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## SPORTS

Monday, Mar. 23, 2009

# Whistle blows for Modesto-area stars

## NFL ref Morelli to be guest speaker

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- Two Modesto men, one from Ceres convicted of car theft
- Oakdale Testicle Festival hits bull's-eye (well, not eye, really)
- Man's body is found in canal
- Gottschalks auction today will determine chain's fate
- Not going to take it? Fine, but no need to get rude about it

The 42nd Outstanding Athlete Awards Banquet, the Academy Awards of Stanislaus County sports, will feature a man in stripes.

Stockton's Pete Morelli, the principal of St. Mary's High in his conventional career, switches from a suit to zebra gear on NFL Sundays. He's been a referee -- the man who announces all the calls -- at NFL games since 2003 and an official in football's most prestigious professional league since 1997.

Morelli will spin a few of his NFL stories as the guest speaker at the OAA dinner, which names the county's top athletes of 2008, Wednesday night at the SOS Club.



Other highlights will include the induction of Modesto soccer icon Tisha Venturini-Hoch into the Hall of Fame. The rest of the awards list: The Jay Pattee (public service), Darell Phillips (coaches), Tom Mellis (scholarships) and the Tom Moore (Relays).

The banquet, which is open to the public, begins with cocktails at 6:30 p.m., followed by the dinner and the program.

The high school girls finalists:

**TIARE JENNINGS** (basketball-softball) -- Jennings, a 2008 graduate of Pitman now playing softball for New Mexico State, led the Pride into the basketball playoffs by averaging

16.1 points and nine rebounds per game. In softball, she batted .559.

**JENNIE MARSHALL** (soccer) -- A freshman soccer player at Brigham Young, Marshall scored 53 goals in 27 games for Beyer High to earn her second straight Stanislaus District Player of the Year award from The Bee.

**JULIANNA SANTOS** (softball) -- Now at Louisiana State, Santos was the slugging portion of the Orestimba High powerhouse, batting .667 with 11 home runs, 55 RBIs and 43 runs scored. She also played nearly flawless defense at shortstop.

**KARA SPINELLI** (softball) -- Now pitching for the University of Detroit Mercy, Spinelli compiled a 22-3 record with a 1.21 ERA to push the Orestimba Warriors to its second Sac-Joaquin Section Division V title. She struck out 150 batters in 156 innings.

**CHRISTINE UHALDE** (golf) -- Uhalde, a Johansen High junior, became the second girls golfer in Stanislaus County history to advance to the CIF State Championships. She won the Modesto Metro Conference tournament and shared medalist honors at the section divisionals.

The high school boys finalists:

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