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## A Brief Moment In History

By Sophie Braccini



Moraga School District superintendent Bruce Burns, councilmember Teresa Onoda, Moraga chief of police Bob Priebe, Officer Angela Likos, councilmember Phil Arth, town manager Jill Keimach, and Lt. Jon King Photo Sophie Braccini

With the recent hiring of officer Angela Likos, the Moraga Police Department is now fully staffed. "This day marks a brief moment in history," said town manager Jill Keimach at the Sept. 24 swearing-in ceremony at the Hacienda de las Flores. Chief Bob Priebe, who over the last 10 years has said his department has never been fully staffed for an entire year, was not fazed by the comment. Not only was Priebe happy to showcase a full department, he was equally happy to welcome its newest female officer.

Prior to coming to Moraga, Likos was a police officer in Pinole for 10 years, and growing up, the Priebe and Likos families were very close. Likos went to high school with Priebe's son, who is a police officer in Pleasant Hill; they were police explorers together. And the family connection goes further than that: "I graduated high school with aunt Renée," said Priebe, "and mom, Dina, was just a year behind us." Over the years, Likos called Priebe on occasion, asking him his perspective and advice on things. When she considered applying for the open position at the Moraga Police Department,

she called Priebe to ask him if there would be a conflict of interest.

"I always enjoyed working in a community setting where everybody works together," said Likos, "and (I found) a sense of community (in Moraga) far greater than I thought it was."

Priebe says that in today's environment officers have their pick of where they want to work, and an experienced female officer like Likos has even more choice. He said he has lost several police officers because they found better paying jobs, offering more excitement than Moraga. Before making an offer to Likos, he wanted to make sure that it was a good fit.

"I like catching the bad guys," says Likos, "but more important to me is working together to build community." She says she appreciates the fact that parents are very involved with their children in Moraga; that people would stop and just have a conversation with her; that neighbors truly look out for one another. "I got that in Pinole," she said, "but to a lower degree than here."

At the ceremony, Keimach noted how impressed she had been with Likos, who while in field training, reached out to Moraga residents to gather supplies for victims of the Northern California fires. This initiative was also an eye-opener for Likos, who was overwhelmed by the community's response. "To say that I was touched is an understatement," said Likos. "When I came down to the police department to pick up (what people had donated) to take it to the victims, there was so much!" After she packed her SUV she had to borrow a second car. The donations ranged from cases of water to animal supplies, clothing and non-perishable food.

The young officer likes being on the street and rolling up her sleeves. "A number of years ago my parents' home was burglarized," she said. Since then she has had a better understanding of what it means to be a crime victim, and can put herself in a victim's position and relate.

"Our job does not end with taking somebody to jail or taking a report," she said, "there is more to it. It's being able to educate people to prevent them from becoming a victim. Often people just need to be listened to."

Likos knows that Moraga is a safe community, but because of this sense of security people

might not take precautions such as locking their cars. "Let's not invite the bad guys here," she said. "We don't need to be paranoid, but let's still be aware."

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