

## Civic News Moraga

# Does Moraga Need More Police Officers?

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“We don’t have a big revenue base, and probably never will, for a combination of reasons.” The cost of having three additional officers in Moraga is roughly \$360,000 – \$65 per each of Moraga’s 5,500 housing units.

The recent increase in home burglaries, including at the Moraga Country Club where a private patrol service augments police, may have spurred the Town Council’s decision to consider police staffing levels – but Priebe cannot guarantee that more police would mean less crime. “It’s like an insurance policy. As your family grows, your assets grow, you reassess your insurance needs,” he said. “Communities do just that. They need to take a really hard look and determine if they are underinsured or properly insured.”

### Town Goals

**Moraga’s goals for 2014 revolve around four key elements:**

Maintain excellence in stewardship.

Maximize existing resources for enhanced community use through partnerships and agreements.

Celebrate the town’s 40th anniversary around the Pear and Wine Festival.

Enable the organization to respond to opportunities as they arise.

*A detailed list of the goals can be found on the town’s website, www.moraga.ca.us (although they should eventually be easier to find, as of our press deadline the goals were listed under the Town Council Jan. 14 Special Agenda). Read the related article that appeared in our Jan. 1 issue, available in our archive at www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0722/Moragas-New-Mayor-Ken-Chew.html.*

# Town Tribute to George and Julie Fisher

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The first Parks and Recreation Director hired was Orinda resident William Penn Mott, Jr. who had directed both the California and the national park services under Ronald Reagan and supported the creation of Oakland’s Children’s Fairyland that was allegedly Walt Disney’s inspiration for his own parks. “He (Mott) was incredibly imaginative,” remembers George Fisher. “He wanted to install a wave-pool in the Rheem Theatre and organize grass-skiing at the Commons.”

The Fishers both served on the Parks and Recreation Commission at different times and were tapped for the boards of service organizations such as the Moraga Park Foundation, which puts on the summer concert series every year.

But their interests ranged further than recreation.

“Our friend’s husband got into a serious accident in ‘75 and was saved by a nurse who lived nearby,” said Julie Fisher. “It took 25 minutes to get an ambulance and another 25 to take him to Alta Bates. Some of us started to realize that we needed local paramedic services, including an ambulance.” She was at the forefront of the fundraising effort with the Service League that purchased the first van-turned-paramedic transport. “We canvassed the whole town and raised the initial \$10,000,” she recalled. Then Rescue One Foundation was incorporated in 1977 to ensure the ongoing funding of the paramedic services of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District.

“I had never heard of such a foundation as Rescue One before I came

to work for MOFD,” said fire chief Stephen Healy during the farewell dinner. “In many places it is a struggle to maintain paramedic services. My hat’s off to you Julie, the Fisher family, and members of the community for having the vision and continuing to serve (on the foundation board) for 37 years.”

When they reached retirement age, the Fishers turned their eyes to the recreation activities offered to Moraga’s seniors. “I remember when we went to the board meetings of the group that was then called the Hacienda Seniors,” said George. “It felt like all we talked about was how long it could stay in business.” It seemed to him that the group was struggling, with a dwindling membership and events that didn’t attract many of its 200 members. In 2007, the Fishers took on the challenge of rejuvenating the group and met with Penelope Leach, then parks and recreation director, as well as a few others interested in the group that George Fisher calls a passion of his life. “And it was Julie who proposed the new name Moraga Movers,” he said. He penned the Moraga Movers’ bulletin for years and served as the group’s president.

The Moraga Movers also became a voice in the town and George Fisher fought hard to cancel plans to move town staff into the Hacienda that was so dear to the heart of many in the community. That pugnacity was noted by Moraga’s town manager, Jill Keimach, who said that when she first arrive in town she soon realized that the Fishers were not only a warm and loving couple, but also people with determination when it came to mak-

ing Moraga a better place.

Today the Moraga Movers number close to 500 members, the meetings and dinners are very well attended with interesting speakers and topics.

The Fishers are putting their house on the market and are expecting to move by April 1. You might still catch them at Safeway before they leave. They also plan to come back every summer, renting something in the neighborhood “and enjoying those wonderful cool Moraga evening concerts at the Commons,” concludes George Fisher.

### Lamorinda Weekly received the following message in an email from the Fishers after the event:

“And what a great party it was! We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to our friends and guests who attended the monthly dinner of the Moraga Movers at the Soda Center on Jan. 13. It was a wonderful experience for us both. We would especially like to thank Linda Borrelli for her conception and planning of the event and John Haffner for his superb MC skills. The remarks made by various speakers for the Town, Rescue 1, the Fire District, the Lamorinda Village, and the Moraga Movers were greatly appreciated. And then the remarks made by long time friends were funny, nostalgic, and only a little bit scandalous. We thank you all.”

## Civic News Orinda

# Orinda Library to Reveal California’s Ties to Taishan

By Laurie Snyder

Orinda history buffs and avid travelers will have a special opportunity to explore the role China and its immigrants have played in California’s growth since its earliest boom days when Bay Area photographer Richard S. Lee presents “Why Chinatowns Speak Cantonese” Feb. 9 at the Orinda Library. The free program will begin at 2 p.m. in the Garden Room and will shed light on the ties between California and a part of China’s Guangdong province known as Taishan.

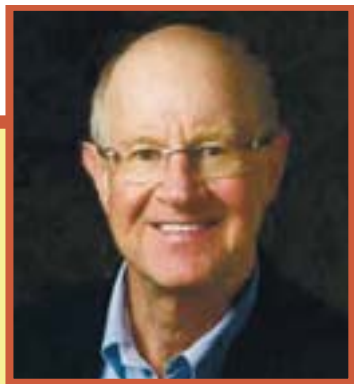
“This area is the ancestral home of most Chinese people who migrated to California during the Gold Rush and later during the construction of the transcontinental railways,” says library manager Beth Girshman. More than 60,000 arrived, seeking stability in communities across America after surviving natural disasters and the First Opium War. By World War II, Taishanese descendants, also known as Sze Yup Cantonese, were playing a significant role as airmen with America’s “Flying Tigers.”

“Lee, a fourth generation Chinese-American and native San Franciscan, has travelled to China and to

his ancestral homeland, Taishan, numerous times and has taken tens of thousands of unique photographs.” He is also a contributor to Asian Week and Xin Ning Magazine, which is distributed in Chinese in over 90 countries. His illustrated presentation will include many of these fascinating photographs.

The program is sponsored by the Friends of the Orinda Library. FOL’s dedicated volunteers raise financial support for concerts, classes, lectures, and other programs each year via their membership program, book store operation, and monthly book sales, as well as by partnering with organizations such as the Eng Family Endowment, which is sponsoring the Taishan program. Collaborations such as these also generate critical funding for surviving natural disasters and the Contra Costa library system.

For more information on this program or on other activities coming up at the library, visit: [ccclib.org](http://ccclib.org), or contact Girshman at (925) 254-2184, ext. 15; [bgirshma@ccclib.org](mailto:bgirshma@ccclib.org).



## WILLIAM DAMON

STANFORD PROFESSOR  
of Education and Director of the  
Stanford Center on Adolescence

Sun. Feb. 2 10:15 a.m.  
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Questions? [Dave@LOPC.org](mailto:Dave@LOPC.org)

## Community Service

# Food Bank Solicitation Scam

Submitted by Lisa Sherrill, Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

There have been a number of reports recently of unwanted phone calls in Contra Costa and Solano counties from “Northwest Food Bank” (not to be confused with North West Harvest: a food bank in Seattle) asking for donations. These calls are not originating from the food bank and appear to be a scam. Caller id shows a Washington state phone number and may appear as Northwest

Food Bank. Northwest Harvest as well as the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano have not been soliciting donations via phone.

Questions or concerns can be sent to [info@foodbankccs.org](mailto:info@foodbankccs.org) or 855-309-FOOD in Contra Costa and Solano counties. To find your local Food Bank, visit [www.bayareahunger.org](http://www.bayareahunger.org).

# Orinda Troop 303 Announces Newest Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Kim Wolfe



New Troop 303 Eagle scouts from left: Christopher Ryan Andrada, Cole Wolfe, Jorge Alejandro Gutierrez, III and Thor Alexander McAvenia. Photo John Wolfe

Jorge Alejandro Gutierrez, III, and Thor Alexander McAvenia, all Miramonte High School students. For their Eagle Scout projects, Andrada refurbished a 7-foot weathered cedar Peace Pole, which displays the message “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in six languages, and installed a 10 by 12 foot flagstone patio around it at Santa Maria Church in Orinda; Wolfe designed a variety of wood rabbit chew toys and led his fellow Troop members in the fabrication of 100 toys and an instructional flier on rabbit care to benefit newly adopted rabbits from the Martinez Animal Shelter; Gutierrez refurbished the Orinda Baseball Association’s Snack Shack, installing new shelving, new countertops, and building new doors for the shack; and McAvenia coordinated and led a Safety Fair, offering basic first aid, CPR and emergency preparedness training through the American Red Cross, and a first aid kit donation benefitting SHELTER Inc. of Contra Costa County.

Under his direction, Troop 303 collected over 1,200 first aid items, which were assembled into over 60 complete family first aid kits.



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