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Moraga Orinda Fire District
Board of Directors Meetings
 Meetings of the MOFD Board of Directors are open to the public and take place on the third Wednesday of each month in the Board Room, Administration Building, 1280 Moraga Way, Moraga.

Next meeting(s):

February 16th, 6:30pm
 Regular Board Meeting, Station 41 (1280 Moraga Way, Moraga), (go to www.mofd.org as the meeting date approaches for more information)

Two Promoted From Within MOFD Firefighting Ranks

By Lucy Amaral



MOFD Fire Chief Randy Bradley congratulates recently promoted Sean Perkins and Dan Dick at a badge pinning ceremony held January 17. From left: Battalion Chief Stephen Healy, Battalion Chief Sean Perkins, Captain Dan Dick, and Fire Chief Randy Bradley. Photo Lucy Amaral

Moraga Orinda Fire District's (MOFD) Fire Chief, Randy Bradley, welcomed newly promoted Battalion Chief Sean Perkins and Fire Captain Dan Dick at a badge pinning ceremony held January 19.

Perkins has been a firefighter since 1987. He joined Moraga Fire District in 1990, working his way up the ranks from firefighter to captain before being promoted to battalion chief. He is a Certified Chief Officer, Fire Investigator and a Strike Team Leader with the State Fire Marshal's office. Perkins, who replaces retiring Battalion Chief Randy Trumpf, will

be assigned to Station 45 in Orinda.

Dick joined MOFD as a reserve firefighter in 2004 and was hired full-time in 2006. He served as "long-term" acting Captain since 2010 before being officially promoted to the position. Dick, a Moraga native, currently serves on MOFD's committee that reviews, coordinates and processes MOFD policies and procedures, and is one of three program managers for MOFD's reserve training program. Dick will fill the position vacated by the promotion of Perkins and has been assigned to Station 42 in Moraga.

Apollo E-Cigs has its Home in Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini



Robert Freeman, with the latest version of the Apollo e-cig

If you've seen the recently released film, "The Tourist," you probably noticed Johnny Depp vaping an electronic cigarette. His character explains that he is not actually smoking a tobacco cigarette, but an e-cigarette, and that all he is releasing is water vapor. We will not be discussing product placement in movies in this article (nor do we endorse the smoking or vaping of anything), but our readers might be interested to learn that one of these companies, Apollo e-cigarettes, runs its American operation from Lafayette. We paid them a visit.

Electronic cigarettes have also been called e-cigs and vapor cigarettes. It is a small hand-held device that looks and performs like a tobacco cigarette. Its primary

functions are to deliver nicotine while providing the physical experience of sucking up and releasing water vapor smoke. The e-cig does not contain tobacco, does not burn anything and is powered by a rechargeable lithium battery. When the user inhales, the heating element, the atomizer, automatically vaporizes some of the flavored liquid solution that's contained in the mouthpiece. The four levels of nicotine vary from very strong to non-existent (in the nicotine-free flavored options).

The product is controversial. In July 2009, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) tested two brands of e-cigs and issued a press release discouraging the use of electronic cigarettes; while a review of

the FDA study by scientific consulting firm Exponent, Inc., concluded that the FDA's study did not support the claims of potential adverse health effects from the use of electronic cigarettes.

Rick Lee is one of the founders of Apollo; he lives in Lafayette where he is raising his family. "I live in Lafayette and love Lafayette," he says, "so naturally we (the partners) chose Lafayette to rent our office. Lafayette is also a community that leads and stands out in living a healthier lifestyle. We believe personal vaporizers (e-cigs) are a better alternative than tobacco cigarettes. So our company should have a good fit in this community. We will also create job opportunities in the community."

Another of the founders was manufacturing personal vaporizers for about four years in China, where the Apollo e-cigs are presently made. He teamed up with Lee and decided to start up a new company in the US to build their own brand and directly service their own customers. "We are not only doing R&D, manufacturing, quality control, but also doing direct sales and marketing for the US market," says Lee, who believes that this business model allows them to better service the American market.

Apollo's manager, Robert Freeman, is the person you will speak to when you call the

Lafayette office. A heavy smoker himself, the young man in his early thirties lives with his e-cig in his pocket. "This is not a device to quit smoking," he explains, "It delivers nicotine. But I have noticed many positive changes since I replaced my 1 1/2 packages a day with my e-cig." Freeman first noticed the return of his sense of smell. "I was in the check-out line at the grocery store when I suddenly picked up the smell of a customer a few people ahead of me, I couldn't believe I used to stink that way!" As a matter of fact, his office where he puffs on his e-cig does not smell of anything at all. Freeman says that his sense of taste is back and that he does not have that heavy feel when he takes his first breath when he wakes up. "E-cigs is my alternative to quitting and to smoking cigarettes," he says.

As the first contact with new customers Freeman says he makes sure not to sell to minors. If he has any doubts about an order he personally calls the customer and has a prepared series of questions to assess their real age. "It would break my heart to see kids picking up smoking with e-cigs," he says.

According to Lee and Freeman, most of Apollo's customers are over age 45 and have been smoking for years, they switch to e-cigs for economic and perceived health reason. For Freeman, the

major benefit of the e-cigarette is that it does not contain the thousands of harmful chemicals that have been found in tobacco cigarettes. Recent studies seem to agree with that claim.

A study appeared on December 9, 2010, in the advance online publication of the Journal of Public Health Policy (www.palgrave-journals.com), by Zachary Cahn (Department of Political Science, University of California at Berkeley) and Michael Siegel (Department of Community Health Sciences, Boston University School of Public Health). "Few, if any, chemicals at levels detected in electronic cigarettes raise serious health concerns," the authors said. "Although the existing research does not warrant a conclusion that electronic cigarettes are safe in absolute terms and further clinical studies are needed to comprehensively assess the safety of electronic cigarettes, a preponderance of the available evidence shows them to be much safer than tobacco cigarettes and comparable in toxicity to conventional nicotine replacement products." They conclude that, "electronic cigarettes show tremendous promise in the fight against tobacco-related morbidity and mortality."

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

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business briefs

Wells Fargo becomes an MEF Community Partner
 Wells Fargo Assistant Vice President of Community Banking, Arturo Gonzalez, and Geri Echague, Assistant Manager of the Wells Fargo Moraga branch presented the Moraga Education Foundation (MEF) at the end of 2010 with a \$5000 Education Grant check. MEF President, Diana Obrand and MEF's Chairman of Business and Community Partners, Eric Andresen (left) were pleased to nominate Wells Fargo their newest Community Partner. The Education Grant is part of Wells Fargo's commitment to community development and support. Presenting the check for The Moraga Education Foundation provides significant funding to local schools, supporting counseling, arts, music and science programs, as well as promoting community involvement in our schools.



(Lto R) MEF Eric Andresen and Diana Obrand, Wells Fargo Arturo Gonzalez and Geri Echague Picture Courtesy of MEF

Parkmon Vineyard Wins Big In Competition

<http://web.mac.com/parkmon/iWeb/Site/PARKMON.html>
 The San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition released the results of the testing to wine makers, ahead of the public wine testing that will be held on February 19 at Fort Mason in the City. Local Wine-maker Parkmon Vineyard won several medals. "We've been participating for a few years to this competition," says Dave Parker, "previous years we won silver awards but this is the first time that we won the gold." Parkmon got the Gold medal for their 2008 Sangiovese. In his tasting notes about the Sangiovese, Parker wrote, "the Sangiovese grapes are some of the older vines in the Lamorinda region (at least 14 years old in 2008). They were planted to the same clone that has been isolated in the Montalcino area of Tuscany that contribute 100% of the fruit for the famed Brunello di Montalcinos. Our 2008 version, the third year we've produced this wine, represents the dark-

est, richest, most decadent edition yet, and is as true a replica of the noble Tuscan wine as California-grown Sangiovese can produce." The winemaker recommends pairing the wine with veal scallopini with a mushroom cream sauce or a rosemary-roasted chicken. "Then again, this wine is light and versatile enough to enjoy with a great pizza," he adds. Parkmon also got Silver for their 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon, and Bronze for both the 2008 Debbie's Cuvee and 2009 Shari's Rose.

News from the three Chambers of Commerce Lafayette

- Shop Lafayette Committee Meeting on February 8th from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room
- Monthly Mixer on February 9th at Wells Fargo Bank, 3525 Mt. Diablo Blvd. from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm
- Board of Directors Meeting on February 14th from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room
- Twitter Strategies (and More!) for Local Businesses on February 16th from 8:00 am to 9:30 am in the Lafayette Library & Learning Center, presented by Robin Fox, Social Media & Inbound Marketing Coach. Limited seating, reservations recommended, at workshops@lafayettechamber.org.
- Thursday: Entrepreneur's Club on February 17th from 8:30 am to 9:30 am in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room

Moraga

Grant Stubblefield was elected Business Person of the year at the January 28 Chamber meeting. The 26 years old Moraga native has been involved with the Chamber and the community since he was still a student at Saint Mary's College. A passionate proponent of community marketing, he created Community Marketing Group a company focusing on local campaigns, like Shop Moraga First, and local business websites, business consulting and serving on the Chamber Board. This



Grant Stubblefield and Edy Schwartz Photo Sophie Braccini

year, Grant began a new venture with his purchase of Neighborhood Computers, formerly owned by Paul Ghysels, a business that has been in Moraga for over a decade. "The Moraga community makes it easy to do business here, the more you plan your feet in a community, the easiest it becomes," said Stubblefield, "I am very thankful for the support I have received here and do not plan to move anytime soon." On Tuesday, February 22 starting at 6:00 pm, the Chamber and Mechanics Bank are sponsoring the Business Person of the Year Dinner at the China Moon Restaurant, 380 Park St. All Chamber members and their guests are invited. Please RSVP to Kathe Nelson at kathenelson@gmail.com by 2/15/11

Orinda

Save the date for the First Annual State of the City Address and Special Recognition Awards Dinner on Thursday, February 24, 2011 at the Orinda Country Club. Cocktails: 6:00 - 6:30 p.m., Dinner: 6:30 p.m. - 8:15 p.m., 315 Camino Sobrante, Orinda, RSVP: Required by Feb. 22. on the city's web site orindachamber.com, cost is \$65 per person. The event will recognize as Best Small Business in Orinda, Orinda Taxi: Julian Juricevic. A long-time Orinda resident, Juricevic started the business three and a half years ago with a single green, hybrid car and one driver - himself. Today, the company has six such cars, four full-time employees, and a dozen independently contracted drivers. Last August, Juricevic and his wife Tanja inaugurated the new Orinda Taxi offices at 15 Altarinda Road, in Orinda. The State of the Town Address will be given by Mayor Victoria Smith. The Chamber will also give Special Recognition Awards to Sally Hogarty, Editor of The Orinda News and columnist Valerie Hotz.



The Orinda Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony on January 18th at Risk Concept Insurance Brokers, 3732 Mt Diablo blvd, in Lafayette, for the company that recently joined their chamber. Photo Candy Kattenburg, courtesy of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com or call the office 925-377-0977