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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As a 45 year resident of Moraga, my husband and I have supported the Rheem and Orinda Theaters, by going to the movies they have shown.

Now there is a chance, they will close due to lack of attendance. What I would like to know, is how anyone aside from locals even knows of their existence? There is no listing of the theaters along with listings of other theaters in the newspapers. Theaters can not rely on local attendance alone.

Pay to have your theaters listed, and I am sure attendance will improve. At least people will not have to call, as we have done, to see if you are open, or have to drive by to see what is being shown.

Just a thought.

Sydney L. Brown
Moraga

Editor:

I was disappointed to see the light tone with which you reported a citation for an 18 year old who hosted a party with alcohol. It has been only a few weeks since your newspaper reported the latest in the sad story of the Orinda boy who died at a party just like that one. A 18 year old having the run of the house to serve alcohol to other 18 year olds is not funny. I'm not approaching this from some sort of uptight puritanical point of view. I'm strictly concerned about the risks of serious injury or death to those kids, and the road safety risks to which they and their parents exposed the rest of us. Your writer should save the levity for other events.

Tony Rodriguez
Moraga

Editor:

As a member of the Board of the Hacienda Foundation of Moraga, I am very pleased to learn that the Town Council has initiated action to remove the corporation yard – and eventually other town offices -- from the Hacienda grounds. This relocation of the Town's unsightly garbage dumpsters, trucks, and maintenance equipment from Hacienda grounds is essential to the Foundation's goal to Enhance, Protect, and Preserve the Hacienda as a treasured recreational asset for future generations or Moragans.

Removing the corporation yard from the Hacienda grounds will:

- Remove this eye sore from the beautiful Hacienda grounds.
- Provide much needed access to the Hacienda from Moraga Road.
- Supplement the currently inadequate parking within the Hacienda grounds.
- Vastly improve access to the Hacienda's Pavilion facility – including access for people with disabilities.
- Make it possible to book two or more summer weddings at a time – and allow Moraga recreation to increase rental income to offset maintenance costs.
- Make way, finally, for initiation of the Hacienda plan to create a thriving Community Center for residents.

Since the Town Council's action, the Moraga blogosphere has been charged with questions about the acquiring the building and grounds at 331 Rheem Blvd. for the new corporation yard.

While it is true that Moraga's budget – like your budget and mine – is under stress, let's take a look at some facts:

- When moved to Hacienda grounds in the 1980's, town offices and the corporation yard were to have been "temporary" tenants. The opportunity to find a permanent solution is long overdue.
- The prior tenant of the 331 Rheem Blvd. property extensively

renovated the buildings, offices, communications, etc. to the light industrial standard appropriate for a corporation yard. The Town is now doing its due diligence to assure it is suitable for Town use.

- The financing plan for the 331 Rheem property involves selling off unused Town real estate. Mostly, it is an asset swap, selling off nonproductive Town assets to buy productive ones that are much needed.
- A "bridge loan" will permit going ahead with the asset purchase and needed renovations at the Town offices at 329 Rheem.
- Developing a Town corporation yard at any other site would surely cost more than the purchase of 331 Rheem. Alternative sites are not available. Any alternative plan would involve very expensive green-field development.
- The overwhelmingly well attended 2009 Cinco de Mayo and Oktoberfest events at the Hacienda clearly demonstrate that greater access to Hacienda buildings and grounds is something the residents need and will support.

I encourage everybody to take a close look at this opportunity that is not likely to be available again. In my view, it is a great chance to move forward with recreation, good government, and sound financing at the same time.

Bob Reynolds
Moraga

Editor:

I was mildly amused by the comments made by Ms. Caroline Wood regarding dog parks. Ms. Wood would be well-advised to gather some more facts about this subject. First, the City of Baltimore operated an off-leash dog park and was fined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency for having fecal bacteria counts in the dog park soil several thousand percent above acceptable levels. The poor taxpayers of the City of Baltimore were fined many thousands of dollars for this unforeseen problem. Second, Ms. Wood neglects to consider the tremendous liability exposure on property owners from unprovoked dog attacks and dog bites. Perhaps Ms. Wood has an idea on how to indemnify the Bruzzone family from this liability. Finally, there is the novel progressive political philosophy of suggesting or invoking eminent domain to seize/use private property for the public good. My suggestion to Ms. Wood would be that she volunteer to use her own private property as a pilot program for a dog park and report back to all of us about her findings. By the way, I own a lovely golden retriever whose only loyalty is to his food bowl and a kind word.

Dennis Wanken
Moraga

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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