

Celebrate
EASTER
with
Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church
• Sunday Services, March 27 •
6:30 a.m. • 8:00 a.m.
9:30 a.m. • 11:00 a.m.
Winter Festival Choir Performs
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See page B1

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Photo Andy Scheck

State of Emergency Declared in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini

The Town of Moraga declared a State of Emergency last week following the March 13 collapse of a section of road at the corner of Rheem Boulevard and Moraga Road that led to the rupture of a gas line, causing gas outages to 2,600 customers and sparking fears of a major disaster.

The declaration is a necessary step to get access to emer-

gency funding from the county, the state and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

On the afternoon of Sunday March 13, pavement and sidewalk started to collapse and a traffic light sank into a large sinkhole, 15-feet wide by 20-long by 15-feet deep. Portions of the sidewalk punctured the four-inch gas line that runs through the

neighborhood, causing the immediate evacuation of nearby shopping centers and an order of "shelter in place" to nearby residents.

"I got a call from one of the police officers," said interim Town Manager Bob Priebe. "I was on site within minutes and immediately activated the Emergency Operation Center." (See story page A5) ... continued on page A11

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Lady Mats Capture NorCal Title



Uriah Howard

Photo Gint Federas

On Saturday, March 19, the Miramonte Lady Matadors defeated the Pinewood Black Panthers (Los Altos) by a score of 73-40 to capture the CIF Open Division NorCal championship at the Sleep Train Arena in Sacramento. The girls captured the title after losing in the final in each of the last three seasons. Next Saturday, the Lady Mats – who are ranked No. 5 in the country, per MaxPrep’s – will return to the state capital to play SoCal’s number one team, Chaminade, in their first state title game appearance. The girls will carry a perfect 32-0 record into the tilt. Read story on page C1

Was PG&E Prepared for Gas Leak Response?

By Nick Marnell

Moraga-Orinda Fire District board president Steve Anderson and director Fred Weil, speaking as private citizens, assailed the response of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company to the Rheem Blvd. gas line rupture caused by the March 13 Moraga sinkhole.

"From all I could see, we as a district did all that was necessary," said Weil, speaking at the conclusion of the March 16 district meeting. "What I thought was interesting was how unprepared PG&E was to deal with it. They were completely at a loss."

Weil said he went to the Rheem staging area about 8:30 that Sunday evening and "saw more trucks and guys standing around than you would see at any PG&E location. I asked one of the techs what they were doing and he said, 'We're waiting for instructions.'"

"It looked like a PG&E convention, with a lot of people standing around, drinking coffee," said Anderson.

"PG&E gave the technicians a list of houses and they couldn't vary from it. Trucks would get to one area and they'd skip lines of houses because they weren't on the list. When the techs got to the end of their list, they had to stop and wait for more instructions as to when to go," said Weil.

"PG&E told the media there were 300 homes left. They'd be orange-tagged because they weren't home that night. It didn't happen," said Weil. ... continued on page A8

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