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Take a Gamble on Rancho Laguna Park? Casino Night event to raise funds for playstructure

By *Sophie Braccini*

Moraga Parks and Recreation staffer Kim Burrowes may not look like a seasoned poker player as she sits in the office at the Hacienda de las Flores, but she loves the game-as long as it is played for a good cause. On March 3rd, the Hacienda de las Flores will become a gambling house with Blackjack, Craps, Poker and Roulette, all to help raise money for a new play structure at Rancho Laguna Park.

"It's a good idea to give something to people to entice them to give," says Burrowes, "I've been to many of these types of game-fundraisers. It's a lot of fun, it gets the community together and we will raise money for local children's play structure."

"It is also a perfect venue for people who want to learn the games," she says. The event will be managed by Aces Up Casino Parties, a company that will bring all the tables and equipment, as well as the trained personal. "The night will be casino-style and professionally handled," adds Burrowes, "and Aces Up dealers are trained to explain the rules to beginners if needed."

Burrowes is also thinking about adding a Bingo area. "All the tables will be standing-only," she says, "so Bingo would allow people to rest for a while and still have fun."

"Your \$40 ticket buys you a drink, access to the buffet, and \$50 in play-money (casino chips)," explains Burrowes. At the end of the night, players won't convert their chips back into money-that's the fundraising part-but the more chips you collect, the more opportunities you'll have to win the raffle prizes that are donated by Lamorinda businesses. "And if people run out of chips during the night, they can buy more," adds Burrowes.

The Moraga Movers, a local non-profit organization for active adults over age 55, enthusiastically agreed to sponsor the event. "When I was very active with the Moraga Service League (a group that does not exist anymore), we used to hold a similar fundraiser at Saint Mary's," remembers Julie Fisher, now a member of the Moraga Movers, "This was in the mid 70's and we raised money for the parks and the paramedics and it was a lot of fun." Fisher hopes that parents of kids who will use the playground will be able to attend the event.

The number of participants is limited to 150. Buy your tickets online at moraga.ca.us, or contact Kim Burrowes at 888-7036. Tickets are \$40 until 2/29, then \$50; players have to be 21 or older. Casino Night takes place on Saturday, March 3, 2012 at the Hacienda de las Flores, 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

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