

Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Lafayette

| Calendar | |
|---|--------|
| City Council | 7pm |
| Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, Nov 26 | |
| Planning Comm. | 7pm |
| Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, Dec 6 | |
| Design Review | 7pm |
| Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, Nov 20 | |
| Park, Trails, Rec. | 7pm |
| Community Center 500 St Mary's Road Wednesday, Dec 12 | |
| Circulation | 7pm |
| Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, Nov 19 | |
| Emergency Prep. | 9:15am |
| City Offices 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 265 Wednesday, Dec 12 | |
| Senior Services | 3:30pm |
| Community Center, Alder Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, Dec 6 | |

Good News, Bad News At The State Of The City Address

By Cathy Tyson
 One the one hand, there's plenty to be proud of; on the other hand the burden of an inherited \$24 million dollar accumulation of road repairs is overwhelming. According to Mayor Carol Federighi, "In a snapshot, the City is healthy and solvent with an increasingly vibrant downtown." The bad news is, "There is insufficient money to fix the roads, and not enough money for police staffing."
 The Mayor outlined the good, the bad and the ugly at last week's General Meeting of the Lafayette Homeowners Council. The Sequoia Room of the Lafayette Community Center was filled with concerned residents and a number of homeowner association representatives. It was a friendly meeting until the question and answer portion of the evening following the Mayor's "State of the City" talk.

The Good News
 A variety of projects are either being planned or in a range of stages of completion for the benefit the citizens of Lafayette. Construction is well under way at the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center, which is on track to open in 2009. The City approved an 80-unit luxury condominium project on the western edge of town near the Veteran's Hall. An important component of the project will tentatively be 18 units of off-site low-income housing. A 20-unit condominium project is nearing approval on the east side of town near the Lafayette Park Hotel. The site of Butler-Conti Dodge has been recommended for affordable senior housing. The Lafayette Mercantile Building is nearing completion, and Whole Foods is coming to town. The Petanque recreation area and the multi-sport rink also opened this year.

The Bad News
 "The goal is to develop a strategy to address our \$24 million dollar road repair backlog," said Federighi. "We simply don't have all the money that we need to do all the things we want to do." She went on to explain with the help of pie charts of where the money comes from and where the money goes, taking special care to explain how different pots of money have specific spending requirements.
The Ugly
 The intensity of the meeting was definitely kicked up a notch when it came time for questions and answers. In a nutshell, many attendees were concerned about the road situation. Questions included, how about having less money in reserves and more money available for police? If we (residents) can raise \$12 million dollars for the library, why can't we figure out road repair? There



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were suggestions to prioritize city issues, that nothing gets done until, say, the top two or three priorities are tackled. One disgruntled homeowner noted, the roads are a concern for residents, but didn't feel like it was a concern for the City Council.
 Current City Council Member and incoming Mayor Mike Anderson invited the crowd to be, "be part of the process. We need your participation." Compliment-

ing citizens for their expertise in a variety of fields, he suggested perhaps resident groups could help address the problem and look for unique solutions.
 With \$11.5 million dollars projected in the general fund for 2007 - 2008 and \$24 million dollar funding gap to fix the roads, the solution remains a mystery, at least for the time being.

Jewish Day School Group Project



From left, Head of School Dean Goldfein speaks with Mayor Carol Federighi, far right

By Cathy Tyson
 It wasn't easy, but with the help of some very generous donations, a Koret Foundation grant of one million dollars and the support of the school community, the Contra Costa Jewish Day School (CCJDS) will soon have its very own permanent new classroom and administration building.
 While well on their way toward their 7.5 million dollar target, and still actively soliciting donations, construction is tentatively scheduled to commence this coming April. At 18,000 square feet, the new structure will have plenty of room to accommodate the growing number of students from kindergarten to eighth grade, along with a dedicated science lab, music room and large library.
 Mayor Carol Federighi recently toured the facility to get a first hand look at the existing school and the new building site. "Design

Review was a wonderful process," noted Head of School Dean Goldfein. "It made our building better, integrating it with the rest of the campus." Federighi acknowledged the requirements of the City, "It can be painful sometimes." This new building is just part of a master expansion plan that is slated to include a gymnasium with a rooftop play field and additional landscaped gathering areas adding to the overall campus feel.
 The current building, leased from Temple Isaiah since 2001, is bursting at the seams with students. Started with just 23 children, now 94 pupils are enrolled in grades K through 8. According to Goldfein, "Contra Costa County has the fastest growing Jewish community in the Bay Area." He continues, "private schools must serve a public purpose, providing something special and unique to the community."

The CCJDS emphasizes its community-learning program through extensive service to the Contra Costa Food Bank, and student-centered fundraising for charity.
 Located off of Risa Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard, the 10-acre parcel offers ample parking, easy access, and a quiet woody atmosphere. Because the setting is so secluded, it's anticipated that construction equipment and noise will have minimal impacts on Mt. Diablo Boulevard traffic.
 Students come from all over the area, Lamorinda, Walnut Creek, Rockridge and beyond. The school accepts non-Jewish students, and has a number of students from households with just one Jewish parent, along with a range of beliefs from Reform to Orthodox.
 "This school is full of life, learning and excitement," says Dr. Colin Schlesinger, President of the Board of Trustees.

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City Mourns the Loss of Kathryn Petersen

Kathryn Petersen, passionate advocate for trails and open space, passed away on Nov. 7. The Community Park bridge was named after Ms Petersen last year, in appreciation for all her work on the preservation and creation of parks, trails and open space.
 In a letter to City staff, Parks, Trails and Rec Director Jennifer Russell wrote, "Kathryn looked at the City much as an architect or engineer, but instead of seeing buildings and roads, she saw trails crisscrossing the city through our beautiful hills, creeks and oak woodlands. Her unwavering vision of an interconnecting system of trails was a force to be reckoned with...We are so grateful to Kathryn for sharing her vision and passion with us and for showing us how one person can make a profound and lasting impression. Whenever we cross the Kathryn Petersen Bridge, we can marvel at the view of Las Tramps creek below, perhaps catch sight of a deer using the creek for safe passage, enjoy the buckeyes as their white blossoms turn to large brown seed pods, and visit the often magical oak woodland waiting for us on the other side."
 The Police Blotter will return to this space in the next issue.

Empty Nesters Unite

By Cathy Tyson
 One Lafayette mom, although sad that her youngest child has left the family nest, is doing something about it with a support group of acquaintances. Their group of eight empty nester moms got together recently to put together Halloween-themed care packages for their respective kids. "It's very comforting to be with other women in the same situation," says Elizabeth Kirkpatrick. They hope to get together again for a Christmas-themed care package party. Everyone brought eight of the same item for each of the college kid's packages, for example, Chapstick, granola bars, Halloween candy, Febreze.

Although there's plenty to do at work, she owns and manages the Hen House, right across from Starbucks, Kirkpatrick says, "I hate it, its very sad." Life without her two boys around the house meant big changes at the grocery store. "One of the hardest moments was at Safeway. I spent just \$62 for a week's worth of food. I just cracked up."
 Even tackling the clean-out of her pantry was painful. After putting it off for more than a year, she recently got around to it. "I found some plastic farm animals stashed in the back, the kind to put on cupcakes." Kirkpatrick notes that



Elizabeth Kirkpatrick at the Hen House in Lafayette
Photo Cathy Tyson

while it felt good to finish the project, she realized that these little farm animals were meant for little boys' birthday cupcakes.... continued on page 8

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