

Community News

Moraga pear orchard branch-trimming event Saturday

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MORAGA — Work to trim branches at the Joaquin Moraga pear orchard to curb the spread of fire blight takes place this Saturday, Oct. 21, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 1000 Camino Pablo at Canyon Road (across from St. Monica's Catholic Church).

Bobbie Preston, who organizes this periodic tree-trimming effort, said the historic orchard's trees are doing better after several years of fire blight removal, treatment with an organic fertilizer last year and our winter rains. But those same rains that nourish the trees also promote the growth of fire blight, she said, especially when the blossoms are open.



Trimming of the Joaquin Moraga pear orchard in Moraga, to thwart the spread of fire blight, happens again this Saturday. Courtesy Bobbie Preston

Fire blight is constantly a threat to this historic orchard, a living link to the days when pears were a major agricultural export for the area, and a focal point for the town's annual Pear Festival.

In addition, each year the Moraga Park Foundation glean the pears for the Contra Costa Food Bank — more than 8,000 pounds of pears from the orchard over the past year.

The trimming work is sponsored by the Moraga School District (which owns the land), the town of Moraga and Republic Services.

Bring gloves, sunscreen, hats and sturdy shoes. If you have them bring (labeled with your name), loppers, hand pruners, large tarps, orchard ladders and (especially needed) pole pruners,

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Sam Richards Sam Richards has been a newspaper reporter/editor since 1982, when he got his first job as a weekend police reporter in Missoula, Mont. He later worked in Belgrade, Mont. and Tracy, Calif. before joining in 1992 what became the Bay Area News Group. He works out of Walnut Creek, covering a variety of stories, with a focus on City Hall news.

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