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12:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Life in LAMORINDA

MOFD Adds Four New Firefighters to Roster

By Lucy Amaral



Firefighters at a minor vegetation fire last Saturday in Orinda near Valley View Drive and Don Gabriel Way. Photo submitted by Jim Boucher

Four newly-hired firefighters were introduced to the Board of Directors at the July 15 Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) Board meeting. Daniel Elbanna, M. Evan Edminster and Jacob Airola were in attendance at the meeting. The fourth, Steven Gehling, was out of town but was included in the introduction by Battalion Chief Darrell Lee.

The four graduated from the XAL Fire Academy in San Leandro and will be replacing recently retired MOFD firefighters. Lee said that the Academy work included physical training, education and practical experience.

"It was an intensive 18 weeks of running, pulling hose, ladders, ropes and learning about hazardous materials, helicopter operations and multi-casualty care," said Lee. "This group also focused on Wildland fires, structure fires, car fires and cargo container fires, along with team work exercises and emphasizing the importance of providing customer service to the community."

Lee said that each probationary firefighter-paramedic will start their tours in Orinda on the ambulance or fire engine and that their assignment could be for the next six to 12 months.

During their probationary time at MOFD, Lee said the four will continue their training. "They will have continual education in the history of the area, street knowledge, mutual threat zones for Wildland, and deliver the advanced pre-hospital care to the sick and injured," He said.

The new firefighters come to MOFD with a variety of experience. Airola, received his paramedic license from UCLA. Daniel Freeman did his EMT at Santa Barbara City College, served for two years as an Emergency Medical Technician for University of California, Santa Barbara Rescue and worked this last year for American Medical Response ambulance service in Contra Costa County before joining MOFD.

Edminster has served as an ER nurse, a CalStar Flight Nurse, as well as a Flight Medic and a Flight

Nurse for the United States Air Force. He was also part of the first wave deployed to Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Gehling, the son of a Contra Costa Fire Captain, holds a degree in Fire Science and gained experience as a volunteer Firefighter-Paramedic in the River-Delta Fire Department and the Cordelia Fire Department as well as serving as a paramedic for Medic Ambulance in Solano County for two years.

A UC Davis graduate with a degree in Exercise Biology, Elbanna's firefighting experience is closer to home, serving as a MOFD Reserve firefighter, including Lead Reserve, for the past year before being hired and attending the Fire Academy.

"We are very proud to have them as part of our team to provide the next generation of firefighters and a long standing tradition of duty, honor and family," said Lee.

The new recruits have already put their training to use. Lee advised that the day after the introductions, several of the new firefighters responded to a Wildland fire near Highway 24.

MOFD to Hold Annual Fill The Boot Campaign

The Union representing the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) will host its annual "Fill The Boot" campaign to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association July 27 and July 29 at the corner of Brookwood and Moraga Way in Orinda.

Vince Wells, of Firefighters Union 1230, said that members of the MOFD will be at the intersection from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with boots in hand to collect donations from the community. *L.Amaral*

TIRE SAFETY DURING TRAVEL SEASON Ask Jeff



Jeff Joyce

Now that our peak driving season is here, the highways are crowded and people are on the go. So let's be sure that the only part of your car that touches the road are safe and reliable. Always have a competent tire facility inspect your tires regularly for pressure and treadwear. Have the wheel alignment inspected annually or if you encounter a road hazard or sudden impact to any of your wheels. Today's cars use larger tires,

mounted on aluminum alloy wheels, which have a lower profile and don't give the same cushion to protect the tires and wheels from impact damage. Plus, lower profile tires can be seriously under-inflated and you may not even notice it. So never take your tires for granted, and keep your tires a priority as they are the only part between you and the pavement.

Dear Jeff:
My tires are making a lot of noise when I drive. They kinda sound like a tractor. Is it just a cheap set of tires or what?
Signed Noisy in Newark.

Dear Noisy:
Most likely it's not the quality of the tire that is responsible for the noise. If your car has over 50,000 miles it's time to look at your suspension performance. Industry experts say shock and strut performance will deteriorate after 50,000 miles and will cause uneven treadwear. Also,

routine tire rotations must be done to insure even treadwear along with regular tire pressure inspections.

Dear Jeff:
My car has run-flat tires and I recently had a flat and the tire guy said I have to buy a new tire. Is that really true or did I get scammed?

Signed: Flat in Frisco
Dear Flat:
Unfortunately its true. The run-flat tires should not be repaired due to the type of construction of the tire and the fact that once any tire has been repaired, tire manufacturers will void any warranty on that tire. Since run-flat tires were designed to save lives, not money, you were given good, sound advice

Jeff Joyce has been the Manager of Express Oil Change & Tire Center since 2004. He can be reached at 925-254-8989 or jjoyce@orindamotors.com

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Lafayette Hosts National Pétanque Tournament

By Sophie Braccini



Players caught on a Sunday afternoon at the Lafayette pétanque field. Photo Sophie Braccini

On July 25 and 26 the Lafayette Pétanque Field will host a national championship for men, women and couples. The tournament is open only to pre-registered participants who are members of the Federation of Pétanque USA (FPUSA). It will be

an ideal opportunity for curious residents to come and see champions fight it out at 480 Saint Mary's Road.

Lafayette resident Mary Albright heads up the the Lamorinda Pétanque Club, the tournament organizers. "Our Club has been part

of the American Federation since the beginning," says Albright who is also the vice-president of the Federation. "we have some very good players here in Lafayette and about six local teams will be in the tournament." Overall she expects about 40 teams to compete in the event.

Pétanque is a French metal bowl game that's a cousin to Bocce Ball and Lawn Ball. "Here today we had a lady who came for the first time and who is a bocce ball player," said Albright when we visited with her on the field, "and she is already doing very well."

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