



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

**MORAGA**

**Town Council:** Regular meeting Wednesday, March 8, 6:30 p.m.  
**Planning Commission:** Tuesday, March 7, 6:30 p.m.  
**Moraga School District Board Meetings:**  
 Tuesday, March 14, 6 p.m. www.moraga.k12.ca.us.

**Do you have a person or couple in mind to be honored as the 2023 Moraga Citizen(s) of the Year?**

Selection criteria are as follows:

- Cannot be a current elected member or paid staff of the Town Council, the Town or any other local public agency (e.g., School District or Fire District);
- Must have a Moraga mailing address;
- Nominees should be persons who:  
 (1) have given their time, talent and treasure to help make Moraga a vibrant community, one where people want to live, work and shop; and (2) bring the community together and make us proud to be residents of Moraga.

Please email your nomination to nominations@lamorindaweekly.com or mail it to Moraga Citizen of the Year Nominations, Lamorinda Weekly, 1480 Moraga Road Suite C # 202, Moraga CA 94556. The deadline for receipt of nominations is Thursday, March 9. A celebration dinner will be held on Friday, April 28, in the Holy Trinity Cultural Center in Moraga to honor the winner.

**Mike Rosa**  
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**Town Council agrees on 2023 Goals and Priorities**

By Vera Kochan

As is customary in the town of Moraga, each new year provides council members with the opportunity to establish its goals and priorities for the coming year. The purpose is to inform the community of Moraga's priorities while providing town staff with a direction for the future.

After a presentation of the goals by Mayor Renata Sos during the Feb. 15 town council meeting, only some minor tweaking was in order after discussions and staff clarifications on a few of the topics.

The Moraga Town Council and Community 2023 Goals and Priorities (Collaboration and Community) are as follows: Continue to lay the foundation and create pathways for a better mix of housing and the revitalization of the town's two commercial areas, including adopting a certified Housing Element, rezoning the commercial centers and Bollinger Canyon, updating the General Plan, and completing an evacuation study; Maintain fiscal disci-

pline, position the town for long-term fiscal sustainability, and efficiently sustain core operations of the town services to residents; and Complete the second year of the 2022-2024 "Worst Streets First" Pavement Reconstruction Project.

More goals are: Continue the Storm Drain Operations and Maintenance Program and complete 2021-2023 Storm Drain Capital Improvement Projects; Support high-quality police and emergency response services, including by securing energy alternatives for emergencies, and coordinate with MOFD on fire safety and planning; and Enhance the town's parks, open space and facilities for the benefit of the public, and move forward with public input into a town-wide recreation and open space plan.

Additional goals include: Pursue measures designed to improve traffic, pedestrian and bicycle safety, especially around our schools, crosswalks, through routes, and residential street entry points to the town's main roadways;

Work with the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, Saint Mary's College, and local school districts to enhance Moraga's business and educational climate; Continue outreach to the public and provide opportunities for input from all segments of the community; and Continue to work with Wedgewood to enhance the Hacienda and address the impacts of operations on the neighborhood.

The final four goals are as follows: Onboard the new town manager with minimum disruption to staff and to operations, and collaboratively streamline town council meetings; Lessen the town's impact on the environment by continuing to implement sustainability and resiliency initiatives and viable strategies in Moraga's Climate Action Plan and in the town's Facility Energy Generation Study; Conduct a town council/town manager session focused on effectiveness and organizational competency; and Initiate the process of amending the town-wide noise ordinance.

**Moraga's Vice Mayor opts for prescribed burn in yard to reduce future wildfire threats**



Photo Vera Kochan

ConFire Captain Aaron Brunton supervises his fire crew

By Vera Kochan

Moraga Vice Mayor Teresa Onoda was worried about the risk of additional wildfires in her neighborhood. "We have evacuated twice, and that makes me very concerned about fire, because we live on Merrill Circle." A friend and Firewise member, Suzanne D'Arcy, told Onoda about the free ember-resistant vents that the Moraga-Orinda Fire District was offering to residents thanks to a \$500,000 home hardening grant they received (www.mofd.org/our-district/fuels-mitigation-fire-prevention/home-hardening-grant-program)

Upon picking up her pre-ordered vent from MOFD, Onoda arranged to have a Firewise meeting in her home for her neighbors. MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker came to the meeting and used her yard as an example of what needed to be done, most of which involved limbing-up trees. Winnacker reminded everyone in attendance that MOFD could arrange a prescribed burn for free on residential properties if the job required it.

Onoda's next step was to

hire Will Thorn, owner of Wildland Corporation (wildlandcorp.com), a fuels mitigation expert. "He limbed-up all of the trees, and just before the prescribed burn, during the January storms, two of our oak trees fell."

Thorn was in contact with MOFD's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Dennis Rein who decided when was an optimal time for the burn. The day before the Feb. 16 burn, MOFD alerted residents in the area to prevent any panic from the smell of smoke and to advise keeping windows and doors closed.

"Our job for the pile burning was to deal with any fallen trees, limbing-up trees, and removing any brush or flammable vegetation," stated Thorn. "We ended up with three piles about 8 feet or higher. One pile is called a "feeder," and that's what is used to toss onto the burning piles when the flames have died down a bit." Thorn was present during the burn, because "I like to be there to see the job through."

Captain Aaron Brunton of Contra Costa Fire Crew 12 brought a 16-man crew of

firefighters to perform the prescribed burn which was located near the top of a steep incline. According to the Bureau of Land Management, "A prescribed fire (also called a controlled burn) is an important tool that can be used to reduce the risk of large uncharacteristically severe wildfire, increase public and firefighter safety, as well as meet a variety of integrated natural resource management objectives."

"MOFD often reaches out to ConFire (the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District) to assist with these types of projects," stated Brunton. His crew size fits the minimum requirement for a Type 2 IA (crews that can form into three or four separate squads of four people to initially attack fires separately). None of the fires that Brunton has supervised have ever "escaped." Optimal weather and seasonal conditions for the burns is winter when Mother Nature has provided enough rain and the trees have absorbed enough water to make it safe. The fire crews also hook up hoses to the nearest fire hydrants in the street. Once the burn has been completed, the fire crew spreads out the embers and hoses down any hot spots to prevent a possible fire coming back to life at a later time.

Brunton noted that these types of free, prescribed burns are available in Contra Costa County thanks to funds from Measure X.

Onoda has already decided what she will do with all of the cleared space. She has purchased a Bay Area Wildflower mix of seeds from Pacific Coast Seed, Inc. of Tracy, Calif. that will attract butterflies. Thorn will return during planting season to help sprinkle the seeds. The cycle of life continues.

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