

Public Meetings

Town Council Wednesday, December 8, 7:30 pm Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, 1010 Camino Pablo

Planning Commission Monday, December 6, 7:30 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Design Review Monday, December 13, 7:00 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd

Liaison Friday, December 10, 8:00 am Fire Station, 1280 Moraga Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements Town of Moraga online: Chamber of Commerce: Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moraga.ca.us www.moragachamber.org www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

Police Report

tion card. Estimated loss \$80.

Very petty theft, 11/04/10 Sometime during the night, an unknown suspect entered an unlocked black BMW parked in a Camino Ricardo driveway and mated loss \$390. removed \$5.00 in change from

or leads at this time. Bigger petty theft, 11/04/10 Also on Camino Ricardo, about a block down the street that very same night, an unknown suspect entered an unlocked Cadillac parked in the driveway and removed a set of keys, two garage door openers and the car registra-

the center console. No witnesses

Yet another theft, 11/04/10 Same night, different street, same part of town. Someone broke into the unlocked trunk of a Miramonte Drive 1994 Mercedes Benz and removed several items - a subwoofer, a car stereo amplifier, a raincoat and sunglasses. Esti-

Fourth theft, is there a theme here? 11/04/10 Once again an unlocked car a few blocks away was broken into. A Courter Lane homeowner had her unlocked 2011 Mercedes Benz, parked in the driveway burgled - a garage door opener, leather binder and the car owner's manual (huh?) were taken. Estimated loss \$60.

uring this time of Thanksgiving I would like to wish you and your families a wonderful Thanksgiving Day, and a Holiday Season of Peace and Happiness. I am grateful to live and work in our beautiful community, and truly thankful for the opportunity to serve you. www.JulieBarlier.com

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The State of the Town

By Sophie Braccini



Ken Chew (on right) after his presentation

oraga Mayor Ken Chew presented the customary State of the Town Address on November 17. Addressing a group of about 50 interested residents, he

listed the highlights of 2010 – from the local government's perspective. In his usual relaxed, and sometimes even humorous, style he portrayed a town where all's well that ends well, if not for unfunded infrastructure maintenance.

Chew started with a series of slides listing the objectives, now accomplished, that he set when his term as mayor began a year ago. The most significant of these achievements are: a balanced budget; the completion of the Specific Plan; the transfer of the corporation yard out of the Hacienda de las Flores to the newly acquired building at 321 Rheem; the completion of the retrofit of the Town Hall at 329 Rheem; the agreement with the School District for the improvement of the sports field at Camino Pablo Elementary; the upgrading of the lighting assessment district through a popular vote; the completion of the Revenue Enhancement study and the subsequent appointment of a volunteer Economic Development Team, as well as the initiation of community outreach to determine whether or not residents would support additional taxes to fund infrastructure maintenance.

The Mayor pointed out that the Town continues to be able to provide essential services to its residents in spite of the cuts that have been required in order to stay financially balanced. "The per capita spending for government in Moraga is \$376.09; it is \$444.55 in Lafayette and \$616.16 in Orinda." He attributed this result to the exceptional dedication of Town staff.

Chew indicated that next year's priorities would be the implementation of the Specific Plan, community outreach to build a consensus regarding town finances, the budget, the conclusion of the Hetfield development project, and the support of local businesses.

He concluded by naming all of the fun events that take place in Moraga every year, from Cinco de Mayo, to the 4th of July, the Pear Festival and the Oktoberfest (which is, the Mayor confided, his favorite). "Moraga continues to be a great place to play, learn, live and one day, grow old," said Chew.

Dollar Tree Approved – Shaping the Future of Rheem Center?

By Sophie Braccini

he members of the Moraga Town Council, regardless of their personal feelings about the coming of the Dollar Tree to the Rheem Center, all indicated that there is nothing in the Municipal Code that could be grounds to refuse the approval of the store's application. The decision made at the November 10 Council meeting will dedicate 9000 square feet of retail space to what is heralded as a discount variety store at the lowest end of the retail market.

Dollar Tree will join other discounters in the Rheem Center such as Tuesday Morning, TJ

Rheem's image as a regional discount center will remain for a long period of time.

A group of Moraga residents who appealed the decision of the Planning Commission to grant a permitted use application to the store put on a well-argued show for the Council on November 10. One of their arguments was that a store selling food items should be subject to the same permitting process ('conditional use' instead of 'permitted use') that must be followed by grocery stores and restaurants.

Food items are a minimal

cation of the Dollar Tree is general retail variety store, their sales of food items is incidental, representing 10% of the floor area" said Planning Director Lori Salamack, "They are not a food retailer or a restaurant. They do not require a conditional use permit."

During the meeting, Council Member Dave Trotter asked that the 10% limit on food merchandise be further enforced by making that percentage a condition of approval. A majority of his colleagues agreed.

The Council granted, in part, an appeal filed by Dollar Tree.

shopping center. In addition to lifting that condition, staff recommended the elimination of the conditions of approval pertaining to signs as the applicant had already secured the necessary approvals from the Design Review Board (DRB). The DRB hearing was held on October 12, before the appeal process was complete.

Trotter was the only one to declare that a Dollar Tree store has no place in Moraga, but added that "it is a permitted use; we regrettably have to make the findings to approve it." He was unable to convince the Council that the store should be required to indemnify the Town with respect to any legal action associated with the approval. ... continued on next page

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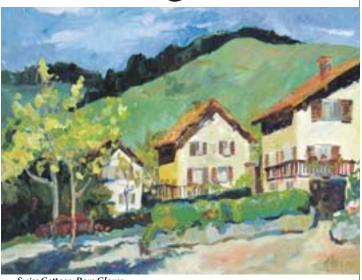
Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony 12/4, 6:30pm, Commons Park Breakfast with Santa, 12/11, 8:30am and 10:00am, Hacienda Santa Visits, 12/15-17, 6:30-8:30pm, in your home Holiday Home Decorating Contest, sign up by 12/1

Photo Andy Scheck

Maxx and Home Goods. Details on the leasing contract were not revealed by the Center's owner, Kimco Realty, but it is likely that percentage of the Dollar Tree's merchandise, no more than exists in a store such as CVS or the nowclosed Blockbuster. "The classifiDollar Tree objected to a requirement limiting shelf height, which meant that it would be treated differently from other business in the



[1924-2010] Pam Glover Paintings



Swiss Cottage, Pam Glover



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