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Lamorinda's wealth of health on display at Moraga Commons

Submitted by Brenda Luster



Sunday Strong instructors at Moraga Commons Park Photo provided

Lamorinda is filled with health-conscious citizens who run, walk their dogs, bike through our beautiful hills, and this last summer, participated in a new program at the Moraga Commons Park called Sunday Strong. Sunday Strong was started by the Moraga Community Foundation, in cooperation with the Town of Moraga Parks and Recreation Department, to offer free fitness classes every Sunday morning in the park during June and July.

Lamorinda's finest instructors volunteered their time to promote the health and well-being of our community and help MCF raise awareness for the Commons Enhancement Program, which includes the purchase and installation of a new ADA compliant, 4-stall, gender-neutral restroom facility at the south end of the Commons Park. The program showcased these amazing local instructors and offered a variety of fitness classes including Bootcamp, Yoga, Pilates, and Tai Chi.

"Sunday Strong gave our community an opportunity to connect personally with neighbors and civically in support of MCF to improve the park facilities," said Brenda Luster of the Moraga Community Foundation (www.moragacommunityfoundation.org). "Engaging the mind, body, spirit, and community rejuvenates us and others around us."

Christine Vleck Jensen has been teaching Pilates for over 15 years in San Francisco and is now opening a Mighty Pilates in downtown Lafayette (www.MightyPilates.com). "The Sunday Strong program was a great way to introduce the local fitness community to a variety of classes," Vleck Jensen said. "Participants who attended my class were thrilled to have the opportunity to try different classes and instructors all while enjoying being outside in the park."

Vleck Jensen is an accomplished lifelong athlete having been a Division 1 softball player, cyclist, and an Ironman. With the addition of a Nutrition degree from Cornell and an MBA from Berkeley, she is proving herself an invaluable health and fitness resource for the Lamorinda community.

Belle Hammond founded Moraga Bootcamp (www.moragabootcamp.com) and is a certified instructor in multiple disciplines. She has spent the last 11 years passionately motivating others to live a healthy lifestyle. Her promise is "to meet each one of [my] clients where they are in their current journey."

Katie Rogers teaches Ashtanga/Vinyasa yoga at Atma Yoga in Orinda (www.mindbodyonline.com). Rogers started teaching yoga in 2006 with the goal "that students experience not only a mental and physical release in her class, but that they leave with a renewed sense of inner peace and connectedness."

Dina Ricksen is an avid health and fitness advocate in Moraga and has taught Pilates for over 20 years, currently offering her expertise at Joy in Motion (www.joynmotiondance.org) and also runs a successful Arbonne business furthering her commitment to healthy living.

Grandmaster Marilyn Cooper has been training and teaching the art of traditional Chinese Kung Fu for over 50 years, winning several titles in national and international competitions. In 1999, after the Columbine High School tragedy, Marilyn found a way to bring the peacefulness of T'ai Chi training to our youth to help prevent bullying and encourage empathy by creating the 9 Tai Chi Peace Games (www.pushingforpeace.org).

Sunday Strong has ended but these health and fitness guru's continue to offer a wealth of resources and talents serving as a vital part of the Lamorinda community and our quality of life.

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