

Senior Services touts successes at recent council meeting

By Lou Fancher



Photo courtesy City of Lafayette

Vice Chair of Lafayette's Senior Services Commission Conrad Brace, in presenting to city council an update on Dec. 11, highlighted Lamorinda Village's and the city's achievements. Working on eight "domains of livability" to create an age-friendly community, the focus has included areas such as outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social engagement, community and health services, and related matters.

Among the documented Senior Services' accomplishments are a \$20,000 contribution for the Lamorinda Spirit Van from the town of Moraga, pickle ball co-sponsorship at the Lafayette Community Center, and city council involvement in supported Lamorinda Village memberships.

Kathryn Ishizu, the organization's Executive Director, and Suzy Pak, Community Outreach Coordinator, emphasized multiple aspects of the "seamless" partnership with the city of Lafayette. The Village has 338 members, including 67 supported memberships.

Pak, in her role as

the part-time coordinator, said the nonprofit's key theme is "connection." Noting that seniors may experience reduced opportunities to make social connections, Pak said programs and resources expand beyond members to benefit the community 55-years-and-older at large. Adding value to existing programs is a part of the Village's goals and process that include constantly adjusting to best meet new demands and interests of target members.

Feedback from schools, medical professionals, businesses and community volunteers has been helpful and will continue to be sought. Events such as "Golden Happy Hours," Senior SWELL events at the Lafayette Library, vaccination clinics, and monthly singalongs, among others, have raised awareness of the Lamorinda Village.

Three community members who have participated in Village activities spoke during public comments. Beth Brown, a volunteer at the vaccination clinic who now assists with Senior SWELL, said meeting the people at the library

events possibly means more to her than it does to the seniors who drop in. A second speaker emphasized witnessing the remarkable "bounce back" seniors have made following the pandemic. The movie matinees, he said, were greatly successful and a clear sign seniors are responding and re-entering community life. The final speaker said the best time of her life, when asked by Pak, was living at Belle Terre/Eden Housing and finding a sense of family through working as a volunteer and member of Lamorinda Village. "The best time of my life is right now, at 82. I finally have a really, really nice life," she said.

The presentation closed with thanks from outgoing Mayor Carl Anduri to the Senior Services Commission, Lamorinda Village, and its volunteers and board members. Anduri read the city's proclamation to Ruth McCahan, founding member and first president of Lamorinda Village, and the winner of the 2023 Don Jenkins Lamorinda Village Service Award.

Community invited for input on design concepts for two Lafayette parks

The city of Lafayette will be holding a Community Workshop at 9 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 20 to discuss design concepts for the Two Parks Collaborative Concept, providing improvements to Leigh Creekside Park and creating a new active play area at the Gazebo site downtown. The city has been actively working on the Two Parks Collaborative Concept with community stakeholders, the nonprofit All Ages Recreation

Downtown (<https://allagesplay.org/>) which is fundraising to help in the city's efforts, and the city's playground design consultant, Scientific Art Studio. The Jan. 20 meeting will be held in Leigh Creekside Park (corner of 4th Street and Moraga Boulevard in Lafayette), with a second workshop to take place at the Gazebo site on a future date to be determined. - J. Wake

For more information, visit: www.lovelafayette.org/city-hall/commissions-committees/parks-trails-rec-commission/two-parks-collaborative-concept

Free community service for older adults, a Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary tradition

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"We're here for the little things, the tasks that might cost a pretty penny if you had to call in the professionals. We're the friendly neighbors everyone wishes they had."

Beyond the traditional notion of maintenance, the HOME Team volunteers bring warmth and companionship into the lives of older residents. "We're not just fixing leaky faucets; we're building relationships. In addition, everyone on our team is trained to be vigilant for potential issues like hoarding, food insecurities, or falling hazards. It's about looking out for one another," says Satterfield.

"The best part? There are no eligibility criteria other than being an older adult. If a senior can't safely climb a ladder to change a light bulb,

we're more than happy to lend a hand."

Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary president Scott Parsons adds, "Rotary HOME Team is one of several impactful community services Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary offers. Our service projects touch the lives of all age groups, primarily families living in Lamorinda and Contra Costa. But our impact also spreads to other parts of the world, notably Guatemala, where our projects save lives and aim to end the cycle of poverty."

Those with an interest in giving back are invited to visit the Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary website at <https://lamorindasunrise.org/>. For more information on the HOME team or to request services, call (888) 204-5573 or visit <https://rotaryhometeam.com/>

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