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# Letters to the Editor

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Share your thoughts with our community! Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis.  
**email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com**; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Editor:

Dear Lafayette friends & neighbors,  
 As 2011 comes to a close, I find myself thinking a lot about how lucky and grateful I feel to be living in Lafayette heading into 26 years of residency here. There are so many reasons for my abiding love for this place I call home, 3,000 miles away from my childhood days in Connecticut.

Chief among them are the active support and commitment shown to our top-rated public schools (in spite of underfunding at State level), and our dream-come-true two-year-old Library and Learning Center. These essential institutions serve all people, young and not so, of every race, religion, color and creed. Nothing is more important than keeping these community cornerstones healthy. With ongoing support, we prove again and again what we value.

I tip my hat with heartfelt thanks to school district board members and school volunteers, the Library Foundation Board, Friends Board, and hundreds of library volunteers as each strive to make these public institutions available for all.

It is my continuing privilege to serve our community on the Library Foundation Board. I love witnessing fellow residents, especially the youngest among us, along with friends and neighbors from across Lafayette's borders, stream through the wide-open Library doors -- 1500 or so a day, 750,000 people since opening in 2009.

Support for these public institutions paves the way for a future we all hope for, and work to provide, and, if we're really lucky, we catch a glimpse of as we watch our youth grab hold of vast and not-yet-known possibilities and promises afforded them only through our shared commitment and financial support.

So to you, my friends and neighbors, known or unknown to me, I thank you for making Lafayette the special and beloved place that I believe it is. I am so proud to be a resident here among all of you.

From my family to yours, I send you best wishes for the New Year. I look forward to seeing you around town as we support our local businesses, we see our children attending our local schools, and we walk through the Library and Learning Center open doors.

Karen Mulvaney  
 Lafayette

Editor:

Moraga's Rancho Laguna Park has NOT always worked well as a place to allow dogs to run off-leash, contrary to assertions by several people. Aggressive dogs have intimidated me after several trail runs while I was walking on the paved pathway or stretching at a bench. Writers Tina Brier and David Shapiro (Letters to the Editor, Dec. 21) suggest that I use the park "during hours when dogs are not off-leash." It does not suit me to run at other times

of the day. I once remarked to the Moraga Town Council that off-leash dogs should be kept separate from other park users. I do appreciate that there is a place where dogs can run off-leash. Just allow other park users to enjoy their time at the park without the threat of intimidation or worse.

Stan Oberg  
 Moraga

Editor:

The scheme approved by the Council for the "imprisonment" of Rancho Laguna Park, as shown in the Lamorinda Weekly, is absurd to the nth degree. Because:

1. A fence behind the turf area destroys the "grain" of the park - its idyllic openness.
2. A fence around the east playground & the adjoining BBQ/picnic areas that allows dogs free rein throughout the day is absolute madness for people trying to have a picnic. Just picture food all over the tables & dogs running around. Is that an atmosphere for a peaceful picnic? Or is it a madhouse?
3. A fence around the group picnic area on the west side will make these picnickers feel that they are in a compound.

The people of Moraga requested that this "jewel" of a park be maintained in its rustic tranquility. Why the government of this city does not listen to its citizens is beyond belief.

I am, & have been, a user of the park & its picnic areas for many years. I am not a dog owner. I have never had a problem with the "off leash" arrangement that has been in place. I do not understand why the city has to destroy something that is currently working & enjoyed by park users. If the State requires that the playground areas require fencing for safety reasons, then fence the 2 areas & leave it at that. If the city has more money it should spend the money on repairing & widening the walk path. I expect the representatives of the City of the Town of Moraga to not carry on like the idiots in Sacramento & Washington! If they are no better they should be un-elected immediately.

J.P. Duffy  
 Moraga

**Join our Public Forum**

If you have significant knowledge about an issue facing Lamorinda, or one of its communities, that requires more than the 350 words to which we must limit Letters to the Editor, don't despair! You can submit your letter to our Public Forum section. Just send your letter to letters@lamorindaweekly.com and let us know you'd like to be considered for the Public Forum. We will not accept Public Forum submissions regarding a current ballot measure or candidate for public office. Opinions expressed in Public Forum are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

## Civic News Lafayette, Moraga

### Lafayette Kindergarten Preparedness Meeting Next Week

By Cathy Tyson

Entering kindergarten is a big step for young families, to make the transition just a bit easier the Lafayette School district will be hosting, "A Roadmap to Kindergarten."

"The information night is a great way for parents to get the District's take on Kindergarten readiness - straight from a Kindergarten teacher - and hear about 'a day in the life' of a kindergartner. This is certainly information every preschool parent will be interested to hear," said mother of three, Melissa Lee, who volunteered to help get the word out.

What does it take to be ready for kindergarten? Mary Maddux, Principal of Lafayette Elementary, can spell it out for newbies. Parents will also learn what their child can expect in kindergarten and throughout the school year, and about all of the partnerships in the community that help support Lafayette's schools.

Also up for discussion, the District will be introducing its planning for the new Transitional Kindergarten program that is set to start in fall 2012. With the passage of SB 1381, the Kindergarten Readiness Act, the State of California is moving the kindergarten birthday cutoff from December 1 to September 1, phased in over three years. The current cutoff for the 2012-2013 school year has moved from December 1 to November 1. For "young fives" whose kindergarten may be delayed, the bill creates a transitional kindergarten that provides a bridge between preschool and traditional kindergarten. It's estimated that the change could translate in \$700 million in state wide cost saving resulting from having fewer children entering school.

For the 2011 - 2012 school year, California children as young as four years and nine months could start

kindergarten. According the Legislative Analyst's Office, "Data suggest children who are older when they start kindergarten tend to perform better on standardized tests."

The Roadmap to Kindergarten will have information on the Kindergarten registration process and dates of the Open Houses at each of Lafayette's elementary school, and feature a range of speakers including Kindergarten teacher Joan McClure, Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill and representatives from the Parent Club/PTA and Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE).

Come as you are, crayons not required on Tuesday January 10 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Lafayette Elementary Multipurpose Room, 950 Moraga Road, Lafayette. For more information on Transitional kindergarten, go to www.preschoolcalifornia.org.

### Moraga Gets Two New Police Officers

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Recently, Koppinger went with her training officer to oversee the Breakfast with Santa event and, according to Moraga Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram, she was beaming with joy as she performed her new

duties. "The COPS money that we used to hire a 13th position is not a guarantee," says Priebe, "we saved last year's allocation (2010), so with this year's money we can finance two

years of employment. If the funds dry out, the Town will choose to either fund that position from the General Fund or eliminate it." Priebe notes that, so far, the COPS grants have not been on the State's chopping block.

## New Year's Resolution



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