

**Independent, locally owned and operated!**

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Published September 30th, 2009

Moraga Police Save Life

By Sophie Braccini

"This is exactly what we have been training for, for years," said Moraga Police Chief Bob Priebe, referring on an incident where two of his officers saved the life of a driver who's heart had stopped by the time they reached him. On the morning of September 16th, Moraga officers responded to the 200 block of Rheem Blvd after receiving a report of a traffic collision. Officer Russell Douthit arrived on scene and discovered that a single vehicle appeared to have run off the roadway and collide with a retaining wall. Officer Roberto Ortiz joined Douthit at the scene and immediately advised radio dispatch that the driver was not breathing and had no pulse. The officers removed the driver from the vehicle and started CPR, which included the use of an automated external defibrillator. With the defibrillator the officers were able to restart the driver's heart. The officers continued CPR until paramedics arrived to further stabilize the driver and transport him to the Kaiser Hospital in Walnut Creek. "Usually the Fire Department gets on the scene before us," said Douthit, "but we were literally seconds away from the scene and those few minutes can make a difference between life and death." The officers explained that the defibrillator device they carry, and have been trained to use, indicates whether the patient has to be "shocked" or not and that the operation went very smoothly. On September 24 Priebe said, "I spoke to the hospital this morning and the driver is doing well. He is still in ICU, but he is able to sit in a chair and feed himself. The family feels it is a miracle he's alive."

Reach the reporter at: sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA