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By Sophie Braccini



Moraga Country Club's new general manager, Andrew Scott, and longtime assistant general manager Kathe Foster. Photo Sophie Braccini The job fits Andrew Scott like a glove. Moraga Country Club's new general manager is a man with vast experience, in both private sports clubs and homeowners associations, who plans to put his business acumen to good use and increase member services without necessarily raising dues.

Scott comes to Moraga from southern California where he most recently managed San Diego's Crosby National Golf Club, among others. "I paid for my education working at sports clubs and continued after I graduated," says the University of Michigan alumnus who studied filmmaking and economics. Scott has more than 20 years of club management experience under his belt. He also spent four years as an adjunct professor in the Collins College of Hospitality Management at Cal Poly Pomona.

A tall, elegant man with smooth manners and well-crafted discourse, Scott looks and talks the part. "I've been managing private clubs that were primarily in affluent communities, ranging from

swim and tennis clubs, to homeowners clubs, to fully amenitized country clubs," says Scott, who believes that managing private clubs has unique characteristics in the world of hospitality. "Generally in private clubs members have a much stronger emotional tie to the club and its amenities; for them, it is a home away from home," he says, "so you cultivate a very close, socially intimate relationship with your clientele." After only two weeks at MCC, Scott's already had dinner at two members' homes. "There is a genuine affection that exists between client and service provider," he adds.

Scott says that he was interested in MCC because it is a fully amenitized country club with stable operations but key challenges that his skill set is appropriately suited for. "The challenges are to balance the interest of the homeowner members and the non-homeowner members, to create value for all, and to advance the food and beverage program in concert with the high level of activity that already exists in tennis, swimming and golf," he explains.

With 531 homes at MCC there is a big need for maintenance and safety, while the non-homeowner members focus more on sports, social activities and food service. One of the first things Scott noticed, he says, is that the club's food revenue doesn't correlate to its high sports activity. "According to my experience, (the food revenue) should be substantially higher," he confidently asserts. "At this club there is a tradition of people bringing their own food and beverages, and we would like to attract them to the services provided by the club," which he says is ready to provide all of the casual and fine dining that members could want.

Scott has great respect for new chef Kevin Able. "He is very talented, very meticulous. I'd love to grow the food program not only in terms of revenue, but also in community recognition and prestige, and one of the ways we are going to do that is the introduction of our new wine pairing dinners," he explains. As a members' privilege, "It's a great way to create 'esprit de corps' among members," he believes, "and to celebrate the marriage of food and wine." Scott also plans to introduce public, signature events such as a wine fair paired with Able's food.

Also on Scott's agenda is the development of the club's social calendar and looking into the possibility of adding a day spa to the clubhouse. "I have considerable experience in the realm of for-

profit clubs," he adds. "One of the things that I would like to bring to this club is a level of business acumen, allowing us to reinvest in the club without necessarily increasing the cost to the members. MCC is a nonprofit club, but you can still apply these same principles." He cites as an example the Santa Ynez Canyon Club in Pacific Palisades, which he managed for seven years, where profits allowed him to remodel the club and add a fitness center without increasing dues.

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