



**MORAGA**

See public meetings schedule on these pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

**Town of Moraga:**  
www.moraga.ca.us  
Phone: (925) 888-7022  
**Chamber of Commerce:**  
www.moragachamber.org  
**Moraga Citizens' Network:**  
www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

**Town Council Meetings**  
Wed., Feb. 28, 6:30 p.m.  
Wed., March 13, 6:30 p.m.  
**Planning Commission:**  
Tuesday, March 5, 6:30 p.m.  
**Park and Recreation Commission:**  
Monday March 11, 6:30 p.m.

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# Moraga officials attend 'Mayors and Council Members Academy'

By Vera Kochan

The League of California Cities held its annual "Mayors and Council Members Academy" in Monterey, Calif. this year. Mayor Teresa Onoda, Vice Mayor Steve Woehleke, and Town Manager Scott Mitnick attended the Jan. 24 - 26 conference, which was intended to give attendees access to various sessions designed to help them run their municipalities more efficiently.

According to the League of California Cities' website, "The academy covers the legal, financial, and practical fundamentals to your job as an elected city official. Sessions also include an update on key legislative issues and an overview of your Cal Cities Services."

"While the annual 'Mayors and Council Members Academy' was initially set up to serve as an orientation and training session for newly elected mayors and council members," explained Mitnick, "the Academy has been

broadened over the years to also serve as a 'refresher training' for those who have been in their roles for a number of years. It is not unusual for city managers to also attend, especially with newly elected officials."

A "Harassment Prevention Training for Supervisors and Officials" session focused on current and emerging issues, while teaching officials and supervisors how to identify, prevent, and properly respond to workplace harassment, discrimination, retaliation, and abusive conduct in order to avoid liability.

Another session, "Developing an Effective City Council and City Manager Team: The Key to Good Governance and City Success," discussed the importance of a good working relationship guided by open communication.

"Your Legal Powers and Obligations; Open Government and Conflicts of Interest" session helped attendees learn

the breadth and limitations of their powers as city officials by acquiring a basic understanding of the legal authorities and restrictions under which cities and their officials operate. The course focused on open government laws, such as the Brown Act and Public Records Act, and laws pertaining to conflicts of interest.

The "Policy Role in Land Use Planning" course was designed to teach the tools and processes in land use planning, such as the general plan, zoning, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as well as the role of regional agencies and the state.

"Effective Advocacy and Key City Issues" shared ideas for establishing practical skills to develop persuasive arguments and testimony that would serve a city's interests.

"Social Media/Digital Communications and Civic Engagement" ex-

plained that as misinformation increases, elected officials need to be quick on their feet and have the necessary skills to proactively manage public perceptions about local government concerns.

"Financial Responsibilities, City Revenues Workshop" dialog centered around local government financial cycles, elected official financial oversight duties, state and local funding relationships, and the four stages of fiscal meltdown.

The last session centered around "Understanding Public Service Ethics Laws and Principles." State law requires elected and appointed officials to receive two hours of training in specified ethics laws and principles every two years.

During the Feb. 14 Town Council meeting Onoda said, "Imagine if you had to run an obstacle course and you could look at it from up above, from a helicopter, you could see all of the se-

quences that would arise. You would manage the course in a much more quick and effective way, and that's pretty much what this gives you."

"I found it very valuable," added Woehleke. "I attended an earlier version of this in 2019, and this was a whole lot more useful, partially because it was perhaps my second exposure to some of it, but some of the topics addressed were far more mature." He also enjoyed the opportunity to network with other city officials from various parts of California.

"Of all the national, state, and regional conferences," stated Mitnick, "this Academy is the one that many find to be an effective primer as to how California local government works, with a timely summary of current challenges effecting cities and towns. This year's Academy was extremely well done with sessions directly applicable to the Town of Moraga."

# SMC Museum of Art features three new art exhibits

By Vera Kochan

Saint Mary's College Museum of Art has introduced three new exhibitions: "Harmonia Rosales's Omega Alpha", "The Decisive Moment: Photo Urbanism in San Francisco Bay, 1930s - 1960s," and "Vignettes -- Select Views of SMC-MoA's Permanent Collection."

Marking her first Northern California debut is Afro-Cuban artist Rosales's Renaissance-inspired, "Omega Alpha" collection. Her six works on display offer a re-imagining of Western myths and Catholicism through the Black body, which are combined with tales of the Lukami religions and focusing on Black female empowerment while using layers



Photos Vera Kochan

**"Yemaya with Ibeji" by Harmonia Rosales**

of oil, pigment, and gold in her pieces.

"Rosales's paintings seamlessly blend religious and cultural belief systems," stated SMC Academic and Engagement Curator Britt Royer. "Her work challenges Western discourse yet

pulls from these traditions to re-envision Greek heroes and Catholic saints. By intertwining the stories, histories, and beliefs of the African diaspora, Rosales casts visibility on Afro-Cuban heritage. It is an honor for Saint Mary's College to host her debut in Northern California."

In "Yemaya with Ibeji," African people of the Yoruba ethnic group experience a high birth rate of twins. This is interpreted as a sign of good luck, happiness, and prosperity. The common belief is that a single soul was split into two, which represents a balance in the physical world. Yemaya is considered the mother to all and the protector of the Ibeji.



**"High-rise Construction and Coit Tower from Russian Hill, San Francisco" by Pirkle Jones**

"The Decisive Moment" exhibit includes 26 black and white photographs by Ruth-Marion Baruch, John Gutmann, Pirkle Jones, Peter Stackpole, Brett Weston, and Max Yavno. The images represent historical moments in Bay Area history by capturing what French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson called the "decisive moment," which according to SMC is "a coalescence of the camera's mechanical or 'innate honesty' with the observer's intuitive insight."

"Vignettes" includes over 40 works of art from SMC's permanent collection. Most prominent is the college's landscape collection of William Keith paintings. Additional works on display include modernist European prints by Georges Barque, Marc Chagall, Ursula Fookes, Kathé Kollwitz, Maries Laurencin, and Jacques Villon. Works dedicated to California waterways include pieces by Armin Hansen, Louis LaBrie, Bertha Stringer Lee, Goardo Piazzoni, Lundy Siegriest, and Mireille Piazzoni Wood. There are pop art pieces by Corita Kent and Andy Warhol; Abstract Expressionism by Seong Moy and Ruth Wall; and contemporary art by Joe Doyle, David Maxim, Diane Rosenblum, and Kal Spelletich.

"Omega Alpha" and "The Decisive Moment" are on display through June 23. "Vignettes" is on display through May 12.

For more information visit: [www.stmarys-ca.edu/museum](http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/museum).

# Lafayette-Moraga trail's mini 'Waterfall'

By Emma Wong

Towering over fenced-in pavement and surrounded by greenery, a cascading mini-waterfall is picturesque for residents strolling on the Lafayette-Moraga trail, especially after recent storms. The waterfall is located just beyond the trail's crossing of Rheem Boulevard and St. Mary's Road, near the Saint Mary's College campus.



Photo Emma Wong

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