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Civic News Lafayette, Moraga

Senior Symposium Coming Up

By Cathy Tyson

“We just really just want to help seniors and give them information,” said Marechal Duncan, Co-Chair of this year’s free Senior Symposium which will be held on Friday, May 6 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Temple Isaiah, 3800 Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

Seniors, caregivers and adult children definitely won’t want to miss this event entitled “Secrets of Dynamic Aging: Finding New Paths and Staying Engaged,” sponsored by the Lafayette Community Foundation.

Duncan formed the Senior Liaison Committee, a subcommittee of the Lafayette Community Foundation, to specifically address issues of concern among area seniors. “The Committee’s initial focus was to serve as a unifying catalyst by facilitating community discussion and ac-

tion that enhances the lives of seniors in Lafayette” said Duncan. With a number of local churches and organizations offering a variety of services, he saw a need to put them in touch with each other.

Since the first senior symposium in 2008, the event has continued to evolve. “This year the economy has changed, so we wanted to focus on uplifting topics,” said Co-Chair Dr. Anita Rama. In response to questions about where to go for senior-related services, organizers will have exhibits from approximately eleven companies.

Speakers include the vivacious and funny, 72-year old Houston Robertson kicking off the morning with “Shifting Gears – Freedoms of Aging in the 21st Century.” “Dr. Happy,” also known as Dr. Bob Nozik, will talk about, “Happiness –

if not now – when?” Shirley Krohn will discuss “Staying safe in your home and beyond,” and Mary Bruns, the Coordinator for Lamorinda Senior Transportation, will address transportation and senior services in Lafayette.

Duncan is a role model for staying engaged; at 89-years-old he’s involved in a number of groups, including the Lafayette Community Foundation, the Historical Society, the Architectural committee, and Sons in Retirement (SIR).

With Board members of the Lafayette Community Foundation and several helpful volunteers from the community, the Senior Liaison Committee is proud to host the event. To RSVP for this free symposium, please call (925) 330-0060 or email seniors@lafayettecommunityfoundation.org.

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Attention Lafayette Safeway Shoppers



Look for shiny new red wheeled baskets exclusively at the Lafayette Safeway. Don’t bother looking for these morphed basket/minicarts at the Orinda or Moraga Safeways, the pilot program is only available at the Lafayette store. The new design featuring a handle to carry the slightly oversized basket and a retractable pull handle and wheels, for those shoppers who intend to get three items, but end up getting a dozen or more.

C. Tyson

Lafayette Assistant Manager Arice Pittman models the new wheeled basket. Photo C. Tyson

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Gerringer’s Day Job

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A number of months ago, given its continually shrinking revenue from the state, the Lafayette School District asked two independent polling companies to submit proposals to Superintendent Fred Brill about the possibility of a parcel tax. Both proposals were presented to the Governing Board. The Board voted unanimously to select True North Research.

Based on the encouraging polling results of True North Research, Brill put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consulting services related to placing a parcel tax measure on the ballot. Five firms submitted proposals; one of those firms was Tramutola. Gerringer refused herself from the vote.

“Due to the long relationship that Tramutola has had with the Lafayette School District, and the potential conflict of interest related to my Board position - Tramutola offered to do the work at no cost to the district. All services provided to the Lafayette School District by Tramutola were pro bono. The board elected to accept this generous offer based on the fact that the Lafayette School District has worked with Tramutola on every tax election measure since our first parcel tax in 1992 and, of course, the cost savings.”

“No funds have passed between Lafayette School District and Tramutola with respect to the parcel tax consulting services. Furthermore, under the current arrangement, no

contract was brought before or approved by the Lafayette School Board for Tramutola’s services. The decision to pursue a parcel tax was based on the polling information provided by the independent polling firm, and frankly, by the real need for additional sources of revenue to fund our educational programs,” said Gerringer.

“The Measure B committee,” said Brill, “an independent citizen’s campaign committee, without input or direction from me or the Lafayette School District governing board, chose Tramutola as the campaign consultant. No funds have passed between the Lafayette School District and Tramutola on the Measure B campaign.”

Moraga Country Club Station Post Office in Danger of Closing

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The School Street building is what many called a “walk-able” post office, meaning that a great number of people who use the services do not drive, but stroll.

After the meeting, Postal Workers Union of the East Bay Area President Stephen Lysaght said that his group has lobbied extensively against the closing of the Moraga station. “We are concerned with the customers’ best interest and question the closing a profitable business unit,” he said. He encourages residents who do not want to see the station closed to continue lobbying against it.

“We will continue to give good service to the public in the Country Club or Rheem office,” said Postal Service worker Mark Fahmy, who is currently the only employee of the Country Club station, “This is our commitment as employees of the U.S. Postal Service. But we should take into consideration the issues that people expressed in the meeting.”
Sophie Braccini contributed to this article

Reach Augustine Ruiz, Public Affairs and Communications Director, at 408-437-6841 or Augustine.ruiz@usps.gov. Letters for or against the closure and consolidation should be directed to the District Manager (or your elected federal representatives):

Kim Fernandez
 Bay Valley District Manager
 1675 7th Street
 Oakland, Ca. 94615

USPS Revenue Boost

Shanette Westphal recently got a startling reminder that mail boxes are the property of the U.S. Postal Service and cannot be used for any purpose other than the delivery of stamped mail. “My husband is the president of the Moraga Baseball Association and Opening Day was last weekend,” she wrote in a note to the Moraga Citizens Network in February, “The person in charge of the programs kindly dropped off an extra copy of the program in my mailbox (which lives at the bottom of my steep driveway) with a ‘thank you’ note to my husband. Apparently the US Postal Service collected this program prior to me getting my mail and left a slip stating that there was mail that I needed to pick up with postage due in the amount of \$2.58.” A short time later the mail carrier came to her door with the program, ready to collect the money. A Postal Service employee confirmed that the rule had always been in existence and that it was enforced everywhere: “No one should touch your mail box or you run the risk of paying postage.”

S. Braccini

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