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Town agrees to join United Against Hate Week movement



Image provided

Moraga's posters and banners will look similar to this

By Vera Kochan

The United Against Hate movement took root during 2017, after various extremists began protesting in Berkeley, Calif.; and the tragic incident in Charlottesville, Va., where a man willfully drove his car into a group of people peacefully protesting a Unite the Right rally, killing one and injuring 35.

In 2018, Not In Our Town, a national anti-hate organization based in Oakland, Calif., joined the effort to spread the message through communities, local organizations, elected officials and faith groups.

The first United Against Hate Week was held Nov. 17-23, 2019. Each involved community hosted events such as workshops, rallies, guest speakers, film screenings, art projects and more.

Moraga's town council established a Diversity and Inclusion Ad Hoc Committee in January 2020, with Mayor Mike McCluer and Council Member Renata Sos as the representatives. One of the council's 2021 goals was to "contribute to the community effort to improve diversity and inclusion throughout the town."

McCluer and Sos have

provided updates from their activities with the Moraga Not In Our Town Community Coalition by: "attending community and organizational meetings; providing comments on and input into the drafting of a community Mission/Values Statement; doing outreach to community organizations to encourage their participation in the Mission/Values Statement drafting process; liaising with members of the Not In Our Town steering committee; and attending topical workshops and training sessions."

Three of the most recent Bay Area advocates to join the movement are Marin County, Albany Unified School District and the city of San Pablo. During Moraga's Sept. 22 council meeting, Sos stated that she and the mayor are proposing participating in this year's event but expect to leverage the existing energy and resources of community groups.

The council unanimously agreed to support the United Against Hate Week slated for Nov. 14-21, with the hope that it will be an annual event. Free posters (Moraga Stands Against Hate) will be available to community organizations, businesses and residents. Temporary banners will be displayed at approved locations, in addition to promoting the message on platforms such as the electronic sign across from Moraga Commons Park, About Town, Moraga's website, and on social media.

According to Town Manager Cynthia Battenberg, there should be no expense incurred by the town as businesses are stepping up to the plate and offering free services.

Hacienda noise mitigation

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In an attempt to mitigate the noise emanating from the Hacienda, staff strategically positioned speakers to direct noise away from neighboring properties; purchased portable acoustic panels (\$1,400) to buffer the sound emitted from behind the speakers; implemented non-compliance noise security deposits; and contracted for the use of former police and military personnel as security to monitor and enforce noise thresholds (\$78/hour).

One of the largest debates centers around appropriate decibel levels. "Based upon the sound readings gathered and input from the community, staff implemented a threshold of 75 to 80 dB at the music source which results in a 65 dB or lower reading at the property line," explained Brandt. "The security guards ensure that the threshold is maintained on the dance floor or six feet from the speakers. Sporadic claps and cheers may spike the decibel level slightly higher, but these spikes are not

related to the music and not sustained throughout the event."

By the end of August, security guards began collecting decibel readings from five locations on the property every 30 minutes. After seven events and 211 decibel readings, an analysis of the information was used to further determine the best possible solutions. As such, all live music (small acoustic bands only) have been relocated to indoor status, the Pavilion is relegated to a ceremony only location; and all DJs will be set up inside the Fireside Room with dancing allowed on the interior fountain patio. Wedgewood has inherited 25 events that will occur between March and June 2022 under the existing policy. They have agreed to comply with the new changes beginning July 2022.

Approximately \$20,000 of the current strategy costs will be paid through the Hacienda Events and Rentals budget for Contract Services. The expense will be addressed during the Mid-Year Budget Update.

Correction: In the Sept. 29 Lamorinda Weekly article, "Proclamation for Moraga Garden Center's Kenny Murakami" it stated that Murakami was "forced to retire by an ADA compliance lawsuit from a serial plaintiff," but Murakami says he had in fact decided to retire before the lawsuit was filed. We apologize for the error.



Town Council
Wednesday, Oct. 13, 6:30 p.m.
Planning Commission:
Tuesday, Oct. 19, 6:30 p.m.
Park and Recreation Commission:
Monday, Oct. 18, 7 p.m.
Moraga School District Board Meetings:
Tuesday, Nov. 9, 6 p.m.
www.moraga.k12.ca.us



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Your Village Associates:

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Bottom Row: Claudia Gohler, Angie Traxinger, Ann Sharf, Carol Stevenson, April Matthews, Ashley Battersby, Linda Ehrich, Margaret Zucker
Not Pictured: Altie Schmitt, Amy Rose Smith, Ann Ward, Dexter Honens II, Hillary Murphy, Joan Evans, John Nash, Judy Schoenrock

Thank you, Lamorinda!
It's Village. Of Course.

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