



MORAGA

See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
Town of Moraga:
 www.moraga.ca.us
 Phone: (925) 888-7022
Chamber of Commerce:
 www.moragachamber.org
Moraga Citizens' Network:
 www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

December 6th, 7th & 8th

Hacienda Holiday Faire

One-of-a-kind, handcrafted gifts & gourmet foods
Over 45 local artisans
Lots of parking & great prices!

Complimentary wine tasting with Captain Vineyards & Free Range Flower Winery

Friday, Dec. 6th 6:00 - 8:00 pm
Sat & Sun, Dec. 7th & 8th 4:00 - 6:00 pm

Hacienda de las Flores
 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga

www.facebook.com/HaciendaHolidayFaire

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Law Offices of Lauren Smykowski

'Tis the season to be wary

By Vera Kochan

The holidays are just around the corner, and scammers are gearing up to separate generous donors from their money and more. While scamming is always in season, the holidays are more rampant with nefarious individuals that make The Grinch look down-right affable.

The State of California Office of the Attorney General has cautionary advice for anyone considering making a charitable donation. "Charities operating in California and telemarketers soliciting

donations in California are required to register with the Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts. They are also required to file annual financial reports. Current registration status with the Attorney General's Office does not mean the Attorney General endorses or has approved the activities of the organization." For information on those records visit www.oag.ca.gov/charities.

Many charities are not necessarily registered in California. As such, the OAG suggests it would be wise to donate to an organization that has a proven track record.

Doing a small amount of research can save you grief in the long run.

The OAG also warns consumers to watch out for charities that use similar-sounding names. "Some organizations use names that closely resemble those of well-established charitable organizations to mislead donors. Be skeptical if someone thanks you for a pledge you never made. Check your records." By the same token, scammers may also use look-alike websites or company logos to fool would-be donors.

It is becoming increasingly important to protect

your identity. Never give your social security number or other personal information in response to a charitable solicitation. Only give your credit card information after you are certain that the organization is legitimate and familiar to you.

The OAG warns that if a fundraiser or telemarketer exhibits abusive, coercive or threatening behavior consumers should visit their website and file a complaint.

The Federal Trade Commission (<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov>) has some tips for consumers regarding scammers' tricks. "Don't let

anyone rush you into making a donation; scammers can change caller ID to make a call look like it's from a local area code; scammers make lots of vague and sentimental claims but give no specifics about how your donation will be used; bogus organizations may claim that your donation is tax-deductible when it is not; guaranteeing sweepstakes winnings in exchange for a donation is not only a scam, it's illegal."

If you believe you have been the victim of a scam call the Moraga Police Department at (925) 888-7055.

SMC SEBA Case Competition utilizes Painted Rock as this year's focus



Prize winning teams and the judges

Photo Vera Kochan

By Vera Kochan

The Moraga Chamber of Commerce and Saint Mary's College have once again partnered for the second annual case competition. The School of Economics and Business

Administration was tasked with developing a strategy for making Moraga a prime hiking destination in the East Bay thanks to the recent acquisition by John Muir Land Trust of the 84-acre Painted Rock area. This year's com-

petition also included possible strategies for boosting retail within Moraga's shopping centers thereby creating an influx of sales tax dollars.

The 100% community funded event was held Nov. 12 at SMC's Soda Center and

once again involved Professor Marco Aponte-Moreno's Strategic Management class.

The five teams in the competition were tasked with overcoming five criteria with regards to a five-year strategy: competitive advantage,

market need, potential for success, financial needs and presentation.

Throughout the course of the semester Moraga Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg, EBMUD Board Member Dee Rosario, JMLT Executive Director Linus Eukel, JLL Leasing Company's (Rheem Center) Jeff Badstubner, Parks and Recreation Director Breyana Brandt, Dover Saddletry Manager Madeline Appel and Vicki Von Arx, who represented the local horse community, spoke to the class offering their expertise.

Team 1 members Sarah Gonzalez, Noah Greene, Javier Landaverde, Byron Scott and Roman Zamora titled their presentation "Hidden Masterpiece of the East Bay." They suggested a Community of Colors Art Festival that could be inexpensively marketed through word-of-mouth and flyers;

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