

# Ad Hoc Committee established for Moraga's 50th Anniversary Celebration

By Vera Kochan

It seems like only yesterday, for those who can remember, that Moraga took the big step of incorporation. It became official on Nov. 12, 1974, and the Town's 50th Anniversary is just one year and three months away.

According to a July 12 staff report by Town Manager Scott Mitnick and Interim Town Clerk Yashin Abbas, "In response, during the June 28, 2023 Town Council meeting review of the Proposed Biennial FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25 Budget, Town Council ap-

proved a \$25,000 initial budget appropriation to serve as 'seed money' to start the year-long celebration process. In addition, Town Council directed staff to report back with the necessary action to establish an Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Committee consisting of the Mayor and Vice Mayor."

The committee held its first meeting on Aug. 10, in order to get the ball rolling for the big celebration next year. Members include: Mayor Renata Sos, Vice Mayor Teresa Onoda, Communication Honor Roll/Past President of Moraga Education Foundation Ana

Moon, Moraga Historical Society President Susan Sperry, Art in Public Spaces Committee Member Holly Hartz, Town Manager Scott Mitnick, Parks and Recreation Director Mackenzie Brady, and Moraga

Historical Society Publicity and Program Chair Vera Kochan.

The 50th Anniversary Celebration plans to include participation from the town's organizations, schools, busi-

nesses, and residents in an effort to make certain that all Moragans can take pride in the opportunity to be a part of the big party.

# Wildland Training Live Burn at Painted Rock



Photo courtesy Lafayette Police Department

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It was executed according to a strict "go, no go" checklist and was coordinated with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and Fire Weather Forecasters at the National Weather Service "to ensure the size and timing of the burning would minimize smoke impacts to homes and other smoke-sensitive sites in the area."

The burn area was divided up into 10 units with directions facing west, north and south around the peak. Fires were started on the north side near Buckingham Drive; progressed to the south forming what is called "a catcher's mitt" strategy, which burns a massive line around an area that lets the fire come to the crews; and finished off facing west above Moraga Road. The reasoning behind setting fire to the west last is that it would ensure safety to the Rheem Valley Shopping Center in the event of stray embers since crews from the already burned areas would be available as backup if

necessary.

"This is part of a longer-term project to promote grazing from cows and for future mitigation," stated Winnacker. It is hoped that eventually cattle can be brought into the region to keep the vegetation in check and reduce the risk of wildfire threat. He also stressed the importance of cooperation from homeowners with respect to vegetation mitigation.

According to Rein, for several firefighters, this was their first time getting experience with this type of terrain; and while there is an East Bay Municipal Utility District water tank on the property, the crews would only use it during an emergency. The fires were started and burned in such a way as to virtually extinguish themselves back into the blackline of an area that has already burned, but crews continually checked for any spot fires that reignite themselves.

"Every burn has a general game plan, but it's never defined until they [the crews] are actually out there," Rein said.

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