



Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors
Wednesday, Oct. 5, 7 p.m.
Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas. Visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors
Tuesday, Oct. 25, 1:30 p.m.
Board Chamber room 107, Administration Building, 651 Pine St., Martinez
For meeting times and agendas, visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

MOFD Board Restores Firefighter Medical Benefits

By Nick Marnell

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District moved to bring firefighter compensation in line with neighboring districts Sept. 21 by approving an increase in employer-paid health care premiums, which had been capped at 2010 levels. The motion passed 4-0, with director Brad Barber absent.

The premium increases range from approximately \$100 a month for a single employee up to \$300 for an employee with a family. The hikes, which will cost the district \$229,000, kick in Jan. 1 and run through the end of the labor contract in June 2018.

The action comes at the behest of Fire Chief Stephen Healy, who told the board that the current firefighters' contract, which included

a first year pay cut and was signed reluctantly by the union in 2014, had lowered morale and frustrated his ability to retain and recruit firefighters. After the new contract took force, MOFD lost firefighters to Contra Costa, Santa Clara and Alameda county fire agencies. The district recently filled its last openings and will send two probationary firefighters to a training academy in mid-October.

Once the employer-paid premium increases take effect, district medical benefits will more closely align with those of neighboring fire agencies, but salaries will still lag behind. According to published documents, MOFD firefighter-paramedics at the highest grade earn a salary of \$99,348 a year, not

including overtime or benefits. The same position at the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District pays \$104,845; the Alameda County Fire Department, \$110,040; and the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District, \$112,572.

Increasing the employee medical benefit was not the board's first attempt to mollify the firefighters' union. In December, with its financial picture having improved, the district agreed to a 2.5 percent wage increase for the firefighters seven months earlier than outlined in the original contract. But the union complained that the original pay cut was unnecessary and that the increase still left the firefighters with the same pay they made in 2008.

Board president Steve Anderson not only voted against the 2.5 percent increase last year, he also voted against the original contract because he objected to the automatic pay increases it provided. This time around Anderson changed his approach. "I know that they took a hit, and this gives the firefighters some recognition for the sacrifice they made," Anderson said later. He stressed that the premium increase will not impact the district long-term, and that it will have no effect on future labor negotiations.

"It's a step in the right direction toward bringing our salary and benefit package on par with similar fire districts in our job market," said Mark DeWeese, MOFD Local 1230 representative.

Motiva Cultivates A Culture of Wellness at Work and at Home

By Sophie Braccini



Matt McCormack with his wife and new daughter stand in front of the Moraga office of Motiva.

Photo Sophie Braccini

With his business Motiva, chiropractor Matt McCormack wants to become a part of the Lamorinda community, and to raise his family here. He recently opened a part-time health and chiropractic practice in Moraga.

With a partner he developed a business service that specializes in addressing another company's musculoskeletal burden and creating a culture of wellness.

McCormack explains that Motiva works with employees in their work environment, addressing the workstation and more, preventing repetitive stress injuries and chronic conditions.

"If we can treat people in the office, we can decrease their pain, while increasing job satisfaction and productivity," says the therapist. Motiva uses chiropractic care, in conjunction with ergonomics,

nutrition and fitness to help each employee with whatever they may need.

Theravance Biopharma, Runway and GSvlabs are some of the companies that have hired Motiva over the last year and a half and where the lucky employees know that some days a week, the Motiva health practitioners will be on site and available to them free of charge.

"We encourage a standing desk," says McCormack. He believes that standing is way better for the back and neck than sitting. If people have pain standing, he will look at arch support and sometimes can recommend an anti-fatigue mat. The practitioner also recognizes the problem of the common head-bent, shoulders rounded and hands together posture of people who spend too much time on their cell phone or at a monitor, where the eye level is not in line with the top of the monitor, and the keyboard below the elbow level.

Motiva addresses more than the workstation. It recommends walking meetings to increase the physical activity during the day. "I also recommend people to stand up every 30 minutes, even if they seat down immediately afterward," says McCormack.

The health practitioner says Motiva adds nutrition, exercise and fitness to the core of his chiropractic services, and for companies he creates a physical culture of wellness. Working with all dietary needs, Motiva makes sure people get all the nutrients they need for optimal health.

McCormack believes that the

services Motiva offers are now expected for companies who want to take a more active role in providing a healthy work environment for their employees, with Facebook and Google setting the standards. Companies who pay for the service see a nice return on investment in term of less days missed, and great feedback in employee satisfaction. It is also certainly good also for recruiting and retention.

When a client visits the Moraga office, the same comprehensive approach is engaged and the first visit lasts 60 minutes, giving McCormack the chance to fully understand each person's individual symptoms and possible triggers. He adds that he treats the whole person, not just their pain.

"I take a comprehensive approach to health and address people's function with the goal of getting them better faster so they can stay out of my office," he says. It

means that he will address any musculoskeletal imbalances with chiropractic care in addition to education regarding diet, exercise and lifestyle. He loves to treat shoulders, ankles, backs and necks, working with older and younger people, and athletes in a holistic way.

"I am excited to also offer care to the Lamorinda community and make this the headquarters for Motiva Health & Chiropractic as we expand and grow," he says. At this time, McCormack is in Moraga once a week and plans to expand to twice a day.

More information is available at www.motivahealth.com. The Moraga office is located at 1605 School Street, Suite #1, (650) 332-4748.

Lamorinda Weekly business articles are intended to inform the community about local business activities, not to endorse a particular company, product or service.

The Tick Tock Store

The Right Place For The Right Time
Batteries • Bands • Repair

FREE Estimates
Rolex-Tag Heuer Repair Center
Specialize in grandfather clock and watch repairs

925-952-4488 www.TheTickTockStore.com

1547-A Palos Verdes Mall, Walnut Creek
(In Lunardi's Center, behind UPS Store)

Craft Cocktail Competition & Tasting

LAMORINDA ARTS COUNCIL

Thank you to Our Generous Sponsors



LAMORINDA COUNCIL
Tickets at LamorindaArts.org/Mixology

SAT OCT 8 • 4:30-7PM • ORINDA THEATRE SQUARE

Business Bites

Compiled by Victor Ryerson

The Greenest Guys in Town
Kudos to a trio of local businesses for winning 2016 recycling awards from Recycle Smart, which recognizes businesses that have demonstrated excellence in reducing and recycling their waste. In the Restaurant category, Orinda's Baan Thai is the gold medal winner for recycling nearly 100% of food waste and other recyclables. In Moraga, Saint Mary's College and its hospitality provider, Sodexo, won the bronze in the Large Food Services category. And back in Orinda, Parker Thatch won the bronze in the Retail category.

New Nightlife in Lafayette -- Provided by You
The Coffee Shop, downtown Lafayette's new addition at 50 Lafayette Circle, now offers local musicians, comedians, poets and guitarists an opportunity to strut their stuff every Thursday from 6 to 10 p.m. at its Open Mic Night. The Coffee Shop's own house band, Two Little Birds, is also there to provide music and backup, and even offers a guitar to play in case your act is impromptu. "No need to bring your own," emphasizes owner Kristopher Shinn. And if you need something to fortify your resolve (or enjoy the show), beer, wine and food are available.

Happy Birthday!
AAAAA Rent-A-Space, better known locally as "5A," is celebrating its 45th year in business, and its 21st year in Moraga. The company started with its first location in Alameda in 1971, and became something of a cause celebre when it established its facility at 455 Moraga Road next to the old Rheem Bowling Alley. The facility was promptly embraced by overburdened homeowners, apartment dwellers, and

summering Saint Mary's students, and the company enlarged its facility to the current 1180 storage units in 2001. "We think it's the most beautiful storage facility anywhere in the western states," says owner H. James Knappe. Party favors are available if you drop by for a look, and if you happen to need a storage space in Maui, they can take care of that, too.

Fastframe of Lafayette is celebrating its 25th anniversary, and owner Anthony Ruiz says he is very grateful to the Lamorinda community for its years of support. The store at 1020 Brown Ave. offers complete framing services, including conservation, restoration and design assistance. Ruiz started framing as a hobby long ago, which then morphed into a home-based business, stints at galleries in San Francisco, and finally the Lafayette Fastframe store. Fastframe supports local artists and school art programs by donating supplies and framed artwork. "We are proud to be a part of the Lamorinda community," says Ruiz, "and we look forward to the next 25 years of service."

Chamber Music
For announcements of more business related events and nonprofit fundraisers, be sure to check the chamber of commerce websites. There is a lot going on in Lamorinda, especially during this busy fall season. Lafayette Chamber of Commerce www.lafayettechamber.org (925) 284-7404

Moraga Chamber of Commerce www.moragachamber.org (925) 323-6524

Orinda Chamber of Commerce www.orindachamber.org (925) 254-3909

If you have a business brief to share, please contact storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com.