



**Fire Districts**

**Public Meetings**

**Moraga-Orinda Fire District** Board of Directors  
Wednesday, Sept. 21, 7 p.m.  
*Wednesday, Sept. 7 canceled*  
Go to website for meeting location  
For meeting times and agendas,  
visit [www.mofd.org](http://www.mofd.org)

**ConFire** Board of Directors  
Tuesday, Sept. 13, 1:30 p.m.  
Board Chamber room 107,  
Administration Building,  
651 Pine St., Martinez  
For meeting times and agendas,  
visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

Emergency response information  
and training:  
Lamorinda Community  
Emergency Response Team  
(CERT)  
[www.lamorindacert.org](http://www.lamorindacert.org).

**No Election for AUHSD Board**

With longtime Acalanes Union High School District trustee Richard Whitmore deciding not to run again, it will be a quiet race for the AUHSD board, with just two open seats.

Incumbent Running:  
Kathy Coppersmith  
Other Candidate:  
Craig Carl Cheslog

**Lafayette Man Walks Lake Tahoe to Support Vets**

By Cathy Dausman



Ted Gallagher

Photo Cathy Dausman

Ted Gallagher's looks are pure Marine, from his closely cropped hair to his sturdy build. His firm handshake and impeccable manners belie a humble and somewhat private demeanor.

Gallagher's privacy, however, may be a thing of the past after he completes an eight-day loop on foot around Lake Tahoe beginning Sept. 10 to raise awareness of veteran suicide rates and raise funds for the veterans' organization Semper Fi.

Gallagher has always loved walking, hiking and trail running. His father was a veteran of World

War II, having served three tours in the Pacific theater; the elder Gallagher and his wife taught their son about giving back. It only becomes apparent how much Gallagher is giving back when he reveals that he has neither served in the military nor has family members who have served.

Still, the Lafayette man insists that veterans, the wounded and their families "deserve, in my opinion, the absolute best of the best." That may explain why Gallagher keeps upping his game on the Tahoe loop. The event "has grown far larger" than Gallagher expected when he

first decided to raise \$10,000 for Semper Fi, possibly by hiking the Lafayette Reservoir Nature Trail.

"Then I thought go big or go home" Gallagher said and the \$10,000 goal became \$25,000 and the location changed to Tahoe. That amount increased to \$50,000 and finally \$100,000. Gallagher has received at least 80 donations. An anonymous check for \$36,000 from a former Marine puts his current total at \$106,000 before he ever makes a footprint in the Tahoe basin.

"It never ceases to amaze us how creative our supporters have been," says Vanessa Keane. Keane, senior manager of community outreach and events for Semper Fi, says Gallagher's donation is "an incredible amount of money," especially considering the majority of their grants amount to less than \$1,000 per case. She said veterans with "invisible wounds" like traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder may face a lifetime of recovery.

Gallagher's walk begins and ends at Homewood on the southern end of Lake Tahoe. His route takes him along streets, highways and walking trails. A work buddy will accompany him on the first day of

his hike but Gallagher expects to be solo for much of the event although he has invited "a ton of vets" to join him. He's packing water, jerky, almonds and power bars; his lodging is a combination of guest and motel rooms cobbled together for the event.

Gallagher calls his walk "The 72 for the 22 at elevation 62(00)," signifying the 72-plus miles he will hike to commemorate 22 veterans who take their lives daily; the last number references Lake Tahoe's 6,200 foot elevation.

Gallagher says that while "writing checks" is great, he gains deeper satisfaction from a physical challenge. Still, he insists, "I'm just a messenger."

Dollars — \$106,000 and counting so far — to donuts he's mistaken.

Semper Fi ([www.semperfund.org](http://www.semperfund.org)) was established in 2004 to provide financial assistance and lifetime support for post 9/11 wounded, ill and injured service members and their families.

To see the Ted Gallagher website, visit [www.fundraising.semperfund.org/fundraise?fcid=635878](http://www.fundraising.semperfund.org/fundraise?fcid=635878).

**Many Wishes are Granted at Saint Mary's Fun Run**

By Cathy Dausman

It was everything the Make-A-Wish Greater Bay Area Foundation could have wished for, and then some — blue skies on a summer Saturday and a 300-plus participant turnout for the annual East Bay Walk for Wishes fun run.

The fun run on Aug. 20 was the third such event on consecutive weekends in August (Petaluma hosted a walk Aug. 13; Mountain View held theirs Aug. 27) and the seventh event hosted at the Saint Mary's College campus.

"We try to make (the walks) an entertaining experience for the kids," said Make-A-Wish marketing director Jennifer Wilson.

And fun it was, as 43 Wish teams assembled to be treated to temporary tattoos, live DJ music, bagels and fruit and coffee compliments of the Moraga Police Department.

"It was an awesome turnout," said Make-A-Wish volunteer and former wish recipient Audrey Price of Lafayette (<http://tinyurl.com/hqefprf>), who volunteered for and walked the course with her family. "Star Wars" enactors from the Golden Gate Garrison's 501st Legion added an otherworldly presence as five members trooped in to the music of the Imperial March. Ten-year-old cancer patient Gavin Cano had his photo taken with family, friends and troopers under the start line minutes before learning he would have his wish granted — to swim

with dolphins in Oahu with his family.

The SMC event raised \$71,746, helping Make-A-Wish

Greater Bay Area grant 378 wishes this year, Wilson said.



Gavin Cano (being hugged) learns he will have his wish -- to travel to Hawaii with his family and swim with dolphins -- granted by Make-A-Wish Foundation. Photo Cathy Dausman

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