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A Pear for the Pickin'



Moraga Council Member Howard Harpham (in white), Tim Freeman of Moraga Valley Kiwanis (in blue) Photos Andy Scheck

property belonging to the Moraga School District at the corner of Canyon and Camino Pablo. A few volunteers joined the men's group from St. Monica's Catholic Church to harvest the trees on the church's property, and several private homes in the neighborhood offered the fruit from their trees as well.

Over 10,000 pounds of pears will be passed along to those in need by the Food Bank.

The Pear Festival will be held at the Moraga Commons Park on September 26. This reporter suspects that those Pear Pies may be responsible for the aforementioned shape -if you haven't tried one, you don't know what you're missing.

L.Borrowman/W.Scheck

"Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Youth Action Committee, Kiwanis, National Charity League, a few dogs...no cats," and many others came to help harvest some of Moraga's glorious pears on August 1st and 2nd, according to Rich Holden of the Moraga Park Foundation. Pear harvesters came from all over the East Bay to collect the golden goodies for donation to the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano. The Moraga Park Foundation has been coordinating the pear harvest for eleven years. Some volunteers, such as Kiwanian Tim Freeman, have been loyal harvesters since the beginning. As it turns out, Moraga Council Member Howard Harpham also wields a mean pear-picker. From kids to seniors, everyone appeared to enjoy the annual harvest under near-perfect skies.

Holden says that at one time some of the harvested fruit was saved to make pies for the annual Pear Festival, but it was difficult to keep the pears in good shape for the fall event which is held near the end of September. Although some of us over-40s have difficulty understanding how a pear shape could be hard to maintain, these days Nation's supplies the pies for the Festival and all the pears go to the Food Bank.

Karen Reed, who coordinated this year's event with Holden, estimates that about 20% of the volunteers are from Moraga. The Food Bank recruits many pickers, who often come to fulfill community service requirements in the fresh air and camaraderie of the orchard.

Most of the pears picked over the weekend grow on



Boy Scout Alec and mom Linda Viera of Danville

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