

## Caregiving: A Labor of Love



### A WORKSHOP FOR THOSE CARING FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

**February 2nd, 8:30am-3pm**

**No cost; registration required by January 31<sup>st</sup>: [MVPCdeacons@gmail.com](mailto:MVPCdeacons@gmail.com)**  
Lunch is provided | Contact us for childcare

**GUEST SPEAKER**, Karen Taylor, DDiv

*Increasing the Awareness of God in the Midst of Caregiving*  
Insights from a wife/caregiver of a husband with early onset Alzheimer's

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

Financial and Legal Considerations  
Transitions of Care  
Spiritual and Emotional Care of the Caregiver



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## Civic News Lafayette

### ConFire Meets Unhappy Lafayette Residents

... continued from page A3

"There is a way that could work," said Louder. "People visualize volunteers working in a small community with low-volume stations. The standard now for firefighters is much more demanding. The volunteer firefighters will have to have the same training as career firefighters do. They still have to go through physical exams and background checks. I just don't want people to think that all you do is put out an announcement, people show up and the next day they're riding a rig."

One resident suggested that Measure Q, which was on the ballot to provide funds for the fire district and failed, be placed again on the ballot. He suggested that the publicity for the measure had been poor and the measure was confusing.

In the meantime, the district has enacted 10 percent pay cuts, has laid off a few people and has kept a few vacancies open.

In addition to Station 16, ConFire will close fire stations in Walnut Creek and Martinez, and reduce service at the Clayton station.

## Civic News Moraga

### Why Doesn't Anyone Want to Work Here?

... continued from page A5

"There are consequences to not having staff available," said Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read during a discussion on the topic of staff vacancies.

Last year, when Senior Planner Rich Chamberlain retired, the workload was not excessive and it was decided to save money by not replacing him. Then the assistant planner left unexpectedly for family reasons. Brekke-Read recruited a replacement, but she didn't last more than a few weeks. "The workload and long night meetings were too much for her," Brekke-Read said. "We had told her, but experiencing it was a different thing." For a while a planner laid off by Orinda worked in Moraga, but she received an offer from another agency that she found more attractive.

The consequence for the town is that some projects are not addressed and service to residents takes longer. A permit that could be obtained in one day will take three, a permitted use for a new business can take up to two months, and long-term planning is on hold—this includes issues such as the sign ordinance, winery regulation, and rezoning the Moraga Country Club. "And there are lost opportunities, such as a Caltrans grant that's open for application, but we have no time to apply," Brekke-Read lamented.

"The difficulty comes from the salaries and benefits we can offer, as well as the long hours," said Town Manager Jill Keimach. "All the department heads took salary cuts when they came to work for Moraga."

At January's town goal-setting session Frank Melon, general manager of Moraga Country Club, offered his advice to the council. "I know how difficult it is to recruit staff in Moraga," he said. "In order to retain people I need to be the employer of choice. You need to look at your compensation level to keep them."

Mayor Dave Trotter does not be-

lieve that salaries and benefits can be raised. "We live in a time of budget constraints," he said. "In the '70s the town was formed with a philosophy of minimum government and as a result of this choice—and of Prop. 13 that froze the percentage of property taxes cities get—we are under-funded compared to most other municipalities." According to Trotter, Moraga has no choice but to stay a minimal government town, even if many residents want more than minimum services.

There are dedicated employees who stick with Moraga. "Bob Priebe (Chief of Police) has been here for a very long time; Lori Salamack (Brekke-Read's predecessor) stayed for more than 10 years, and many others," Trotter said. He is aware that a lot is asked of staff due to their small number. "As a council, have to adjust our expectations and make sure that we retain our valued staff," he added.

Keimach and Brekke-Read are confident that they will be able to recruit and retain qualified employees to fill the vacancies. "There are many positive aspects to working in Moraga," Brekke-Read said. "We form a real team, the communication is excellent and the town offers a very large variety of tasks and growth opportunity." Keimach added that she believes that the community understands that staff works very hard and is appreciative.

The council prioritized Keimach's need for staff recruitment, with the constraint of finding ways other than financial to retain her employees. "We will be negotiating employee agreements this year," she said. "I will ask our creative staff what things could make their lives easier and appeal to them." She cited an El Cerrito policy that allows people to work 9-hour days and have every other Friday off. "That would allow us to keep up with our family lives," she noted.

## Civic News Orinda

### Politicians Sling Mud for a Good Cause

... continued from page A6

Citing Orinda's recent designation by Forbes as America's second friendliest city, Union Bank senior vice president Jonathan Klein lauded Orinda as "a special place" for its level of civic engagement and opening of doors as he talked about his firm's trust in Eden's leadership. But the sweetest icing on the cake came with the announcement that the Orinda-based Ernest and Lola Poll Trust, working in conjunction with the Orinda Community Foundation, has pledged to donate \$60,000 to fund transportation services to help residents at the new apartments remain active, contributing members of the community.

"It's a wonderful time to be in the city of Orinda," said California Assembly Member Joan Buchanan,

who observed that "great cities not only take care of their young," they look after their seniors. She praised Orindans for their persistence in "putting more than a decade of heart and soul" into bringing the project to fruition.

Additional presenters included Steve Dexter, Contra Costa County Supervisor Candace Anderson's chief of staff; Lawrence Shepp who represented the Orinda Community Church; Malcolm Brudigam, the district representative for California Senator Mark DeSaulnier's office; and Kathleen Hamm, treasurer of Eden's Board of Directors.

"My mother always said, 'Take time to pause and celebrate the victories,'" said Worth.

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