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Volume 01; Issue 18

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Wednesday, October 17, 2007



Zoe Heidersbach (4 1/4) gets in the spirit at Glorietta School's Fun Fest

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF

Lamorinda kids continue a 57 year old American tradition
By Sophie Braccini

When Sarah Jessica Parker opened last year's launch of the 56th Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF campaign in New York, she said: "Halloween can be very focused on the amassing of bucket-loads of sweets. Yet 'Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF' demonstrates that kids can do good deeds and still have fun. A positive first experience with philanthropy can lay the groundwork for a lifetime of giving." This year, many Lamorinda community groups are encouraging families to join the challenge. So don't be surprised when young trick-or-treaters come to your door this Halloween toting an orange UNICEF box along with the usual plastic pumpkin basket or devilishly decorated goodie bag, and have some pocket change handy by the candy bowl.

UNICEF is the acronym of the United Nation Children's Fund. It began as the "Food for Europe" program after WWII and became an integral part of the UN in 1953. Every year, more than 10 million children under the age of five die totally preventable deaths.

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Autumn events abound!

See our Calendar on page 6 for a list of seasonal festivities

Troop 234 Holds its First Environmentally Friendly Carwash

By Lee Borrowman

Fundraising carwashes have always been a part of life in Lamorinda. Between the Boy Scouts, high school academic clubs and sports teams, few weekends pass without one. Due to policies being enforced of late by the Central Costa County Sanitary District (CCCSD), some of these casual carwashes were having trouble finding a good home.

In many cases, the wastewater from the carwashes was running down storm drains and flowing from there through the systems of creeks and rivers that lead either to reservoirs of drinking water or into the Bay. The CCCSD has put a stop

to this practice, and local storm drain enforcement personnel are out on weekends looking for violators.

So what was Boy Scout Troop 234 to do? Twice a year for the past several years the Troop has held a carwash. Carwash organizer Tony Silva, who admits that his first reaction was "More regulations?! More work?!" had to come up with a way to keep up the tradition.

Using a plug for the storm drain, a couple of sump pumps and an elaborate array of hoses, Silva built a system that channeled the waste water not into the storm drain but into a floor drain in the

bathroom of a nearby service station; a drain that leads to the sewer and a wastewater treatment facility.

"It took a lot of people to pull this off," says Silva. The service station is Lamorinda Gas and Motorsport on Moraga Road. Owner Robert Smeyne donated the water for washing, the electricity to power the pumps, and of course his bathroom floor in support of the troop. The Bruzzone family owns the land the carwash is held on, and Bill Snider of Moraga Hardware and Lumber gave the Troop a generous discount on the hoses needed for the set-up. Scout Master and chief cook Steve Israel kept the carwashers well fed.

Finally, Silva wants to acknowledge the help

and enthusiasm of the CCCSD's Colleen Henry, who worked with him on the permit approval process. "It was best experience I've ever had with a bureaucracy," he said with a smile. "Colleen was very enthusiastic about our system; we even got the permit for free."

Henry asked Silva if he was willing to serve as a resource for other groups, and Silva agreed. He is still working out the details, but expects to offer advice, assistance and equipment rental to other non-profit groups. Any funds raised by this service would, of course, go into the coffers of Troop 234 to offset the \$500+ cost of acquiring all of the parts and equipment they needed to build their system.



Tony Silva (orange shirt, hat) watches the pumps at work

Photo Andy Schreck

Orinda Walks to Work and Bikes to School

By Lee Borrowman

The weather could have been better, but that didn't stop some Orindans from participating in the Walk/Bike/Bus to School and Work Day on Wednesday, October 10. The event was sponsored by the City of Orinda and the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) in support of the National Walk and Bike to School and Work Day, held annually in early October, and to increase awareness for improving pedestrian and bicycle pathways in our community. TSAC has committed to creating an Orinda Master Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan, which will facilitate obtaining grants to make badly needed improvements.

Although conditions in Orinda are not ideal for safe walking and biking, the hope of the City was that this day would help educate and give focus on the

need for improvements in this area. By encouraging parent participation in walking with their children and neighborhoods walking together, the City hoped to create a positive and safe environment, especially for school age children. Other goals included reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality, being more environmentally friendly, and enhancing the health of citizens.

As it turned, the greatest numbers of participants could be found on their way to school. Council member Sue Severson was at Glorietta that morning, handing out stickers. "I was impressed with the student and parent enthusiasm for a walk/bike to school day. The extra benefit of families and friends coming together was heartwarming," Severson said.

... continued on page 4



Glorietta families walked or biked together

Photo courtesy of Sue Severson

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Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Lafayette

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, Nov 13	
Monday, Nov 26	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, Nov 1	
Thursday, Nov 15	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, Oct 23	
Tuesday, Nov 6	
Park, Trails, Rec.	7pm
Community Center 500 St Mary's Road Wednesday, Nov 14	
Circulation	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, Nov 15	
Emergency Prep.	9:15am
City Offices 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 265 Wednesday, Nov 14	
Youth Services	6pm
Community Center, Eldenberg Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, Nov 5	
check online: Town of Lafayette: http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us for: • all meeting notes • calendar updates Chamber of Commerce: http://www.lafayettechamber.org for: • local businesses • upcoming events	



Vandalism, 10/02/07 Unlucky victim parked and locked his car on the street in front of his home on Green Place and went inside. Owner returned to vehicle about an hour later and saw that the front passenger window was broken. Nothing was missing from the car and there was no other damage.

More Vandalism, 10/02/07 Two sets of expensive golf clubs were taken via the smashed rear window of a vehicle parked in a driveway on Hidalgo Court. The owner of the car and the clubs didn't hear a darn thing. Two sets of clubs, estimated value \$2,500 each, for a total of \$5,000.

Even More Vandalism, 10/01/07 An individual left his car parked and locked in his Warner Court driveway. An unknown suspect smashed the rear passenger window. Nothing was taken and the car was still locked when the police came to investigate. No leads or witnesses.

Yet Another Vehicle Petty Theft, 10/01/07 At about 7:00 p.m. an Audi A4 was parked in the driveway of a Robles Court home. When the owner came out at about 8:30 a.m. the next morning, he found an unknown suspect had entered the car and stolen a silver Canon Elph camera, valued at \$150, and a set of 12 champagne flutes and a silver ice bucket, valued at \$200.

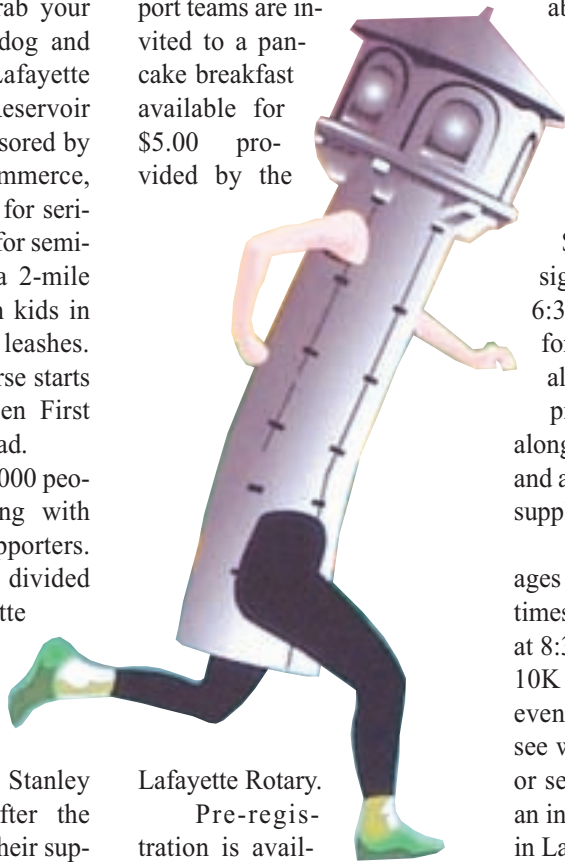
Something for Everyone at the Reservoir Run

By Cathy Tyson

It's not too late, grab your sneakers, get the dog and head to downtown Lafayette for the 15th annual Reservoir Run. The event, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, features a 10K length for serious runners, a 5K run for semi-serious runners and a 2-mile race for families with kids in strollers and dogs on leashes. The out and back course starts at Mt. Diablo between First Street and Moraga Road.

Last year over 2,000 people participated, along with scores of sideline supporters. Money raised will be divided between Lafayette schools and the Chamber of Commerce for their services and programs. Music will be provided by Stanley Middle School. After the workout runners and their sup-

port teams are invited to a pancake breakfast available for \$5.00 provided by the



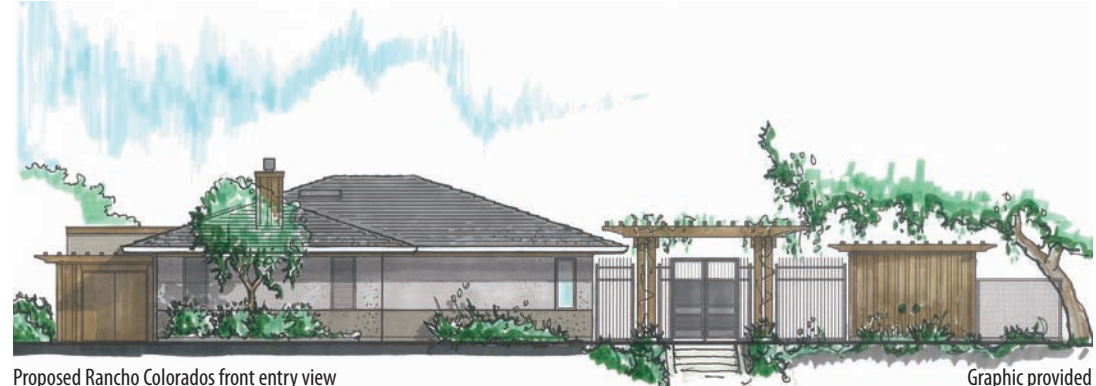
Lafayette Rotary. Pre-registration is avail-

able through the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, www.lafayettechamber.org or www.active.org. Adult pre-registration is \$26, youth pre-registration is \$18., but runners can still sign up on race day from 6:30 on, \$30 for adults, \$23 for youths. The fee includes all the water you can drink, provided at strategic spots along the routes, a goody bag, and a long sleeve T-shirt, while supplies last.

Participants are encouraged to park and BART. Race times are staggered, beginning at 8:30 for the 5K, 8:45 for the 10K and 9:00 for the 2-mile event. For more information, see www.lafayettechamber.org or see www.YouTube.com for an interesting video – just type in Lafayette Reservoir Run.

Rancho vs. The Neighbors

By Cathy Tyson



Proposed Rancho Colorados front entry view

Graphic provided

Before Burton Valley's Rancho Colorados Swim and Tennis Club (Rancho) can proceed with a proposed renovation project, the Planning Commission encouraged Rancho's Board of Directors to come to an agreement with the 18 neighbors on the private portion of Rohrer Drive. Since the main building at Rancho has been there since 1960, and is badly in need of improvement and the last request for a membership increase was way back in 1966, one would think changes to Rancho wouldn't be a problem.

Although 84% of Rancho's current 250 families approved plans last year to hire an architect to proceed with the design, adjacent to Rancho the eighteen neighboring families weren't so sure. Their major concerns aren't even about the proposed new 2,395 square foot Clubhouse.

Rather, their primary concern is about increasing the membership from 250 to 300 families and associated impacts. The neighbors would also like Rancho's Board of Directors to certify that Rancho is in compliance with all conditions of approval and that Traffic Manage-

ment guidelines are enforced. These concerns are included in the Planning Commission Staff Report, where staff recommended 14 project specific land use conditions of approval covering everything from hours of operations, to number of swim meets, parking spaces and more.

After spending quite a bit of time meeting with neighbor representatives, Rancho Board President Todd Mullins said the Club has agreed with the neighbors on a number of issues including, removal of proposed tennis court lighting, hours of use, number of swim meets, limited number of members, noise, and the appointment of a Traffic Manager to oversee parking issues.

A letter to the Lafayette Planning Commission received September 26, 2007 from neighbors William Gavan and Tom Lowe stated, "As of this date, Rancho and the neighbors have essentially reached agreement on all of the major issues as outlined in the draft agreement with the exception of the number of member families that will be permitted." It goes on to say they will compromise and agree to

275 member families.

At the early October Planning Commission meeting neighbor Steve Peers surprised most everyone in attendance and officially withdrew from the tentative agreement between Rancho and the neighbors, citing that year after year Rancho is not in compliance with their current use permit and that the proposed increase to 300 families is just too many. Another neighbor spoke up pointing out that Rancho has reneged on all of its promised compromises. A third neighbor complained that she was okay with 25 additional families, but not special events that might go until midnight.

Brad Fox, Rancho Treasurer for five of the last six years noted that the club has an infrequent parking problem, especially during swim meets. To address that, Rancho has developed a Parking and Traffic Management Plan, which



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Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Moraga

Calendar

City Council 7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo Wednesday, Oct 24
Planning Comm. 7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive Monday, Nov 5
Design Review 7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive Tuesday, Nov 13
Park & Rec 7:30pm
Hacienda, Mosaic Room 2100 Donald Drive Tuesday, Nov 20
Liaison 8:00am
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way Friday, Nov 9
Youth Involvement 7:30pm
Hacienda, Mosaic Room 2100 Donald Drive Thursday, Nov 8
check online: Town of Moraga: http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us for: • all meeting notes • calendar updates



Rapper Guys Come to Campo, 10/05/07 At approximately 10:22 in the morning, officers came to check on two suspicious subjects. One of the subjects, a black male in his twenties dressed in baggy clothing had long corn rows and gold teeth was seen rapping with his pal, also a black male. The pair was walking around campus rapping with a boom box. Peter Nitler, who happened to be enjoying a Chemistry test at the time, said the whole class started laughing when the young men were outside of his classroom. His teacher was not amused.

Car Stolen, 10/07/07 A Springfield drive resident parked his car in the driveway and went inside his home. When he came out the next morning at 8:00, his vehicle was gone. All keys to the vehicle were accounted for except for an extra key that was kept in the center console.

Tires trashed, 10/05/07 An Ascot drive resident called police to report that his left front and rear tire had been punctured while parked in an unassigned parking stall at the apartment complex.

Burglary, 10/04/07 A Sanders Drive resident was away from his home for several hours. When he returned he discovered someone had entered using a pry bar and forced entry via the side garage door. Several items were missing. The victim said he had no idea who would enter his home and steal his property.

Ascot Intersection Design Underway Camino Pablo Bumps Haunt Council Meeting

By Steve Angelides

The design work for safety improvements to the intersection at Ascot Drive and Moraga Road has begun under the \$115,000 contract approved by the Town Council, at a meeting haunted by references to the Camino Pablo road bumps, which were not on the agenda.

The Ascot design work is the first phase of the \$683,000 project which will be funded by a \$601,000 grant supplemented by Measure C road funds and garbage franchise fees. The recommended design is

schedule to be presented to the Town's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) on November 7, and then to the Council on November 14 or 28.

The contract approved by the Council states that the civil engineer will "prepare plans, specifications and estimates for median islands, driveway modifications, and ADA compliant curb ramps." It states that the traffic engineer "will design the signals for the project and design signal interconnect with the Donald

Drive signal." Town Engineer Jill Mercurio told the Council that the contract "includes the study of all alternatives up to and including full signalization."

Three Ascot Drive residents commended the Council for undertaking the Ascot project, and spoke in favor of full signalization of the intersection. They commented on the difficulty of turning left from Ascot onto Moraga Road, especially during the morning rush hour.

... continued on page 8

Sign Ordinance in Moraga: the Business Community Gets Involved

By Sophie Braccini

The City of Moraga is revising its sign ordinance and has decided to involve the business community right from the start. On October 9th, Planning Director Lori Salamack made a comprehensive presentation of the draft project during a public session of the "Citizens Land Use Academy" at the Hacienda de las Flores. The session was well attended by business owners and managers, includ-

ing representatives from the Rheem Pet Shoppe, Curves, UPS, Huntington Learning Center, Lori's Perfect Tan, Long's, Elena Hood Real Estate and the Moraga Chamber of Commerce.

Salamack made a detailed presentation of the draft ordinance. She explained that the draft had been designed with discussion in mind. The sizes of the different types of signs, the categories that

need a permit or the regulation of banners have been set at a minimum so the community can propose improvements. One of the main characteristics of this ordinance is that it will be "content neutral," meaning that rules will apply to any type of sign (permanent, semi-permanent, removable) independently of its content. For example, V-shaped signs that are used by real estate professionals will follow the same rules as farmers' market, garage sale or any other V-shaped signs.

... continued on page 8

Moraga Movers Go to Fleet Week Submitted by George Fisher and Chuck Treat



A good time was had by all Photo submitted

The Moraga Movers kicked off its fall membership drive at the Moraga Commons Pear Festival on September 29. The 2008 application forms are available at the Hacienda Park office and La Sala or by calling the office at 376-6622. Applicants joining between October 1 and the end of December will automatically be members through 2008. Moraga Movers is dedicated to activities and needs for adults 55 plus and the nominal dues are tax deductible.

For those unfamiliar with some of the exciting activities offered to members, the Moraga Movers' Chuck Treat offers this account of a recent excursion:

Dottie Baker led fifty-five Moraga Movers and Lafayette Seniors to San Francisco for the Fleet Week Air Show finale, Bay Cruise and buffet on Sunday October 7.

Upon boarding The San Francisco Belle, a 295 foot long, four deck river boat replica, the

crew led us to our reserved seating on the first deck where we enjoyed a buffet lunch. They kept our Mimosa flutes filled and the ship's whistle sounded as we got underway at 2:30. The Bay was full of sailboats and motor craft of all types including the California Maritime Academy's Golden Bear, USS Jeremiah O'Brien, and FDR's yacht Potomac now restored and operating out of Jack London Square.

The Air Show started with a fly-by by Air Force Captain Russ Piggott, a Lafayette native and pilot for the USAF Viper West Coast Demonstration team flying an F-16 Fighter, and his 65 year old father, Lafayette resident John Piggott, flying in tight formation next to his son in his Russian Sukhoi Su-29 war bird. They made numerous passes right overhead. Next up was John Piggott in his Pitts Special biplane. The Pitts biplane is small but was easy to follow by its tail of smoke as Piggott performed acro-

batics from just feet above the Bay surface to what I estimate was 5,000 feet or higher.

The Blue Angels, six Navy fighters with their C130 support plane then roared overhead and the grand finale was on. They put on a spectacular show of close precision flying while trailing red, white and blue smoke, first at high speed and then at low speed with landing gear and tail hooks down. Their signature aerobatic is flying straight up, make that vertical, and then rolling over to fly straight down as they trail smoke causing some of us to wonder if they will pull up in time. They do.

We arrived back in Moraga that evening thoroughly satisfied with our Fleet Week adventure. We vowed to return next year and all agreed that Dottie Baker had delivered yet another memorable excursion.

... continued on page 8

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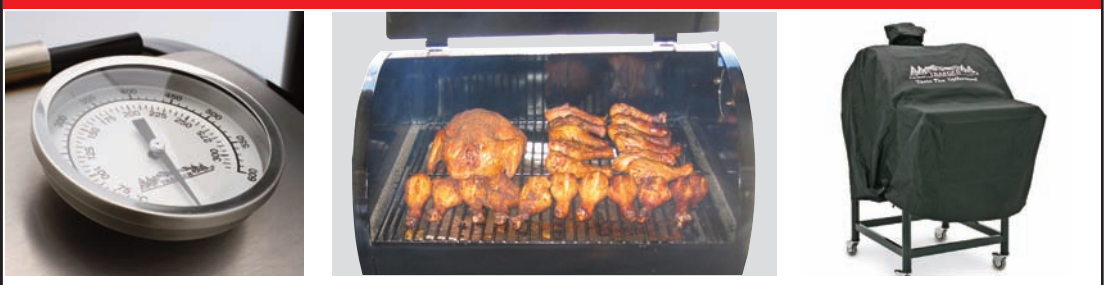
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Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, Nov 6	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, Oct 23	
Traffic Safety Advisory	7pm
Community Room City Hall 22 Orinda Way Monday, Oct 22	
Hist. Landmark Comm.	3pm
Gallery Room, Upper Level 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, Oct 23	
Liaison	8:30am
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Monday, Nov 5	

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



Bad Parent-Sitting, 10/09/07 The son of an El Toyonal resident is the sole caretaker of his 93-year-old mother, they both live in the same home. The son drove mom to downtown Orinda to do some errands and left his mother in his parked car for approximately three hours. Son became intoxicated and forgot not only where he parked his car, but that his elderly mother was in it. The son got a ride home and reported his mother missing to the police. His mother was found in Orinda and returned home. A report was sent to Adult Protective Services.

Stolen Laptop, 10/08/07 A Dia Dorados resident was visiting the Orinda Community Park one day with her laptop. She left it on a park bench near the gazebo for approximately 45 minutes. Upon her return to the bench, she found her Compaq notebook computer missing.

Auto Burglary, 10/4/07 Someone broke the window of a locked car parked at Wagner Ranch School and took the owner's black purse, which was slightly covered by clothing. The purse was taken sometime between 9:00 a.m. and 11:40 a.m. when the victim was alerted to the broken window. Police found all the doors to the vehicle still locked.

Teens Find Place To Party, 10/02/07 Approximately eight people, mostly juveniles entered an El Gavilan home while the homeowner was away. The suspects were found drinking alcohol and smoking pot and allegedly using Ecstasy. No damage was done to the house and nothing was stolen. No one had permission to enter the home.

Orinda Walks to Work and Bikes to School ... continued from page 1



This Glorietta family invited their dog to join in the fun
Photo courtesy of Sue Severson

"The kids loved it," wrote Severson later, in a statement sent out on behalf of the event's sponsors, "we got cars off the streets and also took a step toward becoming more environmentally aware."

As follow-up, the City of Orinda is seeking your input into how walkable/bikeable our streets are in terms of getting our children to school safely. Checklists can be found in pdf format on the City's website <http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us>. When completed, these can be mailed to the City Manager, City of Orinda, PO Box 2000, Orinda, CA 94573. This information is critical to the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee as we work through our Safe Routes to School initiatives. Thank you for participating, it was a success because of you!"

And While We're on the Subject...

Orinda's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee recently unveiled its new Neighborhood Traffic Management Program, which summarizes the ultimate goal of traffic calming as "to provide a safer and more livable environment for residents, pedestrians, bicyclists and children." The next time you're inside on a rainy day, check it out at <http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us>.

Among other things, the plan describes the process by which residents can request traffic calming measures, provides traffic calming request forms, spells out the City's policy on "speed cushions" and lists the streets for which speed cushions will not be considered. That list includes arterial streets such as Bear Creek Rd, Camino Pablo, Glorietta, Moraga Way and Rheem Blvd, as well as many smaller "collector" streets.

Orinda Has a Young Visitor from Tabor

By Andrea A. Firth

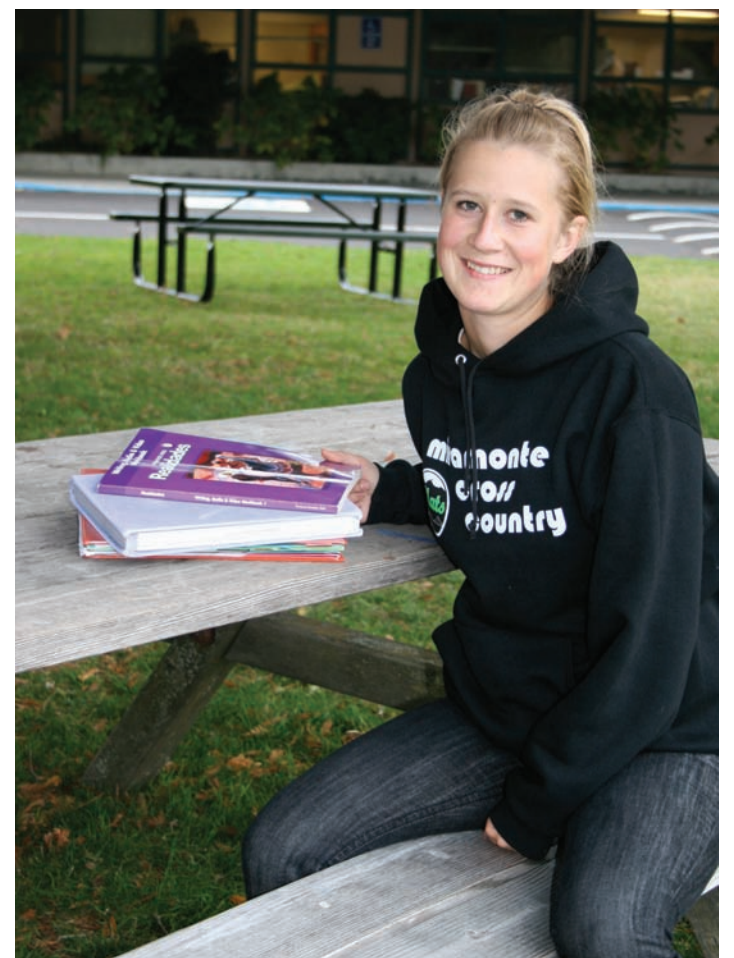
When you ask Tereza Vertatova what she likes best about life in Orinda, she replies with assurance and a smile, "I like meeting people. There are lots of people from all over the world here." Sixteen year-old Tereza is from Tabor in the Czech Republic. She is spending a semester at Miramonte High School as part of the visiting student program sponsored by the Orinda/Tabor Sister City Foundation.

Tabor is a medieval city with a rich and turbulent history located approximately 60 miles south of Prague. "I'm used to all the old buildings in my country. I see America as young in this aspect," notes Tereza. She finds the weather and terrain in northern California a bit different too. "We have four seasons in the Czech Republic. I'm not used to the cool mornings and hot days. That's why I have a cold now," she reports with a snuffle and adds, "We have hills in Tabor, but they are not so big."

Having never been to the United States before, Tereza was motivated to head west to improve her English language skills and to do some exploring. Already, her conversational English is impeccable and includes a smattering of colloquialisms that make it difficult to distinguish her from any other high school student. As for exploring, she's been shopping in San Francisco, kayaking in Carmel, and plans to go hiking in Yosemite soon.

Now a junior at Miramonte, Tereza was intrigued by the opportunity to take an elective such as Contemporary Issues. "This class is pretty hard for me, but I like it. I get to see the world from the American perspective, the American point of view—this is interesting." She is also taking Spanish and running on the cross country track team.

Although she misses her family and friends back in



Tereza Vertatova, visiting student from Tabor in the Czech Republic.
Photo Andrea Firth

Tabor, Tereza has found the student body at Miramonte very welcoming and helpful. "Everyone talks to me and asks me where I am from. They are curious, and I think this is good," she explains. Tereza will have two more years of high school to complete when

she returns to the Czech Republic in February. She plans to go to college possibly majoring in languages. Tereza would like to return to California someday, and she adds, "I hope that some of the friends that I made here will come visit me in the Czech Republic."



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Life in LAMORINDA

Lush Lawns, Pest-Free Homes . . . But At What Cost?

By Jennifer Wake



Creeks like this one behind Chow in Lafayette, meander through much of Lamorinda and feed directly into the Delta and the Bay

Photo Jennifer Wake

The Lamorinda area is well-known for its natural beauty, with its homes set amongst natural vegetation or perched near meandering creeks. But when homeowners are unaware of safer

alternatives to toxic pesticides, keeping homes and gardens beautiful and pest-free can come at a cost to our health and the environment.

According to the Contra

Costa County Agricultural Commissioners Office, the Lamorinda area contracts out one of the County's largest scheduled bi-monthly applications by pest control operators, underscoring an alarming trend of increased insect and weed eradication in more affluent areas.

Additionally, a report by the Pesticides Action Network North America (PANNA) and Californians for Pesticide Reform revealed that, in California, use of carcinogenic pesticides had more than doubled from 1991 to 1998, and that total pesticide use in 1998 was at the highest level ever reported. Insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, rodenticides, and microcides (disinfectants) are all considered pesticides.

A former Cal/EPA investigator with a master's degree in public health, Moraga resident Susan JunFish understood some of the dangers of toxic chemicals. When she and her family moved to the area in 2002, she set out to enroll her 3-year-old son in preschool, but after visiting over 20 preschools, she saw many environmental hazards including pesticide use at the sites.

"I witnessed many preventable environmental hazards where children were being exposed to

cleaning products and saw two incidents where pesticides were being sprayed as children were walking by," she said. "One local preschool was even exposing kids to lead by letting kids play inside old computer screen terminals. Staff often diluted bleach (sodium hypochlorite) incorrectly and used disinfectants improperly."

A 2004 study by the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine found that children exposed to pesticides or cleaning products, particularly under age one, are 2.5 to 4.5 times more likely to have permanent (chronic) asthma by the time they're five.

In August of 2002, JunFish founded the Parents for a Safer Environment (PfSE) - a grass roots organization dedicated to reducing preventable environmental hazard exposures to children. "I wanted to figure a way to inform and somehow reach out to preschools at large."

The majority of PfSE's work has been assisting public agencies such as local towns and school districts and the county to reduce the use of unnecessary pesticides and use safer alternatives. Their work has been mostly volunteer and partially funded by small grants from local, non-profit, county and state

agencies.

Over the course of two years, PfSE worked with the Town of Moraga to implement an integrated pest management (IPM) plan, which was approved last year. Thanks to its implementation, parks in Moraga have the distinction of being one of the "least pesticides applied" areas in Contra Costa County. PfSE has also taken several calls from parents in Lafayette and Orinda who have witnessed spraying in their schools and parks, and hope they take the lead in pursuing IPM policies in their towns.

... continued on page 13



Moraga resident Sam Laudy, 21 months, plays without worry of toxic pesticide use on the grass at Moraga Commons

Photo Jennifer Wake

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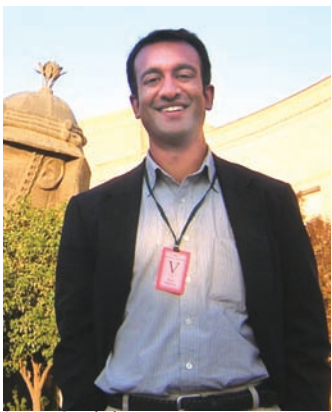
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Campo Alumni to Talk About Iraq at Saint Mary's

By Sophie Braccini



Rajiv in Bagdad

Photo courtesy of Rajiv Chandrasekaran

Living in Baghdad's "Green Zone" shortly after the US invasion of Iraq, Rajiv Chandrasekaran, a young journalist for the Washington Post and alumni of Campolindo High School, was keenly aware of the privileged enclave he was working in as the war raged all around. Yet, it was from this stable aberration that most American officials based their decisions on rebuilding Iraq and as Chandrasekaran argues, that's exactly why the decisions were so out of touch with Iraqi reality.

Chandrasekaran moved to Moraga with his family from Palo Alto in 1987 and he completed his high school years at Campolindo. There, his favorite subjects were science and math and he actively con-

sidered becoming a doctor or engineer. However, his interest in news research and reporting started with his participation in "La Puma," Campo's student newspaper. He remembers how Edward Hewitson, English teacher and journalism advisor had a profound influence on him and his interest in reporting the news.

After graduating, Chandrasekaran re-crossed the bay to attend Stanford where he majored in Political Science. There too, he gravitated toward journalism and edited the Stanford Daily, the student newspaper that's been publishing news since 1892. A month after graduation, Chandrasekaran was offered an internship at the Washington Post that eventually turned into a permanent position.

At the Post, Chandrasekaran began reporting on business issues and his background in Silicon Valley made him a perfect choice for covering technology issues. In 2000, he was offered the opportunity to cover South East Asia for the Post. In Chandrasekaran's words, "this was a great new adventure, I had never traveled to that part of the world, and I was interested in living overseas, in discovering new countries as well as seeing my own from further away."

At 26, he found himself stationed in Djakarta Indonesia for 2 1/2 years. There he covered issues and events such as the 2000 Olympic games in Sydney, Australia and President Clinton's historic visit to Vietnam. After 9/11, he reported extensively from the hot spots of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Chandrasekaran believes that his physical appearance might have allowed him to be accepted in this part of the world. In 2002, his editor moved him to Cairo so he could better cover the Middle East. Then he was stationed in Baghdad six months prior to the commencement of the Iraqi war and became the Post's bureau chief in Baghdad August 2004.

From his experiences came the book: "Imperial Life in the Emerald City - Inside Iraq's Green Zone." "It was a crazy world inside the Green Zone," says Chandrasekaran, "many of the decisions were made in the protected area by people who had been sent by the White House based on political loyalty rather than cultural, technical or operational competency.

They didn't always see what was really important and relevant to the Iraqi people like jobs or electricity." Chandrasekaran witnessed the aftermath and how it led to

protests and dissatisfaction with the American occupation.

... continued on page 6



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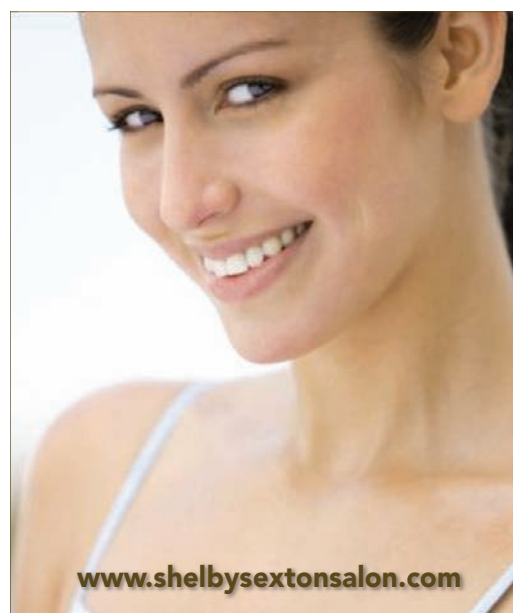
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Life in LAMORINDA

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF



Trick-or-Treating for UNICEF (top to bottom, left to right): Anne Robles holding baby Carly, Andrea Lucacher, Kelly Robles, Charlie and Grace Woidat

UNICEF works with governments, national and international agencies and civil society to support effective and essential actions at each phase of the life cycle of the child, from the mother's pregnancy through early childhood, preschool and school-age years and adolescence.

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF was started in 1950 when a group of

young trick-or-treaters went door-to-door on Halloween night in Philadelphia, carrying milk cartons to collect change. The result was much bigger than they could ever have imagined, since over the past 56 years the children of the United States have raised more than \$132 million to help build a better future for children around the globe.

Some in Lamorinda have

...continued from page 1

taken over the challenge and this year, community groups and schools are joining forces. The Moraga Junior Womens' Club joined the fund raising effort two years ago. Anne Robles, a mother of 3 young children, says, "Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF is a great way to teach our children that there are less fortunate children in the world and that this is one way in which they can help." Mei Lin Wolff, who started the program for the Moraga Juniors, said the experience was great: "My daughter, who attended school at Glorietta, went with a group of friends and the response was unanimously positive. Some people were surprised, but most remembered doing it during their childhood or having had their kids doing it." "Some people didn't have change," she adds, "so we ended up getting \$5 and \$20 bills!"

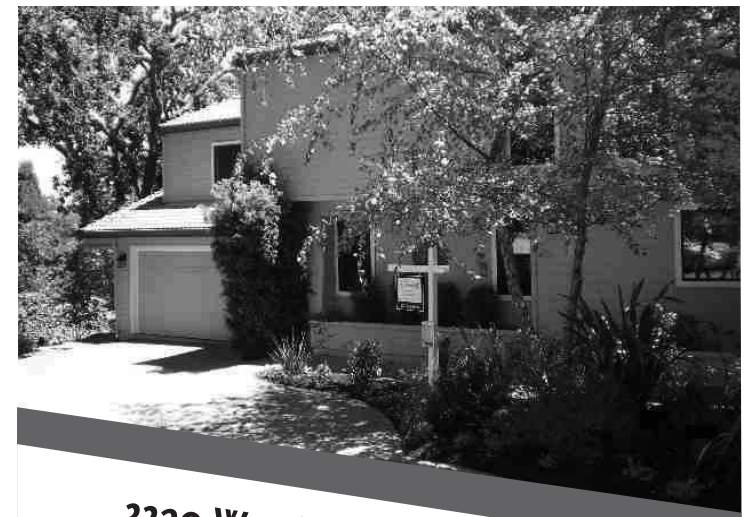
Robles campaigned to get other groups to join in, and this year the Lafayette Juniors and the Lamorinda Moms Club plan to share in the philanthropic effort. "It is amazing what difference even small amounts of money can make," adds Robles. According to UNICEF data, \$1 protects a child from polio for life. Additionally, \$1 immunizes one child against the deadly disease measles. Measles claims more children's lives each year than wars, famines, and natural disasters combined. \$2 can provide 66 children with vitamin A capsules for a year. Vitamin A protects children from permanent blindness, helps them grow strong and protects against certain types of in-



fections. \$2.46 can buy school supplies, such as pencils, books, chalk, slate board and paper for one child for one year. \$9 buys a pack of 200 water purification tablets. Drinking unsafe water can lead to diarrheal diseases, which kills 1.5 million children each year.

The "Leadership" class at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School is a veteran of the program. For 10 years now the middle school students have participated, raising anywhere from a few hundred to more than a thousand dollars depending on the year. Gerald Gruen, the Leadership teacher, explains that the students chose a different way to raise money this year. "The students have dropped boxes in every first period class and organized a competition between them," says Gruen, "some classes have already required additional boxes and we are very excited to see the outcome."

Pier 1 Imports, a corporate sponsor of the project, gives away the orange containers for free. The Walnut Creek store, 2099 Mount Diablo Blvd # 101, confirmed that it has many containers available in a basket just inside the entryway. For more information on this program and on actions developed by the UNICEF go to www.unicef.org.



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2 Years Later: Assessing the Impact of OSH on the Local Retail Scene

By Sophie Braccini

In August of 2005 Orchard Supply Hardware (OSH) opened a store in the Moraga Center. As the project worked its way through the planning and construction process, discussions were often loud and heated. Some argued the big retailer would bring much needed sales tax revenue to Moraga, while others worried it could attract too much out of town traffic and significantly hurt locally owned businesses. OSH, which is part of the Sears Group, owns some seventy-five retail hardware stores in California. The level of investment that OSH brought to Moraga would be of significant concern to any local

merchant in the hardware, nursery and hard-goods business. Now, two years later, the presence of OSH has not lead to the closure of any local business, but it's hard to assess the full impact of the store on local business and the community at large.

The Town's primary motivation for approving the Moraga OSH store was the expected positive impact it would have on local finances through local sales taxes. When contacted, Town staff was unable to provide details on tax revenue, and Eric Evensen, OSH's Store Manager, is hesitant to discuss specifics. "I cannot give you a precise figure," explains the manager, "but I can tell

you that we have met all our objectives and that we're where we should be. Our commitment to Moraga isn't about to falter."

On the other hand, local Moraga Hardware & Lumber owner Bill Snider has seen erosion in sales volume and customer traffic since the opening of OSH in late August of 2005. Snider states: "Prior to the opening of OSH, we were continuing to grow at a brisk pace since my purchase of Moraga Hardware & Lumber in April of 2000. Instead of growing the business, we are now focused on maintaining market share, hanging onto our customer base, and customer service. I have

been forced to downsize my staff and my ability to give back to the community is now limited.

... continued on page 11

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Fall Open House Keeps Fire Safety Top of Mind

By Jennifer Wake

As the air turns chilly, and rain begins to fall, there's nothing quite like the warmth and comfort you can get by bundling up in front of a roaring fire. But according to the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, when fireplaces and woodstoves are not properly maintained or used incorrectly, the result can be devastating.

Before your first fire of the season, be sure your chimney has been inspected and cleaned by professionals in the past two years if it used often, the District says, with home flues for wood burning stoves inspected once a year.

"Since high flames burning hot will burn clean, and clean fires have leave little creosote and resin,

open the draft wide," the District suggests on its Web site. "Make sure that your chimney has a spark arrestor or wire basket on the top of the chimney, always use fireplace screens or glass doors, and never the door of a wood burning stove open unless there is a screen or glass door backup."

Simple tips like cleaning ashes out of the fireplace or stove regularly (keeping in mind that ashes can remain hot for days after a fire), never leaving a fire unattended, having a fire extinguisher accessible that you know how to use, and making sure there are working smoke detectors in your home can help to ensure an enjoyable and safe fall season.



Lamorinda residents can get the latest information on emergency preparedness and fire safety from firefighters at the Moraga-Orinda Fire District's annual Fall Open House at Fire Station 41 (1280 Moraga Way in Moraga) on Saturday, Oct. 20 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Residents can also take a peek at the fire fighting equipment, the engines, and ambulance.

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What Are You Waiting For?

By Tara Rochlin

When my husband and I first moved to Moraga in 1992, we were moving from a 1200 foot condo in Downtown Chicago. The houses in Lamorinda seemed ridiculously large to us, and we finally settled for roughly 1500 square feet with a fabulous backyard and pool. We had no idea what we would do with all the space. By the time our second child was on the way, 1500 square feet was looking pretty small, but we loved the property, so we added on and made it a 2000 square foot house with a spacious home office and a cozy family room. As our kids grew and reached adolescence, 2000 square feet started to feel smaller and smaller, cozy meant cramped, and we again pondered an addition and hired an architect.

value to be tallied on a monthly basis. While we typically gain (although occasionally lose a little) wealth on paper, we spend our life living in the asset, and in the long run we'll all do just fine.

Without question, the market has slowed and credit has tightened. The 'gems' that two years ago were entertaining five or even ten competing offers after two days on the market are now competing for a relatively smaller pool of buyers. Average time on the market is over 30 days (based on MLS pending and sold data, Jan.1, 2007 - Oct. 4, 2007 for Moraga-35, Orinda-40 & Lafayette-33). If you benefited from the rise in values over the last few years, this means that you can shop around for the perfect property for your next phase of life, have enough equity to get an attractive loan, and can negotiate in a fair and reasonable manner without feeling pressured to act quickly! What a wonderful opportunity!

This time, however, it was clear that the property would not sustain a larger house, the cost was out of line with the added features, and the house simply could not be made into what we wanted for our family (and sanity). We also found ourselves using the pool less and less, and spending more time on outside activities and at Moraga Country Club. When the right house hit the market we knew it, and made the move.

Each of these decisions was made based on what we wanted in a house and the needs of our family at the time, not just on market conditions or spreadsheets comparing average cost per day per square foot. Primary residences are not like stocks or bonds with a

Oh there is a catch...you have to sell your current house. The cost of buying your dream home for your next phase of life for below its peak valuation might be to accept that the home you currently own (which is undoubtedly someone else's dream home) is also down from the top of the market. This is where psychology kicks in. Tests prove over and over again that for most of us the fear and frustration of leaving money in the table trumps the desire and joy of getting a deal. But in real estate, the equa-



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tions balance, in both down markets and up. The big difference is that a slow market is a buyer's market. Since the whole objective is to find the next house that will make you happy and meet your needs, this is a perfect market to chase your dream. So what are you waiting for?

Lamorinda Home Sales continued



LAFAYETTE	Last reported: 7
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$600,000	
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,750,000	
MORAGA	Last reported: 3
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$405,000	
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$639,000	
ORINDA	Last reported: 5
LOWEST AMOUNT: \$1,189,000	
HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$2,200,000	

Home sales are compiled by Cal Resource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California Resource. Neither Cal Resource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

- LAFAYETTE**
- 3215 Camino Colorados, \$712,000, 3 Bdrms, 1168 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 9-27-07
 - 3642 Crescent Drive, \$960,000, 2 Bdrms, 1307 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 9-19-07
 - 35 Crest Road, \$1,750,000, 4 Bdrms, 2862 SqFt, 1997 YrBlt, 9-19-07
 - 3921 Quail Ridge Road, \$1,699,000, 5 Bdrms, 2036 SqFt, 1980 YrBlt, 9-27-07
 - 3442 Solana Court, \$600,000, 3 Bdrms, 1302 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 9-19-07
 - 3492 Silver Springs Road, \$1,506,000, 4 Bdrms, 2543 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 9-27-07
 - 99 Silverwood Drive, \$1,565,000, 2 Bdrms, 2036 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 9-18-07
- MORAGA**
- 5 Francisca Drive, \$565,000, 2 Bdrms, 1211 SqFt, 1984 YrBlt, 9-21-07
 - 651 Moraga Road #22, \$405,000, 2 Bdrms, 1144 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 9-25-07
 - 1725 St. Andrews Drive, \$639,000, 2 Bdrms, 1262 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 9-24-07
- ORINDA**
- 2 Dolores Way, \$1,500,000, 9-18-07
 - 12 Estates Drive, \$2,200,000, 4 Bdrms, 4212 SqFt, 1939 YrBlt, 9-25-07
 - 42 Hacienda Circle, \$1,189,000, 3 Bdrms, 1616 SqFt, 1948 YrBlt, 9-27-07
 - 58 Oak Drive, \$2,175,000, 4 Bdrms, 4132 SqFt, 2004 YrBlt, 9-26-07
 - 63 Southwood Drive, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 2406 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 9-21-07

Ascot Intersection Design Underway

Sanders Ranch resident Joe Maloney told the Council he hoped that the Ascot engineering study would be an "independent factual study which will not be biased by anyone on this Council or anyone in this room who may have a hidden agenda." Sanders Ranch is a gated community at the far end of Camino Pablo.

Stan Roth, another bump opponent, told the Council that many residents of Sanders Ranch are "very, very angry" about the Camino Pablo bumps. Although the Council voted to smooth all three of the Camino Pablo bumps after the public outcry about them, by the time of the meeting only one of the

three bumps had been smoothed. Roth interrupted the discussion of the Ascot project by demanding to know when the remaining two Camino Pablo bumps would be smoothed. Town Manager Phil Vince responded that the work on all three bumps should be completed by October 20.

Mayor Mike Metcalf responded sharply to what he referred to as Maloney's "insinuations." Although the Camino Pablo bumps were designed by a contact engineer, Metcalf, as the Mayor, the Chair of TSAC, and the volunteer drafter of TSAC's proposed traffic calming guidelines, has borne the brunt of criticism of the bumps and speculation that

he has a "hidden agenda" to impose traffic calming throughout Moraga, including reducing Moraga Road to one lane in each direction.

"I'm getting tired of people insinuating that I've got hidden agendas," Metcalf responded. "On Camino Pablo some things were done wrong. We're correcting those issues. On Ascot this Council has decided that enough is enough. We've had two deaths on Moraga Road. That road is a speedway. It's very dangerous. The warrants I saw from the traffic study say we need to do something, and we do. There's no hidden agenda. The one lane road is an idea that has to be discussed

... continued from page 3

very thoroughly. We haven't had that discussion," Metcalf concluded.

When TSAC met to discuss the Camino Pablo plans, the Town notified residents within 300 feet of the project, and only one resident attended. When TSAC met to discuss the process for public input into future traffic improvements including the Ascot project, the Town notified every household in town, and the meeting was packed. Mercurio said the public would have the opportunity to participate in the Ascot project design at the TSAC meeting on November 7 and also at the Council meeting on November 14 or 28.

Sign Ordinance in Moraga:

Following Salamack's presentation, a public joint meeting was held between the Moraga Economic Development Advisory Committee and the Design Review Board. Salamack answered questions and took suggestions from both groups as well as the public. She stressed that this was the best time for interested parties to make specific recommendations, before the draft is presented to the Town Council.

Some of the business owners who participated in the first meeting stayed for the second, as some of the aspects of the draft were very disturbing to them. The first to speak was Larry Hood of Elena Hood Real

Estate Group. One recommendation of the draft is that any V-shaped sign posted on right-of-way property be subjected to the acquisition of a paid permit. For real estate professionals, who post signs all over town on Sunday to advertise open homes, such a process would prove cumbersome, expensive and "a waste of staff time," said Hood. Other contentious elements included the percentage of window space business owners will be allowed to cover with legible information, the maximum size of illuminated signs, the frequency with which banners can be used at a specific address and the maximum size of such banners.

... continued from page 3

Salamack noted everybody's comments and will present them to the Planning Commission before the proposed ordinance goes to Town Council on October 24th. This may not be the final phase of the process since the Council could reject the draft and ask for it to be re-worked. All interested parties are encouraged to view the draft document on-line and attend the Town Council meeting. The document and agenda will be available at http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us/moraga_agendas_town_council.php, on or about October 19th.

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Lamorinda Schools

Los Perales • Miramonte • Orinda Academy Orinda Intermediate • Saklan Valley School • Sleepy Hollow Springhill • Stanley Middle • St. Perpetua School • Wagner Ranch

Frustration at Wagner Ranch

By Lee Borrowman



A district employee removes tiles one at a time



The wall as it appeared a few years ago

Children went happily about the business of being students last week at Wagner Ranch Elementary (WR), looking forward to this week's Scary Story Night and Monster Mash, blissfully unaware, as were some of their parents, that controversy was raging behind the scenes.

Principal Janis Americh faced a challenge towards the end of the last school year. WR was outgrowing its facilities, and rather than creating overcrowded 5th grade classes and 3rd/4th split classes, Americh and Orinda Union School District (OUSD) administrators decided to have a portable structure installed on the site. OUSD facilities personnel determined that the only reasonable and cost-effective location for the portable was a space near the front of the school that was, unfortunately, occupied by the "Founders Wall," an installation that was created by the first families to attend WR after it reopened in 1997. The wall was composed of tiles bearing the handprints and artwork of many of the students of the day.

These families worked hard to help build the school. To them, the tiles were not only fond memories of their children's time at the school, but symbols of the dedication and

effort that was put in to making "The Ranch" a school of which all would be proud.

And WR is indeed a school of which all can be proud. WR's API score jumped 5 points last year to an impressive 955, and the school has been invited to apply for the California Distinguished School designation.

The decision was made in May to move the wall so the portable classrooms could be installed. Americh explained that during the excavation of the wall in July, it was discovered that the foundation was so large and secure that it could not be dug around and lifted up. As the wall was deconstructed, it was also found to have no supportive cage around it so any attempt to lift it would have resulted in the destruction of the wall.

Julie Whitsitt, a WR parent and community volunteer said, "At that point, in most construction projects, a back-hoe would have been used to demolish the whole thing. To the district's credit, they took the time to remove each concrete tile by hand, preserving every tile that they could." Americh estimates that 20%-25% of the tiles were destroyed. A few of the salvaged tiles were claimed by parents last week; the remaining tiles are in Americh's office, awaiting rein-



Excavating the wall stallion in another location at an as yet undetermined date.

The action prompted some of the founding families to ask, "Why weren't we contacted at any point in this process so that we could help find a way to safely remove the tiles?" Americh's position is that the district had insufficient time and resources to contact everyone. Whitsitt believes, "While arguments can be made on both sides about the communication of needing to relocate the wall, the facts do not show malicious intent."

Americh explains, "We never intended to destroy the wall or anyone's memories. Every effort was made to save the tiles. But my first priority must be the children that are here now, and we need to give them the best possible education."

Most parents are saddened that some of the tiles could not

be saved, but are understanding of the decision to move the wall. Some feel that their hard work has not been appreciated, while others take a more pragmatic approach, agreeing that the wall was the property of the school district. "My memories are not locked in a tile," said one mom. A few are angered that Americh and OUSD have been unresponsive to their expressions of concern and, in a few cases, outrage. Former WR parent Allena Behnke writes, "If the district doesn't respond to us on this topic, I have no reason to believe they will respond to any other concern that I may have in the future." OUSD Superintendent Joe Jaconette declined to comment on this issue.

Whitsitt's closing remarks reflect the view of the majority of current Wagner Ranch parents: "No one is more dedicated to all of our children (than Americh). Every leader must make

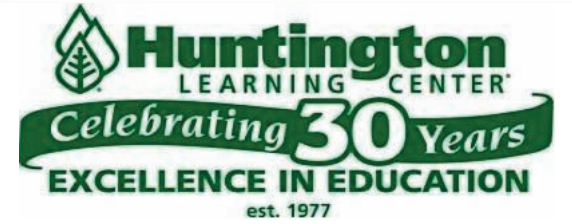
hard decisions; some are not popular. The scrutiny of this decision has gone in a direction that has become personal, off-topic and distracting. All past, present and future Wagner Ranch parents and students have

learned valuable lessons regarding the history of our campus vs the needs of future generations. I would like us to move forward and continue educating our future leaders."

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Happy Valley Celebrates 50 Years

By Cathy Tyson



Current Principal Wendy Patterson and past Principal Carol Blackburn are surrounded by past and present teachers, administrators, and Parent Club members

Bright sunshine and "Rock around the Clock" greeted carnival goers at the recent Happy Valley Elementary School 50th Anniversary Party. Past, present and future Parent Club Presidents greeted the crowd of special guests along with current pupils and parents in 50's inspired attire. It was warm hugs all around for many of the honored teachers and principals from yesteryear. Parents Club organizers sponsored a special reunion reception next door at the Sammann's garden after the public festivities to give past teachers a chance to visit and catch up, over 75 guests came to enjoy the reunion.

"It's a magical place for children and teachers and par-

ents," said past teacher Kent Peterman. Wendy Patterson who is starting her sixth year as principal said, "it's an amazing special place, deeply rooted in the community."

It's such a special place that Anthony and Shayna Giorgianni, along with their three children, recently moved from a different area of Lafayette to be within the Happy Valley school boundary.

Older Happy Valley graduates may remember principal (1974 - 1978) Bob Lilley who made a special trip up from Palm Springs. Carol Blackburn, principal for over 25 years (1978 - 2002) came from Alameda. Even the second superintendent, Francis Ebbert made the trip, he served from



1962 - 1972.

Karla McQuain, current Parents Club President and Amy Ruegg, past Happy Valley student herself, now with a daughter at the school, and a number of other parent volunteers worked hard to make the day happen.

Jan Broad, current third grade teacher, summed up the warm feelings for the school, "this is my first job, and I'm going to retire here."

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Los Perales Gains a Library ...but loses a playground

By Lee Borrowman



Los Perales, under construction

Photo Andy Scheck

Excavation began two weeks ago at the site of Los Perales Elementary School's new library. The construction of the library is part of a successful package bid by Rodan Builders. At a cost of 1.1 million dollars, both Los Perales and Camino Pablo will see new facilities. The Los Perales library building will include two student bathrooms, a conference room and offices, and Camino Pablo students will enjoy four new classrooms. The new facilities will include covered walkways.

Los Perales administrators have implemented several measures intended to ensure the safety of students during the construction process, which is scheduled to be completed in February despite the imminent arrival of the rainy season.

As the fencing went up and bulldozers started tearing into the surface of what was formerly known as the Panther B Playground, a couple of civic-minded fourth-graders were circulating a petition amongst the student body requesting that a replacement playground be constructed. The petition echoes the opinion expressed by the Los Perales PTA's Executive Committee in a letter sent to the Superintendent and Governing Board on September 12, stating that although a new library was important for Los Perales, library construction should not

move forward without a playground plan. The Board voted on Sept. 18 to proceed with the construction of the library, but not with plans to build a replacement playground.

Los Perales has been waiting for years for its new library. The project had fallen victim to costly delays and miscommunications. The architect's design included a new playground, which was to be built into a hillside on the south side of the school. When the bids came in at between 2.3 and 2.7 million dollars, everyone balked. The district quickly requested revised bids that excluded the playground, and subsequently accepted the lowest bid. Superintendent Richard Shafer explained, "We just don't have enough money to build a million dollar playground." The price tag of the proposed playground caused some to wonder why the district was unaware that the cost would be so high even though the design had been prepared by the project's architect two years ago.

The PTA is concerned that LP was already far below the other schools in terms of the amount of usable playground space available. Shafer said, "The LP site is one of the most difficult I've ever seen in terms of space. It sits on a hill and is closely surrounded by homes."

In its letter, the LP PTA

told the Board, "The goal of upgrading the library is to bring LP up to an equitable position compared to the other Moraga elementary schools, but improving one aspect (library size) by degrading another (playground space) does not accomplish the goal. If construction is begun without a complete plan, it is likely to leave LP in a permanently inequitable position, with a larger library but sub-standard playgrounds and no way to fix the problem."

The minutes of the Sept. 18 Board meeting read, "In as much as construction costs continue to rise, the Board believes that awarding the bids would not preclude a solution for replacing the LP playground space appropriated by the new library."

The Board asked Shafer to convene a committee to "research and recommend alternative sites for improvement of the playground area." The committee, which includes Shafer, LP administrators, teachers, parents and the project architect, will be presenting its recommendations to the Board on Oct. 23.

The financial resource for the current facilities work is the district's \$3 million allocation from the bond fund. It is not known at this time when the Board might vote on an alternative playground plan or how much money might be made available for such a project. Interested parties are encouraged to check the Board's agenda online at <http://www.moraga.k12.ca.us/>.

Lamorinda 4-H Update

Submitted by Sara Captain, Co-President

In this suburban community, the hand-picked opportunity to encounter a real farm is pretty rare. However, the opportunity to spend a whole day on a real farm dallying with unconventional farm activities such as tractor riding, corn mazes, face painting, petting zoos and a homegrown farmer's market is even more uncommon. In fact, such an event occurs only once a year!

Join Lamorinda 4-H and Mangini Farms as they put on the 7th Annual Mangini's Farm Weekend! It's located at 2498 Pleasant Hill Rd, Pleasant Hill, and is open to the public Saturday and Sunday, October 20-21 from 10am-4pm.

For more information, contact Sara Captain at 899-3450

Wildcats on Stage at Stanley Middle School

(Information submitted by Pam Nichols)

Break out the life preservers! Wildcats on Stage and the Lafayette Arts and Science Foundation proudly present "The Pirate Bride," written and directed by Barrett Lindsay-Steiner. Described by Lindsay-Steiner as "an old fashioned melodrama; The Pirates of Penzance meets Beach Blanket Babylon," Pirate Bride promises to be a rollicking good time!

The performers are 6th,

7th and 8th graders. Some have been involved with Wildcats on Stage since the Fall of 6th grade and plan to continue performing in high school, and others are making their debut. "I love working with LASF and Wildcats on Stage, and really appreciate the hard work these kids are putting into learning their parts with less than forty hours of rehearsal time," said Lindsay-Steiner. The show is suitable for all ages.

Showtimes:

Friday, November 2nd - 6:00 p.m. & a 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 3rd - 5:30 p.m. & a 7:30 p.m.

Location:

Stanley Middle School Multi-Use Building
3455 School Street, Lafayette

Tickets:

\$7.00 per person, at the door

Challenge Day Empowers Students at OIS

By Jennifer Wake



OIS eighth graders move chairs in a frenzied activity as a way to get everyone comfortable with each other

Lamorinda schools are well versed in teaching the three "Rs" - reading, writing, and arithmetic - but Orinda Intermediate School (OIS) counselors and administrators believe fourth and fifth "Rs" are equally important: Respect and Responsibility.

As part of OIS's Character Education Program, Associate Principal Jeanne Cusack helped coordinate Challenge Day at the school two weeks ago. The entire eighth grade class of 300 students, along with 75 parents, staff and teachers, participated in a complete day of workshops designed to increase self-esteem, help shift dangerous peer pressure to positive peer support, and reduce the acceptability of teasing, oppression and all forms of violence on campus.

The day started out with fun and engaging activities to establish an environment of comfort and trust, explained Cusack. The eighth graders are placed in groups away from their friends, and away from their comfort zone.

"It started out light, with lots of fun. It was designed to get kids comfortable with each other," Cusack said. "In the activities students had the opportunity to reflect on how they treated each other and how they

have tolerated differences. At the end of the day, they realized that they had the power to make a change."

The Challenge Day program is based on the premise that students should notice what is going on around them, decide the right thing to do, and take action on that decision.

"The Challenge Day leaders referenced 'Notice, Choose, Act' throughout the day," Cusack said. "When kids notice something going on, they need to choose to act. If they see someone being teased, they'll now step in and say 'Hey, that's not cool to be doing that.' It was amazing for us, as adults, to see and hear students express themselves and offer insights about how they treat each other."

In addition to Challenge Day, OIS has implemented several other programs as part of their Character Education Program, including Others First - a program that supports charitable, altruistic, and humanitarian activities by students in the local community.

"If we only focused on academics, I think we'd be missing a big piece of what kids need," Cusack said. "Middle school kids are trying to establish their social status and peer groups. It's important that their

school be an environment where everyone can feel comfortable and safe."

In February 2007, OIS was recognized as a 2007 California School of Character by the Character Education Partnership (CEP) and was one of 25 finalists (from 133 applicants across the United States) for the National Schools of Character award for its comprehensive character education program, which has yielded positive results in student behavior, citizenship, school climate, and academic performance.

Following Challenge Day, 60 OIS eighth grade students signed up to continue the efforts in a secondary program called "Be the Change," which inspires participants to create an environment of compassion, acceptance and respect on campus. Students, staff and teachers met last Thursday to brainstorm things that can be done to promote "Be the Change" around campus and some staff members will attend a training called "The Next Step" to bring back more ideas.

"We have definitely seen our eighth graders embracing the message and being kinder to each other," Cusack said. "The big challenge for us is to perpetuate that feeling."

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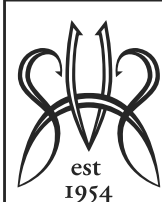
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business briefs

Jamie Westdal is Delighted with Her New Location

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Bay Area photographer Jamie Westdal recently moved into her colorful new studio next to Loard's Ice Cream in Orinda. After 16 years in Theatre Square, Jamie's growing volume of new and repeat customers mandated



the search for a larger location. "This is a beautiful space, with lots of light and room to welcome clients. I'll be able to more comfortably shoot large groups, and help my clients select from dozens of gorgeous custom-made frames for their portraits," says Westdal. She has photographed hundreds of families, babies, teenagers, grandparents, dogs, brides and professionals in Lamorinda.

Got Signs?

The draft for the new Moraga Sign Ordinance is on the agenda of the Town's Council for discussion on October 24th. Interested parties should come to Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School at 7:30p.m.

Lafayette's New Bank Names New CFO

California Bank of Commerce, 270 Lafayette Cir, Lafayette 283-2265 - www.californiabankofcommerce.com/



Left to right as you look at the picture: Tom Park - Executive Vice President, Mark DeVincenti - Chief Marketing Officer, John Rossell - President & CEO, Roxy Klein - Director and Chair of the Investment Committee, Virginia Robbins - Chief Administrative Officer, Steve Shelton - Executive Vice President Photo Katy Dyer

On October 11th, John Rossell, the Bank's CEO, announced the appointment of Randall Greenfield as Chief Financial Officer. Since August, Thomas Byrom had been acting in a consulting capacity and has been part-time CFO. Rossell pointed at Greenfield's 30 years of commercial bank finance experience. In his previous positions, Mr. Greenfield has served as CFO for several successful commercial banks, including most recently at Diablo Valley Bank in Danville. (Diablo Valley Bank was acquired in June by Heritage Commerce Corp., the parent of Heritage Bank of Commerce) California Bank of Commerce opened in June and expects to move to its permanent Lafayette's offices in the Mercantile on Mount Diablo Blvd. by the end of the month.

Chambers of Commerce:

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce,

100 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette - www.lafayettechamber.org

Last month, the Chamber revived the Business Issues/Governmental Affairs Committee. At the September meeting many topics were brought up. They included (among many others): Downtown Strategic Plan, Measure "J", Regional Housing Needs, Could we ever support a sales tax increase? New Mercantile, Failed Roads Measure, and Woodbury and Lafayette Park Terrace projects. On October 25th at 8 a.m., the Committee Chair, Larry Blodgett, will decide with participants on which projects to work on and they will be assigned to members for research. The purpose is to get the business community involved in community affairs. The October meeting is open to all.

The Lafayette Chamber will participate to a joint Business Showcase with the Pleasant Hill, Concord and Hispanic Chambers on November 8th. This event is co-sponsored by the Lafayette, Pleasant Hill, Concord and Hispanic Chambers. Reservations are now being accepted, applications can be found on the Chamber's website, www.lafayettechamber.org. Last year over 600 visitors and 140 vendors participated. Hurry, this event sells out.

Chamber of Commerce of Moraga

www.moragachamber.org

Chamber meeting on October 26th, at 8:00 a.m. at Terzetto Cuisine, 1419 Moraga Way in the Moraga Center. Everyone is welcome.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce, 24 Orinda Way, Orinda

www.orindachamber.org:

After Hours Mixer, Tuesday, October 23rd, 2007 - 5:30 to 7:00pm. Location: Park Place Wealth Advisors, 18 Orinda Way, Orinda. A great opportunity to meet Chamber members, open to all.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact Sophie Braccini at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com or contact Lamorinda Weekly at 925-377-0977.

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2 Years Later: Assessing the Impact of OSH on the Local Retail Scene

My most valuable assets are my customers and my employees. I can only hope our customers appreciate the benefits we provide to the communities we serve."

Snider gives every impression he's a fighter who trusts the high level of service his staff provides and the quality of merchandise he sells is making a difference. Across the Way carries moderate to high-end furnishings and accessories for the home and garden: "OSH has had little impact on our lifestyle store," added Snider. He believes this is an encouraging sign local residents value great customer service and high quality products above other transient considerations.

Another local merchant who might have been seriously impacted is Kenny Murakami, owner of Moraga Garden Center. Indeed, Murakami faced a 16% decrease in business the first 2 quarters following OSH's opening. Now, after 2 years of competing with OSH, Kenny has recaptured all of his lost business. "I can't say I'm happy about OSH coming to town," comments the master gardener, "but at

the moment, I'm more concerned about the weather than I am about OSH." Murakami believes that his ability to recapture business is the result of OSH's focus on quick turn over plants, such as inexpensive annuals. Murakami sees himself in the business of making people better gardeners, which emanates from his deep knowledge of plants and the endless variety of what he has to offer.

As for local customers, they seem to be equally opportunistic. Kathy, a mother of two young children reported to prefer shopping at OSH because she can use a shopping cart to sit her children. Nancy, a busy working mother just refuses to go North of Moraga Way and stops at OSH when she's in need of colorful flowers for her garden. Others are avid supporters of the locally owned businesses, "when you want expert advice on plants and vegetables, there is no place like Kenny's," confides Rob, an amateur Moraga gardener. Jennifer, a Moraga resident for 8 years, wouldn't go anywhere else than to Snider's shops: "there's always somebody to

give me the expert advice or tip I need and I often go to "Across the Way" for gifts."

Beyond Moraga, the impact of OSH on local retailers is minimal and no other nursery or hardware stores reported any significant loss of business. It is quite understandable when looking at the OSH store's demographics. OSH store customers are roughly 50% Moraga residents, 15% Orinda residents, 20% Lafayette residents, and the rest are contractors that come from further away. This could be a weakness of this store in that it has difficulty reaching customers beyond the Moraga borders. One might wonder if our small suburb can sustain a 33,000 square foot store like OSH.

Other ways local stores contribute to the community are local jobs and contributions to community organizations and non-profits. Evensen's OSH store belongs to a corporate group with a set of established policies and procedures and he sometimes has to wage an uphill battle to be able to contribute to local organizations and events. He was happy last year to have been able to

... continued from page 7

secure a \$1000 grant in plants for the Camino Pablo School garden and his store now supports a local baseball team as well.

On the other hand, locally owned Moraga Hardware & Lumber has had to significantly curtail its once very generous donation policy to local sports teams, all Eagle scout projects, the Moraga Education Foundation, Lamorinda schools, and local charities. "My ability to give back to the community we serve is directly related to the support I receive from our customers. When people support locally owned and operated stores, business owners have the opportunity to give back to the community they belong to and they love to do it!" says Snider, who has lived in Moraga since 1989 and has two children in local school districts. "Locally owned and operated businesses can do more for their community than chain stores owned by publicly traded companies because we are loyal to our community, not a group of shareholders. If we have the community's support, we will give back!"

Tom Frainier: Character Wanted!

By Sophie Braccini

When I met Tom Frainier he was wearing a paper hair bonnet that made him look quite friendly and approachable, in spite of his towering height. As CEO, co-owner and "Chief Boot Licker" of Semifreddi's breads (as reads his business card) he runs one of the most successful businesses in the East Bay, in partnership with his brother-in-law. But this Moraga dad is not your traditional successful businessman and there's more than one facet to his portrait.

Frainier joined Semifreddi's, the family business, after interrupting a promising career at the Clorox Co. in 1988. "I am interesting in controlling my own life," he affirms, and being part of a big company, even at the executive level, wasn't giving him that kind of freedom. Now, almost 20 years later, the company has grown to \$10.5M in revenue, 120 employees and 350 grocery accounts.

With his partners, Frainier developed a marketing strategy that uses no advertising dollars but relies on what he calls "gorilla marketing." For years, Frainier wore a "SemiFreddi's" shirt at all times. When he started with the firm as a delivery person, he would randomly give out loaves of Semifreddi's bread to passing motorists. At Halloween, instead of passing out candy, he'd give out bags of Semifreddi's croissants. "You can conquer your customers through word of mouth," believes Frainier. In the early days it was not rare for him to work 90 hours a week. "You need to have high energy to run your own business," explains Frainier, "but I've mellowed down, now I'm like all my managers, I do not work more than 45 hours a week, 30 hours in Emeryville and 10 to 15 at home in Moraga."

In fact, Frainier reduced his hours at Semifreddi's when he took on his second job of being a full time "mom" to his two school age daughters during the school year. He says that he had to work even harder to get that position. When the mother of his children decided to return to her native England, he decided to seek custody of his daughters. Up to this point it was very rare for a father to obtain custody of his children in Contra Costa. But Frainier did prevail, and though painful on many levels, the situation brought a whole new dimension to his life and a fatherly fulfillment he hadn't anticipated.

Frainier loves taking care of

his daughters as he prepares meals, helps with homework and manages the house with only a minimum of help. This will be his 10th year coaching soccer for LMYA, he volunteers in his daughters' classrooms and often goes on fieldtrips. This is what he calls "his labor of love," and he still has time for his "fabulous girlfriend."

This unique situation has made him a better CEO, he believes. "I see myself more as a mentor than a boss," he declares. "My interest is in having highly motivated employees who wouldn't want to work anywhere else. The key is to treat each person with respect, give them flexibility in their schedule so they can have a balanced life, and provide them with opportunities to learn and grow." This explains the very low turnover rate in his organization and the large number of resumes Semifreddi's receives weekly.

Reflecting on where he is today, Frainier believes that he couldn't have done it without the support of the community he resides within. Local parents have commended him for his daughters' wonderful attitude and he thinks that the teachers at Camino Pablo Elementary in Moraga have had a great impact on their development. "They were all wonderful, M. Adler, Ms. Elliott, Mrs. Scott, Mrs. McCormack, Mrs. Laughland and of course Mr. Jennings, the principal."

This over-achieving father has adopted one of the teacher's motto to raise his girls: "doing your best is always good enough" (Mrs. Laughland, 2nd grade teacher). "I'm very proud to be a Berkeley Alumni, but I won't tell my girls

they have to get there, or Stanford, or an Ivy League University. It doesn't matter that much in the long run anyway. I want them to find what they love and see them pursue it with passion. That's what I do, even though it took me a few years to discover what that passion was."

For more information about Semifreddi's, go to www.semifreddis.com.



Tom Frainier, "hands on" in Semifreddi's bakery in Emeryville Photo Sophie Braccini



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The Autumn Harvest Part I – Mushrooms that stand out

By Chef Dan Leff

The bountiful fall harvest more than makes up for shorter, cooler days. Exotic mushrooms, normally among the most expensive items in the produce section, are available now at unparalleled freshness and prices.

It's time to use these beauties in a way that spotlights their appearance, flavor, and texture.

Let's focus on three types of mushrooms that aren't widely used on American tables:

Matsutake

The best of these feature large, firm caps and thick stalks. If they are too light, it means they're starting to dry out. They're a grayish-brown color. Top notch ones sell for around \$14.00 per pound – typically, half a pound of these is more than enough for most purposes.



Golden Chanterelles

I've seen these for \$10.00 per pound locally (and nearly half that at Seattle's Pike Place Market, but I'm out of frequent flyer miles). They require some care in cleaning but they are worth the effort. They should be dry but not withered – check the caps carefully for signs of rotting, an affliction that these fragile specimens often suffer from.



Pink and Yellow Oyster Mushroom

Again, these top out at around \$10.00 a pound. Normal (brown) Oyster mushrooms are available most of the year, but these colorful varieties are definitely seasonal specialties. They should be in firm, tight bunches, with no rotting.



Washing

Matsutakes should be cleaned carefully with a piece of paper towel that's been dampened with cold water. Dirt can stick to this variety tenaciously – be as aggressive as possible in cleaning them, but try to avoid damaging them.

Golden Chanterelles are prone to flecks of dirt and “no-see-ums” – annoying little insects that hide in the gills. The 3-bowl method works best: Fill three bowls with cold water, and place copious paper toweling at one end of this array. Working quickly, dunk the chanterelles into the first bowl, then the sec-

ond, then the third, and onto the towels to dry. You'll notice that the water in the first bowl will be dark with dirt, then slightly lighter in each following bowl – these mushrooms are dirtier than they look! Excess moisture harms them, so fast work is a must here.

Oyster mushrooms don't need a heavy hand in cleaning. Be sure to get inside the inner stalks, if they come in a large clump.

Preparation

Mushrooms this beautiful and distinctive shouldn't be hidden away in soup or a stew. They are best used to top off any dish where they

can stand out – on top of a pizza, as a garnish for a filet of fresh fish, or mixed in with some top-quality sautéed vegetables. Making them the object of attention means handling them with specific care.

Matsutakes are firm and meaty. The caps can be cut into slices, then slice the stems, cutting across. Don't slice them too thick or the finished product will be too chewy! Sauté them in olive oil or butter over high heat until all the juices have rendered out and then been reabsorbed. Season them lightly with salt and pepper, then let them rest on a sheet pan.

Chanterelles are more delicate. Don't take a knife to them – tear them by hand into long strips. Sauté them with some minced shallots for extra flavor. They exude a lot of liquid, and require more cooking than the Matsutakes. Once the juices have reabsorbed, season them and let them rest in the same fashion.

Oyster mushrooms are not quite as fragile as Chanterelles, but they should be handled and cooked the same way. The bright colors of the pink and yellow varieties will fade somewhat with cooking, but they are still original enough to merit use as a garnish.

This recipe is available on our web site. Go to: <http://www.lamorindaweekly.com>

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Hungry? Take a look at what Moraga Parks and Rec is cooking up!

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Learn to enjoy autumnal bounty from your garden Indian-style. Learn to make a light autumn meal with a tomato-based curry for your favorite seasonal fish. Ages 16 and older are welcome. Cost is \$57 with a \$15 materials fee. Class will be Saturday, October 27 from 1-3:30pm.

Kids in the Kitchen

Introduce your kids to cooking healthy meals and learning healthy eating habits. Kids will focus on the benefits of color in their diet and learn how to help prepare the family meal. Ages 4-6 are welcome. Cost is \$22 with a \$5 materials fee. Class will be Saturday, November 3 and 10, from 10:00-11:15 am.

Kids in the Kitchen

Kids learn the benefits of healthy eating and how to cook and grow what you eat. They will also learn the importance of growing your own vegetables. Participants will each get a plant to take home. Ages 7-12 are welcome. Cost is \$27 with a \$5 materials fee. Class will be Saturday, November 3 and 10, from 12:30-2:30 pm.

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LAMORINDA's Restaurants			
• updated September 5, 2007 •			
American			
Bistro	3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-7108	
Chow Restaurant	53 Lafayette Cir, Laf	962-2469	
Hungry Hunter	3201 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	938-3938	
Quiznos	3651 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-0200	
Ranch House	1012 School St, Mor	376-5127	
Terzetto Cuisine	1419 Moraga Way, Mor	376-3832	
The Cheese Steak Shop	3455 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-1234	
BBQ			
Bo's Barbecue	3422 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-7133	
Burger Joint			
Flippers	960 Moraga Rd, Laf	284-1567	
Nation's Giant Hamburgers	400 Park, Mor	376-8888	
Nation's Giant Hamburgers	76 Moraga Way, Ori	254-8888	
Café			
Express Cafe	3732 Mt. Diablo Blvd #170, Laf	283-7170	
Ferrari-Lucca Delicatessens	23 Lafayette Cir, Laf	299-8040	
Geppetto's Caffé	87 Orinda Way, Ori	253-9894	
California Cuisine			
Gigi's	1005 Brown St., Laf	962-0882	
Metro Lafayette	3524 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-4422	
Shelby's	2 Theatre Sq, Ori	254-9687	
Chinese			
Asia Palace Restaurant	1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor	376-0809	
Chef Chao Restaurant	343 Rheem Blvd, Mor	376-1740	
China Moon Restaurant	380 Park St, Mor	376-1828	
The Great Wall Restaurant	3500 Golden Gate Way, Laf	284-3500	
Hsiang's Mandarin Cuisine	1 Orinda Way # 1, Ori	253-9852	
Lily's House	3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd #A, Laf	284-7569	
Mandarin Flower	581 Moraga Rd, Mor	376-7839	
Panda Express	3608 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-0288	
Szechwan Chinese Restaurant	79 Orinda Way, Ori	254-2020	
Uncle Yu's Szechuan	999 Oak Hill Rd, Laf	283-1688	
Yan's Restaurant	3444 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-2228	
Coffee Shop			
Millie's Kitchen	1018 Oak Hill Rd #A, Laf	283-2397	
Squirrel's Coffee Shop	998 Moraga Rd, Laf	284-7830	
Village Inn Cafe	290 Village Square, Ori	254-6080	
Continental			
Petar's Restaurant	32 Lafayette Cir, Laf	284-7117	
Vino Restaurant	3531 Plaza Way, Laf	284-1330	
Duck Club Restaurant	3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-7108	
Hawaiian Grill			
Lava Pit	2 Theatre Square, St. 142, Ori	253-1338	
Indian			
India Palace	3740 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-5700	
Swad Indian Cuisine	3602 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-9575	
Italian			
Giardino	3406 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-3869	
La Finestra Ristorante	100 Lafayette Cir, St. 101, Laf	284-5282	
Pia Pizzeria	15 Moraga Way, Ori	253-9191	
Mangia Ristorante Pizzeria	975 Moraga Rd, Laf	284-3081	
Michael's	1375 Moraga Way, Mor	376-4300	
Mondello's	337 Rheem Blvd, Mor	376-2533	
Nino's Bay	#2 Theater Square, Ste. 153, Ori	253-1327	
Pizza Antica	3600 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-0500	
Postino	3565 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-8700	
Ristorante Amoroma	360 Park St, Mor	377-7662	
Japanese			
Asia Palace Sushi Bar	1460 B Moraga Rd, Mor	376-0809	
Blue Ginko	3518-A Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	962-9020	
Kane Sushi	3474 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-9709	
Niwa Restaurant	1 Camino Sobrante # 6, Ori	254-1606	
Serika Restaurant	2 Theatre Sq #118, Ori	254-7088	
Tamami's Japanese Restaurant	356 Park St, Mor	376-2872	
Yu Sushi	19 Moraga Way, Ori	253-8399	
Jazz Dinner Club			
Joe's of Lafayette	3707 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Laf	299-8807	
The Orinda House	65 Moraga Way, Ori	258-4445	
Mediterranean			
Alex's	2 Theatre Sq # 105, Ori	254-5290	
Oasis Café	3594 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-8822	
Per Tutti Ristorante	3576 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-5225	
Mexican			
360 Gourmet Burrito	3655 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-1270	
El Charro Mexican Dining	3339 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-2345	
El Jaro Mexican Cafe	3563 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-6639	
La Cocina Mexicana	23 Orinda Way, Ori	258-9987	
Mucho wraps	1375-B Moraga Way, Mor	377-1203	
Baja Fresh Mexican Grill	3596 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-8740	
Celia's Restaurant	3666 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-8288	
El Balazo	35180 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	284-8700	
Maya Mexican Grill	74 Moraga Way, Ori	258-9049	
Numero Uno Taqueria	3616 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-1333	
Pizza			
Aladino's Pizza	3614 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-6363	
Mountain Mike's Pizza	504 Center St, Mor	377-6453	
Pennini's	1375 Moraga Rd, Mor	376-1515	
Round Table Pizza	"361 Rheem Blvd.", Mor	376-1411	
Round Table Pizza	3637 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	283-8044	
Village Pizza	19 Orinda Way # Ab, Ori	254-1200	
Zamboni's Pizza	1 Camino Sobrante # 4, Ori	254-2800	
Sandwiches/Deli			
Bianca's Deli	1480 Moraga Rd # A, Mor	376-4400	
Europa Hofbrau Deli & Pub	64 Moraga Way, Ori	254-7202	
Gourmet Bistro Café	484 Center St, Mor	376-1551	
Kasper's Hot Dogs	103 Moraga Way, Ori	253-0766	
Noah's Bagels	3518 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-0716	
Orinda Deli	19 F Orinda Way, Ori	254-1990	
Singaporean/Malaysian			
Kopitiam	3647 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf	299-1653	
South American			
The Patio Tapas and Restaurant	960 Moraga Road, Laf	299-6885	
Steak			
Casa Orinda	20 Bryant Way, Ori	254-2981	
Tea			
Patisserie Lafayette	71 Lafayette Cir, Laf	283-2226	
Thai			
Amarin Thai Cuisine	3555 Mt. Diablo Blvd # B, Laf	283-8883	
Baan Thai	99 Orinda Way, Ori	253-0989	
Royal Siam	512 Center St, Mor	377-0420	
Siam Orchid	23 Orinda Way # F, Ori	253-1975	

The Lamorinda Weekly (LW) Restaurant Guide is not paid advertising; our intent is to provide a useful reference guide. We hope that we have included all Lamorinda restaurants on this page, except those that told us they did not wish to be listed. LW is not liable for errors or omissions. In the event that we have inadvertently printed misinformation or excluded a restaurant please let us know (info@lamorindaweekly.com) so that we may correct our list for the next issue.

Winter Crops that Will Amend your Soil and Save You Time

By **Kenny Murakami and Sophie Braccini**

We are blessed by a climate that permits winter vegetable gardening. It is not uncommon to be able to supply the table with salad from the garden all winter long. Broccoli, kale and many other edible species also do quite well. However, some gardeners would rather give their kitchen garden a rest during the cool months, or even better, plant crops that will fertilize and amend it.

This technique is known as "green manuring."

Green manuring is the planting of crops intended to be cut down and turned in the soil at a later date. There are two types of green manures: legumes and non-legumes. Legumes, such as clover, beans, peas, vetch, alfalfa, help fix nitrogen from the air, making it available for organic matter breaking up heavy soils. Usually, people

plant green manures as a winter cover crop, but you can plant them year round. October is an especially good month for planting the legumes, and it is your best opportunity for peas. You can plant the other plants into November, and a December sowing will still give you some results.

A common winter cover crop consists of a grass and a legume such as winter ryegrass and purple vetch. The ryegrass has 2' roots which help bring nutrients up from deep in the soil, and as an additional local benefit, it grows well even in heavy clays. It helps open up the soil (after the rye is cut down and turned under, those 2" deep roots remain, decomposing and creating vertical, compost filled, cracks in the soil). The vetch will fix nitrogen in the soil and increase its fertility. Most legumes have a symbiotic relationship with a bacterium that lives on their roots and

develops the nodules that will fix the air's nitrogen in a way the plant can use. So leave the roots in the soil.

Generally, you want to cut down green manures when they are beginning to bloom but before they mature and set seed. The plants are more succulent, less fibrous and break down faster in the soil. You can chop up the green manure with a spade or rotary mower, or turn it under with tiller. If you choose fava beans and peas you can eat

the edible part before the plant is used for green manuring. The plant might be a little tougher, so you might have to shred it before you work it in your soil.

Planting requirements:

Fava Beans: sew to a rate of 3 to 5 pounds for 1000 square foot, Annual Rye grass: 1 to 2 pounds for 1000 square foot, Purple Vetch: 1 to 3 pounds for 1000 square foot and Peas: 2 to 4 pounds for 1000 square foot.



Kenny Murakami, Moraga Garden Center holding Fava Beans



Green manure Alfalfa

Lush Lawns, Pest-Free Homes . . . But At What Cost?

... continued from page 5



Parents for a Safer Environment founder Susan JunFish, MPH, smiles as children play at Moraga Commons. Her work has helped make parks and schools safer for children

Although PfSE has helped facilitate changes in the Moraga parks and school district, JunFish says continued spraying around the shopping malls, apartment buildings and in single-family homes pose potential hazards.

"Most people are not aware how pesticides, especially when they are tracked indoors, could stay active for months inside a home and expose children," she said.

Currently, the U.S. Environ-

mental Protection Agency relies on those who apply pesticides, including landowners, to decide whether or not they want to take the risk of using toxic pesticides. It is illegal for any pest control operators (such as True Green Chem Lawn, Terminex, Clark, etc.) to tell residents that pesticides are safe or non-toxic.

Additionally, JunFish says risk assessments that were used in the past to approve pesticides and many other chemicals were based

on 30-year-old healthy white males.

"Now even the EPA is beginning to accept almost 10 years of accumulating research showing children are hundreds of times more susceptible to certain pesticides than adults," she said. "In proportion to their size, children breathe the drink and eat more than adults and do not have the full set of liver enzymes that could help break down some toxins and, additionally, are more susceptible to pesticide exposure because they have more hand-to-mouth habits and play low to the ground."

Approximately one-third of the total pounds of pesticides used in California in any given year are known to be particularly toxic to humans, whether as immediate (acute) poisons, chronic toxins or both.

Every three years, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control biomonitors several thousand people randomly for numerous toxins, including pesticides. They are finding an increasing amount of pyrethroids – the number one pes-

ticide family of choice currently used by pest control operators for insect control – in those tested.

"Like DDT was banned in the 1970s, pyrethroids will likely also be banned or strictly limited in use in the future," said JunFish. "If we don't curb our use of unnecessary chemicals of convenience, we will continue to see multitudes of chronic illnesses in ourselves, in pets, and in wildlife as a result."

So what can you do? PfSE suggests choosing least-toxic alternatives to get rid of pests, and limit fertilizer usage or change to organic fertilizers that are slow releasing.

For more information about Parents for a Safer Environment and information and links for solutions to abating or getting rid of almost any pest among other topics, visit www.pfse.net. PfSE is seeking a part-time staff person for research and advocacy work.

Moraga Men Read Books Too

Submitted by **Dean Mayer**

Skinny Dip; By Carl Hiaasen; Alfred A. Knopf, publisher, 2004, 355 pages

Lamorinda parents may be more familiar with Carl Hiaasen for his young readers' book, Hoot, than for his novels aimed at adults. But Hiaasen, a Florida-born author and Miami Herald journalist, has written some 10 novels for those beyond school age, including Skinny Dip, a piece of crisply written, satirical crime fiction filled with dark humor.

Our "Moraga Men Read Books Too" book group (see how you can join below) found Skinny Dip to be light, fun summertime reading that, of course, you can enjoy any time of the year. Call it Elmore Leonard meets Dave Barry, which makes for an entertaining blend that's just right for lazy Sundays, airplane flights or a few days at the pool.

Skinny Dip opens with incompetent marine scientist Chaz Perrone pushing his beautiful, heiress wife Joey Perrone overboard from a luxury cruise ship on the Atlantic, miles from Key West. Chaz isn't out for his wife's fortune. Rather, he fears Joey has discovered

the profitable pollution scam he's running on behalf of a ruthless agribusiness tycoon who wants to continue illegally dumping fertilizer into the endangered Everglades.

Unfortunately for Chaz, Joey, a former swimming champ, doesn't drown. She makes her way back to shore thanks to a wayward bale of Jamaican marijuana (how Florida can you get?) and Mick Stranahan, a moody, loner ex-cop who also has struck out in the marriage department. Then Joey (with Mick's help) launches a devious plot of revenge aimed at driving Chaz crazy and making him pay for his misdeeds.

Though Joey and Mick could be a little better developed as characters, their counter-plotting against the increasingly paranoid Chaz is compelling. Hiaasen also introduces several other fascinating characters, including a misplaced Norwegian police investigator and a rough but occasionally sympathetic henchman for the agribusiness tycoon. Scenes of the henchman's tender visits with an old woman in a nursing home are well-crafted.

Hiaasen is at his best when he describes the tragic destruction of the Everglades due mostly to greed and corruption by developers and puppet politicians lusting after a buck through the decades. It's easy to see why Hiaasen is regarded by many as an important environmental voice striving to save his beloved Florida from continued plundering.

Is Skinny Dip classic literature? No, but most of you should find it an enjoyable, satiric romp injected with mystery, over-the-top characters, make-you-laugh situations, and a few cynical truths about people and society.

"Moraga Men Read Books Too" meets monthly, usually on Monday night at Pennini's over pizza and a beverage. We're a small book group and welcome new members. We talk about the books, but we're not intense. We laugh about things and check out the sports on Pennini's big screen TV. To learn more or join us, please email dmayer@clifbar.com or call Dean at 247-0836.

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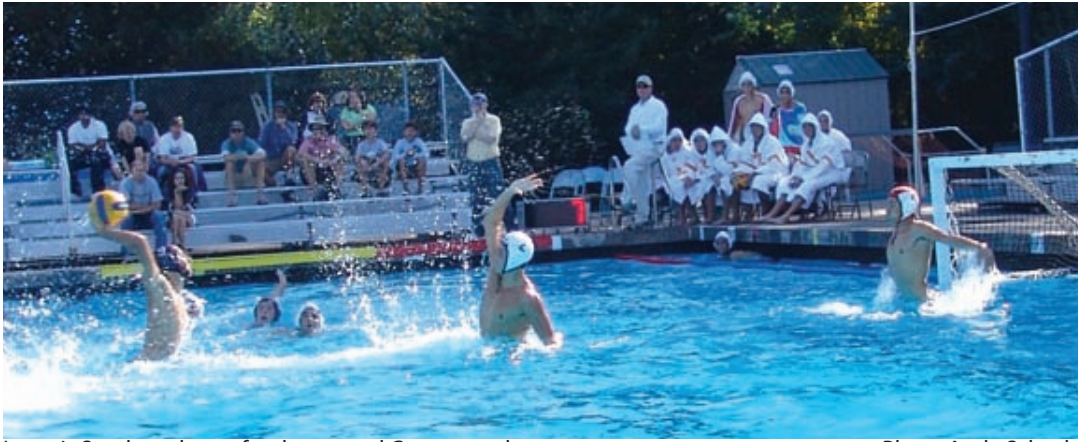
SPORTS

LAMORINDAS LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



Tough Tournament Ends with a Blast

By Alex Crook



Loomis Stephen shoots for the second Campo goal

Photo Andy Scheck

The 2007 Acalanes Water Polo Tournament was held at Campolindo High School. Play began on a rainy Friday and ended with a thrilling Campolindo victory on Saturday as the Cougars boys' water polo sunk the competition at this two-day event.

Campolindo started by defeating Clayton Valley in the first round, bringing them into the quarterfinals against Northgate. Another win brought the Cougars to the semifinals against Santa Margarita, where they prevailed 6-3.

The championship featured host Campolindo against visiting St. Francis. Campo caught the Lancers early and pulled to a 2-0 first quarter lead. With 2:17 left in the first, St. Francis woke up, beating keeper TJ Barni to cut the lead in half. One additional goal for each side left the score 3-2 in favor of the Cougars at the quarter.

The Lancers came back strong and found themselves leading just 1:02 into the second half. Helped by a beautiful backhand goal, St. Francis took control for the first time, leading 6-5. The Cougars came back in the fourth quarter with junior Chris Dyer scoring easily on a 5-meter penalty shot to tie the game at 6. Campo then pulled ahead at the 2:00 mark on a key goal from Dyer. With only 10 seconds left, St. Francis forced overtime with a game-tying goal. In overtime, however, Chris Dyer was at it again. With 2:42 left in sudden death, Dyer finished off St. Francis, winning the tournament for host Campolindo.

In all, Dyer finished with four goals in the championship game, leading his team to victory.

In the third place match, De La Salle prevailed over the Santa Margarita Eagles, a team

who made the long trip from Southern California. In the fourth quarter, De La Salle found itself with a 5-2 lead, but the Eagles rallied and scored another with 1:36 left. But one late goal was strictly enough for the De La Salle defense, and the Spartans held on and were awarded third place.



Chris Dyer shoots for the goal

Saint Mary's Men Battle #21 Gonzaga

By Kevin D. Shallat



Jared Medina (6), Goal Keeper Brian Mason, Justin Kim (17)

Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's men's soccer team began West Coast Conference play on Friday, Oct. 5, hosting the Bulldogs of Gonzaga University. Although Saint Mary's was able to grind out a tough match against the 21st ranked team in the nation, the Gaels lost the match 1-0 on a hard luck goal.

The game started off shaky for the Gaels as Gonzaga was able to control the ball in Saint Mary's territory for much of the opening period. It looked as if the Gaels were in for a long afternoon.

However, after the first few minutes of the game the Gaels seemed to realize that they were plenty good enough to have a shot at winning this game. Gael midfielder Erik Robert did a good job of forcing the ball into Bulldog territory, as he made some nice passes on the run to set up his fellow teammates. Midfielder Dylan Leslie had a couple of nice shots on goal, including one penalty kick, which was stopped by the Gonzaga goalkeeper. Standout Gael goalkeeper Brian Mason was able to help keep the game tied at 0-0 going into the half.

The second half was even more impressive than the first, as the Gaels had possession of the ball for much of the half. Midfielder Justin Kim was a spark plug for the Gaels, as he was able to cut right down the middle of the Gonzaga defense throughout the second half. One of the shots by Kim looked as if it was going in, as it was hammered toward the Gonzaga goal. Their goalie was able to stop a sure goal by leaping up and over, completely out-

stretched, to save a goal for the Bulldogs.

Despite the Gaels impressive defense, Saint Mary's caught a bad break in their own territory when Gonzaga midfielder Grant Lundberg kicked a shot on goal that was completely blocked by a Saint Mary's defender. The ball bounced away, but it had a funny spin to it, and wound up rolling parallel to the goal line. The ball looked like a bunted baseball rolling down the base line, teetering on the edge of fair or foul. Unfortunately for the Gaels, the ball rolled the wrong way across the line and into the Saint Mary's goal.

The good news? There was plenty enough time for the Gaels to come back. With 3:50 left to play, Robert had an opportunity to tie the game on a nice shot on goal, but the Gonzaga goalkeeper again denied the Gaels a chance to tie.

The last good opportunity came on a corner kick to freshman Kyle Deremer, who did a great job in heading the ball toward the net, but the ball sailed up and over the goal. The Gaels went on to lose this one in a hard fought loss by a score of 1-0.

Catch the next Gaels game by checking the schedule online at: www.SMCGaels.com



Erik Robert (3)

Photo Tod Fierner

Bocce Ball

Awards Banquet Lights up Hacienda

By Jennifer Wake



Ron Lopes, Moraga

Photo Andy Scheck

More than 60 of the 120 Moraga Bocce Club players from throughout Lamorinda gathered at the Hacienda de las Flores in Moraga last week to celebrate the winners of the Bocce Ball Championship Playoffs and do what they do best: Have fun.

The Master of Ceremonies for the event was Dom Sidari – the person responsible for bringing bocce ball to the Commons and bringing players to the courts. When he stood up to make a few remarks, the crowd erupted with cheers of, "Hip, hip, huray!"

"The bocce ball courts wouldn't have happened – at least for many, many years – if not for Dom," said Nancy Richardson, the former Town of Moraga Parks and Recreation Director who helped Dom get approval for the courts over ten years ago. "Dom came into my office and said, 'I want a bocce ball court,' and I said, 'Go for it.'"

And go for it, he did. Dom traveled to Oakland for the best materials after researching some of the top courts in the area, such as the courts located in Martinez. "He got real oyster shell for the base of the court, only the best of the best," player Jeff Schwartz said.

For Dom's wife, Jean, the endeavor has been a time-consuming one, but she says he loves it.

"It takes a lot of time," she said. "A lot of people have asked to help and he says, 'No. I'll take care of it.'"

"Then I say: What about the house?" she added with a chuckle.

Many of the players came to the sport simply from knowing Dom. Leslie Schreiner has been playing for the past four years after Dom invited her out to play. Other players now say she's "a natural." "I love it!" she said. "Bowling? Forget it. I like the people we play with and the team."

John April of Orinda explained bocce ball is not just an old guys' game. "Leslie's the reason we don't have a trophy," he said, laughing. This was his first year playing, and April said it was frustrating at times, but he plans to keep at it.

"I'll get better," he said. As for the first-place winners of the tournament, the Frank Glowatch Team received awards for their achievement, but in keeping with the relaxed atmosphere of the evening, only first names were engraved on the trophies: Phil, Dug, Paula, Frank, Jim, Darcy and Wayne.

"We have great camaraderie," April said. "It's a great way to build relationships in the neighborhood."

The next goal for Dom? Two more courts at the Commons.

First round:

Acalanes defeats (d.) Pinole Valley
Santa Margarita d. Drake
Campolindo d. Clayton Valley
Northgate d. Las Lomas
St. Francis d. Berkeley
Marin Catholic d. Ygnacio Valley
De La Salle d. Alhambra
Monte Vista d. Novato

Quarterfinals:

Santa Margarita d. Acalanes
Campolindo d. Northgate
St. Francis d. Marin Catholic
De La Salle d. Monte Vista

Semifinals:

Campolindo 6, Santa Margarita 3
St. Francis 9, De La Salle 5

Championship Game:

Campolindo 8, St. Francis 7 (in overtime)

Third Place Game:

De La Salle 5, Santa Margarita 2

Fifth Place Game:

Acalanes 10, Monte Vista 3

Seventh Place Game:

Northgate 7, Marin Catholic 6

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Dom Sidari and his wife Jean take pleasure in watching team play



SPORTS

LAMORINDAS LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Announce Club Sports registration/meetings/tryouts send to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

Second Half Surge Lifts Acalanes Over Campolindo

By Kevin D. Shallat



Brooks Baker for Acalanes, Connor Breslin for Campo

The Acalanes Dons made the short trip to Moraga for Campolindo's homecoming game last Friday, with each team needing a win in a big way. A second league loss for either team would dash any hopes for a division title. Unfortunately for the Cougars, it was not the homecoming they were hoping for, as Campolindo was edged by the Dons, 25-21.

The game started off with hard hits from each team, as both teams tried to establish their toughness. The first play of the game was a turnover after Campolindo made a hit on a pass play, which knocked the ball up into the air for a Cougar interception. Campolindo running back Kawa Kazzaz didn't waste any time running around the end

and into the end zone for a quick score.

Acalanes running back Tyler Malley started off the game with a few nice runs, but was limited in rushing yardage for the rest of the game. After the turnover by Campolindo, Acalanes quickly aired it out to wide receiver Brooks Baker for a long touchdown pass, tying the game at 7-7.

Campolindo's defense was very strong in the first half. They were able to limit the scoring by Acalanes, and completely shut down their running game. Strong safety Tyler Rittenour and cornerback Fern Fadelli had impressive, loud tackles throughout the game.

In the second quarter Campolindo quarterback Andrew Er-

tola threw a nice pass to Nick Mascheroni for a 64-yard touchdown. The Dons immediately answered back after a nice catch over the middle from tight end Hunter Hewitt. With 7:38 left to go before halftime, Malley ran the ball in to tie up the score. The score would only get to 14-13, however, as the Dons missed the first of three PATs on the night. Campolindo grabbed the momentum back on an eight yard run by Andreas Antono, bringing the score to 21-13 in favor of Campolindo until the half.

There were a combination of factors in the second half that led to the Acalanes win. Campolindo shut down their passing attack and ran the ball for the majority of the second half, but



Bo Richter with the ball for Campolindo

were unable to score any points.

Acalanes quarterback Robbie Pestal got back on track and found a way to get the ball to his favorite targets.

"Robbie's one of the most accurate passers I've ever played with," Hewitt said.

Baker caught his second touchdown pass of the night to get the Dons within two points of the Cougars. With 4:57 left in the game, Pestal found tight end Hewitt in the end zone for the game-winning touchdown pass.

"I wasn't on tonight in the first half, so we went back to what we've been doing successfully, which was throwing the short routes, making them come up, and then going deep by hitting Brooks and Hunter," Pestal said.



Anthony Fadelli on defense for Campo, Brooks Baker for Acalanes

State Champions Prevail in Hard Fought Match

By Kevin D. Shallat



Mary Vaccaro at the net sets the ball

Big crowds turned up for the girls volleyball match-up between the Miramonte Matadors and last year's state champion Campolindo Cougars, Thursday, Oct. 4. Miramonte had a tall order to fill in playing the Cougars, yet the players and fans were determined to give Campolindo a run for their money.

The Matadors played inspired volleyball with the help of their home crowd, but they were unable to stop the defending champions from winning this match, 3-1.

The Mats would hang tight in the first game and get the score to within one point, at 20-21. Campolindo's outside hitter and middle blocker, Chandler Moore, did a nice job of putting the game out of reach with a tremendous spike for a side-out point, followed by a service point. Campo won this first game, 25-21.

In the second game Miramonte was unable to get consistent sets by the net, yet they did a tremendous job to keep the score

close. Outside hitter Kari Johnson did a fantastic job of serving for the Mats, dropping a number of serves directly in front of the Cougar's net. Late in the second game the Mats were able to solve their setting issues and establish a killer combo between their libero and outside hitter.

Libero Mary Diamantidis dished out a host of assists to fellow Matador outside hitter Juliana Stivanicevic. The two were able to guide the Matadors to a 25-22 victory and tie the match at 1-1.

Things were looking good for the Matadors and they jumped out to an early 12-9 lead in the third game. Outside hitter Kelsey Ross powered a spike past two Campolindo defenders to help the Matadors take the lead. Outside hitter Kim Condie did a nice job for Campolindo, as her serves provided a big lift to help put the Cougars up 24-22. The Matadors recorded a nice dunk style spike to tie the game at 25-25. However, Campo was able to spread the offense more by getting everyone

involved, as they won this tightly contested game by a score of 27-25.

"We're all very athletic...so I think we're able to contribute from many positions out there," said Campolindo Head Coach Scott Bishop.

In the fourth game Campo would jump out to a 12-6 start, and never look back. Libero Alessandra Neason served well when it counted most for Campolindo. Freshman setter Mary Vaccaro was everywhere for the Cougars Thursday night, dishing out perfectly placed assists for her teammates.

"Mary is doing an incredible job to come into a varsity position and run the offense," Bishop

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benefactor of Vaccaro's assists, as she led the Cougar's with nine kills on the night.

Miramonte would get within four points when the score jumped to 16-20, but that's as close as they would get. Campolindo went on to win this final game by a score of 25-18, and win the match 3-1.

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