



**Independent, locally owned and operated!**

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Published May 11th, 2011

## Smile...You're on Google Camera!

*Cathy Dausman*

Underneath the paint job, it's a simple Subaru, cruising local streets. But there's no mistaking the iconic map design, including faceless yellow person standing atop a green directional arrow. It's a Google Streetview vehicle, complete with "commercial grade digital still and video cameras and an array of eye safe lasers" coming off the roof.

Lamorinda Weekly caught up with one car recently in Moraga.

Its driver, who did not wish to be identified, has been mapping the Lamorinda area since May 3. He had just completed three weeks mapping Oakland streets. Although he's always had "driving jobs" he has worked for Google only a month. He drives the car eight hours a day, and fills up with gas "at least once daily". Although he drives a Subaru, any gas efficiency is probably negated by the roof-mounted camera. "My [Ford] Explorer gets as good gas mileage as this car with the camera," he says. He's been waved at and flipped off in the Streetview car. Miramonte High School students whooped and hollered as the Streetview car made its way nearby during school dismissal last Friday.

According to Google, "Drivers are trained to activate the computers...but not remove or delete any information captured by the system." The Google online product that will eventually use this data is still under development, but Google says it will be "built to respect the law and rights of individuals."

An online search for "Google Streetview Project" brings up any number of hits, including Google Art Projects, Google Business Photos, Google Street with a View, and occasional shots capturing a Streetview driver who forget about camera height clearance.

Questions specifically about Streetview vehicles can be e-mailed to [streetview-americas-inquiries@google.com](mailto:streetview-americas-inquiries@google.com).

Reach the reporter at: [cathy.d@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:cathy.d@lamorindaweekly.com)

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA