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**Please submit:**

**Events:** calendar@lamorindaweekly.com  
**Stories:** storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com  
**Letters:** letters@lamorindaweekly.com  
**Opinion:** letters@lamorindaweekly.com

**Lamorinda's Religious Services**



**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

**Worship the Lord with us**



Sundays at 9:30am & 6pm

**Moraga Valley Presbyterian Church**  
 10 Moraga Valley Lane, Moraga • www.mvpc.today.org • (925) 376-4800

**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,  
 Children's Church @ 10:30am, The Groove (Youth Service) @ 10:30am,  
 The Living Room (Young Adults Service) @ 7:30pm

**Weekly Activities:** Wednesday Community Bible Study @ 10am  
 Wednesday REVERB Youth Group @ 7pm  
 Friday BLAST! Kids Club @ 6pm

**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.

**Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, 433 Moraga Way Orinda**

**Summer Worship Schedule 6/14 - 9/6**

8:30 a.m. Coffee in Gregersen Hall  
 8:45 a.m. Nursery Care Available  
 9:00 a.m. Worship Service in the Sanctuary  
 10:00 a.m. Fellowship Time in Gregersen Hall  
 10:30 a.m. Nursery Closes

925-254-3422

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

**Summer Sunday Morning Schedule**  
 Blended Worship, 9:30-10:25 am  
 Adult Education, 10:30-11:15 am  
 "the church behind the car wash"

Kids! Join us for Camp E.D.G.E. July 13-17! see website

**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,

State Senator DeSaulnier has the typical politician's view of how to solve the budget mess. He says our problems are "systemic" pointing to the "robust" initiative system and the constitutionally required 2/3 super majority to pass budget items in the legislature. To correct this, he has called for a constitutional convention to remove all legal impediments to greater spending and even greater taxes. The problem is not lack of revenue, it is excessive spending. California needs less spending, lower taxes and less regulation to attract more business to establish here and stem the flow of business locating elsewhere. The Senator is a member of one of the largest groups of irresponsible incompetents ever assembled anywhere: the California legislature.

Allan Hoskins,  
 Lafayette

*PS: The voters passed Proposition 1A in 2004, with a majority of 83.6%, to prevent just such a grab as the Governor is suggesting. Politicians BEWARE!*

Dear Editor

The 6/10/09 Lamorinda Weekly had a recap of state Senator DeSaulnier's meeting with the Orinda City Council regarding California's budget deficit. Senator DeSaulnier identified the state's "robust" initiative system and the need for a super majority vote to pass the budget as elements that impact the legislature's ability to manage the state's finances effectively. Politicians complain that California cannot raise taxes as easily as they would like. They condemn the constitutional requirement that tax increases be approved by two-thirds of state legislators. They bemoan Prop 13, which caps the rate at which they can raise our annual property taxes. Most California politicians would like to pass measures to delete our few existing taxpayer protections.

Senator DeSaulnier has been in state government for years, first as an assemblyman, and then a Senator. While on his watch government spending spiraled out of control, and California is close to bankruptcy facing a \$24.3 billion budget deficit. It is easier to blame something or someone for government mismanagement instead of taking responsibility for one's actions. California used to have a good roads, infrastructure, and schools on one-half of today's tax levels. Now Politicians want to borrow, spend and tax. This policy has created a state with record high levels of deficits, spending, and taxes resulting in poor roads, infrastructure, and schools. When will politicians of today learn that government cannot spend its way out of debt or recession?

Our representatives should be encouraged not to bow to the desires of special interest groups.

Janet Maiorana  
 Orinda

**Budget 2009/2010 Moraga Plans to Stay within its Means**

... continued from page 3

Segrest replied that even if the Council authorized all of the one time or under the line items, the budget should stay positive.

"We have been able to reduce our expense by more than \$900,000," explained Joan Streit, "we have kept our PERS (retirement and health benefits) rate stable when some towns have seen it multiplied by three, we will not fund a 13th police officer, we have consolidated other administrative positions and reduced staff, we have changed the way we manage our health care plan, and we are not contributing to the asset replacement fund."

According to Segrest, another element in Moraga's favor is its historical frugality. "During the boom years some cities engaged in new programs and expenses; Moraga never did. We are not taking on social, traffic or large recreation programs," said Segrest.

"That's the benefit of minimal government," commented Council Member Mike Metcalf.

At the June 9 meeting, the Council decided on the list of the one-time items that had been proposed by staff. As a rule, the Council approved projects that could be funded by the

General Fund or the Asset Replacement fund, but refused all projects that could only be financed by the money the Town received from the developer of the Palos Colorados project (see side bar).

Capital projects improvements scheduled for next year are mostly funded by grants and sometimes the Town struggles to find required matching funds. Coming up are the repaving of Moraga Road, the construction of a side walk on Corliss, the installation of an ADA-compliant elevator at 329 Rheem (the Town offices), and upgrades at the Hacienda and the library, including an ADA-compliant door.

Asset replacement and infrastructure maintenance remain largely under-funded. "Previous Councils made that same decision and it will take us years to improve the quality of service on our roads, plan for the maintenance of our drain system and completely fund our asset replacements," said Segrest, adding that this can only be done if the Town can find new sources of revenue. That's a task imparted to the new Revenue Enhancement Committee; a very large ball in their court.

**The Ins and Outs of Moraga's Budget**

- In:**
- Pay off a \$90,000 loan with Bank of the West that was for the purchase and seismic upgrades to the Rheem building that houses the Town offices.
  - \$55,000 for maintenance of sports fields that belong to the school district; the Council is seeking a marginal cost analysis from the district.
  - Study of salary equity among staff for \$25,000. Half this budget cycle, half the next. Council Member Karen Mendonca said she was concerned with employee morale and Council Member Howard Harpham estimated that internal as well as external inequities could impair the ability of Town Manager Mike Segrest to effectively manage.
  - Renewal of Moraga's participation in the Senior Spirit Van program (\$5000), and on a proposal by Mayor Dave Trotter to cut the Council's own travel budget by half, add an additional contribution of \$4,000 to this senior transportation service. That increase will bring Moraga's participation close to 20% of the cost of the service, the percentage of trips that are used by Moragans.
- Out:**
- \$75,000 study for a new community center/gym; the Council declared it necessary, but at a later date when town finances show a higher surplus above base-line.
  - \$55,000 feasibility study to move the Town's corporation yard from the Hacienda de las Flores.
  - \$75,000 proposed expense by Publics Work Director Jill Mercurio to fund wells and pumps at the Hacienda and in the public parks in order not to use potable water to irrigate the town's lawns. "We have heard that water costs could increase dramatically in the coming years," said Mercurio. The return on investment of such a project was estimated at about five years.
- S. Braccini

**Public Forum JOIN IT**

I recently moved to Moraga from Oakland. I used casual carpooling for 12 years in Oakland both as a driver and a passenger. I gave or received hundreds of rides over the years, and I never had an unpleasant experience. My experience has not been as good since my move. Perhaps casual carpooling is a more recent phenomenon in Lamorinda and people are unaware of the well established etiquette used by carpoolers. Please understand that these are not my guidelines; the following do's and don'ts are adhered to by all experienced drivers and carpool riders:

The driver, of course, is expected to drive safely and cautiously. The driver is expected to provide a relatively clean car interior such that, for example, the riders do not later find cat hair on their coats. It is courteous of the driver to keep the car relatively clutter-free so that the riders have space for purses and briefcases. Drivers typically keep radio volume low and usually tuned to NPR.

Passengers should buckle up immediately. Please assume that food and drink are not allowed in the driver's car. Having said that, most drivers will not care if a passenger brings a cup of coffee if the car has cup holders. After "good morning" pleasantries are exchanged, conversation is generally kept to a minimum unless initiated by the driver. Remember that rush hour driving in the East Bay can be difficult, and the driver may not want to engage in chit chat. A rider who is a smoker should think twice about getting into a car if he or she has just had a cigarette or is wearing clothes that smell of smoke. Similarly, anyone who wears fragrance should wait until arriving at your workplace to apply it.

The standard drop off location in San Francisco is at Fremont and Howard. Typically, however, the driver will announce his or her destination and allow a passenger to ride further down Howard or into the Financial District. While it is true that casual carpooling is mutually beneficial - the driver can get into the HOV lane, the passengers get a free ride, and the

environment is slightly spared - it is nonetheless also true that the driver is doing the work and paying for the gas, car insurance and wear and tear on his or her automobile. Thus, the driver should not be treated as a chauffeur.

Finally, here is the big one: Cell phones should not be used! I recently picked up a passenger who was on her phone when she got into my car. Traffic was particularly horrific that rainy day, and I was about to ask her to end the call. She then told her caller that she had to get off the phone because she had "a conference call in a minute or two." I thought it was a polite way of ringing off and never imagined that she was serious. I was wrong. She was an active participant in a conference call which lasted throughout the trip, and she refused to end the call even when asked. The other passenger and I were stunned at her obnoxiousness. She was still talking when she got out of the car.

Carpooling is a wonderful concept. I encourage anyone interested to give it a try.

As far as I know, there have never been any significant untoward incidents throughout the history of East Bay carpooling. However, courtesy and common sense make the system work all the better.

Robyn Schanzenbach  
 Moraga

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](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com) and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum.