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Cows Grazing on Our Hills: A Century-Old Affair

By Sophie Braccini



Photo Andy Scheck

mean, I remove it and put it in a pasture that is not a public agency," said Hoover.

Council Member Dave Trotter commented that he heard Moraga grass was the best in the area. "Moraga grass has a lot of late growth," confirmed Hoover, "and it can reach 24 inches high. We really appreciate being able to graze here."

Moraga is not India, but cows are sacred here; they herald the semi-rural character that the Town and most of its residents view with pride. John Hoover and his family have raised cattle in Moraga for more than a century- his cows have grazed along Mulholland Ridge since the late '70s. "We've been raising cattle in the town of Moraga since 1910," said Hoover. "I've been here all my life."

On October 10, the Moraga Town Council renewed its contract with Hoover for two more years, allowing his cattle to continue grazing at the Mulholland Open Space Preserve.

The cows provide a way to keep the grass low on the hills. "We also provide fire breaks that we dig with our tractors, and we keep up the fences," said Hoover. He also added two new water sources for his animals that serve wildlife as well.

Hoover said that he and his crew are happy to educate children about the cows when they walk on the trails and ask questions. "We make sure that the cows are gentle," said Hoover during the meeting. Walnut Creek residents got their city to ban cattle grazing in town, arguing that the animals were dangerous. "If a cow shows signs of being

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