

Bubble Palooza event delights children with white foamy fun at Moraga Commons Park



Photo Vera Kochan

Local kids enjoy a morning of fun May 30 during Bubble Palooza at Moraga Commons.

By Vera Kochan

Moraga's Parks and Recreation Department has, once again, put on an event to keep the townsfolk entertained in an unusual way.

The brainchild of Recreation Supervisor Jasmine Bateson, Bubble Palooza's May 30 festivities at the Moraga Commons Park saw approximately 70 kids (5 years old and younger), throughout the morning plunge into a huge mound of bubbles across a 20-foot by 20-foot

area produced by an electric machine that closely resembled a leaf blower, but without the noise.

A concentrated bubble solution was poured into a tank where water was added to create the foamy white bubbles one would see during a bubble bath at home. There was no "tub" per se. The bubbles were sprayed onto the grass under what serves as the town's Holiday Tree in December. There were also several small machines around the perimeter that

blew the kind of bubbles made from a typical bubble-blowing toy.

Children played for about an hour in the two-foot-deep bubbles wearing their clothes and enormous smiles. One can't help but wonder if bath time at home is met with as much enthusiasm. Parents watched with expressions that could have said, "I wish I could jump in there, too!"

Isabelle (3) could barely muster up a few words for an interview when asked if she was enjoying herself. Rather, she kept pointing to the bubble pile as if to explain that's where she wanted to be, and the interview was over.

Emily, Isabelle's mom, said that her daughter was initially hesitant to go into the foam, let alone touch it. "Now she's putting piles of bubbles on her head."

While a new batch of bubble solution was being made, the small revelers stood around the dwindling remains with expectant looks on their faces and refused to leave the area in the hopes that a fresh batch of suds would soon be manufactured.

"It's kind of hokey," said Bateson, "but if it's 15 minutes of smiles for the day, then it's worth it."

Lafayette's Utility Box Art celebrates over 175 years of history



Early Downtown Utility Box Art

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A grist mill, hotels, a store, a blacksmith shop, and a school were the first signs of retail activity. A few decades later a church and post office were added.

The "Pioneer & Farm Life" box reveals how and when the first farmers arrived and would eventually grow crops that included pears, peaches, walnuts and grapes. Many farmers also kept cows on their property and made their own butter and cheese from the milk.

The "Mt. Diablo Boulevard" box lets viewers know that the main road was still unpaved by 1926, even though cars were beginning to travel on it right alongside cattle. Ten years later, the main streets were paved and included lane lines, but drivers, as yet, had no traffic signs or signals to deal with. As the decades passed, additional lanes were added and more businesses came to Lafayette.

An "Early School Days" box explains the 1850s opening of the first grammar school and subsequent schools to follow. One of the teachers, Jennie Bickerstaff, arrived to work each day riding sidesaddle on her horse due to the long skirts women wore at the turn of the last century.

Not to be left out is the "Leisure Pastimes" box. Lafayette worked hard and played hard by enjoying sports (there was a baseball team), May Day and Fourth of July events, community dances, horse shows, and in 1941, the



Mt Diablo Boulevard Utility Box Art

opening of the Park Theatre for movies.

Situated at the crossroads of Martinez, Canyon/Moraga, Oakland and Walnut Creek, the "Tunnels, Roads & Rails" box denotes the importance of enhanced travel routes for Lafayette's citizens. The 1913 electric railroad service through town, the 1937 opening of what would eventually become the Caldecott Tunnel, and the building of Highway 24 in the 1960s would serve to connect Lafayette with its neighbors and beyond.

For more information or to take the tour visit: www.love-lafayette.org/175plus. You can also visit the LHS website: lafayettehistory.org or <https://facebook.com/LafayetteHistoricalSociety>.

Special thanks to LHS Oral History and Social Media Director John Kennett.



Photos Vera Kochan

Saklan People Utility Box Art

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