



EXPERIENCE MATTERS

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Margaret DePriester – two-term mayor during the 1980s passes away leaving her imprint on Moraga



Photo provided

Margaret DePriester

By Vera Kochan

With a can-do attitude and an indomitable spirit, Margaret DePriester could easily have been given the title “Moraga’s Ambassador of Good Works.”

DePriester passed away on Aug. 19 at the age of 98, but not before making her mark on the town she and her husband, Coral, called home since 1968.

“She wanted to contribute to the community, and her goal was to make it an even better place to live,” stated her daughter Susan Freeman. “She really loved Moraga.”

DePriester played an integral role in the incorpora-

tion of the town of Moraga in 1974; was the first woman appointed to the planning commission in 1975; was elected to the town council in 1980 and served for eight years, including two terms as mayor in 1983 and 1987; was voted Moraga Citizen of the Year in 1986; served as president of the Moraga Historical Society in 1993 and 2004 (she chaired the committee that raised funds to build the Moraga History Center and worked as an archivist there); was the founding president of The Hacienda Foundation of Moraga, Inc. in 2006; and was elected president of Moraga Valley Kiwanis Club during 2005-06.

Her friends Sam and Susan Sperry and Dave and Debby Trotter would often take DePriester and her close friend Elsie Mastick (both of whom had moved into Moraga Royale) out to dinner locally. “I met her when I joined the Kiwanis in 2002,” recalled Sam Sperry. “She immediately impressed me as a person of strong values and a firm resolve.”

Susan Sperry praised DePriester’s work for the Historical Society: “She worked tirelessly and was a valuable asset for many years, especially doing computer and email work.”

Dave Trotter added, “Margaret was a very dear friend. An influential and widely respected town leader, Margaret was a force to be reckoned with, and also admired, at the same time. Margaret loved Moraga and its history. I learned a lot about both over the past three decades by listening very carefully, and heeding what she had to say.”

During a recent Kiwanis Club meeting, members paid tribute to DePriester with recollections and praise: “You never could really say ‘no’ to Margaret;” “She was very persuasive in convincing people to serve on boards and committees within town;” “She didn’t put up with any shenanigans;” “Daffodil planting started with Margaret;” “She always had time to have a conversation with you. She was always interested in what you had to say;” “She was a legend and a hero to people;” “When she passed away I thought how is that – she was not mortal;” and “She was instrumental in passing a safe roof ordinance while on the town council.”

One Kiwanis member described DePriester’s imprint on Moraga succinctly: “She was a mighty politician and friend to everyone. What an incredible lady.”

Town council candidates

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Lamorinda Weekly: What areas of the MCSP do you feel will most benefit the residents and the town as a whole?

Candidates: Schilling felt that a slow, sensitive and measured growth would preserve the history and charm of Moraga.

Onoda and Sos both noted that while SB 330 has put controls on the town’s housing development, MCSP is meant to provide affordable housing for students, seniors and workforce within a walkable area of shops and transit. They also agree that the Plan will provide clear guidelines as to future development and minimize

disagreements between the town and developers.

Stromberg appreciates the centralizing of retail/commercial/ residential within a Town Center along with an extension of the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail; a possible Bed and Breakfast; and the preservation of Moraga Ranch.

Langan agreed with the importance of preserving Moraga Ranch in addition to creating an educational, recreational and shopping destination to help the town thrive.

The Moraga Citizens Network will host Candidates Night online. The event will be held from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Sept. 30. All five candidates will at-

tend. For updates and information regarding login access for the event go to: www.MCNMoraga.org. To submit a question for the candidates email: MCN94556@gmail.com by the Sept. 25 deadline.

Parking lots evolve into active sites during pandemic

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Modifications had to be made: no dojo means no bare-foot practice on asphalt, so the classes are led in kimono and wearing sport shoes. There is no close contact, of course, but still plenty of exercises to boost participants’ fitness.

Guzman also had to make some accommodations to abide by the health regulations. First, she bought stall mats, the thick rubber mats that can be used for horses and are installed in gyms. Each participant in Lafayette is asked to stay on their mat, so there is no contact. One at a time they get the individual equipment that will be used that day, and that will be disinfected after the practice. Brittany Haas who is part of

that CrossFit community with her husband says that the extra precautions make her feel safe and she could not wait to come back to train live. She says that being there with the trainer and others in the class that she knows make a big difference, and it is a nice break from a work-day at home.

Westernoff says that about a third of his clients come to the live classes. Cole who recently started has seen only about 10% of his regular following in the outdoor classes, but he has big plans for the coming months, including hopefully a Halloween outdoor party. If restrictive measures stay in place, everyone is thinking about rain protection with umbrellas or sails, because stopping is not an option.



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Town Council
Wednesday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m.

Planning Commission: Monday, Sept. 21, 7 p.m.

Park and Recreation Commission:
Tuesday, Oct. 20 7 p.m.,

Moraga School District Board Meetings:
Special Board Meeting, Oct. 13, 6 p.m.
www.moraga.k12.ca.us. See also AUHSD meeting page A2

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