

Community Service

We are pleased to make space available whenever possible for some of Lamorinda's dedicated community service organizations to submit news and information about their activities. Submissions can be sent to storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com with the subject header In Service to the Community.

Moraga Historical Society Honors Two Members

Submitted by Elsie Mastick



Susan Sperry and Maria Rieger

Photo provided

Honored for their contributions to preserve local history, two Moraga Historical Society members received awards from the Conference of California Historical Societies at a June 22 luncheon in Sacramento.

Receiving the Scholarship/Authorship Award was Maria Rieger. Born and raised in Spain, Rieger has a deep understanding of her native country and culture. She is invaluable at translating Spanish documents and researching pre-American California history. Rieger is one of the most prolific contributors to the El Rancho Moraga Quarterly, the Moraga Historical Society's newsletter, and she is consistently reliable and passionate about her work. In 1993 Rieger was recognized with a certificate of appreciation from the National Park Service for her leadership and contribution to the plan for the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, which the public can now follow with beautiful markers from Arizona to Northern California. Her support of and contributions to the Moraga Historical Society have been invaluable over many years.

Susan Sperry has been a staple of the Mor-

aga community her entire life. Sperry grew up on a cattle ranch in the area, where she still lives today with her two daughters and their families. After graduating from the University of California, Berkeley she taught fifth grade at Los Perales Elementary School. With graduate degrees in special education, Sperry moved to Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School in 1983. At JM for 23 years, she developed the curriculum for teaching the history of Moraga. Her unit included a walking tour of Moraga, often accompanied by descendants of original Moraga families – Carr, Sanders, Baitx, Trelut. This unit is still in use today in the third grades of the Moraga School District. After teaching in Moraga for 37 years, Sperry retired and joined the board of the Moraga Historical Society. Currently she is recording secretary and served as president for two terms. She has collected oral histories of many "old timers," turning them into a video in 2005. Sperry has watched Moraga grow from grassy hills to a thriving community. Mayor Dave Trotter calls Sperry a "living history of the Town of Moraga and this community."

Moraga Movers Musical Nostalgia

Submitted by George Fisher



Photo provided

On July 8, nearly 200 Moraga Movers were treated to a wonderful evening of music. Bonnie Weiss returned once again and entertained a very enthusiastic audience with the music of Cole Porter. Her one hour presentation featured many screen clips including Fred Astaire, Ethel Merman, Bert

Lahr, Bob Hope, Ginger Rogers, Cyd Charisse, Frank Sinatra and others. Weiss herself broke into songs which so embellished the evening. Moraga Movers is open to all Lamorinda residents 55 and over. For information, visit www.moragamovers.org or call (925) 376-6622.

Supervisor Candace Andersen Seeks Applicants for Seats on Advisory Bodies

Submitted by Jill Ray

District 2 Supervisor Candace Andersen is looking for interested, motivated residents to serve on a variety of Contra Costa County citizen advisory boards. These voluntary boards usually meet monthly and advise the Board of Supervisors on a variety of issues. They provide a key communication link between the community and county government.

Supervisor Andersen is looking for volunteers from her district to fill the following positions:

- Assessment Appeals Board
- Contra Costa County Fire Protection District's Fire Advisory Commissioners (1 alt. seat)
- Economic Opportunity Council
- Mental Health Commission (1 Consumer Seat)
- Merit Board

District 2 includes: Alamo, Canyon, Danville, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Parkmead, Rossmoor, San Ramon, Saranap, and Walnut Creek (west of Main Street).

Applications and more information are available on the county's website: <http://contra.napanet.net/maddybook>.

Additional Rowing Camp Moves Closer to Home

By Michael Sakoda



Rowing camp participants on the San Pablo Reservoir in Orinda.

Photo Andy Scheck

This summer marks the inaugural year of the Oakland Strokes rowing camp at the San Pablo Reservoir in Orinda. The Oakland Strokes rowing club was founded in 1974, and began teaching rowing to local middle and high school students. More recently, they began offering instructional summer camps at the Tidewater Boating Center on the Oakland estuary. "We've been running the camps for about 10 years," said Beth Anderson, one of the Strokes' middle school rowing coaches. "But at the estuary, there's a lot of tide and water movement. San Pablo is really calm ... a better location for beginners."

The recent move to San Pablo is thanks in large part to the support of Lamorinda teens involved in the Oakland Stokes competitive rowing teams. "All the kids from (Lamorinda) row for us, but they come all the way out to Oakland," said Anderson. "We're trying to bring rowing a little bit closer to a lot of our students."

In these times of childhood obesity, diabetes and other weight-related epidemics, parents can't refute the importance of a good exercise, but more than that, rowing offers an opportunity that few other sports do.

"Middle school is a time when kids are changing sports and sort of discovering they might not be good enough to compete in the sport they're playing," said Anderson speaking as a mother of two. "The nice thing about rowing is it starts in middle school or the beginning of high school. It's good for kids who are athletes but haven't found a sport they're really great at because it gives them a place to excel."

Members of the Oakland Strokes competitive teams are sought after by recruiters from top universities. "Almost every college in the country that recruits for rowing comes to see us," said Anderson. "We're one of the leading programs in the country competitively, so we

send kids to all the great schools."

Several Lamorinda teens are moving on from the Strokes to compete at the college level.

From the US Junior National Champion Women's team, Alia Shafi (Acalanes High School) will be competing for the US National Team at the Junior World Championships this summer before attending Brown in the fall. Elizabeth Pate (Miramonte High School) will be attending Harvard, and her twin sister, Ellen, will be attending the University of Virginia. Indigo Catton (Campolindo High School) is set to attend UPenn and Camille Triebisch is heading for UCLA.

From the silver medal winning men's team, Erik Johnson (MHS) is off to Cornell, Karmi Chan (MHS) to UCLA, and Ben Peterson (CHS) is heading for Trinity College.

"It gives you an edge if you've got good grades and you're a strong athlete," said Anderson. "It's a good opportunity. We can teach them something new and take them to the next level."

The coaching staff of the Oakland Strokes will be at the disposal of campers at the San Pablo sessions where children of all skill levels are invited to join in for an incredible experience with a storied program.

"We have two sessions at San Pablo: Beginners go 8:30 to 10:30, and we teach them everything they need to know and get them rowing by the end of the week; and an intermediate group, where they've done one week of summer camp, comes from 10:30 to 1:30, and they progress from where they left off the week before," said Anderson. "What we're trying to do is introduce kids to the basic sport of rowing and the excitement of what crew has to offer."

The camp concludes its second session this week, and will run one more session for beginners July 22-26. For information, visit www.oaklandstrokes.org.

TEEN SCENE

Teen Treks

By Hannah Li

The day school lets out, high school students flock to their cars to flee the Lamorinda area as if a natural disaster had forced them to drive through the Caldecott towards Berkeley and Oakland. Admittedly, I was one of those people, yet this summer I've made it a point to enjoy the prospects that Orinda, Lafayette, and Moraga present; specifically, Lamorinda's fabulous hiking venues.

Hiking in itself is a great way to spend time with friends without spending money. We often take for granted the plethora of hiking opportunities that Lamorinda's beautiful rolling hills and safe off-road trails have to offer. While teens nowadays seem glued to their computers 24/7, getting some serotonin in the sunlight can really make up for those hundreds of hours of studying during the school year.

Jessie O., a senior at Miramonte chimed, "I love walking around the Lafayette Reservoir on weekends. It's a great way to exercise and I often run into old friends who also hike there. The park is so pretty and if I'm feeling adventurous I will walk the Rheem Trail."

Many lesser known areas provide quality hiking prospects as well. Senior Simone B. added, "Canyon Road has innumerable off-roading opportunities. Some trails go into Oakland and others loop back into Moraga. The road itself is a great trek into the Oakland hills. Be careful of cars as the roads are narrow and winding! I actually just took a hike up into Redwood Park the other day!"

Meg S. similarly explained her preference of taking exhilarating runs on Grizzly Peak with other teens: "A lot of people think Grizzly is only for cars, but I've had a lot of great hikes up there."

Indeed, many of these trails are less than

a ten-minute drive away. I recommend treks to King's Trail off Rancho Laguna Park, strolls around Valle Vista or in the wilderness areas off Bear Creek Road, walks along "the ridge" in Orinda, and runs through the trails in Moraga Commons Park.

San Pablo Reservoir and the East Bay Municipal Water District Recreation Area located between Orinda and El Sobrante is a scenic 1,000-acre park where hiking, biking, jogging, kayaking, picnicking, and fishing are all part of the summer fun. Although dogs aren't allowed in the water or boats, it's a bonus to take your pooch on your outdoor excursion.

Whether you are a serious hiker or a casual stroller, Lamorinda provides a plethora of hiking opportunities for everyone.



Hannah Li, a reporter on Express Yourself™ is a high school junior who runs track and tutors. In her free time she enjoys blogging, photography, and cooking.

Teen Scene is YOUR voice. If you have something to say or have writing skills and want to be part of our Teen Scene team, email our Teen Coach, Cynthia Brian, CynthiaBrian.com.