



# MORAGA

See public meetings schedule on these 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

**Town Council Meetings**

Wed., March 13, 6:30 p.m.

Wed., March 27, 6:30 p.m.

**Planning Commission:**

Tuesday, March 19, 6:30 p.m.

**Park and Recreation Commission:**

TBA

## Town welcomes new administrative services director

By Vera Kochan



Photo Vera Kochan

### Moraga's new Administrative Services Director Katie Bruner

Moraga's new Administrative Services Director Katie Bruner officially began working for the town on Feb. 20, taking control of the position from Interim Director Lisa Malek-Zadeh, who in turn filled the post

since Annie To resigned in October.

Previously serving as the City of Walnut Creek's budget and procurement manager for six years, Bruner has had an additional 11 years of experience with

both Alameda and Napa Counties in an analyst capacity. She has a Master of Public Administration, along with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Sonoma State University.

Bruner's town duties will encompass financial reporting and management; human resources, which includes recruitment, benefits management, and daily operations; information technology; preparation of operating and capital improvement budgets; risk management involving financial, human resource and liability risk management; strategic financial planning and analysis; and supervision of accounting services.

"Katie's exposure to working for three well-run California local governments in general, combined with her spe-

cific experience in the key components necessary to succeed as an Administrative Services Director, make her an ideal candidate to take on the role," stated Town Manager Scott Mitnick in a recent press release. "In addition to her technical skills (including budget preparation, long-term financial forecasting, preparing financial reports, investment portfolio management, purchasing, improving technology, etc.), Katie has the necessary people skills to work effectively with Town Council, Department Directors, Town employees, and members of the community."

Bruner grew up in the Bay Area and used to drive through town on her way to work from Oakland to Walnut Creek. She and her husband appreciated the

small-town feel of Moraga, which is why making a job relocation was a perfect move for her.

"There are a lot of similarities in services, and every city is different" Bruner said, when comparing working for a town as opposed to a city. "Here, there's a smaller staff, and everyone has to wear many hats -- you have to do more."

Currently living in Walnut Creek, Bruner is getting herself acclimated to Moraga government's way of doing things, "there's always room for improvement. In order to do that you have to get an idea of the process before you make any changes."

Bruner added, "I'm really excited to be here and serve the community in any capacity, and I also want to meet everyone's needs."

## The history of trains in Moraga — an MHS event

By Vera Kochan

The Moraga Historical Society, in an effort to keep local history alive, held another of its public presentations at the Hacienda de las Flores. This time the topic was trains.

The March 3 event drew a sellout crowd of enthusiasts looking forward to hearing resident train expert, Sam Sperry, regale everyone with facts and a visual buffet of 53 slides. Sperry even showed up dressed for the part with an authentic train conductor's uniform, which he wears while retelling stories of Moraga's rails every year to the town's third grade classes (something he's done for 10 years).

Sperry's love for trains captured his attention when he was a boy. Growing up in Mackinaw, Illinois, where a depot was located, he would often ride the rails of the Illinois Central Railroad to

Peoria, Illinois.

Taking everyone's imaginations back in time to a 1913 Moraga, Sperry began with the Oakland, Antioch & Eastern Railway's route between Oakland and Sacramento with a stop at the Moraga Station, which took the town's commuters to work and pears to market. In 1928, the Western Pacific Railroad acquired OA&E, along with the Northern Railway and formed the 185-mile long Sacramento Northern Railway that added a St. Mary's College Station to the route, which eventually ended at Chico.

Sperry's presentation went beyond Moraga's boundaries to include facts beginning in 1905 and ending in 1957. He presented slides of various maps and photos which included sections of routes such as the San Francisco - Oakland Key System Ferries along with the Oakland

segment -- up Shafter Avenue to College Avenue and on to Lake Temescal and the Shepherd Pass Tunnel. According to Sperry, the Shepherd Pass Tunnel route ran under Skyline Boulevard and was 3,200 feet long, passing extremely close to the Hayward Fault.

Nearing its way to Moraga, the route continued through Redwood Canyon as it ran along Pinehurst Road (a popular picnic spot in its day), making a left at Canyon Road and running past Valle Vista's rock quarry with an eventual stop at the Moraga Station (which was directly across from today's Moraga Barn). The train's second stop in town was the St. Mary's College Station, eventually heading on to stops in Lafayette, Saranap, Walnut Creek, and Concord before boarding a train ferry at Mallard Island in order to cross Su-

isun Bay. The train cars were deposited at Chippis Island where the route continued on to Sacramento and eventually Chico.

The trains which served the entire route ran on an all-electric system. With the advent of the Caldecott Tunnel's opening in 1937, passenger service was terminated in 1941, due to reduced ridership. In early 1957, freight service was also discontinued.

There are reminders and remnants throughout Moraga of the 44 years of crucial service the railroad system provided to our small town. Some are visible,



Photo Vera Kochan

### "Conductor" Sam Sperry dresses the part for his train presentation

while others you just have to know where to look.

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## Election results: Moraga passes school bond, incumbents win their races

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In other Moraga school news, Parks also announced a tentative agreement with teachers. "This is an achievement to be proud of and aligns with our collective priority to recruit and retain excellent teachers," Parks said. The 7.5% salary increase across the salary schedule will mean that Moraga School District teachers will have realized a cumulative 19% raise over the last three years.

Local Demorcatc Congressman Mark DeSaulnier was the highest

vote-taker in the county, with approximately 65% of the vote. He will face Republic challenger Katherine Piccinini, who took about 19% of the votes, in the general election in November. Democratic Assembly member Rebecca Bauerkahan similarly took over 66% of the votes, and will run against Republican Joseph Rubay, who took about 33% of votes. County Supervisor Candace Andersen ran unopposed.

State Proposition 1, which was favored in Contra Costa County by over 56% of voters, is

still undetermined as votes statewide continue to be counted. Some vote-by-mail ballots still await counting, including those postmarked by March 5 but which arrive up to 5 days later. County election officials must verify results 30 days after the election. The Secretary of State's office must certify the election eight days later. The school bond and the state proposition will be final after the March vote. Candidates will move forward to the November general election.

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