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## Civic News Moraga

### Moraga to Poll Residents

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"We have to also talk about the maintenance (after the roads have been repaired)," said Mayor Mike Metcalf. Staff worked on different scenarios (see graph) charted out over a 20-year period for the upkeep of the renovated infrastructure. "We need \$25 million now, then various amounts of money to preserve these roads for

the next 20 years, that can range up to a total of \$42 million" said Council Member Dave Trotter. "We need a measure that would bond for a larger amount upfront than something else that would provide for continuing maintenance." The poll will be conducted in late spring or early summer. The

Lew Edwards Group will design the survey to test the response of the community to three potential revenue measures at different levels. Residents interested in hosting informational sessions in their homes for their friends and neighbors should contact Town Clerk Marty McInturf at 888-7022.

### Here are the three revenue measures under consideration:

**Mello-Roos Community Facilities District** (a "CFD") is a Special Tax. Once approved, a Special Tax Lien is placed against each property in the CFD. Property owners then pay a Special Tax each year. If the project cost is high, municipal bonds will be sold by the CFD to provide the large amount of money initially needed to build the improvements or fund the services. By law (Prop. 13), the Special Tax cannot be directly based on the value of the property. Special Taxes instead are based on mathematical formulas that take into account property characteristics such as use of the property, square footage of the structure and lot size. The formula is defined at the time of formation, and would include a maximum special tax amount and a percentage maximum annual increase. Staff believes that the flexibility in designing the formula permits fairness (such as taking into account residents who live on private roads). Needs a two-thirds majority approval to pass.

**Ad Valorem Property Tax** is a tax calculated by allocating bond debt service to all taxable parcels in proportion to their assessed value determined by the County. The annual amount is deductible on individual income tax returns under current law. Needs a two-thirds majority approval to pass.

**General Purpose Sales Tax** would be a half percent or one percent added sales tax on any purchase within the Town's borders. According to Jerry Bradshaw the passage of such a measure in El Cerrito did not result in any sales loss. Only 60% of the revenue may be used to service the debt of a bond. It captures non-Moraga drivers coming to the discount stores, and would generate road repair funds in an amount ranging from \$300,000 to \$600,000 (1% increase) a year. Needs only a simple majority approval to pass.

## ...from Front Page

### Leap Year Birthdays: Uncommonly Good!

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"Some computer programs refuse to accept that February 29th exists!"

Bronwyn's mother Kate Hutchison said her daughter was the only baby born that day at Alta Bates Hospital's usually busy maternity ward. "Over the years it has been a lot of fun watching people's reactions to Bronwyn's birth date," she said. Families tend to make that special birthday celebration memorable: Bronwyn recalls a Princess party on her "first" birthday, and a Hawaiian theme party on her "second". "I do have the best birthday in the world," she said.

Isabella went to Florida when she turned "one" and says her parents have a "special surprised planned" this year. With a sister born near Thanksgiving and a brother born between Christmas and New Year's, Wiltshire's birth date was less unique in his family. And this year, "although it's taken me 80 years to become an adult," he says his daughters are throwing him a dinner party.

Expectant mothers sometimes anguish over delivering a Leap Year baby. Kate Hutchison said she was "even willing to share my [late February] birthday," rather than have Bronwyn on February 29th. Kathryn Morris agreed, "When I was pregnant, [Olivia] was overdue and I was desperate to have the baby...the one day I don't want to give birth is the 29th [of February]."

To put that special birthday in perspective, just talk to Leanne Parsons. She missed being a Leap Year baby by one hour. Parsons, who was born by cesarean section, said her dad wanted her to have a February 29th birthdate, but her mother did not. "Since my mom was the one pregnant with me for nine months she won, and at 11:00 p.m. February 28th I was born," she

said. "I have always wished that my dad had gotten his way."

Wiltshire recalls crossing the International Date Line while at sea on one birthday. He had a friend in the maritime industry whose birthday was also February 29. For years, the two competed to see who could telephone the other first with birthday greetings.

In contrast, Bronwyn had not met

anyone sharing her special day until *Lamorinda Weekly* put out the call for Leap Year babies. She now knows three others, and one near-miss. Although younger Leap Year folk may be anxious for their special birthday to come around, Wiltshire has learned to be patient, and philosophical. "A few of us are just a bit slow regarding the aging process, and I guess that can't be all that bad."

### Leap Year Traditions

Years divisible by four are Leap Years in the Gregorian calendar. Centuries not divisible by 400 are not Leap Years. Thus, 2000 and 2400 are leap years, while 1800, 1900, 2100, 2200, 2300 and 2500 are not. Under early English law, February 29th was ignored and had no legal status.

Leap Years are considered unlucky for marriage. Scotland supposedly passed a law in 1288 allowing women to propose marriage during Leap Years. By tradition any man who declined a Leap Year proposal had to pay a fine, often a pair of gloves (to hide the woman's hands, bare of any engagement ring).

Guinness Book of Records verifies one family who produced three consecutive generations born on February 29:

- Peter Anthony Keogh was born in Ireland on February 29, 1940;
- Son Peter Eric was born on the Leap Day in the United Kingdom (UK) in 1964.
- Peter's daughter, Bethany Wealth, was born in the UK on February 29, 1996.

A Norwegian family named Henriksen holds the official record for number of children born on February 29: three. Karin Henriksen had daughter Heidi in 1960 and sons Olav in 1964 and Leif-Martin in 1968. Leap years also appear with varying rules in the Julian, Chinese, Jewish, Persian, Islamic, Bahai, Hindu and Ethiopian calendars

2012 is also a leap second year. A leap second is measured by an atomic clock, and added to or subtracted from Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) to make it agree with astronomical time.

A leap second compensates for slowing in the Earth's rotation. The first leap second was added to atomic clocks in 1972. A positive leap second will be introduced the end of June, but that's probably another story... (online sources: Time and Date, Leap Year Day) C. Dausman

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