

Proponents of Measure D get council member endorsement

By Vera Kochan

Moraga's voters can expect to see Measure D on their March 5 ballot. The Measure, by the Moraga School District, hopes to win at least a 55% voter approval to authorize funding for capital improvement projects and technology upgrades within all of the elementary and middle school campuses.

According to a ballot measure summary included in Town Manager Scott Mitnick's Jan. 23 staff report, the intent is "To improve Moraga's local elementary/middle schools by upgrading science/technology/engi-

neering classrooms/labs; replacing leaking roofs/unsafe windows; preventing classroom overcrowding; and updating classrooms/technology for 21st-century learning, shall Moraga School District's measure be adopted authorizing \$52 million in bonds at legal rates, levying \$30 per \$100,000 assessed value while bonds are outstanding (averaging \$3 million raised annually) with citizen oversight, annual audits, no funds for administrators, and providing local funding that cannot be taken by the state?"

A more detailed breakdown of MSD's scope of projects that are necessary include: upgrading /constructing science, technology, engineering classrooms and labs; upgrading/constructing art and music classrooms; replacing/repairing leaking/aging roofs and unsafe windows; installing additional or expanding existing restrooms; installing sustainable athletic fields and physical education facilities; installing solar panels; updating classroom computer technology; updating classroom equip-

ment; improving drainage on roofs and around classrooms to prevent flood damage; improving security cameras and other surveillance systems in addition to installing more safety equipment; and providing updated kitchens and food prep areas.

More items on the school facility project list involve: repairing and replacing aging plumbing and electrical systems; providing multi-use rooms as wellness centers; constructing/modernizing indoor/outdoor eating

spaces; preventing classroom overcrowding by constructing/expanding facilities; providing additional state-mandated pre-kindergarten classrooms for students 4 to 5 years old; providing additional kindergarten classrooms; installing new building finishes such as walls, floors and doors; making all necessary ADA upgrades; and improving grounds by providing appropriate pathways, hallways, drop off areas, lighting, and landscaping.

Chair of the Committee for Safe and Modern Moraga Schools – Yes on "D," Ana Moon, and Moraga School District Superintendent Dr. Julie Parks gave a brief presentation reminding everyone that a big reason why families move into town is for the excellent schools.

When it came time to offer an endorsement of Measure D, the town council did so unanimously and without hesitation.

Legos ...continued



Photo Scott Mitnick

At least a dozen of the many Lego projects Mitnick has completed

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Legos were invented in 1932, in Denmark. Lego is a Danish phrase for "leg godt," meaning "play well" in English. As the toy became more popular through the years, the pieces began to come in a variety of colors, "Lego people" were added, and eventually more complicated kits were sold that included everything, along with easy-to-follow directions, to make whatever was pictured on the box. Rare kits can sell for upwards of nearly \$3,000 in today's market.

"It's a great thing – the ability by yourself, or with a loved one, to build something from scratch,"

stated Mitnick. "With Legos, it's not just the end result, it's the process along the way that's just as gratifying. It's the therapeutic aspect of it, and I wish I had more time to do it."

Mitnick's best guess at completed projects is "a few dozen – not as many as I would like." And, while the kits from his younger days were gifts, he likes to buy his own now. "When I was visiting the White House, I bought the kit version in their gift shop."

When asked if his hobby drives his wife nuts, he replied, "Not really, although, there are times that she gets mad at me because I spend too much time on it."

Trying to include Mia in the fun, Mitnick recently bought her a Lego flower bouquet kit to work on together. He was thrilled to see that she'd finished it on her own and put the "bouquet" in a glass vase to display. Even his two sons have gotten into their dad's hobby and occasionally join in on a project.

At last count, Mitnick thinks there are about a dozen Lego projects displayed in every room of their house. From a Volkswagen "Beetle" and vintage van replica, to a Frank Lloyd Wright house or various whimsical structures, all of them are from kits, but he'd like one day to construct something of his own creation again, just like when he was a kid.

Mitnick and family have visited the many Lego theme parks "upwards of eight to 10 times in three countries including the 'mother ship' in Billund, Denmark. I'm not fanatical, it's just fun. People of all ages, genders, and perspectives can do it. You have to be patient, and you have to be organized. You have to be accurate, or you could make a mistake that could make you take

apart most of your work." In the long run, is there really a downside to that?

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