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Neighborhood Earthquake Response

By Ellen Beans



Photo Sophie Braccini

Fifteen Moraga residents on Carr Drive, Inverleith Terrace, and Gloria Court were seen at 8 a.m. last Saturday walking into Gloria Court, some donning helmets and work gloves. Several had called in to the "command center" using their FRS radios. The reason? They were responding to a simulated earthquake and were practicing their training to assist their neighborhood in a major emergency. Sophie Braccini, coordinator, signed everyone in and proceeded to organize the neighbors into three teams with assignments to do a complete "search and rescue" of each home in the area, leaving Bill Wiegmann to do the in-take of information gathered.

Team Two found a posted tag on one garage door indicating that gas fumes were detected. The team then searched for the gas meter, found the attached wrench to turn off the gas, but before Brian Buick turned the knob, the homeowner on the team yelled out, "No! Not now!" Then ensued an engaging lesson in how and when to turn off the gas in a real emergency.

Another team found an "injured" man pinned down by fallen lumber and bleeding at the mouth and ear, and used an FRS radio to report this

to the command center.

Once all sections of the neighborhood were searched and reported on, all teams re-gathered at the command center. For the first time, there was a coordinating center for the whole town of Moraga to report the information gathered. Braccini, after several tries, reached Moraga Central Command using one of the four U.V. Dual Band Multifunctional Two-way radios recently purchased by the Moraga Police Department.

Each team reported on its findings, which in a real emergency would help the Town to know where to direct the minimal professional services available. Then the neighbors evaluated the 30-minute exercise. Gloria Court was a good gathering location, neighbors needed more practice using the FRS radios, and they needed answers to some important questions: Are all gas meters the same in our neighborhood? Where are they on each house? Exactly what are the conditions under which the gas meter should be shut off? Where can we get a wrench?

In the end, the residents felt that they were ready to practice more involved scenarios in the future.

(Read a related article on the next page.)



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CCTA Recognizes Contra Costa Caldecott Medallion Winners

By Cathy Dausman



Two of the three Contra Costa County Caldecott Fourth Bore Medallion Design Competition winners, from left: Acalanes High School sophomore Daniell McCann, 16, and Springhill Elementary School third-grader Chaya Tong, 8.
Photo Cathy Dausman

Family and friends of Caldecott Fourth Bore Medallion Design winners crowded the Contra Costa Transportation Authority meeting October 17, as the winning designers and many of the 37 additional Honorable Mention winners received formal recognition. The ceremony was emceed by CCTA chair Don Tatzin. Additional presenters include Caltrans District 4 Director Bijan Sartipi and Metropolitan Transportation Commission Vice Chair Amy Worth. Contra Costa County had representation from across the K-12 school system: winners were 16-year-old Daniell McCann, an Acalanes High School sophomore, 8-year-old Chaya Tong, a third-grade student from Springhill Ele-

mentary School, and Penelope Watson, 13, of Pleasant Hill Middle School. Each girl received a framed poster, certificate and t-shirt. McCann and Tong are also past winners in other art contests – McCann for design work done for the Walnut Creek Peace and Justice Center; Tong for bookmark designs for the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. When it opens to traffic in late 2013, the Caldecott Fourth Bore will have three concrete medallions on each side of the tunnel. The selected artwork will inform the molds that will create these medallions. Each mold will be hand crafted, and each will take about a month to make, said Caltrans Landscape Architect Jeanne Gorham.

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