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Moraga Police Department swearing-in ceremony



Photo Vera Kochan

From left: Chief Jon King, Cpl. Russell Douthit, Cpl. William Davis, officer Craig Walker, officer Jeff Yanga, reserve officer Max Juster and police services tech Cathy Ghiselli

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One by one, the officers' badges were pinned on them by a family member amidst the lights of camera flashes and applause.

Newly promoted Cpl. Russell Douthit has served the town with honors since 2007 and comes to Moraga after serving with the Concord Police Department.

Also promoted, Cpl. William Davis, who has been in an MPD uniform for 13 years after having once been a deputy district attorney for Contra Costa County.

Officer Jeff Yanga last served with the Broadmoor Police Department, near Daly City, as well as having served as a firefighter for two years, before deciding that his heart lies in police work.

Officer Craig Walker was formerly a deputy sheriff in Mendocino County and served there with King.

Reserve officer Max Juster is excited to follow in his father's footsteps. "It's awesome!" said the Camplindo graduate. "It's what I've always wanted to do."

According to King, new

police services technician Cathy Ghiselli, who was formerly a teacher's aid at Rheem Elementary School, "is the first person people will see when they come to the police station. She's a good representative for us to have."

Officer Yanga's 4-year-old son, Micah, stole the show by arriving to the ceremony in an authentic looking, police officer's uniform right down to the hat and badge. It appears that history will repeat itself about 20 years from now!

Moraga to get new Mobile Moraga work order management system

By Vera Kochan

Want to report a pothole, graffiti or animal control issue? The town of Moraga is taking more steps toward moving into the digital age. A new work order management system, known as Mobile Moraga, is coming to your cell phones.

During the Feb. 13 town council meeting, Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt gave a detailed presentation on the benefits of the new feature by stressing that it would fall under the town's current allocation for this year's IT budget regarding tech efficiency improvements.

The free app's features would allow a user to click

onto whatever issue needs attention by the Public Works Department or the Parks and Recreation Department. Problems such as traffic signal issues, potholes, park or trail concerns, graffiti, street maintenance, animal control, street light outages and more would be reported by the touch of a fingertip.

An additional feature lets the user go one step further to target the exact geo-location of the problem and either upload or download photos for a more detailed explanation of the issue.

Brandt stated, "It allows us to do work more efficiently in town and allows citizens to report non-emergency concerns

to the town on their cell phones."

The new system will allow improvement of staff efficiency and provide civic engagement and transparency by providing the community an easy opportunity to help town staff maintain Moraga. The town would also gain valuable analytical information, data driven decision making and streamlined resource allocation.

While at this point the service would be most relevant to public works and parks and rec, its usage may evolve through time. It would also provide feedback to the reporting resident with periodic notifications that an issue has

been received, when it has been assigned, anticipated resolution dates and completion of work order.

Edric Kwan, Moraga's public works director, plans on "putting all work orders into this system."

Startup costs for the Civic LLC system's three year agreement comes to a pre-budgeted \$18,450, which includes app development, smart devices, data plans, set up of data and analytics valuable to the town for decision making and resource allocation and annual user fee. After three years, the only cost of the system is the annual user fee of \$5,000.

William Carmen, park volunteer and president of the

California Association of Parks and Recreation Commission said, "I worked on the trail maps for the town and would see things at night that needed maintenance." He added, "I've seen a lot of these kinds of apps and this is a good price."

Brandt summarized, "I really believe that the data and analytics obtained from this system will be very valuable to us as staff and very valuable to you (the town council) in making decisions for the future."

The system will be tested by a handful of citizens before the public rollout scheduled for April.

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