

Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar	
City Council Auditorium, Orinda Library 24 Orinda Way Tuesday, Apr 10	7pm
Planning Comm. Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, Apr 10	7pm
Traffic Advisory Mayor's Conf. Rm, City Offices 14 Altarinda Road	7pm
Park & Recreation Community Center 500 St Mary's Road Wednesday, Apr 11 Wednesday, May 9	7pm
Historic Landmarks Gallery Room, Orinda Library 22 Orinda Way Tuesday, Apr 24	3pm
Liaison Room 7, Community Center 26 Orinda Way Monday, Apr 2	8:30am
check online: Town of Orinda: http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us/ for: • all meeting notes • calendar updates	
Chamber of Commerce: http://www.orindachamber.org/ • local businesses • upcoming events	

Chandrasekaran Discusses "Life in the Emerald City"

By Lee Borrowman
Rajiv Chandrasekaran, Baghdad bureau chief, from April 2003 to October 2004, and now assistant managing editor for the Washington Post, made an appearance at the Orinda Bookstore on Saturday, March 24, to discuss his new book, "Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone." An audience of about sixty interested listeners heard Chandrasekaran speak on the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003-2004, from the appointment of Bush loyalists who were unqualified to manage the occupation and the dismissive attitude that Coalition Provisional Authority L. Paul Bremer took towards the needs of the Iraqi people, to the reality of life in Baghdad during that period. Debbie Trotter was in the audience. "He's a very good speaker, and very credible. Despite the fact that what he was saying was at times horrific in detail as to what the U.S. had done, he seemed to be impartial and to be offering a fair repre-

sentation of what really happened," said Trotter. The Campolindo and Stanford alum also took questions from the audience, and spoke briefly about the current situation in Iraq. When asked why we are only now finding out the details of the occupation, Chandrasekaran explained that much of the information was locked in the heads of those who had been there. While researching the book he interviewed people in Washington, D.C., who spoke to him for hours on the subject in what seemed to be an almost therapeutic exercise for them. As for the current situation, Chandrasekaran believes the war was a mistake, but that the U.S. cannot leave Iraq at this time. He said that the government is reluctant to allow Iraqi refugees into the U.S. now because that would be an admission that mistakes were made. He also spoke in favor of a limited partitioning of Iraq, as a likely but imperfect part of the solution.

Campaign for Orinda Bond Takes Off

By Chris Lavin, Contributing Writer
Volunteers have opened a campaign headquarters in Orinda's old library and launched a new website to support Measure E, a bond measure up for a vote in June to help fix crumbling and deteriorating roads as well as the water pipes beneath them. "We all know that this is the most pressing issue facing our city," said Mayor Steve Glazer. The vote, scheduled for a June 5 special election, needs two-thirds approval to pass. It calls for the city to sell a \$58.6 million bond, to be paid back by taxpayers. A similar measure for a slightly larger amount failed by a slim margin last November. "I believe we're very ready, this time," said Orinda Councilmember Sue Severson, who supports the measure. The issue of whether to

float a bond or not has been on the front burner for Orinda for more than three years. When Measure A failed last November, however, it did not seem to take the wind out of the sails of those who supported it. A cantankerous City Council election on the same November ballot added to the controversy surrounding the measure. However, since the start of the year, the council has been working together to address the deteriorating conditions of Orinda's 92 miles of road that were inherited from the county when Orinda incorporated in 1985. "It would be a terrible situation not to have the water pressure to put out a fire," Severson said. Opponents of both measures have boiled their arguments down to a few: They do not believe Orinda has had the correct spending

priorities, they believe too much as been spent on creating new city offices, and some believe that the city spends too much on the mutual fire department. Now, city council members believe they have addressed those arguments. In a letter sent out to all Orinda citizens, Glazer has reiterated that money to fix deteriorating infrastructure will not come only from the bond measure, but from other sources, as well. He said that some city reserves will be used, state and federal bond money will be sought, and money also will be sought from East Bay Municipal Utilities District and the fire department. The campaign's new website is www.FixOrindaRoads.com, where information about the bond measure, campaign contributions and volunteer opportunities may be found.



Rajiv Chandrasekaran at the Orinda Bookstore Photo by Andy Schreck

Bank Robbery Attempted

By Lee Borrowman
On Wednesday, March 21, two armed men attempted a take-over style robbery of the Bank of America branch at 31 Orinda Way. At approximately 9:50 A.M., two masked men carrying a rifle and a handgun entered the bank. They ordered bank employees to the vault, but fled upon finding the vault locked. Take-over style robberies are very frightening, but no one in the bank was injured during the attempt.

Orinda police were able to obtain good descriptions of the suspects and their vehicle, a black SUV, from tellers and customers, and a chase ensued involving several local law enforcement agencies, including the California Highway Patrol, Contra Costa County Sheriff and the Lafayette Police Dept, which sent its canine "Doc" to assist with the search for the suspects. The suspects were pur-

sued to the edge of Richmond, where they abandoned their vehicle and fled on foot, causing a lock-down at nearby De Anza High School for the protection of the students. One suspect was arrested in the vicinity of the vehicle, and at press time on Monday the other was still at large although police are in possession of information that may lead to his identity, according to Sheriff's spokesman Jimmy Lee.

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Ages 8 - 17

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