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The App Rap

By Eric Pawlakos

GasBuddy – Find Cheap Gas

Price: Free
 Developer: GasBuddy.com
 For: Android and iPhone

With gasoline prices on the rise, GasBuddy is a free app that will appeal to both parents and teenagers alike. It not only locates gas stations wherever you are, it also finds the least expensive gas. This app is remarkably simple to use. Once you open the menu you simply press 'find gas near me.' After a quick search, GasBuddy loads all the gas stations nearest to you. This can be very useful if you are traveling and getting low on gas. Bobby Taylor, a student at Miramonte, commented, "GasBuddy has helped me find gas stations whenever I go to visit colleges, friends or need to travel for extracurricular activities." In addition, the app gives you the options to sort the stations by price, distance from you, and type of fuel. Once you click on a particular gas station, accurate directions are quickly loaded.

Testing this app in the Lamorinda area showed some differing prices for

regular unleaded. For example, in the Moraga area, Lamorinda Gasoline's price of \$3.95/gal is 14 cents cheaper than Chevron's \$4.09. Lafayette's '76 is also at \$4.09. Depending on how often and how much you fill up, this free app could save you a nice little chunk of change. Douglas McKinley said this is a "cool and easy way to save some money."



Eric Pawlakos is a junior at Miramonte High School. When not at school he can be found playing rugby with Lamorinda Rugby, or learning guitar.

I'm All Ears



Photo Cathy Dausman

Tolstoy the dog listens while Roxanne reads "Airy Fairy" during Animal Rescue Foundation's "All Ears Reading" at Moraga library.

The program offers children grades 1-5 the opportunity to read to an ARF dog. All Ears Reading runs through June. Reading time is 3:30 or 4 p.m. C. Dausman

Araim Discusses Islam in America with Lafayette Rotary

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Since 9/11, Araim has been invited by numerous groups to come and speak about Islam. He said that over 50 churches, some hospitals and many colleges in the Bay Area have invited him. Dignified and eloquent, Araim is an adept of interfaith dialogue and his goals are to share with his audience the roots of his faith, bringing out what they have in common, leading to an audience understanding that American Muslims are no different from themselves.

"Christians, Jews and Muslims believe in the same God," he says, "the difference is the way we receive the guidance through Qur'an." He explained that to be a Muslim is to submit to the will of God expressed in the Qur'an. He told the story of how the sacred book was revealed to Muhammad verbally through the angel Gabriel over a period of approximately twenty-three years. He listed the five pillars of Islam, insisting that it is the duty of a Muslim to give back to the community since wealth is considered a gift of God. His most important message, on Thursday, was that Muslims living in this country pledge to abide by American law. He tried to dispel misunderstandings. "In this country the word 'Jihad' evokes someone with a sword," he said, "Jihad means the struggle to control, especially the evil within the self, or self-defense. In America, this is done through the law; violence is not an option.

For him, the violence that has erupted in some Muslim countries and led misguided youth to acts of

violence is the result of socio-economic or politic problems. "How do you interpret what is happening right now in the Middle East, this quest for democracy that is breaking out?" asked Rotarian Dick Holt.

"All these countries could be in favor of democracy," answered Araim, "but because of tribalism they have suffered dictatorships. But now people can communicate with others through the internet and circumvent government's control. They know what is happening in other parts of the world, they see that their rulers are corrupt, and out of desperation they face the oppression of their regimes." He added that he thinks that the Muslims in Egypt would welcome a secular state.

Dan Baker asked how Araim's wife would like to live in some parts of the Muslim world where women are oppressed. "Islam should not oppress women," he answered, "it is important to distinguish between tribalism and religion. Qu'ran says to protect women, not oppress them."

The general theme Lafayette Rotary's speaker series is "Building Communities."

After the meeting was over, the Rotarians continued to discuss that day's topic passionately. "He (Araim) is well-integrated into America, but he didn't address what happens on the other side of the border," said Mo Levitch, while another Rotarian added that the conditions of women in Islamic countries had not been discussed sufficiently.

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