

Town assumes partial management for after-school programs



Plenty of lawn space for outdoor activities

Photo Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

2019-20.

The Moraga School District's After School Enrichment Program, typically operated by the PTA, has agreed to hand over the reins to the town for partial management starting with the fiscal year of

During the town council's May 22 meeting the resolution was adopted unanimously. Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt's presentation outlined the need for such a move, much of it based on the upcoming

Measure V structural improvements set to occur on both the Camino Pablo and Rheem elementary school campuses this summer and potentially Los Perales Elementary next year.

As such, the ASEP will be held at the Hacienda de las Flores facility, which is no stranger to hosting children's activities like the annual summer camps.

The Hacienda will see an activation in daytime activities from approximately 3:30 to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, which will not detract from already confirmed weekend rental usage. The facility will have five rooms to offer for classes, not to mention the vast lawn available for outdoor sports.

Any revenue generated by the ASEP will benefit the town as the PTA relinquishes 100 percent control of Rheem and an as yet to be determined percentage from

Camino Pablo. Not only will the Hacienda partner with the schools, but it has a greater opportunity to serve the community.

Brandt assured council members that there would be no startup costs due to past summer camp activities allowing for the sharing of equipment. Any liabilities would also be covered by insurance policies currently in place.

With Rheem located just up the street, transportation to the Hacienda would be provided by bus. Camino Pablo students may have to rely on parental carpools.

The same instructors that are involved with summer camp will be enlisted into the ASEP, and the Hacienda's software infrastructure is already in place for any registration and administrative needs.

A sampling of some of the ASEP classes include: basket-

ball, chess, coding, guitar, soccer, Mandarin, painting, Performing Academy, piano, science and Spanish.

Costs to the town are considered neutral, with projected revenue estimated at \$145,000 in year one and \$160,000 in subsequent years. Expenses for contracted instructors are projected at \$130,000 with additional part-time staff salaries at \$15,000.

Brandt hopes that this program would bring additional attention to the Hacienda with regards to future community rentals and interest in the property's facilities. She stated, "The risk is very minimal. Our expenses are tied into our revenue, and so I think that the biggest risk is if we tried and it just doesn't work for whatever reason - if it's not convenient for families and people don't participate."

Moraga top town for speeding citations

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These radar speed guns, like other types of radar, consist of a radio transmitter and receiver. They send out a radio signal in a narrow beam, then receive the same signal back after it bounces off the target object.

Speed guns go through a calibration process using a tuning fork before each and every working shift to ensure accuracy, and before and after being used to detect each speeding violation. Dash mounted speed reading devices are also installed in MPD cruisers which can read objects coming or going.

Who determines Moraga's posted speed limits? According to King, an

independent entity of traffic engineers, not affiliated with the town, makes those determinations.

Tony Bizjak's "Back-Seat Driver" column says, "When traffic engineers do their surveys, they are told to disregard the speeds of the fastest 15 percent of drivers on that street driving during free-flow traffic conditions. That's because the law figures those people are probably driving too fast. Some drivers are going too slow, as well. So the law says: Look at the speed that drivers near the 85th percentile are going, and set the limit there." Bizjak adds, "That speed, engineers point out, is one standard deviation about the average speed for all cars on the road.

It's a speed that is considered reasonable, given what's actually happening each day on the street."

King stated that Moraga has recently had a traffic survey performed and the currently set speed limits are accurate with considerations given to lane width, curves in the road, areas where children congregate and any other detrimental road conditions or hazards.

Anyone who's been pulled over for speeding tries to get out of a ticket by coming up with a unique reason for doing so. "Everyone has an excuse. Unless you are in the midst of a dire emergency or trying to prevent one, excuses aren't usually too effective," says

King. He added, "Just because an officer stops you does not mean you are automatically going to receive a citation. However, there are studies that have shown that the preventative effect of a

citation is much greater than a simple warning. So, in trying to change driving habits and get people to slow down, a citation is more effective than a warning."

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