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Hometown Fun Highlights July Fourth Celebrations

By Peggy Spear

Photos provided by Orinda Association

There will be loud noises coming from Lamorinda on the morning of the Fourth of July, but it won't necessarily be coming from fireworks. That will be happening later in Moraga.

No, the sounds emanating throughout the Independence Day morning will be from the many musical groups participating in the Orinda Fourth of July Parade.

Now in its 33rd year, the popular event, sponsored by the Orinda Association, will have "more music than ever before," says association spokesperson and treasurer William Waterman. The musical groups will range from garage pick-up bands to the renowned Concord Blue Devils Drum and Bugle Corp. There will be three different Dixieland jazz bands, Waterman says, the East Bay Banjo Band, music students on floats and performances by the youth theater company, the Peter Pan Foundation.

And of course these musical attractions will be joined by other floats and roving bands of whimsical entries — in the past there have been wheel barrel dancers and the famous lawnmower brigade. All in all there will be about 60 floats carrying bands, representatives from preschools, local pools and sports teams, and even political parties.

"We call it the Best Hometown Parade in America," Waterman says.

The parade kicks off at 10 a.m. and runs from Brookwood Road near the Orinda Theatre, up Moraga Way to Camino Pablo, then skirts off to Santa Maria Way then up Orinda Way to the Community Park.

However, Waterman is quick to point out that even before the parade starts there is a lot of activity, from the 7:30 a.m. pancake breakfast to Haley's "Color" Run for a Reason. Beginning at 8 a.m., this is the 12th year this two-mile and five-mile fundraising run will benefit SUDC (Sudden Unexplained Death of a Child), and this year features splashes of color being thrown at contestants for a technicolor run. To sign up visit www.sudc.org/haleysrun.

After the parade there will be games and booths — including beer gardens — at the community park, as well as food and drinks for sale at Theatre Square.

Waterman says that his and the other organizations are being fully supported by local law enforcement officials to help with road closures, and "an army of volunteers."

Meanwhile, up in Moraga, the famous fireworks over the Country Club will be preceded by a day of fun. There will also be a Fun Run supporting Campolindo Track beginning at 8 a.m. with a Kiddie Run, and five-mile and two-mile runs beginning at 8:30 a.m. For registration and course maps, visit www.campotrack.com.

After runners finish the grueling race, from 8 to 10:30 a.m., they can take advantage of the Pancake Breakfast, which kicks off a full day of fun at Moraga Commons. Community booths will be open on the Commons from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and also at 9 a.m. is the popular dog parade (sign up at the bandshell), and at 10:30 a.m. the annual children's bike parade (sign up at the flagpole). At 11 a.m. there will be old-fashioned kids' games at the bandshell, and from 12;30 to 1 p.m. a family magic show. Inflatables will be set up from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and food, wine and beer booths open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Music will begin with the National Anthem at 6:45 p.m. with the Mayor's Welcome at 6:50.

Finally, the stars of the evening — the fireworks — will take off at dusk over the Country Club Gold Course, but officials are warning that there will be no hanging out on the course to watch due to security risks.

If residents would like to "Buy a Rocket" to help defray the cost of the $27,000 fireworks show, they can send a donation to the Town of Moraga, 2100 Donald Dr., Moraga, 94556, or donate online at www.moraga.ca.us.

Both Orinda and Moraga are encouraging residents from neighboring communities to come and enjoy their hometown festivities.

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