

Lafayette puts 'awesome' into after-school care

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The recreation department staff know what they are doing in this field. With many years of the ever-popular Camp Awesome providing summertime fun and activities, parents have confidence in the program, as the survey proved.

Details on how to apply can be found on the PTR page of the city website <http://www.lovelafayette.org>

org/city-hall/city-departments/parks-trails-recreation/recreation-programs/after-school-awesome.

Heinsma says the goal is to expand the program in the future. "I am excited to have all the kids here, to help them build a love for the community center and to have fun," he says.

How awesome is that?

Tatzin not running for re-election

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I will need to have heart surgery within a few years and I am not sure for how long I will be out of commission or what my abilities will be when I return."

Tatzin said that he knows he will miss being involved with council decisions and city life but expressed his confidence that there are many qualified citizens who can be outstanding council members.

Those remaining so late into the night at the city meeting gave him a standing ovation, although the news was a surprise to most.

Lafayette resident and Circulation Commissioner Lynn Hiden was sad to hear the news the following morning.

"With his institutional memory, region-wide respect, his ability to negotiate, a killer logic, and his dedication, he was very good for us. Which had been his intent, all along," notes Hiden.

Lafayette City Manager Steve Falk describes Tatzin's accomplishments on behalf of the city as nothing short of monumental.

"Don has had a hand in every significant project that the city has completed over the last three decades," says Falk, explaining that list includes the development of the Lafayette Community Park and Buckeye Fields, the acquisition of

Leigh Creekside Park, the deal to acquire the Acalanes Ridge Open Space, the rebuilding of Lafayette Plaza, the Veterans Memorial Building, and the new Lafayette Police Station.

"To my mind, Don's greatest accomplishment is probably his least well-known," says Falk. "He was the financial architect behind the \$50 million Lafayette Library and Learning Center; his plan not only helped pay for the Library but also endowed the Library Foundation with more than \$10 million, thus ensuring that the Library would not only be built, but also successful for generations."

Highlighting his moral leadership, Falk notes that, "During his 33 years on the city council, Don Tatzin has been an unwavering champion for transparency, for public participation, for people with disabilities, and for fiscal responsibility. By making these his priorities, he set an example for other council members and for all of the many staff members who worked for the city during Don's tenure.

"The city and its residents are far better off because Don Tatzin chose to devote more than half of his life to public service," reflects Falk.

Orinda rejects regulation of temporary events

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However, he also said that on each occasion upon which the police had been called to the Great Oaks property, the owner was polite and responsive. Over the past year, police have received 12 complaints about the property. Drummond Buckley, director of planning, was asked how Orinda can do a better job of enforcing existing code requirements. He responded that they might use an acoustic engineer to measure decibels, and added that some Orinda police cars now have equipment to measure decibel levels. He also suggested that the city is allowed to charge a single violation for each hour of an event, potentially leading to multiple fines being imposed on the violator. However, he added, it is difficult to capture commerciality.

City attorney Richard Taylor noted that the city can fine-tune code enforcement, but that it is up to the city to prove commerciality. He added that two years ago the state increased county fines to \$1,500 but did not increase city

finer. Vice Mayor Inga Miller said that she liked enforcement rather than the proposed permits, and Council Member Darlene Gee said that she supports vigorous, aggressive enforcement rather than new rules that would affect the entire community when there is only one offender. "It is an incredibly frustrating issue," Taylor said, "when someone who doesn't even live in the community continues to get away with imposing misery on our residents." Council Member Dean Orr agreed that it is very frustrating, and said that the council is very sympathetic to the residents. Mayor Amy Worth expressed concerns about the public safety issues that had been raised.

In the end, the council decided not to pursue changes to the temporary event permit program, but asked staff to come back to them with ideas for stronger code enforcement. The owner of the property in question did not respond to requests for comment on this issue.

Cameras installed in Moraga help capture crooks

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King's first additional project in Moraga was creating a safe exchange zone monitored by a camera. The chief explains that people in town have asked his department to create a place where safe exchange of goods could happen. He says that other departments have done this and it has proven useful to people wanting to buy or sell items online and needing a safe place to trade goods for money with a stranger. The parking spot next to the entrance of the building

at 329 Rheem Blvd. where the police department is located will be marked and a red emergency phone is also available there, next to the door, connecting people to police dispatch 24/7.

His second project is a portable camera unit that he says can be installed if a series of crimes are noted in a particular location.

The camera records are stored for 30 to 60 days at the department. The data is not shared over the internet.

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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

OPERA IS AFFORDABLE! [Re: "10th anniversary of Opera in the Park"]

Contrary to the remark quoted in your article of July 11, it is possible to enjoy live opera performances without breaking the budget. Yes, the best seats are costly, but that's true in sports venues as well. Here are some opportunities your readers should know about.

San Francisco Opera has "rush" days for students and military (sfopera.com/rush) and standing room for anyone. Civic Center BART station is a few minutes' walk away.

Opera San Jose (which is only one hour away via 680 and is a superb company performing in a gorgeous theatre) has subscriptions starting at \$100 for 4 operas. The city garage one block away charges \$5 for parking evenings and Sundays. (operasj.org)

Our wonderful region is also home to Livermore

Valley Opera, West Bay Opera (performing in Palo Alto), West Edge Opera (Berkeley), and Island City Opera (Alameda), all charging very modest fees.

And of course the Met broadcasts live performances of world-class singers to our local movie theatres on Saturday mornings (encores on Wednesdays) for about \$25 (metopera.org/Season/In-Cinemas). Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek cinemas broadcast these. Bet you can't get a good stadium seat for that! – let alone paying for parking and the outrageous prices for inferior food at ball parks.

I'm glad that the Orinda Rotary Club offers a charming outdoor summer opera event – what a great way to introduce people to this wonderful art form! Let's be sure your readers know that after their first taste, there are many ways to afford opera.

Linda Riebel
Lafayette

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence – we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Hacienda event highlights Moraga's easy-going style

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From time to time a little group of teenagers from the local high school strolled by, putting on airs of such dignity and showing off their summer tans. Old friends were meeting in the lines, some council members were meandering and talking to their constituency while parks and recreation staff member Clinton Calkins was keeping an eye on everything.

The organizer of the evening had been there since setup in the morning and was enjoying a slice of pizza, knowing that he would have to stay late that night to make sure everything was cleaned up and ready for the wedding booked for the next day.

Calkins had hired the six trucks. He explained that it was a mix of old favorites and new ones. A foody himself, Calkins had tasted everything and was confident residents would enjoy it. At a nearby table three young mothers with their little ones, including a newborn, agreed that there was food for everyone at the event and that all was delicious. They said that they had bought food at the trucks last year and were very happy to see them back. For them, besides the food, the community feel and the beauty of the space were the prime attractions.

This Friday night an additional vendor captured a lot of attention: Canyon Club Brewery that is set to open at the corner of Country Club Drive and Canyon Road before the end of the year installed a stand and was providing samples of a few of its alcoholic creations.

Calkins explains that this is his third year organizing the event, making it a much easier task. He knows the trucks and their owners and how to negotiate with them. The town had to do it that way rather than hiring a company such as Taste of the World to run the event because all the existing truck companies deemed Moraga too small to be worthy of their attention. Calkins says he likes it better that way; it gives flexibility for the town to hire the people they really love and the truck owners also like it because they do not have to pay a flat fee plus a percentage to an organizer, but instead give 10 percent of their gross sales to the town. Calkins explains that the fees received cover the town's costs, including table rentals, county health permits, staff time and marketing.

The next Hacienda food truck

event is scheduled on Aug. 10, and will feature Yummi BBQ, Sip & Slide, Cosa Nostra Pasta Truck, Flavors of Cali, Golden Gate Gyro and the popular dessert truck Izzya's Frozen Custard. The third event will be on Aug. 24 and the fourth and last event on Sept. 14.

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