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Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Melyssa Snyder helps launch the new Splash Pad at the Moraga Commons with Parks and Rec Director Jay Ingram
 Photo Doug Kohen



Let the Summer Fun Begin!

By Cathy Tyson, Sophie Braccini and Andrea A. Firth

School's Almost Out. Find the events you don't want to miss in our Summer Event Guide, page 18 and 19.

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Budget Goes From Red to Less Red

By Cathy Tyson

(The Lafayette City Council is scheduled to revisit the proposed budget after press time on Monday, June 8. Please check our website for updates, <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/>)

The proposed \$11.9 M budget to run the City of Lafayette for fiscal year 2009/2010 represents a 2% increase over last year's spending. Unfortunately there was a projected \$900,000 budget gap between revenue and expenditures, due to several one time

charges. Further reductions may be implemented at the next City Council meeting.

The largest one-time charge is the anticipated borrowing by the State of California, "When lawmakers pull this trigger – and we are confident that they will – the impact to Lafayette will be a \$540,000 reduction in General Fund revenues," said City Manager Steven Falk in a Staff Report. The state's fiscal picture is so dire, it's allowed to borrow revenue, but it must be paid

back within three years with interest.

Instead of taking the \$900,000 from the \$8.3 million sitting safely in reserves, the Council decided it was more prudent to look for cost savings to reduce the overage.

"Projections are anything but rosy, economists are saying we are not going to recover for some time," said Council Member Carol Federighi at a recent City Council meeting.

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Drugs and Alcohol Take Toll on Local Teens

By Jennifer Wake

Now that Danielle Lincoln is a junior at Acalanes High School, she and her friends hang out with the seniors, and she can tell that a lot of seniors drink. Although she didn't see as much drinking among freshmen and sophomores, she says, "Friends are turning toward drinking as they get older; they consider it cool."

And while she says the recent tragedy involving 16-year-old Miramonte student Joe Loudon was "a wake-up call," she hasn't heard about Acalanes parties "getting that bad."

"After sports [events] or seasons are over, they have parties," she says. "A lot of people drink and it carries on to the next year. It's just a way to blow off steam and celebrate the end of the year."

"Teens are gonna party," says marriage and family therapist Monica Gadda. Unfortunately, Gadda has seen a growing attitude among teens (and their parents)

that as long as it's just drinking, it's not a big deal.

Gadda teaches a course on alcohol and substance abuse at Saint Mary's College and has coached volleyball at Orinda Intermediate School and volunteered at Joaquin Moraga. While at the middle schools, she saw a disturbing trend. "Younger and younger people are drinking," she says. "These sixth, seventh and eighth graders would tell me, 'We're drinking just a little bit of beer . . . not smoking pot. High school kids drink; it's just what you do.'"

The 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) reported that 28 percent of youth aged 12 to 20 years drank alcohol, and 19 percent reported binge drinking (more than five drinks in a sitting) – making them more susceptible to alcohol poisoning.

... continued on page 8

Police Plan to be Vigilant this Weekend

Orinda Police Chief Bill French is a man on a mission. "I thought I had a zero tolerance policy before, but this will be a stepped-up effort," French stated firmly regarding teen drinking and anyone drinking and driving this upcoming graduation weekend. "We will have extra patrols out, and we will be targeting high school parties and DUI enforcement." Police in Lafayette and Moraga will be paying attention as well, so residents are encouraged to celebrate safely.

Rainbow Trout to Return to Orinda Creek?



By Sophie Braccini

Six months ago, the Friends of the Orinda Creek (FOC) assisted the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development (CCCD) to test the waters of the San Pablo Creek. The results are in and the waters of the primary creek that flows through Orinda are in good enough shape to support the re-introduction of trout.

Read on page 5

Miramonte Wins North Coast Baseball Championship



By Kevin D. Shallat

It was an emotional week for the Miramonte varsity baseball team going into the North Coast Section (NCS) Baseball Championship game on May 30, as well as a tough week for the school and community together. Merely one week earlier, Miramonte lost a student, Joseph Loudon, who was close to some of the players on the team. Read on page 21

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