

Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way	
Wednesday, July 17	
Planning Comm.	7pm
New Location: City Hall 22 Orinda Way	
Tuesday, July 10	
Park & Rec	7pm
Room 7, Community Center 28 Orinda Way	
Wednesday, July 11	
Historic Landmarks	3pm
Garden Room, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way	
Tuesday, July 24	
Liaison	8:30am
Room 7, Community Center 28 Orinda Way	
Monday, July 2	
check online:	
Town of Orinda:	
http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us/	
for:	
• all meeting notes	
• calendar updates	



Vegetable, Donut and Beer Theft, 6/10/07 A homeless man was caught with snow peas, cauliflower, cucumber, a cinnamon bun and a can of malt liquor in his pockets after he walked out of the Orinda Safeway. Total value of his haul is \$6.75. Store manager requested prosecution. The alleged thief apologized and offered to pay for the items. He had \$12. on him.

TV Stolen, 6/8/07 An unknown person entered an unlocked home via the front door on Scenic Court between 11:00 - 12:00, while elderly homeowner was asleep. Mystery thief stole flat screen LCD Samsung television. Homeowner awoke at noon and found front door open and TV gone.

Mailbox Mischief, 6/7/07 Unknown person damaged mailbox by knocking it down, possibly with a car. The Southwood Drive homeowner heard a crash, but didn't see anything. Damage is estimated at approximately \$150.



7:00 A.M.
Haley's 4th of July Run for a Reason Registration, in front of the Community Center
7:30 - 10:30 A.M.
Pancake Breakfast in front of the Library
8:00 A.M.
Haley's 5 Mile Run starts - 2 Mile Family Walk follows
10:00 A.M. Parade
11:30 A.M.

Orinda Community Park festivities, music, food and entertainment!

Concert in the Park, 11:30-1:30, Silver Spurs (Country); Chamber of Commerce Hot Dog Stand (11:30-2:30); Haley's event area by the tennis courts includes Silent Auction, Home Depot Kids' Workshop, Quenchers Smoothies.

Join the All Volunteer Orinda Marching Band!

All instruments, ages and levels of ability are welcome. Rehearsal will start at 9:00am up the hill from Casa Orinda and the gas station (drummers meet at 8:00 and must register in advance, M. Green 254-9169).

You must provide your own lyre, wear blue pants or shorts, a white shirt and have red on your hat or socks. Music is available in advance by calling 283-0361 and leaving a message with your name and phone number.

"Three Quarter Of a Century" Celebrates Access to the Outdoors for All

By Sophie Bracinni

On June 21st, "Three Quarter of a Century" celebrated life and the great outdoors during its annual luncheon at the Orinda Community Church. Every year, on the third Thursday of June, Orindans 75 years old and better are invited to a luncheon and to hear a speaker on a topic of interest. The group was formed 8 years ago by Orinda resident John Fazel. According to John, "the purpose is to honor our seniors and offer them a fun event where they'll meet good friends and have a great time." Last Thursday, the group invited Michael Muir, the great grandson of the legendary John Muir, to speak about his the organization he founded, Access Adventure.

This non-profit is unique in the world. As Muir presents it, "Our mission is to provide wilderness and open space access for people with disabilities using innovative, solar powered, wheelchair accessible horsedrawn carriages." The programs of Access Adventure are provided without charge to anyone with a condition that limits their ability to get around. The carriages are built by Thornlea Carriages in Wabash, Indiana.

Access Adventure provides wilderness trips from March to October in Humboldt County, the Yosemite area, the Los Padres National Forest and other wild places around the world. The association is run by a diverse group of volunteers linked by their love of nature, horses and a passion to serve. A professional horse trainer, Muir was struck by multiple sclerosis at age 15. On Thursday, the 55 year old man fired up his audience with his passion and energy. He told them how, in 2001, he led an international team



Helen Vurek luncheon queen crowned by Keith Miller Prudential Photos by David Dickson, Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary



Celebrating the passage of time: Joyce Mann, Helen Vurek, Thomas and Aileen Deah of people with disabilities driving wheelchair accessible horse-drawn carriages on a three thousand mile, ten month journey across America. By the end of the luncheon, all the programs describing upcoming Access Adventures had been snapped up by the crowd.

The meeting ended with the crowning of the Queen, King and longest married couple of the assembly. Helen Vurek, 97 years old was the queen for the second year in a row. Thomas Dehl, 92 years old, was crown the king and also received the longest married couple award with his wife

Aileen, celebrating their 67 years together. Fazel promises that this very successful event will go on for many more years. He can count on the support of the Orinda Prudential Office managed by Keith Miller, a main sponsor of the event, along with the Lamorinda Sunrise Rotary. Our 75+ year old citizens represent about 6% of the total population (and growing), but fun activities are rarely organized for them. For more information email Fazel at runmtms@prodigy.net.

Orinda Historical Society Seeks Volunteers

By Chris Lavin

History is gaining ground on the Orinda Historical Society, with stacks of documents and photographs that need to be cataloged gathering dust.

"We have a lot of them," said Erik Anderson, a software engineer who serves as vice president of the society. "We're in the process of trying to find them all and cataloging them."

To do that the OHS is using volunteer senior citizens and sometimes even high school students who receive training on the society's new photo digitizing equipment and put to work in the society's office on the ground floor of the Orinda Library. The scanners and software were purchased with a grant from the Rotary Club.

In a second "call to action," Andersen said, the public is now able to purchase the best of the photos over the Internet at www.orindahistory.org. Board members hope that local merchants will begin displaying more scenes of Orinda's bucolic past in restaurants and office space - even private hallways at home.



This photo shows the Theodore Wagner house. Wagner loved the scenic beauty of the valley, and he built an expensive house in 1882 on what is now the Wagner Ranch Nature Area. The grounds included barns, a dairy, a hotel, a blacksmith shop, a brick-making kiln, and the first telephone in Orinda. He built a platform where a band would play on Sunday afternoons for all of his neighbors who came to enjoy his elaborate grounds. Wagner became famous for his parties and festivals, and was instrumental in creating the image of Orinda as a pleasant, scenic retreat.

"We're on a shoestring budget, and we're all volunteers," Andersen said. "We can use a lot of help."

And there are boxes upon boxes to be dealt with.

"We get all kinds of stuff from all kinds of places," Andersen said. "We've had donations from newspapers, from private estates, the city, and even just private individuals who find stuff."

Some of the documents are used in displays, but the ultimate goal is to have photographs sorted and scanned and

filed under intuitive categories. To volunteer, call the OHS at 925-254-1353, or stop by when the society is open from 3-5 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

New Orinda Development Unlikely to be a Boon for Schools, City

By Chris Lavin

Two major housing developments in Orinda - possibly the city's last -- are well under way, with 369 multiple family dwellings likely to have for-sale signs out front by the end of 2008. So two major questions impact the city's future: Why will the additional property taxes fail to swell the city's coffers, and why is the school district still predicting declining enrollment over the next decade?

Like other schools throughout the Bay Area, both the Acalanes and Orinda Union school districts are expecting enrollment to steadily decline over the next 10 years, which means fewer state funds coming their way from the state.

"Officials have been watching it," said OUSD School Board President Pat Rudebusch. "It's not that drastic."

In the early 1970s Orinda's school enrollment was around 3,000. In the mid-80's, that had dropped to the low point of about 1,600. Now the schools have been hovering around 2,400 for several years, but they expect a steady decline.

Yet the declining enrollment and its corresponding budget reductions come at a time when 245 high-end homes are under construction in a city with one of the best reputations for its public schools in the state. Houses at Wilder - known over the two decades in the approval process first as Gateway Valley, then as Montanera - are expected to be sold in the \$2 million range, producing almost \$25,000 in property taxes per house per year - from families many of whom are expected to have young children.

"You have to remember that only 7 cents on every dollar paid in property taxes comes back to the city of Orinda," said City Councilmember Amy Worth. Instead, property taxes throughout California go straight to the state, which controls the purse strings - a hotly debated subject between cities and counties throughout the state since Proposition 13 made the change in 1978.

That means that even if every home in the new developments sells for an average \$2 million, only about \$500,000 will be added to the city's annual budget.

In fact, opponents of the recently defeated Measure E, which would have raised \$59 million through bonds to fix Orinda's crumbling roads and water pipes, claimed in numerous letters to the editor and public forums that additional taxes from the city's new homes could pay not only to fix the roads, but for a plethora of other wish-list items as well.

"That's just not going to happen," Mayor Steve Glazer has said.

Besides the 200-plus homes in Wilder, the Pine Grove development will add another 80 homes to Orinda's real estate lists. But that many homes won't produce a significant change in Orinda's school population, city officials believe.

And while the new homes will certainly help contribute some money to the city, they will likely be the last. The city's general plan calls for limited development, and the prime spots marked for new homes have already been consumed.



Photo by Rick Konlon

Concerts-in-the-Park

Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 pm (except for Wed., July 4, 11:30am), at the Orinda Community Center Park. Bring a picnic and enjoy the free music in the park!

- June 19 Spirit of 29 (Dixieland Jazz)
- June 26 Stone Soup (Oldies Rock)
- July 4 (Wed., 11:30am-1:30pm) Silver Spurs (Country)
- July 10 Spazmatics (80s Rock)
- July 17 Pladdohg (Celtic Rock)
- July 24 Lady Kaye & the Kings of Swing (Swing & Jazz)
- July 31 Cal Alumni Big Band (Big Band Jazz)
- Aug. 7 Mixed Nuts (Oldies Rock, Disco, Blues)



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