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The U.S. Artistic Swim Team with Dr. Selina Shah, the team's physician.

Photo provided

World-class U.S. Artistic Swim Team trains for Olympics at Campo

By Jon Kingdon

If you have recently been to the Campolindo Soda Aquatic center, you may have seen several young women walking around with their faces slathered in a white cream. It was not a performance of Kabuki Theatre. You were witness to the United States National Junior and Senior Artistic (formally Synchronized) Swim Teams, which have located to Lamorinda in 2013 and have practiced at that facility every

year since. The facial covering is from baby anti-rash cream to protect the swimmers from the sun's reflection off the water. Why not zinc oxide? The anti-rash cream is just as effective, and it washes off more easily.

The last time that the U.S. team medaled in the Olympics was in 2004 when they received a bronze medal. To address this shortfall, USA Artistic Swimming, which is recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee as the National Governing Body for the sport,

went overseas to hire a new coach in December 2018, Andrea Fuentes, who was formally the head coach of Spain's Artistic Swim Team.

Fuentes, who was introduced to synchronized swimming when she turned 9 and competed for Spain until she retired at age 30, won three silver medals and one bronze medal in her Olympic career. She also won 16 world championships medals and 16 European championships medals before retiring to coach for Spain in 2013. ... continued on Page A10

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Happy Holidays
Looking forward to assisting you with your real estate needs in 2021!



How MOFD personnel helped dispatch the largest wildfire in California history



Photo provided

From left, MOFD engineer Dave Mazaika, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Dennis Rein, engineer Steve Rogness, Capt. Mike Marquardt

By Nick Marnell

On Nov. 13, four members of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District returned from their 14-day assignments at the North Zone of the August Lightning Complex, a wildfire caused by a series of lightning strikes Aug. 17. The August Complex fire destroyed more than 1 million acres, the largest wildfire in recorded California history.

MOFD personnel on site included Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Dennis Rein, Capt. Mike Marquardt and engineers Steve Rogness and Dave Mazaika. The men shared their experiences as members of the South Central Sierra Interagency Incident Management Team, based in Hayfork, about 45 miles west of Redding in heavily forested Trinity County.

Interagency incident management teams are called together when fires grow too large or complex for local agencies to handle. The teams comprise people who are called up from their regular jobs when an incident re-

quires their specialized services.

The August North Complex fire was managed by the U.S. Forest Service, which put together an incident management team in Hayfork in the middle of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Base camp peaked at 500 personnel, with half of the group firefighters, half of the group the incident support system.

"We built a small city within a 48-hour period," Mazaika said.

A typical day began with a 7 a.m. briefing, with most activity wrapped up by 10 p.m.

Marquardt, the Line Safety Officer, worked out in the field as the eyes and ears for incident safety. He verified escape routes. Are firefighters wearing the proper equipment? How are the road conditions? He confirmed weather reports. Weather extremes ranged from the possibility of heatstroke in August to frostbite in November; one morning, the temperature dropped to 12 degrees.

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