

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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The 9th Annual Orinda Classic Car Show Weekend
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Moraga Parks and Recreation Commission chair Karen Reed enjoys a spectacular view from the Old Moraga Ranch Trail.

Photo Sophie Braccini

Exploring Moraga's Less Traveled Trails

By Sophie Braccini

In the all-time favorite Moraga elementary school song "The Hills of Moraga," it is said that the hills "are calling to me." The hills and trails of Moraga are among the first things that come to mind for many when describing this bucolic town. But do residents know the hills and trails that well? Not according to passionate hiker Karen Reed, the

chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Reed says that some trails are seldom traveled, some of the surrounding hills' beauty ignored. Two of Moraga's less traveled trails are Old Moraga Ranch Trail and the eastern part of Kings Canyon Loop Trail. These trails are not for "sissies" – this is serious hiking with steep ups and downs,

but the treks are as magical as the views. Up these trails you'll be on top of the world.

"Moraga Ranch Trail may be less known because it starts in the middle of nowhere and ends in the middle of nowhere," said Reed.

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Quote of the Week:

"My daughter did not make it to finals but she still felt as though she was a winner." Read Letters to the Editor, page A11.

Advertising

Lamorinda Community Picnic



Organized by Lamorinda Presents, A Partnership of Lamorinda Community Volunteers

Moraga Commons Park: Thurs. Aug. 15 4pm - Dark

Picnic with Friends, Family & Neighbors BYO Picnic Basket, Food Service starts at 5pm
 Community Games Start 5:30 p.m.

Tug-o-War, 3-legged race, water balloon toss, watermelon eating contest, egg relay, more...
 Music by Zebop! Starts 6:30 p.m. Santana Cover Band

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That Sinking Feeling – Orinda's Tarabrook Repair Costs May Triple

By Laurie Snyder

Heads clasped in hands, dejected Orinda City Council members received word at their Aug. 6 meeting that Orinda's recovery from the Tarabrook emergency may now end up costing three times more than the \$498,000 tab first projected by the city's engineering consultant.

The problems started last December when an antiquated 24-inch corrugated metal pipe simply couldn't take Mother Nature's rainy wrath and failed, opening up a sinkhole under Tarabrook Drive. Because that storm drain pipe is now completely blocked, the city is helping residents by pumping the upstream flow around the obstruction. The longer this situation goes on, however, the more likely another failure of some sort could occur, which could make life even harder for residents – and end up costing the city more down the road.

So, public works staff and their advisors recommended that the city replace the pipe with a new,

36-inch reinforced concrete pipe. But in order to do that, the repair crew will actually need to reach the existing pipe, currently buried at a depth of 25 feet – a storm drain depth described as "excessive" by Harrison Engineering, Inc.

Of the seven contractors who even considered tackling this nightmare, only two returned bid packages by July 18. Bay Pacific Pipelines, Inc. estimated it could complete the job for \$1,221,175 while Pfister Excavating, Inc. felt it would cost \$1,642,583. An additional 10 percent would be added for "contingency and administrative and construction management expenses."

According to Harrison Engineering personnel who reviewed the bids for the city, the most significant expense items relate to excavation safety and the jacking and boring of the larger and sturdier pipe. Two of the contractors electing not to submit bids deemed the project too risky; another deter-

mined it was "not the type (of) construction method they typically do."

The dramatic differences between initial cost estimates and the eye-popping bids are also likely a result of the limited number of contractors, in general, who are capable of performing this work, a late city bidding process, and the tight turnaround for project completion needed by the city.

Staff recommended four possible courses of action to the council: Accept the bids as is; accept the bids with changes recommended by Bay Pacific Pipelines (the lowest bidder) which could have saved the city \$100,000 but would have caused a delay while staff sought new federal and state permits to accommodate Bay Pipeline's revised drilling method; reject the current bids and reopen the bidding process again later; or redesign the project entirely and reopen the bidding.

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Life in Lamorinda B1-B12

Opening Tonight: "Lady Windermere's Fan"

Lou Fancher gives you a preview of Cal Shakes' take on Oscar Wilde - page B2.



Sports C1-C3

Ready for Football?

Michael Sakoda looks at the upcoming high school season - page C1.



Our Homes D1-D12

Automotive Innovator's Historical Home

Cathy Tyson blends bus trivia with a tour of an interesting Orinda Country Club home - page D1.

