

# Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

# Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, Sept 4	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Sarge Littlehale Conf. Room City Hall, 22 Orinda Way Tuesday, Aug 28	
Public Safety Comm.	7pm
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Thursday, Sept 13	
Hist. Landmark Comm.	3pm
Gallery Room, Upper Level 26 Orinda Way Monday, Sept 25 (Meeting Aug 28 cancelled)	
Liaison	8:30am
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Monday, Sept 10	

check online:  
Town of Orinda:  
<http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us/>  
for:  
• all meeting notes  
• calendar updates

Chamber of Commerce:  
<http://www.orinda-chamber.org/>  
• local businesses  
• upcoming events



**D.U.I. in a ditch, 8/14/07** An anonymous person called to report a vehicle on the wrong side of Miner Road in a ditch. The driver was alone, in a Ford Explorer. The police officer noticed a moderate odor of alcohol. The suspect was determined to be intoxicated. The vehicle was towed.

**Pellet Gun Delivery, 8/13/07** An older white male resident came to the Orinda police department to turn two pellet guns for destruction.

**Identity Theft, 8/10/07** A Chaparral Place resident reported unknown persons used her personal information to access her online bank account. Fraudulent charges of \$849. were deducted from her account. She closed the account and her bank reversed all charges.

**Elder Abuse, 8/10/07** Witnesses at Safeway, and a police officer who happened to be at the scene for a different matter, saw a suspect lean into a white 82 year old female's car and allegedly assault her. The suspect fled the scene, but her license plate number was obtained. Video surveillance from Safeway documented the altercation. The victim suffered scratches trying to defend herself. The suspect was advised of her rights and taken to the Martinez detention facility.

Read online at:  
<http://www.lamorindaweekly.com/html/read.html>  
(a pdf reader is required to view the pages.)

## Location, Location, Location – Orinda's Theater Square a Mixed Bag

By Sophie Braccini



Shan Kenner - Spanish, Flamenco Guitar Photo by Andy Scheck

On the evening of August 16, Shan Kenner played Spanish and Flamenco guitar music outside one of the vacant business spaces in the interior of Theater Square. There was not much of an audience on this evening; a few diners enjoying the evening air at Shelby's, the occasional passers-by.

The summer-through-fall concerts at Theater Square are part of the revitalization strategy developed by owner GLL Partners, who hope to increase foot traffic in the back of the Square and bring those businesses to the attention of consumers. Business owners say the lack of foot traffic has been problematic since the Square opened in October of 1991.

Pati MacDonald of Curves, a women's fitness center, and Sherry Sadighpour of Hedyeh, a gift boutique featuring little treasures brought by Sadighpour from all over the world, would like to see better external signage, and an attractive directory visible from the street to inform and entice visitors to the interior shops. McDonald, who also owns a Curves in San Diego, compares the

Orinda location with the Curves in Lafayette and Moraga and is pessimistic about opportunities for the growth of her business.

In contrast, many of the Square's business are highly successful. Sweet Dreams store manager Connie King, who has enjoyed seeing Orinda's kids pass through the store for ten years, says "We get a lot of foot traffic from the theater here, and having Starbucks next door has been good for our business, as well."

Nearby "b.b. gear" has sold women's apparel in the Square for more than 10 years. Storeowner Hayfa Sulyman attributes her success to consistency in her business practice and a keen knowledge of her customers' needs. "When you open a store you can't expect to make any money for the first two years," comments Sulyman, "and you need to do your market research before you start. Orindans have very discriminating taste, they can pay for good service but they won't come back if you offer nothing special," she adds.

For Catherine Macfee, Interior Designer, the Center

has been a very good location as well. She has doubled her floor space and has now opened a retail gifts and decoration store across from her first location. But according to Store Manager Kaylee Adams, 90% of Macfee's customers come from referrals; only 10% of their new customers come through foot traffic.

Nino's Bay Restaurant, which just celebrated its grand opening, has high hopes for success and expects their creative cooking to attract customers. Entourage, the beauty salon, is thriving in the back of the Center. Shelby's and the Lava Pit are also doing well. However, clearly noticeable are the empty spaces, some of which have been unoccupied for two years.

GLL Partner's Chris Quiett has been engaged in active negotiation with the town of Orinda to get some specific signage for the Square approved. He has been very happy with the open-mindedness of city officials and believes a final agreement will be reached in the next few months. Quiett also faces a zoning challenge: only traditional retailers are admitted in the Square and businesses such as real estate and financial services are not. He believes that a more diverse mix would be beneficial to the revitalization of the back of the Square. But Quiett expects that, "Once the word gets out about the concerts and the new merchants, people will come to the Square and will appreciate its fun atmosphere."

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## Clinton Fundraiser a Huge Success

By Lee Borrowman



Hillary Clinton with Robert Shwartz, Joni Binder and children Jonah and Maia Shwartz Photo provided

"Many people brought their pre-teen and teenage daughters," said Binder. "It was great to see. Senator Clinton is a wonderful role model and a source of inspiration for these girls." Also in attendance were Casa Orinda's Charlotte Guppy, Orinda School Board member Riki Sorenson, event co-hosts Steve Tidrick and Laurie Littlepage,

and Tim and Leslie O'Brien. Leslie O'Brien grew up with the Clintons in Little Rock. This was the first time Binder hosted an event of this kind in her home, and she describes it as a truly local effort. Attracting guests was a matter of calling friends who called friends. Although she readily admits to being a bit nervous during the event, Binder says, "It was an amazing night!" In fact, the entire week was an adventure for the Shwartz/Binder family, which includes children Jonah and Maia. "The Secret Service was at our home all week long; they had earpieces and talked into their wrists. We had gardeners and landscapers, and a wonderful caterer, Orinda mom Susie LaCour of LaCour Gourmet; one of our bartenders was a local kid home from college who also works as a swim coach at Meadow." Just before the event began, everyone had to clear out for the bomb-sniffing dogs. Would she do it again? "Absolutely; for the right person," said Binder.

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Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton mingled with one hundred and ten guests from Orinda and around the East Bay at the home of Joni Binder and Robert Shwartz on the evening of August 12. The event raised over \$200,000 for the Hillary for President Exploratory Campaign.

"Several of our guests had been on the fence before," said Binder, but they were completely won over. She (Clinton) is very warm and intelligent; I'm not sure how well that comes through in the media." According to Binder, Clinton spoke eloquently and answered questions about the situation in Iraq, education and healthcare reform, recognizing Orinda's Xenophon Therapeutic Riding Center as a wonderful example of an organization that is central to the type of optimum care we should be striving for as a nation (for more information on Xenophon go to <http://xenophontrc.org/blog/>).

Guests included Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher, who was escorted by former Safeway CEO David Bowlby, and her 16 year old daughter, Katherine.

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