

LAMORINDA Community

Letters to the Editor

Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writers and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and town (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only), and should be 350 words or less. Letters may be edited for length or legal considerations.

email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Dear Editor:

I'm writing to express my profound disappointment with the Orinda School District for its apparent decision to eliminate the Environmental Education (aka the nature area) program at Wagner Ranch. This program is the heart and soul not only of Wagner but of the other three elementary schools in the district as well.

My son, now in 5th grade, has participated in this program since 3rd grade and this has been one of his most formative experiences at school. His understanding of and appreciation for nature, the environment, and other animals that share our world is far greater than his years would suggest because of the work and dedication of Toris Jaeger and the other staff at the nature area. This program has enabled him to feel that there was something special "for him" to connect with at Wagner. I always thought that the goal of the District was to provide that something for every child. My son is moving on to OIS next year so this is not about how this affects my family. I am deeply saddened to think that other children will not have the opportunity to experience what my son has been fortunate enough to experience.

The OUSD Board needs to listen to the people and the community they represent and work with concerned parents to find a way to save this program. I know that there is no "fat" anywhere in the system but the \$6 0,000 (which comes from parent donations, by the way) cost of the Environmental Education Program only represents less than 3/10 of 1% of the District's budget. Fund raising and minor adjustments to other programs could make this up if the Board made it a priority.

If something must be cut it would be far better to trim something that can be more easily reinstated when finances improve. To try to put the nature area Environmental Education Program back in place in the future without Toris Jaeger's passion and institutional knowledge will be like trying to put Humpty Dumpty back together. It will not be the same. At least provide Toris, who is nearing retirement age anyway, the opportunity to help put a restructuring plan in place and train her successors to carry on the program.

Sincerely,
Fred Smith
Orinda

Editor:

A week after the last performance, I continue to be awestruck by the unbelievable theater production of Disney's, Beauty and the Beast, put on by Campolindo High School's Music Department. It was a difficult ticket to get! Due to the history of "sterling" productions at Campolindo in past years, all of the tickets were sold out prior to the first night. That's eight shows and over 3600 tickets sold! Additionally, the cast and production crew ran two shows for local elementary schools to begin "whetting the appetite" of budding actors and actresses as they approach high school.

What made this production unbelievable? Well, first, the sets, the music, the talented performers; THE SHOW. It captured Disney's "vision." Beauty and the Beast could have played in Walnut Creek or even San Francisco and had widespread audience appeal. What impressed me most was the opportunity for involvement and the efforts by many. Listen to these numbers: 95 student performers, in two separate casts, captivating the audience with their acting, singing and dancing; 42 student musicians artistically performing Beauty and the Beast's musical score; 34 student production assistants moving sets, directing spotlights and opening curtains; and 172 parents, siblings and friends of Campolindo students volunteering their hearts out to allow these students this wonderful opportunity. Planning started in March of 2008, costumes were being sewn last summer, tryouts and callbacks were conducted in October and sets were being built in early January. WOW!

Special recognition goes to the students who filled our imagination so capably about Belle's quest to not be "odd," the Beast's desire to love and be loved and Gaston's unfulfilled fantasy of marrying Belle. To Stacey Kikkawa, Dave Pinkham and the entire artistic and production staff, your time, your patience and vision to help "mold" these actors and musicians into such capable performers was truly appreciated. Lastly, who will forget the hours and hours and hours of time by the many volunteers to paint backgrounds, build sets, feed actors, move people, sell tickets, deliver fan mail, bake cookies, sew costumes, sell roses, seat people, paint faces, etc., etc.?

Thank you for a wonderful experience. Beauty and the Beast was BOFFO! BRAVO! BRAVO! BRAVO!

Will Cogswell
Moraga

Public Forum JOIN IT

An open letter to Mayor Trotter and Members of the Moraga Town Council, from Bill Carman:

Thank you for recognizing the dog owners of Rancho Laguna (RL). Mayor Trotter in your interview with the PTA last election season you demonstrated the deepest understanding of this issue. The Town Council has been receptive and fair to our complaints thus far.

Rancho Laguna is one of America's oldest (limited use) off leash dog parks since 1979. Ohlone Park in Berkley is the first recognized fenced in Dog Park (1979). Dogs have roamed free to play with other dogs at RL for 30 years. No incidents of human injury from dogs have been reported at RL. The 8.4 acres of Rancho Laguna, has served as an informal dog park to the Lamorinda Community. It has operated as a sports field, a camp ground, and training area for dogs off leash. In the morning and evening, the dog's owners had access to the park. The rest of the day was for people. We have had show dog champions, agility dogs, and dogs trained in search and rescue. Rancho Laguna has been a family place where the WHOLE family can come out to play with the dog.

Rancho Laguna has the ability to attract a majority of the 12,718 licensed Lamorinda dog owners. It is a limited use dog park by definition[i]. If Rancho Laguna were a publicized dog park it would rank like our school system, one of the best. If it was an all day dog park it could pull 60+ cars per hour to Moraga, this cannot be done with the commons proposal. Currently we don't want this to be an all day dog park. This summer the park will be overfilled during dog park hours now that the word is out. Bummer, It was Moraga's best kept secret until the winds of change came blowing through the trees this January carrying a bad smell.

Moraga has 3,570 licensed dogs[ii], for 5285 homes.[iii] Moraga had only 10,009 Registered voters in 2008, 7000 could be dog owners. There are 12,718[iv] licensed dogs in the Lamorinda community whose owners are potential users of the park. Moraga Dog owners spend \$35,700 in license fees annually to use this park. We support a pet store, a groomer, professional dog trainers and 4 veterinarians. The Moraga Safeway has ½ aisle dedicated to dogs. Rite Aid, Home Express, Tuesday Mornings and OSH sell dog supplies too. The Town of Moraga receives 9.25% of every dog taxable item sold. Dogs are good for business!! We have the only thing close to a dog park in Lamorinda.

City	Homes	Licensed Dogs	% Homes with Dogs
Lafayette	9532	5282	55%
Moraga	5285	3570	67%
Orinda	6958	3866	55%
Total Lamorinda	21775	12718	58%

Many of these businesses support Lamorinda Weekly, and Contra Costa times. Dog owners spend money at Chows, and Metro in Lafayette, many of the dogs are from Moraga. In Moraga the dog friendly restaurants are

Bianca's Deli and Amoroma's. The newly owned Ranch House will gladly invite dogs at the picnic tables.

The proposal for Amendment 12.08 of the Moraga Municipal Code has stripped all off leash dog use from the Moraga Commons, Mulholland Ridge, and if we did not protest, I believe they would take Rancho Laguna from us too!

We did not want a dog park, we thought we had one. We wanted to share this park as it is. We tried to rent the park out for camping event in August. We asked how much money they wanted, but were denied. In November we were attacked by an out of control, animal control officer. Some protested at a town meeting in January. Then we were hit with a barrage of dog gone dogma by the PR&C in March after the council asked them to correct the ordinance in February.

As a fan of Rancho Laguna's off leash use hours I just want the Moraga Town Council, and The Moraga Parks and Recreation Commission to recognize the value of this Off Leash Park to the community. Keep the park as a multi use facility; make the park an Official Dog Park during the following hours.

- 1) During the period from October 1st through March 31st, animals are allowed off leash daily from park opening to 9:00 a.m. and from 4:00 p.m. until park closing.
- 2) During the period from April 1st through September 30th, animals are allowed off leash daily from park opening to 9:00 a.m. and from 6:00 p.m. until park closing.

The Parks and Recreation Commission proposal to limit our dogs on just the paved path and turf area created a variety of unpleasant emotions. We suggested a fence or hedge row between a few picnic tables and the tot lot's. Below is a simple concept graphic (which was not presented).

We do not want to get political. We want to enjoy our town's beauty and recreate with our dogs. If the proposal 12.08 passes as written 12,700 dog owners in the Lamorinda community might start barking. My fantasy is you will just proclaim Rancho Laguna an official limited use Dog Park, allow a hedge like barrier around the tot lot's and group areas, keep the majority of the park open to dog users and put a knowledgeable pro dog person on the PR&C. They are going to be working on how to ruin a good thing over the next 12 months, let us help minimize the damage, and maximize revenue for Moraga. Ask us for help in creating the new vision.

Bill Carman and his dog Juneau can often be found at Rancho Laguna..

[i] Wikipedia Dog Park http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dog_park 4/1/08

[ii] Contra Costa Animal Control Pet Emergency Services www.Lamorindacert.org e-mail 3/23/09

[iii] Lamorinda Weekly www.lamorindaweekly.com v3#1 3/18/2009

[iv] Contra Costa Animal Control Pet Emergency Services www.Lamorindacert.org 3/23/09

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If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda or one of its cities that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section.

Just send your letter to **letters@lamorindaweekly.com** and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.