

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

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Volume 01; Issue 22

Happy Holidays from the Lamorinda Weekly Team!

Wednesday, December 12, 2007



Photos: Tod Fierme

Lamorinda's Big Dig

EBMUD Pipeline Project to Close Moraga Road this Summer

By Cathy Tyson

Plans are moving forward with the 17,500 feet of 36" diameter pipeline to be installed from the Lafayette Water Treatment Plant to the corner of Moraga Road and Draeger Drive in Moraga.

The existing original pipeline was built in 1930; some of it was replaced in 1947 back when the population of Lamorinda was a fraction of what it is today. The new pipeline will expand capacity to serve Moraga and Lafayette now and in the future, improving water delivery reliability and maintaining water quality for portions of Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda.

Moraga Road from Old Jonas Hill Road to Sky Hy Drive will be closed to through traffic from 9:00 to 5:30 for approximately six to eight weeks. The sections of Moraga Road with four lanes will have one lane open in each direction for the duration of the construction. Keeping Moraga Road open for the majority of morning commuters, when traffic is most dense was a priority of EBMUD.

Construction is tentatively scheduled to start on June 15 and be completed by August 15.

The powers that be at EBMUD anticipate a "manageable traffic impact," with the majority of outbound Moraga traffic detoured to St. Mary's Road. However this may not be the only construction project going on in the area this summer.

According to Janet Keeter, Orinda City Man-

ager, Orinda is moving forward with its \$2.7 million dollar paving project for Moraga Way. At the December 18th City Council meeting, it is anticipated that the project will be authorized to go out to bid with two scheduling scenarios; moving it up to April and May, along with a scenario for the summer months. A federal grant for \$1 million of the \$2.7 million dollar project has time restrictions, so those are the only two scheduling options available.

Moraga has a paving project of its own. The Town will receive \$540,000 in funding from the Pavement Rehabilitation Program with the stipulation that it be spent before the end of the 2008 - 2009 fiscal year. Moraga is required to contribute matching funds of at least \$150,000 and any additional difference between the bid and the grant, according to the Public Works Director/Town Engineer Jill Mercurio. EBMUD's big dig in Moraga needs to be complete prior to this paving project.

No one argues that the pipeline isn't needed, but the impacts will be felt beyond a longer commute. Bus route 106, which is a circular loop throughout Lamorinda on what will be closed roads, will definitely be adjusted. Mary Burdick, Marketing Department Manager of County Connection said, "At the moment it's very premature, and there are going to be periods of delay, but EBMUD is doing whatever it can to mitigate the situation."

Many environmental groups as well as neigh-

bors were concerned about loss of trees. Responding to these worries, EBMUD will replace any protected tree, like a valley oak or a coast live oak, on a 3:1 basis with native trees of the same species. Non-native trees will be replaced on a 1:1 basis.

The Soda Aquatic Center at Campolindo High School is usually busy all summer long with swim lessons, swim teams and water polo. Aquatic Coordinator for the Acalanes Union High School District, Andrew Morris said, "It's an unfortunate situation. We'll make slight adjustments to the schedule, but the majority of our events are on Saturdays and Sundays." He continues, "The majority of our renters will feel the brunt of it, Orinda Aquatic, Lamorinda Water Polo and Roughing It Day Camp," among others.

Finally, some have suggested, delayed commuters might be speeding through Burton Valley to make up for the, with any luck, few extra minutes they've been stuck in traffic. Lafayette Police are well aware of the situation. In addition the City of Lafayette is negotiating with EBMUD for additional funds for flaggers to help keep traffic moving through busy intersections.

You Better Watch Out!

By Cathy Tyson

Holiday revelers take note; Lamorinda's police departments will be beefing up their DUI enforcement during the month of December on local streets and Highway 24.

"The increased patrol efforts focus on reducing fatal and injury collisions resulting from alcohol or drug use," said Orinda Police Chief Bill French. "We want residents to have a safe and happy holiday season. If you plan on consuming alcohol, please do not drive. If you choose to consume alcohol, designate a sober driver."

A total of 25 police agencies throughout Contra Costa County will be participating in the "Avoid the 25" campaign.

Think twice before that next pomegranate martini or you may have a close encounter with a DUI check point. Not the kind of Christmas gift anyone's been wishing for.

Train-O-Rama!

By Lee Borrowman

There's just something about trains. Whether it's The Polar Express, or the miniature toy circling under the Christmas tree, this season conjures images of trains. The Hogwarts Express, in all of its crimson glory, currently circles at the Orinda Hardware Store along with many other model trains and a veritable Toyland of buttons to push and whirligigs to watch twirl.

"It has to work, it's designed for kids," says Ed Levinson of Orinda Model Railroad Consultants. "Let the kids play

with it - and let the parents play with it, too!" Levinson, a retired attorney, designed and maintains the attraction at Orinda Hardware, which is an authorized dealer of Lionel trains. Most of the items in the interactive display, including the Hogwarts Express, are available for order/purchase at the store.

Diane Wolfe has been bringing her grandson, four year old Holden Wolfe-Brown, to visit 'the train store' for a couple



Diane Wolfe and Holden Wolfe-Brown

Photo: Andy Scheck

LAMORINDA WEEKLY this week

Town News	2,3,6	New Mayor	6	First Thanksgiving	11	Lamorinda Home Sales	14	New Year's Eve at Amoroma	16
Lafayette Movie Stars	2	Table Topics	7	Calendar/SMC Happenings	12	Holiday Home Tour	14	Sports	18, 19
Holiday Tree Saved	3	Financial Predators Target Seniors	9	How to Contact Us	12	Local Computer Services	15	Classifieds	18
Shop Orinda	4,5	Schools	10,11	High Tech Gift Ideas	13	Lamorinda Restaurants	16	Love Lafayette	20

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of years. "We once spent about two hours here. He plays, and tells me what buttons to push and when to push them." Wolfe says that her other grandchildren also enjoy the trains, but they are very special to Holden. "I think the train store is really responsible for his continuing love of trains," says Wolfe. "And there's always something I can pick up while I'm here."

Levinson says that both original owner Gary Hopper and current owner Bob Smith are train enthusiasts as well. The displays in the store began with Hopper, and Smith has continued the tradition. The layout has been changed three times since 2005, and pieces are interchanged regularly. Right now, there is a fun-filled amusement park spinning amidst a number of trains.

If you'd like to see even more model trains and don't mind a bit of driving, pack up those bored, "when does school start again?" kids and visit the World's Greatest Hobby on Tour, Jan. 5th and 6th in Sacramento, <http://www.wghshow.com/>.

Levinson offers a Saturday morning model train seminar at Orinda Hardware. Train enthusiasts are welcome to come in with questions; sessions usually begin around 10:00am. Reach Levinson at OrindaModelRR@aol.com, or 376-8425.

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Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Lafayette

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, Jan 14	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, Jan 3	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, Jan 8	
Park, Trails, Rec.	7pm
Community Center 500 St Mary's Road Wednesday, Jan 9	
Circulation	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, Jan 7	
Emergency Prep.	9:15am
City Offices 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 265 Wednesday, Jan 9	
Senior Services	3:30pm
Community Center, Alder Room 500 St Mary's Road	

check online:
 Town of Lafayette:
<http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us>
 • all meeting notes
 • calendar updates
 Chamber of Commerce:
<http://www.lafayettechamber.org>
 • local businesses
 • upcoming events



Off the Beaten Path, 11/30/07
 At just after 8:00 p.m., near the corner of First Street and Mt. Diablo, a teenage driver drove his vehicle down an embankment and stopped in the middle of the street. Driver was arrested and booked.

Identity Theft, 11/28/07 A 57-year old male suspect attempted to open a Discovery credit card using a Dewing Avenue resident's name, date of birth and social security number. The almost-victim did not give permission.

Car Break In, 11/28/07 Someone forced entry into the car of a Carol Lane resident, damaging the steering column and ignition. The car was locked and parked in her carport. The passenger rear door was bowed out as if someone tried to pry it open. Because the car was not drivable, it was towed to a repair shop, where the estimated "fix" will cost \$1,000. At least it wasn't stolen.

Stealthy Bike Thief, 11/27/07 A locked bike was stolen from the side yard of a Bickerstaff Road home. The suspect removed a padlock securing the bike to the gas meter. Sadly, there are no suspects or witnesses. The specialized Hard Rock mountain bike cost approximately \$625.

Read online at:
www.lamorindaweekly.com
 (a pdf reader is required to view the pages.)

New Mayor for Lafayette
 By Cathy Tyson



From left, Former Mayor Carol Federighi and current Mayor Mike Anderson Photo Cathy Tyson

At the late November City Council meeting Lafayette's former Mayor Carol Federighi, turned over her gavel to current Mayor Mike Anderson. Unlike City Council Members, which are elected by the public, the mayorship is rotated annually and elected by City Council Members. As anticipated, the former Vice Mayor, Mike Anderson is the new Mayor of Lafayette, and Don Tatzin is the new Vice Mayor. Both were elected unanimously.

"We're blessed in this City with fine staff, and a dedicated City Council. It's been an honor and privilege to be Mayor," said Federighi.

Reflecting on the past year, Federighi recalled that she started her term with the controversial crosses to deal with and ended it with the twinkle lights. Along the way she almost learned how to open a champagne bottle with a saber. Apparently it's harder than it looks. At the birthday celebration for the Marquis de Lafayette, she was having some difficulty opening the ceremonial cham-

pagne bottle. The French Consul General attempted this difficult maneuver, and ended up getting sliced by flying glass and enjoyed the cultural highlights of the emergency room for stitches.

Clearly Lafayette has moved forward under her leadership. The crosses were indeed challenging, she recalled, but the City came out of it with a revised residential sign ordinance. Other highlights include, the Downtown Strategic Plan, the new library, the Mercantile Building, Whole Foods, the Woodbury, some senior housing in the pipeline along with the Park Terrace condominiums moving through the approval process.

One thoughtful resident summed it up; "We thank you for taking time away from your family to take care of us."

New Mayor, Mike Anderson, inspired by the success of the Measure J campaign, used a take-off of the three r's to outline his goals for the coming year: roads, resources, redevelopment and respect.

A New Master Plan for Lafayette Parks
 By Jean Follmer

Lafayette (the City) is in the initial stages of implementing a New Master Plan (the Plan) for its parks and the City wants your input. Parks can include both neighborhood parks with little or no parking and community parks with parking lots. Additionally, parks can be classified as either active or passive and many parks include both spaces. For example, the neighborhood Brook Street Park is active because it includes play equipment and picnic facilities. The neighborhood Mildred Lane Park is

passive because it consists of a bench and native landscaping. Community parks such as the Lafayette Community Park and Lafayette Community Center are larger (with both active and passive spaces) and offer recreational facilities such as baseball and soccer fields, a multi-sport rink, play areas, a Petanque court and recreation classrooms. The City currently has 88.8 acres of park land at 6 locations and the Lafayette Community Park accounts for 68 of those acres.

Lafayette citizens have in-

Lights! Camera! Municipal Finance?
 By Cathy Tyson

In an effort to educate the public about the esoteric nature of municipal finance, Lafayette has embraced a two-pronged approach to help get the word out. First, the fall issue of Vistas had a very thorough article about how projects are funded in Lafayette. Despite the timeliness and depth of the story, it's possible that not every resident reads it. Second, is their new video available for viewing on the City's home page

www.lovelafayette.org
 or www.YouTube.com.

"We're looking for a way to keep the material alive and, since a video link might be viewed by some or most of the people who stop by our website, it's worth doing," said City Manager Steve Falk.

Beyond the cool factor, and even though Lafayette seems like a prosperous city, only 6 cents of every dollar paid for property taxes goes to the City. This, coupled with the \$24 million unfunded road repair backlog puts, "financial pressure on every other City operation and has led to budget skirmishes over even the smallest programs. Until there is a comprehensive funding solution for Lafayette's roads and police, these issues will not go away," added Falk.

An internet survey was conducted after the loss of last Spring's Road Tax Measure. The bottom line was that residents aren't fully informed about the ways California public agencies are financed. Noting this, the City Council directed staff to do something about it. Hence the Vista's article and now, the video.

While it's not unusual for larger cities to have full service video production facilities, Lafayette is not a large city. Falk tried to make the 6-minute video educational but fun. "It's a little corny, it's a little camp, but we did that deliberately in an effort to keep the viewer's attention."

The video is entertaining, but it serves a bigger purpose. According to Falk, "Without new sources of funds, Lafayette's residents will continue to receive the lowest per-capita police coverage in Contra Costa County and, without new sources of revenue, many neighborhood roads will continue to deteriorate until they turn to gravel. Some 4,000 Lafayette residents live on failed roads. During some shifts, there are only two police officers on duty to cover the entire town. These services are, by most resident's judgment, totally unacceptable. Indeed, in each of the last four failed measures, six out of every ten voters demanded to tax themselves to improve services in

Lafayette. But unfortunately, California's laws requiring a supermajority for new taxes prevented them from doing so."

"We wanted to get the point across in an amusing, interesting way," said Tracy Robinson, Administrative Services Director. See Ms. Robinson, Steve Falk and a cast of other city employees at a computer near you.

Extra copies of Vistas are available in the City Offices, or to find it on-line, go to the Lafayette home page, www.lovelafayette.org, and click on Vistas Newsletters in the blue column. "Where Do Your Taxes Go?" is in the fall edition.

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Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Moraga

Calendar

City Council 7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School
1010 Camino Pablo
Wednesday, Dec 12

Planning Comm. 7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room
2100 Donald Drive
Monday, Dec 17

Design Review 7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room
2100 Donald Drive
Monday, Dec 24

Park & Rec 7:30pm
Hacienda, Mosaic Room
2100 Donald Drive
Tuesday, Dec 18

Liaison 8:00am
Fire Station
1280 Moraga Way
Friday, Dec 14

Chamber of Commerce 8am
Terzetto's Cuisine
Moraga Shopping Center
Friday, Jan 25

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



12/05/07 A resident at Aegis called police to report that he was being "held captive." The resident told the police dispatcher that his family and the police were looking for him. Upon arrival, the officer learned the resident had barricaded himself in his room. The resident, after some cajoling, finally allowed officers inside his room. The resident was taken to a local hospital to be evaluated.

Driving with a suspended license, 12/02/07 At 3:00 in the morning a pickup truck was stopped on St. Mary's Road for speeding. The 35-year old driver had an active misdemeanor probation through June of 2012 and was also driving on a suspended California Driver's License because of June 2007 D.U.I. conviction. Lamorinda Tow impounded the vehicle. That would be strike three, now you're a pedestrian.

Theft, 12/02/07 A Miramonte Drive resident called to report her bicycle stolen. Apparently her blue Cannondale 18 speed mountain bike was taken from her back porch. The bike cost \$500 when she purchased it about five years ago. Perhaps she can use the suspended license guy's truck, see above, since he won't be needing it anymore.

Mean Girl, 11/29/07 A Miramonte student and her mother came to the police department to report that she was being harassed by a female student at school. The young lady had allegedly sent text messages to her phone stating, "something was going to happen to her, adding it was going to be funny and that nobody could protect her." The reporting person told the officer that school officials had warned the student to stop the harassment. This student is also allegedly making comments over the internet about her to other classmates. Officers spoke to the alleged harasser's father later that day.

Moraga Holiday Tree Gets One More Year of Lights

By Steve Angelides



The Town tree lights go up

The Moraga Town Council has granted the Town's holiday tree, a 60 foot pine in the center of the Moraga Commons, one more year of lights.

The Council asked the Town Manager to spend \$8,900 to have holiday tree lights installed and removed by a professional contractor, for this year only. This is an increase of about \$6,000 over the cost of having the Town staff do the work.

However, two years ago, a Town employee sustained a shoulder injury while installing the tree lights, and the Town had to shoulder an increase in workers' compensation premiums as well as the cost of a replacement worker for several months. Last year the tree was not lit because the Town staff was concerned about the cost and liabilities.

Next year, the Town will consider other alternatives, including asking the Parks and Recreation Department to organize a tree lighting ceremony and a fund-raising drive such as the Town uses to pay for its annual fourth of July fireworks celebration.

Council Restructures Traffic Committee

By Steve Angelides

The Moraga Town Council has decided to restructure its Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) to add three more public members and remove two council members.

The new TSAC will have 5 voting public members and non-voting liaisons from the police and engineering departments and the fire district. TSAC currently has two public members, the police chief and town engineer, and two council members, all of whom are voting members.

The restructuring proposal came from TSAC itself, and was unanimously adopted by the Council, including the two council members who sit on TSAC, Mayor Mike Metcalf and Council member Ken Chew. Metcalf made the restructuring proposal during a five hour TSAC meeting in October at which TSAC was heavily criticized by mem-

bers of the public for its structure as well as its role in the installation of three controversial road bumps on Camino Pablo.

"Personally I was responding to an exhortation from the public," Metcalf told the Council. "It was a personal attack and it just seemed to me the best thing to do is to make a change," he explained.

The Camino Pablo bumps caused a furor in August when, to the surprise of many residents, and at least one council member, they were installed as part of the Camino Pablo repaving project. At its meetings in March and April, after the minimum required public notice, TSAC had recommended "slightly raised crosswalks" at the locations of the three bumps. The Town's contract road designer implemented that recommendation by placing speed tables of the maximum standard height at the three locations.

The fierce public uproar that followed resulted in a special five hour council meeting in September, attended by nearly 200 people. At that meeting the council heard from speakers who were evenly divided between bump supporters and opponents, and voted to smooth the bumps to the minimum standard height as a compromise. Nevertheless, bump opponents have continued to vocally oppose the bumps and criticize TSAC at subsequent TSAC and Council meetings, and have even started an anti-bump website, www.moragasafety.org.

The Council considered leaving at least one council member as a TSAC member or liaison, and Metcalf said he would be willing to continue to serve in that role if necessary.

... continued on page 8

Moraga Movers Meet Jersey Boys Submitted by George Fisher

It was a picture perfect day as we found our way by private van to San Francisco. We got there early enough to have lunch and do some Christmas shopping, before we all met again at the Curran Theatre to see "Jersey Boys."

It certainly lived up to its hype - the sets were spectacular and, of course, the singing and actors were superb. We all enjoyed it very much. Our van picked us up right out front of

the theater, and we were treated to a spectacular sunset on the drive home.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Kim and Kimberly at Moraga Park and Recreation Dept. (not to forget driver Steve), for arranging our special day. They will work co-operatively with our new Travel chair, Laura Wilson, on future trips, long and short. We look forward to all of them.

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number over 300 active Lamorinda residents over age 55, and hope to welcome at least 100 more members in 2008. For further information about the Moraga Movers, please call 376- 6622.

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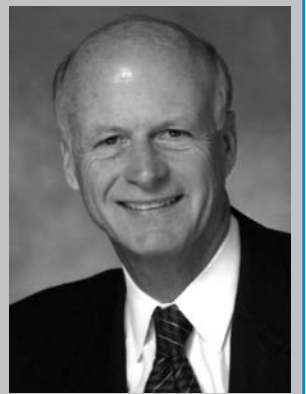
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Who does "Shop Orinda" benefit?
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Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar

City Council 7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way
Tuesday, Dec 18

Planning Comm. 7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library
26 Orinda Way
Monday, Dec 17

Hist. Landmark Comm. 3pm
Gallery Room, Upper Level
26 Orinda Way
Tuesday, Jan 22 (no Dec meeting)

Liaison 8:30am
Community Room at City Hall
22 Orinda Way
Monday, Jan 7

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

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

New Mayor for Orinda
By Cathy Tyson

It was standing room only at the Orinda Library Auditorium for the Annual Reorganization of the Orinda City Council. Former Mayor Steve Glazer had just finished his year and was ready to make the transition to City Council Member, but not before a little good-natured ribbing from his fellow City Council Members.

Former Mayor Pro Tem, and now current Mayor Victoria Smith started the festivities with, "we're here to roast, I mean honor, Steve Glazer who has served the citizens of Orinda with great distinction." Council Members took turns with jibes, some serious and complimentary, some true and downright funny.

Just a few of the humorous comments included, "red silk pajama flashbacks, trolling with the top down on his BMW to be closer to his constituents, to bring Orinda's Safeway up to Moraga's standards, so residents can enjoy

five kinds of organic carrots," among others.

Another light moment came from a representative of the Orinda Historical Society. Noting that he "has taken a lot of guff about the road situation," she gave him a photo of the Crossroads taken in 1936 as a gift. "The roads were worse then than they are now, dirt."

According to Glazer, highlights from his year as Mayor included: a 50% increase in road spending over the past five year average, a new City Hall with Emergency Operations Center which is environmentally friendly, a new police chief, Chief French, the Pulte Pinegrove project, the Shop Orinda campaign, bringing Cal Shakes to Theater Square for their season kick-off, an all star year for the Arts Council with the library installation and Orinda Idol, improvements to the water plant fencing and landscap-

ing to benefit the Manzanita neighborhood, and as noted above, improvements to the Safeway store.

"Being the Mayor has really been a gift to me in so many ways, a gift that I'll always treasure," summarized Glazer.

New Mayor Smith complemented the former Mayor's ability to set a civil tone, to disagree without being disagreeable.

Smith has, "two key issues to make progress on this year, one is roads, two is downtown revitalization." She continued, "It's time to stop taking pot shots and start filling pot holes." Finally, she had two words for the holiday season, "Shop Orinda," suggesting that revenue that stays in Orinda will help the road situation.

Both Smith and new Mayor Pro Tem, Sue Severson were elected unanimously.



Steve Glazer and Victoria Smith Photo Cathy Tyson

The Results are in for Mayor's Architecture Award
By David Anderson



Homeowner Jesse Undlin Photo David Anderson

On Tuesday December 4th The Orinda City Council awarded the first ever Mayor's Award for Excellence in Architecture to Jesse and Laura Undlin of 40 Barbara Lane. Designed by William Simpson who is also of Orinda, the Undlin's new home won among a pool of fifteen nominees and two other finalists to earn the honor.

Orinda Mayor Steve Glazer, who founded the award during his term this year, said in his statement to a packed house Tuesday night that he and his panel were "looking for a way to recognize those who have gone the extra mile (in residential design)" and were looking for

nominees whose work exemplified an improvement, "not just to their homes but to the whole neighborhood."

The Undlin residence won in large part due to the relationship of their home to the site on which it was constructed (regarded as the most important set of criteria). The second most important was 'Architectural Expression.' This 1,800 square foot multi-level home with shake siding is set back into the hillside effectively utilizing the property in the design of the home. The residence is energy efficient with a radiant floor heating system and a tank-less water heater.

Mayor Pro Tem Victoria Smith describes the Undlin residence as a "small but livable home that maximizes the use of the (up sloping) lot," adding that "both the indoor and outdoor living areas are oriented so that they don't infringe on the privacy of the neighbors and the home is appropriately sized for the neighborhood."

Among the other finalists were the Logan residence at 6

Beaconsfield Court designed by Peter Golze of Berkeley and the Bott residence at 1 Dos Posos designed by Jarvis Architects of Oakland. The fifteen nominations exemplified a wide range of residential design including a Colonial Mexican Hacienda, a Mediterranean Style Villa and a modern home described by the designers as "Napa meets South of Market".

ORINDA POLICE

Attempted Burglary, 12/5/07
Someone forced entry in Yu Sushi, an Orinda Way restaurant by smashing the front glass door. Suspect checked the cash register, which was empty and a box of delivery receipts. No items were missing, no fingerprints were found.

Actual Burglary 12/04/07
A Southwood Court resident parked her car in the garage and went into her house for nine minutes, leaving the garage open, vehicle unlocked, and keys in the center console. Upon her return, the resident saw her keys and purse were taken. Partial latent prints were found. \$100. cash and \$350. in property were taken.

Car vs. Pole 12/02/07
The pole won. At midnight, a 29-year old Albany resident was driving on Moraga Way and somehow hit a P G & E pole. He continued driving south for about 200 yards, when he pulled over, and stood outside his vehicle. This may come as a surprise, but the driver admitted to drinking prior to getting behind the wheel.

D.U.I ., 12/01/07
At just after midnight, a La Espiral resident changed lanes without signaling near Orinda Way and Santa Maria. The officer pulled him over, and noticed a strong odor of alcohol. Test showed a blood alcohol level of .11, over the limit of .08. The gentleman was released to the custody of his wife. Perhaps he was not aware of the Avoid the 25 campaign.

Artscape Orinda—A Unique Exhibit Not to be Missed
Andrea A. Firth

Artscape Orinda kicked off last Sunday amidst cooler than typical winter weather with a private reception attended by the artists, city council members, and many local patrons of the arts. As the music of the violinist wafted from the upper level of the Library Plaza, guests enjoyed wine and an array of hors d'oeuvres as they walked around the Orinda City Library, Community Center, and

City Hall admiring the sculptures that comprise the year-long exhibit and mingling with the artists on hand. The exhibit is sponsored by the City of Orinda and the Orinda Arts Council, and the artworks are on temporary loan from the artists and donors for the residents of Orinda and the surrounding communities to learn from and enjoy.

The sculptures are made from a variety of durable materials and range in size from big to bigger and bigger still. Some are playful in design, others more austere, and a few require some reflection.

... continued on page 9

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Life in LAMORINDA

The Gift of Gab:

Orinda Resident's Creative Question Cards Spark Conversations

By Jennifer Wake

Nearly everyone has had an idea for a product or service at one time or another. But only those who take the idea from concept to product can truly call themselves entrepreneurs.

Orinda resident Cristy Clarke has always been quick to come up with new business ideas. In 2002, on the way to a dinner party with her husband, she thought it would be a good idea to jot down some questions to help the conversation along. The response was so positive, she knew she had a good idea. Soon after, she developed a prototype and began extensive research on production and importation.

In 2004 Clarke founded TableTopics, selling small acrylic lacquer boxes filled with a stack of 135 "conversation starter" cards, each with a question on the back. Questions range from "If you could give all human beings one virtue, which would you choose?" to "What do you think is the ideal age?" There are specialized versions with questions for family, teens, couples, golfers and even sets for those following Election 2008.

Now available at more than 1,800 retailers in the United States, the UK, Canada, Australia, and

New Zealand, sales of the unique cards reached approximately \$3 million last year. Yet it wasn't the first business venture for Clarke.

As a college student, she started a typing business where she would type term papers for desperate college students who would come by the night before a paper was due. "I'd charge them an arm and a leg," Clarke said. "They'd pay it and I'd type their paper all night."

After college, she started a company likened to a fast food caterer called Just Hors d'Oeuvres in Lafayette, but sold the business when she started her family. Clarke stayed home with

her children for the next 10 years, letting her ideas "percolate." But she never lost sight of starting another business. TableTopics was a perfect fit.

"I thought it would be great to have questions on the table - at dinner, at cocktail parties. And with the Internet, I could work from home," Clarke said. "It's been a huge growth experience going from a service to a product, but it's why I went with the TableTopics idea. In the service industry, I was limited by time - and food was rotting in my garage."

After starting TableTopics, the Clarke family garage mor-

phed into a clearing house where Clarke's three daughters, Kelly, 15, Kate, 14, and Lily, 11, filled orders from the online store they developed.

"The girls had a lot of ideas, and told me we should sell it online," Clarke said. "I said, 'Go for it.' They started the Web site targeting Christmas 2005, and got it up and online in October [of that year] through Yahoo store. One of the girls did all the order processing, while the others boxed up and shipped out."

Clarke said they started getting 30 to 40 orders a day, and in the month of January 2006 they packed 1,000 orders. "They lasted until about April, and then I had to send it down to a fulfillment house," Clarke said.

"It was so much fun seeing them in the garage filling the orders, but they would have had to quit school to continue," she added, laughing.

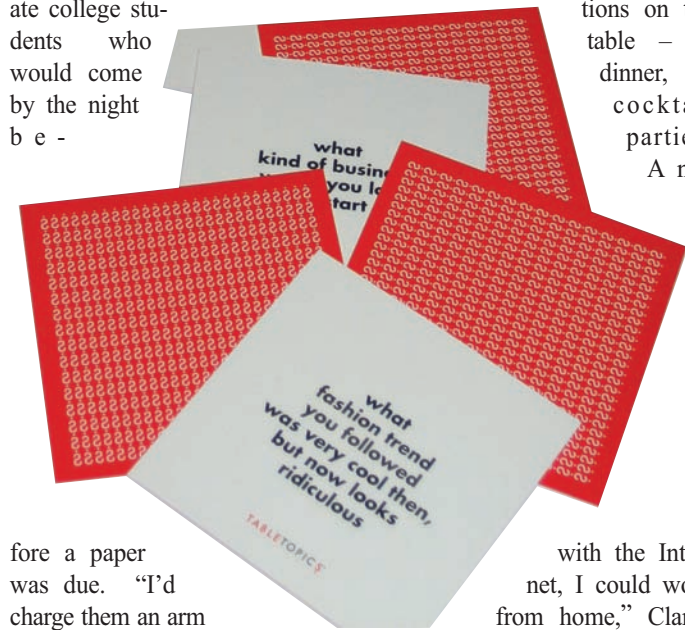
Recently, Clarke began to miss the extra time she had with her daughters before the success of TableTopics and considered selling it. Her girls said no. "When I talk about selling the business, they're the ones that say don't do it."

"They've really become part

of this and see the value of this experience. It's not the money or the number of stores we're in," Clarke said. "The real value for me, as a mom, is that at some point in our lives we can stop growing. They've seen that if you get out of

your comfort zone, it's amazing what it gives you personally."

For information about TableTopics, you can visit their Web site at: www.tabletopics.com.



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Letting the Beauty of Mature Women Shine

By Sophie Braccini



Photo session with Penelope Lippincott & Patti Camras

Photo courtesy Fuse

Achievement has always been the trade mark of Patti Camras. The former President of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, a successful real estate agent, is beginning to build an additional career: modeling. In the first issue of Fuse, a new Lafayette fashion magazine, the 63 year old model shines in the most simple of outfits, radiating mature beauty and confidence.

Camras got into this new pastime quite unexpectedly. She modeled for the Orinda fashion show organized by the Orinda Women's Club and when a friend saw her picture she referred her to Penelope Lippincott, Director of Fuse. Lippincott is not an agent,

she manages several businesses all linked to fashion. Her latest addition, Fuse, promotes local fashion designers featuring models in their early twenties as well as mature women. A professional fashion photographer, she offers women in their 40's to 60's a training curriculum to become independent models, building their own practice. The training costs between \$1400 and \$4000.

However, for Camras, the experience is transforming her life. She started in March of 2007 by learning basic modeling techniques: posture, walking in high heels, pivot and kick turns, runway presentations, make-up and hairstyle. "The classes are phenomenal," she says,

"Penelope is a coach, a trainer, a teacher. When you pay for the whole cycle of twelve classes, you can retake it over and over. I'm doing it again for the third time and I'm learning a lot."

Camras is known as Patricia Kennedy in the modeling world; having a different name is part of creating the image and marketing strategy. Camras chose the Kennedy last name to convey the elegance and power she so easily embodies. And Patricia Kennedy has already got some jobs lined up. She has worked on "stock jobs," pictures that are taken in specific situations and that can be purchased by marketing professionals; she worked for Fuse, modeling for a handbag company and she was part of a bridal show. "This additional career is totally igniting my enthusiasm and passion," comments Camras, "and the energy is spilling over to my other profession, real estate."

Camras is not the only beautiful mature woman radiating with confidence at Fuse. Connie Menzies, a yoga instructor in her mid fifties, has been training with Lippincott for several months as well.

... continued on page 12

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Council Restructures Traffic Committee

Bump opponents, including Stan Roth, who has volunteered to be a public member of the new TSAC, supported that idea, but Barbara Simpson, who has also volunteered to join TSAC, opposed it. Ultimately the Council unanimously removed all council participation from TSAC.

The Council will recruit volunteers for TSAC and will interview the candidates in a special public meeting early next year. Topping the new TSAC's agenda will be to review the draft traffic calming guidelines which the Council received from the current TSAC and quickly referred to the new TSAC. A number of suggestions were made for improving the guidelines, among which was to specify what public notice of proposed traffic calming measures should be given.

Metcalf said he hoped the new TSAC would promptly revise the guidelines and submit them to the Council for approval because "there's a lot of pent up demand" for traffic calming. He cited four neighborhoods, the Bluffs, Corliss, Larch, and Rheem, in which he said residents are already organizing to seek traffic calming measures.

Chew said he wanted the current TSAC to revise the guidelines and submit them to the

... continued from page 3

Council before the new TSAC is seated to avoid "a long delay". He said the bump opponents were "a small minority whose sole intention is to disrupt TSAC to keep us from doing what's right for the

rest of the community."

When the Council majority decided the guidelines would have to wait for the new TSAC, Chew said they "would have to answer to the rest of the community that wants

some type of traffic calming" for the delay. Council member Dave Trotter responded that he was perfectly prepared to do that, because he was elected to take political responsibility for his decisions.

A New Master Plan for Lafayette Parks

... continued from page 2

What to do? Jennifer Russell says, "We have a huge challenge before us because Lafayette has been built out for so long" there just isn't much land available for new parks. Many home tracts were built before being annexed by the City, so parks weren't originally contemplated. Russell says "Newer communities are being built with parks in mind." Add to that the exorbitant price of land in the area; securing additional park acres is not easily done. The dollars just aren't there.

One might ask where our tax dollars go and how they are allocated. Those questions are answered in a six-minute video on the City's website called "Municipal Finance 101" featuring City Manager Steve Falk. It all comes

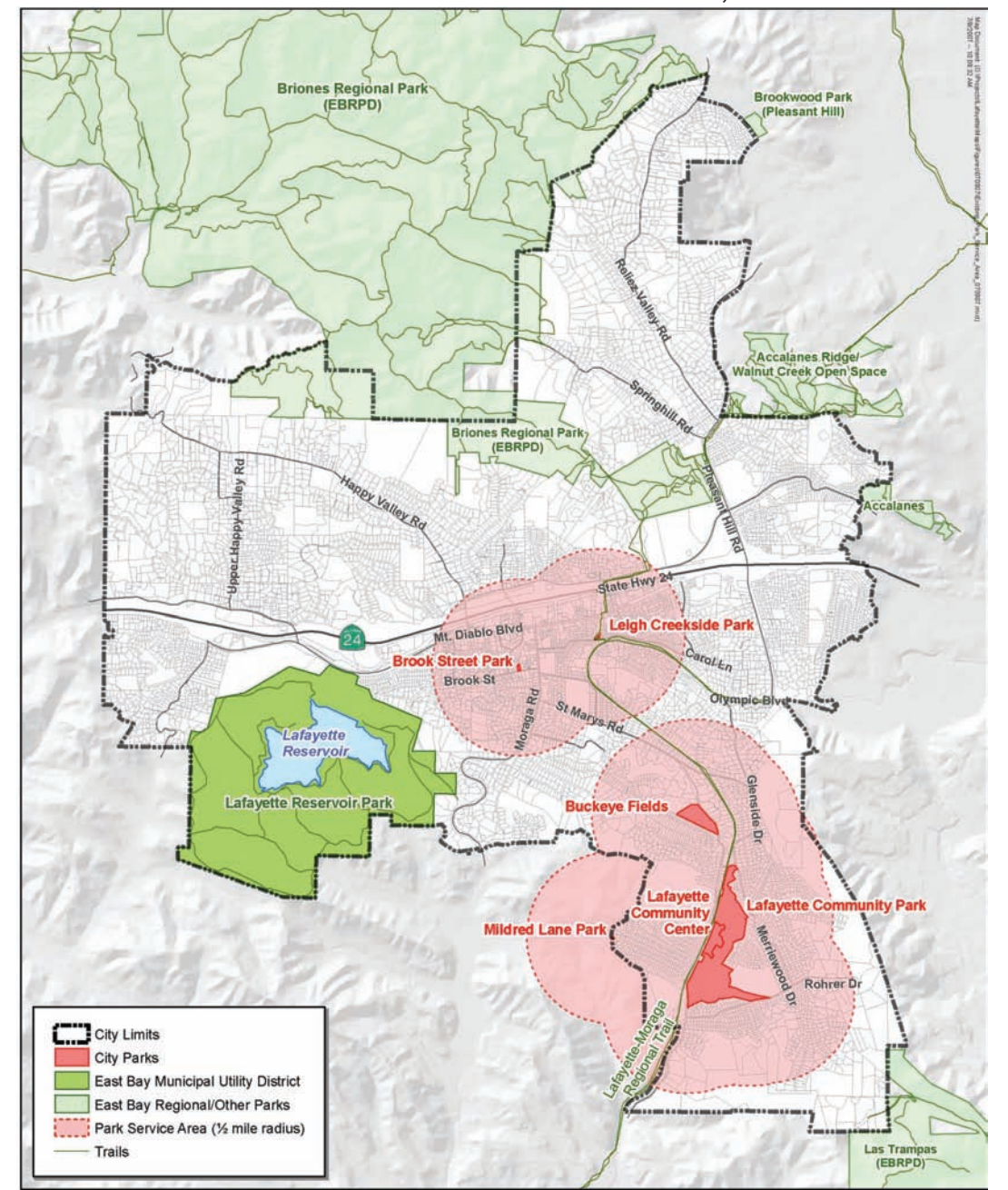
down to different "buckets" and only certain things can be legally paid out of each bucket. In the case of parks, funding is available from three potential sources: dedication/improvement fees on new construction, state grants or donations and user fees which "offset operations and maintenance costs."

The Plan is in the public outreach and participation stage. The first of several public input meetings was held recently at the Lafayette Community Center and the upcoming Winter Recreation Guide will also ask for comments. According to Russell, "It's hard to get people to voice their opinions." She encourages citizens to contact her directly with their questions, concerns and ideas.

Russell offered the reminder that the Plan is "in its infancy", thus your voice will be heard. The City wants to know if there is a need for park facilities/services in your neighborhood.



Jennifer Russell, Photo Jean Follmer
Lafayette Parks & Recreation Director



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Life in LAMORINDA

Seniors' Awareness and Education Help Stave Off Financial Predators

By Jennifer Wake

Ever since he was a deputy district attorney in Contra Costa County more than 10 years ago, Lafayette resident and former superior court judge Dan O'Malley says the scam artists, telemarketers, and drug addicts have been preying on seniors.

With more than 7 million California citizens expected to reach the age of 65 by 2020, financial predators are honing their skills, whether it be through phone solicitations, junk mail offers, free "financial seminars," and Internet scams.

"The problem is so widespread. With the Internet, it's expanding and seniors are a prime target because of their vulnerability, and because they won't turn them in," O'Malley said. "The

seniors are so embarrassed by their behavior and that they were taken, they won't even tell their loved ones."

A recent study by the California Department of Corporations Seniors Against Investment Fraud (SAIF) Program noted that more than 70 percent of people aged 50 and above have been approached fraudulently, and according to the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, 84 percent of elder abuse cases go unreported.

The Elder Financial Protection Network (EFPN) estimates that more than 200,000 elderly Californians are victims of financial abuse each year, with the Bay Area being a hotbed of activity. Wells Fargo Bank manager Kris

Rambrich stated that the bank's Moraga branch has handled approximately 15 fraud cases involving seniors in the past six months.

Saint Mary's College Psychology Professor Mary McCall, Ph.D., says financial predators have become very good studies of personality.

"They see the body language of an older person – how they walk, eye contact – and they figure out what pitch to use," McCall said. "Pitches might vary from helping someone out personally to helping out a religious organization, playing on lifelong beliefs. Victims might think, 'Maybe I should donate to this religious organization before I die.'" A SAIF benchmark study

found that in 2002 monetary loss to senior financial scams in California alone exceeded \$3 billion, and with many seniors living in homes nearly paid off, the recent run up in home equity has brought a slew of predatory lenders to the area, increasing the chance of losing all of a home's equity through these scams, or even the home itself.

Predators look for seniors who live alone and who have access to funds or equity. And they are not always transients or junkies. One of O'Malley's clients at age 96 gave \$800,000 to a stock

broker to invest. "He took all her money that she had safely invested, liquidated it and put it into stocks," O'Malley said. "They were giving her back her own money, while she now had to pay \$100,000 in taxes and the broker

collected \$100,000 in fees."

The client just turned 100 and O'Malley is concerned that she may not live to see the case come to trial. "It breaks your heart," he said.

... continued on page 12

Artscape Orinda—A Unique Exhibit Not to be Missed

... continued from page 6



David and Diane Goldsmith of Orinda enjoying Artscape Orinda

Photo by Andrea Firth

Upon approaching the Library Plaza one can't miss the blue-spotted frog suspended in mid-air leaping gracefully from the top of a potted flower into the cascading waterfall, a work done in steel by artist Gale Wagner. To the right and left of the leaping frog are three tall ceramic dogs and four steel totem poles that seem to be keeping watch over the lower level Plaza (works by Jeff Dowling and Vickie Jo Sowell). A few steps away, Bill Wareham's steel sculpture entitled Chuquito with its assortment of brightly painted and precariously stacked shapes led one guest to comment, "It looks like a pile of orange and grapefruit slices. It's fun."

The Plaza also plays host to Bird by Riis Burwell, a large, heavy and simultaneously elegant piece, and a bright orange aluminum sculpture aptly named Sunburste by artist Kati Casida. (A second work by Casida is located in the landscaped island in the parking area of City Hall.) Placed in the middle of the

flowerbed adjacent to the Plaza steps, Archie Held's three panel steel sculpture Negative seems organic to the landscaping. A further walk about, one will find John Toki's ceramic artworks framing the entrance to the Community Center which houses a steel piece entitled IO by Joe Slusky. And, the exhibit is rounded out by a three-piece ceramic sculpture reminiscent of the stone columns at Stonehenge by Patricia Bengtson of Oakland.

Following an introduction of the artists, exhibit organizer Ted Urban took a moment to briefly summarize the concept for Artscape Orinda. "The artists have agreed to loan their art to the City for one year. Hopefully, community members will fall in love with the art and feel that it should stay here after that," stated Ted. "The project is

unique. It's an experiment, a year-long exercise. We'll see where it takes us," he concluded.

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New Buildings for Camino Pablo

By Sophie Braccini

On December 8th giant metal frames were trucked in from Lodi and set in place by crane at Camino Pablo Elementary in Moraga. Meehleis Modular Building, a company that specializes in custom modular construction projects, is erecting four classrooms at Camino Pablo Elementary (CP) and a

new library at Los Perales Elementary (LP). The technique allows them to set in place the whole structures over one weekend, saving time and money.

The frames used at CP are 10' x 32'. One classroom requires four frames plus one that's shared by two classrooms, creating additional meeting



J.D. Arrighi & Mike Snow, Meehleis Modular Building Inc., set a roof piece on Saturday morning

space. The foundations were already in place on December 8th when the giant frames were placed on them and welded to a steel plate that's part of the foundation. The structures are built to sustain an 8.5 magnitude earthquake.

The next phase will be the setting of the stucco and the insulation. According to Neil Jennings, CP Principal, "The classrooms will be stronger than most buildings. They meet

State standards and are inspected onsite." The project is scheduled to be completed by late February, and third graders will move into their new quarters.

The LP library will go in sometime during the winter break. The frames used at LP will be even larger: 10' x 36' frames. The frames incorporate energy saving elements which allow more natural lighting, and double paned windows.

Los Perales Auction Committee

Lures Donors

By Lee Borrowman

Auctions are still the rage among local school fundraisers. Every year, parent volunteers spend months encouraging families and businesses to donate items to their auction of choice. By January, many of these dedicated volunteers find that their former friends, co-room parents and erstwhile tennis partners quickly turn and walk the other way when they see the valiant Donation Chair heading their way. This year, the Los Perales Elementary School PTA Auction Committee is trying a new approach to getting families to send in those fabulous auction items.

At the end of November, a drawing was held. All families who had sent in their auction donations early were automatically entered to win an iPod Nano. The lucky winner was the family of Angud and Arjun Chimni.

In mid December, there will be yet another drawing. And this time, the prize will be the coveted Nintendo Wii game sys-

tem (not that any LP student actually wants one of those...). LP Auction Committee representative Paula Pollock would like to encourage all LP families to get those donations in by 9:00 AM on December 14 so that they are eligible for the drawing; why buy that Wii when you could win it instead?



Angud and Arjun Chimni with Principal Bill Walters



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JM Gets a New Sand Volleyball Court

By Andrea A. Firth

When Nick Piatt tackles a project, he isn't afraid to get some dirt under his nails and even a little sand between his toes. Nick approached Bruce Burns and Brad Carn, principal and assistant principal at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School (JM), offering to complete a service project at the school. Building a sand volleyball court seemed like a good fit for a young man with energy, enthusiasm, and a great network of support. "I have known Nick and his family for several years," noted Bruce Burns. "When we talked about the project, I knew he could do a good job. We were also very fortunate to get financial support from the School District, the PTA, and the Student Body Fund."

Nick is a member of Boy Scout Troop #212, and he is working toward becoming an Eagle Scout later this year. To achieve this goal, Nick is required to complete a major service project where he maintains responsibility for the project planning, management, and implementation. Constructing the sand volleyball court at JM required all of this and a whole lot more. "The



Nick Piatt (center) at work on the sand volleyball court

Photo courtesy of Irish Piatt

project took about 180 hours to complete and included the help of other scouts, my father, my brother, my mom, their friends, and some of my friends," explained Nick.

Before starting work, Nick researched the court dimensions and the best materials to use. "There are a variety of sands that you can use," noted Nick. "We felt that the white beach sand was the best option." He also had to figure out how to manage drainage for the court and found digging the drainage trench a difficult but fun aspect of the project. In addition Nick coor-

ordinated the recruitment of the many hands that helped to get the work done. "My fellow troop members were very supportive. And, I owe a big thanks to my Scout Master, Tom McIntosh, who is always a great help to me," added Nick.

Although Nick quietly admits to feeling relieved that the volleyball court is now done, he is pleased with the outcome. "Completing this project was very challenging and a lot of hard work. It made me realize what I could accomplish. I hope the kids at JM really enjoy using I the volleyball court."

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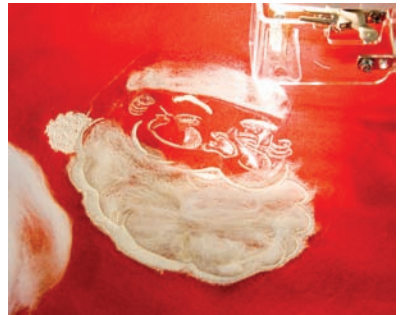
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State Grants Help Gardens Grow in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini



(left to right) students Steven Wetterholm, Laura Hickey, Mina Lucacher and Kevin Gibbs attend to the salad garden with teacher Lois Mead Photo Sophie Braccini

Paul Simonin was both happy and surprised to hear that the four schools of the Moraga School District were each awarded a \$2500 State grant for their gardens. As the Director of Administrative Services for the district, he had initiated and coordinated the four schools application process and knew that only a small percentage of the applicants would get the monies. In mid-October, the sum was wired with missions to the schools to promote school gardening programs linked to the healthy eating/healthy-living curriculum. "The four schools were awarded the maximum amount," says Simonin, "this is really remarkable."

Each school's effort was led by a designated contact person. At Joaquin Moraga Intermediate (JM) it's Elaine Guttman, at Rheem Elementary Alice Noyes, at Los Perales Elementary (LP) Andrea Barrett and at Camino Pablo Elementary (CP), Principal Neil Jennings.

"My name was on the paper but this is team work," says Elaine Guttman, Core teacher at JM "all of us on the committee share the interest and duties." JM is planning to use the grant money to expanding on already established

projects.

"Last year a compost area was built by volunteers with our first MEF grant," said Guttman, "an eagle scout has built redwood planters for the compost area, Moraga Garden Center is generously selling us plants and supplies at their cost, Moraga Garden Club gives us bulbs to plant each fall and this year gave us money, too."

These projects have met with great community support and the next phase involves meeting with the PTA, JM Principal Bruce Burns and the Project Pride people to coordinate efforts with the parents. "We have big plans and we want to continue student centered gardening and art," states Guttman.

LP and CP have existing gardens as well. CP boasts 6 1/2 large beds in an enclosed garden that was built six years ago and contains many edibles, native plants, birds and butterfly plants, a compost bin and work shed. According to Jennings, the grant money will be used to buy new gardening tools for the students, a tool shed, teaching and training material to enhance existing programs.

The LP campus is undergo-

ing some transformation with the building of a new library. However, some classes have a room garden where various botanical and art related activities are conducted. The grant will allow for the extension of the existing classroom beds and possibly become seed money for a garden adjacent to the new library.

Rheem was the only school that didn't have a garden. A site was identified, on the hillside where an old volleyball court was unused. The Rheem garden committee which includes the school principal, parents and teachers, decided to raise money for the project. On top of the \$2500 garden grant obtained by the district, the school got a "Wastebusters" grant for \$2,631.00, and the PTA allocated \$6100 to the project.

The team has visited other school gardens to collect ideas: Burton Valley School in Lafayette, Camino Pablo School Garden and the Edible Schoolyard in Berkeley. They collected many ideas concerning garden layout, use of volunteers, funding, tools, and curriculum.

Noyce, the fifth grade teacher who coordinates the program, says: "Our Rheem teachers met and gave us feedback on curricular lessons which could be taught in the garden. For science we could teach lifecycles, food chains and webs, weather, climate, soil science, composting, photosynthesis, flower parts, insect life, butterfly life cycle - just to name a few possibilities. In language arts: poetry, story writing, imagining. In art: drawing, painting, tile and clay, observation of color. In social studies: Moraga History, native Indian plant uses, American colonial plant use, dyes plants. In Life skills: patience, responsibility, effort, caring, cooperation, etc. The list goes on and on." The group is now focusing on prepar-

ing the site and involving the community in the design.

"We are very excited about how the garden will physically enhance our school and enrich our curriculum," comments Noyce, "our staff embraces the idea that students learn best by doing. We know that the garden will lend itself to making learning authentic and unforgettable for our students."

The Moraga School District recently won another grant from the State, to address obesity. The \$35,000/year award includes an annual cost of living adjustment. "We were lucky to get the grant for the three elementary schools," explains Paul Simonin, "only thirty-six schools got it in the all county." The grant funds must be applied to Physical Education. "We are lucky to have 1 1/2 PE teacher that's paid for by the PTAs," says Simonin, "this recurring grant will allow us to hire fully credentialed PE teachers so each school will now have a 'complete' PE teacher." One option would be to have these teachers work together 3 days a week, exercising an entire grade level at a time and freeing a full period for all the teachers in that grade. Teachers could implement common planning time, if they so desire.



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Orinda Schools Celebrate the First Thanksgiving

By Jane Wiser

"We gather together" takes on new meaning at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area in November as each fifth grader in the Orinda Union School District participates in the annual "First Thanksgiving". One of several programs at the Nature Area, First Thanksgiving is sponsored by the Educational Foundation of Orinda (EFO). EFO is providing \$65,000 this year to fund nearly 100% of the environmental instruction at the Wagner Ranch Nature Area for all Orinda elementary students.

Costumed in Native American and pilgrim attire and adopting period names to help personify the experience, students spend a day in the life of an early American, complete with authentic crafts, games, and preparation of the Thanksgiving feast. Students rotate between activities such as leather-craft, metal work, corn husk dolls, and sack races. They sign a proclamation of attendance with a hand-made feather quill. Archery has returned to the Nature Area this year with great enthusiasm, and at First Thanksgiving real pumpkins are used for target practice.

"Beside us to guide us" is Toris Jaeger, District Naturalist. For nearly 30 years, Toris has educated students in many fields of environmental science offering a unique hands-on outdoor classroom complementing the in-class science curriculum. The Nature Area, aided by the Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area, is a

perfect site for such study as a nature preserve that includes Bear Creek, an exploration pond, raised bed gardens, and an outdoor cooking center.

Once it is time for the feast, a communal table is adorned with natural décor, and the meal is shared, signifying the blending of cultures and reward for hard work, harvest, and friendship. All food is donated by parents and prepared at the Nature Area, except the roasting of the turkeys. There is no slighting of courses either: sweet potatoes, potatoes, corn, popcorn, stuffing, vegetables, pies are all included, and students work hard to prepare the vast feast. It is a heart warming, communal experience that is well remembered by those who have attended in the past as well as parents who share the day as volunteers.

Living history is what our school children experience at First Thanksgiving. In funding this living



Kelly Cheng participated in a Native American craft project Photo Caroline Lovell Photography

history experience, EFO continues a longstanding tradition of providing excellence in education in Orinda schools. EFO relies on the generous support of parents and the community at large, and will raise \$1.4 million this year for the benefit of all Orinda students from kindergarten through 12th grade.



Charlie O'Brian spent the day as a Pilgrim Photo Caroline Lovell Photography



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 6:00 p.m. – "The First Noel"
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 10:00 p.m. – "Silent Night"
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Campus Happenings



Photo by Ken C. Young, Moraga; www.kcyoungfineartimages.com

Art Exhibitions:

"Footloose in Arcadia: Artists and Authors of Piedmont from 1890 to 1930"
 Nov. 3 to Dec. 16
 In celebration of the centennial of the City of Piedmont, the Hearst Art Gallery has organized this exhibition of the region's early artists and writers. Turn of the century Piedmont was home to Jack London, who wrote the *Sea Wolf* and *Call of the Wild* while living in Piedmont. He was part of the local artistic and

literary bohemians that included George Sterling, Herman Whitaker, and Xavier Timateo Martinez. The Reverend Joseph Worcester, the first Swedenborgian minister in San Francisco, designed and built his own home and was one of the first to design a structure that was harmonious with nature - he influenced architects Bernard Maybeck and Willis Polk. In 1901 Jack London moved into Worcester's cottage. William Keith painted several versions of the Worcester cottage; three are included in the exhibition. Hearst Art Gallery
"William Keith: The 1880s Paintings"
 Works from the 1880s, which marked a decade of great changes in William Keith's life. On view in the William Keith Room Hearst Art Gallery

Exhibition hours: Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.
 Admission: \$3 adult; children 12 and under free; free parking
 Web site: <http://gallery.stmarys-ca.edu>.
 Telephone: 925-631-4379

For more information about upcoming events at Saint Mary's College, visit the college website at <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/news-and-events/events.html>.

Seniors' Awareness and Education Help Stave Off Financial Predators

... continued from page 9

An important issue, McCall says, is many seniors grew up during the Depression or have a lifelong personality trait of being open to helping others. "They want to help people who are down on their luck. People who are open and friendly don't expect to be scammed," she said. "They see themselves as nice and helping out. They have a basic personality of trust."

Unfortunately, EFPN notes that once a senior has been targeted, there is a tendency for the perpetrators to repeatedly prey upon the elder until all their resources are gone.

So what can be done?

The California Commission on Aging states the best way to avoid becoming a victim is through awareness, prevention, and education.

O'Malley agrees. "Seniors need to make a decision about steps they are going to take well in advance before anyone knocks on the door," he said. "Have a checklist already in place, so if you get an offer, you say 'I'll get back to you,' immediately go to your list and start calling agencies like Adult Protective Services, Consumer Protective Services or even the SEC to check them out. Don't sign anything until you run it by somebody."

EFPN CEO and executive director Jenefer Duane adds that seniors should plan ahead for their needs and be very careful who they appoint to manage their affairs in the event they are unable. "Be very diligent about checking references of persons you hire - it's best to involve a friend or family



members in the interview and hiring process," she said. "And never give out personal financial information to anyone who calls you on the phone or comes to the door. Don't be rushed into a deal, stay away from living trust seminars, hang up on telemarketers, shred old financial documents and offers you receive in the mail."

If elders suspect they, or someone else, has been exploited or victimized, they should call adult protective services and report the situation. "If the elder is in danger or a crime has been committed, call the police," Duane said. "The identity of the reporter is kept confidential."

To report suspected elder abuse call the Attorney General's hotline at (888) 436-3600. Or to get more information, you can attend the free EFPN workshop, "Be Wise: Prevent Scams, Fraud, and Identity Theft," on Jan. 17 at the Lafayette Community Center (500 St. Mary's Road). For information on the seminar, call (925) 284-5050.

Letting the Beauty of Mature Women Shine

... continued from page 7

The tall and slender Lafayette resident looks like she's walked the runways in high heels all her life. It is not the case though and it seems that starting this new career is allowing her to own the power and joy she always had but was a little shy to let shine. This may be the case of many aging baby boomers. "We are under-represented in the market," affirms Menzies, "we want to affirm who we are and re-conquer our self-esteem."

The challenge for these two women and others working with Lippincott will be to build a successful business. Lippincott is optimistic: "Three out of five women who start in the profession of mature modeling will make it," she says, "the market is there, and success will come to the ones who have endurance and commitment."

Lippincott continues to look for such women. She regularly organizes "open calls" where women come in and audition; Lippincott and her team decide who they will accept as clients. "I choose women

who can tell the truth, who embrace the beautiful flaws that come with a certain age, rather than erase them. I need to see that sparkle in their eye. Height and weight are less a factor than energy, determination and motivation.

A beautiful woman in her mid-fifties went to an open call in Lafayette recently. After the interview she was a little confused. "It sounded like a talent agency, and it looks like they have a lot of connections and opportunities for jobs," the woman said, "but then they kept talking to us about business. I'm interested in modeling and there is a need for mature women doing it, but I do not have the time to do my own marketing."

Camras and Menzies both know what it means to be freelance and as part of their marketing strategy, they are going to New York in March to participate in an international fashion convention where they will get exposure. They'll go as part of a group with Lippincott, who has been successful at this event in the past.

Not to be missed

of musical sass, and a news flash about Santa's recent surgery? It's all here with choirs, bells, xylophones and audience participation. At Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane (behind the car wash) in Lafayette. Free admission.

ART

Orinda artists Peggy Moulton and Liz Piatt will be showing their art in the Orinda Library Art Gallery through Dec 15. The large case will feature Peggy's fiber art with emphasis on her whimsical cats-all embroidered and stitched by hand. The smaller case will be filled with Liz's handmade 3-D Christmas scenes-everything from Seven Maids amilking to The Old Woman in the Shoe. Bring your kids. Orinda Library Gallery 24 Orinda Way, (925) 254-2184

Moraga Art Gallery "Texture and Light" through Jan 6th. Featuring the work of Pat Smith, who likes to experiment with different art forms: watercolor, acrylic painting, printmaking, photography and fiber arts. Moraga Art Gallery, 570 Center St, Rheem Valley Shopping Center/next to Longs Drugs Open Tuesday through Sunday, 12-5 pm. 925.376 5407

Lafayette Gallery "Envisioning the Season" through Dec 23rd. A special show that captures the spirit and the glow of the holiday season. A holiday reception will be held at the Gallery (50 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette) on Nov 30, 7-9 pm.

"Capturing the Light: a Retrospective" solo exhibit by Bay Area photographer Wenda Pyman. Her body of work shown here are Landscapes, Scenics and Nature, mostly concentrating on the local Diablo area and beyond. Moraga Public Library, 1500 St. Mary's Rd, Moraga, 925.376.8294 Open Tuesday through Sunday, hours vary.

"Mt. Diablo A Personal View" – The Photography of Sue Reynolds. Through Feb 28. Lindsay Wildlife Museum, 1931 First Ave, Walnut Creek

OTHER EVENTS

Aegis of Moraga Open House 8th Anniversary Celebration!
 Thursday, Dec 13th 5:30pm to 7:30pm. Sip champagne and sample holiday refreshments, enjoy listening to seasonal music performances and enjoy our beautiful décor.

Santa Claus is coming to La Festa Square Lafayette welcomes everyone this holiday season to take home a free photo with Santa. Dec 15, 2007 from 11 am to 3 pm .Visitors will be able to find Santa located at Mangia Ristorante Pizzeria.

The Lafayette Library invites you to participate in Warm Up America!, a nationwide organization that brings communities together through knitting for charity. If you knit or crochet, or would like to learn how, come to our Knitting Night Dec 19th from 6:30-7:30pm, where we'll work on squares that will eventually be joined together as an afghan to donate in our community. All ages and abilities encouraged to come! If you can't make it but would still like to help, you can drop off 7 by 9" swatches (any color, pattern, or stitch), or yarn donations, at the library through Dec 21. RSVP to Rebekah in person or by phone at (925) 283-3872 Lafayette Library 952 Moraga Road Lafayette,

The Moraga Women's Society will hold its Dec Meeting on Monday, Dec 17th at 11am at the Hacienda. It will be a "pot luck" lunch followed by a "White Elephant" exchange. Donations will be accepted for "A Friendly Manor."

Lafayette Parks and Recreation winter session registration has begun. Go online to www.LafayetteRec.org or call us at 925-284-2232.

Moraga Parks and Recreation winter/spring online registration has begun. Go online to www.moraga.ca.us. Walk-in registration begins Dec 17th.

THEATER AND MUSIC

CAPA performs The Nutcracker Dec 14th, 15th and 16th. For specific show times and tickets, please contact www.capadance.net or call 925-376-2454.

Student Matinees: If your child's school class would like to come to a Student Nutcracker performance, please contact Nancy Falk at nancy.falk@gmail.com, Student Performances are 9:30am and 12pm on Wed Dec 12 and 13th at the Rheem Theater in Moraga.

The Miramonte Jazz Band's Annual Winter Wonderland Tour is set for Friday, Dec, 21 from 8 am until noon. The Band will perform holiday favorites at the AUHSD offices at about 9 am and then at Orinda Theater Square around 10:30 am Don't miss this exciting community event.

Lafayette Town Hall Theatre Company Presents *Miracle* on 34th Street Through Dec 29th Contact the Town Hall Theatre Company Box Office for exact dates and times Rating – Appropriate for all Ages. Town Hall Theatre Company, 3535 School Street at Moraga Rd, Lafayette 925-283-1557 or www.thtc.org

"Christmas at the Biltmore", an original play by Brentwood local Steve Kinsella, is a heartwarming and touching story of individuals all coming to spend their Christmas vacation at the New England bed and breakfast, Biltmore Hotel.

Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church, 1801 Lacassie Ave, Walnut Creek through Dec 15th. Tickets \$20. Discounts for groups, youth and seniors. Order at www.christiantheatre.org.

Christmas Gifts Wrapped in Music Sunday, Dec 16 at 4. Where else can you hear a boldly updated Christmas spiritual, a carol from the Canadian Huron tribe led by tom-toms, a jazzy snap

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Technology Gift Ideas for 2007

By Edward Zeidan

This has been an exciting year for technology—prices keep dropping, items keep getting smaller, and great new features have been added. Below are some gift ideas and commentary.



Computers

Computers are always a great gift. If you're considering a desktop computer, the Dell Inspiron 531s is worth a look, with prices starting around \$500 including a flat screen. For Mac users, the iMac 20 is an excellent computer, and prices start at \$1,199, including the screen. For laptops, consider the Dell Inspiron 1420, which starts at \$799. Apple MacBook laptops start at \$1,099. Make sure to get at least 1GB RAM (2GB is better)

Digital Cameras

The days of carrying a bulky, heavy digital camera and separate camcorder are over. Many of the new compact digital cameras take fine pictures, and can shoot short video clips. Consider the Canon Powershot SD1000. About \$200. You'll also need a memory card for storing your pictures and video. 2GB is a good size.

Cell Phones/Personal Digital Assistants

Cell phones have been enhanced with lots of new features, such as music players, games, GPS directions, and organizers. It's no longer necessary to carry a separate cell phone and personal organizer. Apple's new iPhone is a combination cell phone, iPod music player, Internet browser and organizer in one very slick, easy to use device. Starting at \$399 it's pricey, but very cutting edge and cool. Blackberry phone/organizers are very popular, particularly among business users. Prices start at \$199, and many models feature color screens. For more options, check your phone providers' store or website for the latest offerings.

Music Players

The reigning king of music players keeps getting better. The new iPod touch looks just like the sleek new iPhone, with its gorgeous screen, music player, Internet browser, and personal organizer. Prices start at \$299. Microsoft's competing music player—Zune—has a huge 80GB hard drive to store thousands of songs, and a larger screen. Prices start at \$250. If you're looking for more basic players, prices start at \$79 for the tiny iPod Shuffle, and the Creative Zen Stone starts around \$35.

Video Gaming Consoles

For the video game enthusiast in your life, nothing beats the thrill of playing one of the new game consoles. Consoles for the latest systems start at \$279.99. The three most popular systems are Nintendo Wii, Sony Playstation, and Microsoft Xbox. The Sony Playstation 3 comes with a Blue Ray DVD player, which alone costs several hundred dollars.

TVs

The latest news in high definition TV is called 1080p. 1080p televisions offer better picture quality than the older standards—1080i or 720p. There are two competing technologies—LCD and Plasma. Get an LCD if you can. They use less energy, run cooler, and are easier to see in brightly lit rooms.

HD/Blue Ray DVD Player

Want to watch your movies with six times the detail? Check out the latest high-definition DVD players. Just like the days of Betamax and VHS, we have two competing standards shooting it out for dominance. Blue Ray, and HD both offer great picture quality. You'll need a high-definition TV to play the new DVDs. By the way, the new high-def DVD players will make your old DVDs look better too. Prices start at less than \$200.

GPS

GPS or Global Positioning Systems receivers provide turn-by-turn directions to your destination. For golfers the Sky Caddy provides great information about the course they're playing on. You can also get a GPS for the runner or hiker. Prices for GPS units start at around \$150.

Backup Devices

Looking for a gift that might save the day? Consider giving a gift of online backup \$49.99 per year. We've found a shockingly low number of people who actually backup their computers. We like iDrive.com or carbonite.com.

Bluetooth Cell Phone Headset

Talking on your cell phone while driving will require a hands-free device starting July 1, 2008. Many cell phones can use a Bluetooth wireless headset. Prices start at around \$50.

HP Printing Mailbox

Do you have a friend or relative who isn't comfortable using a computer, but wants to receive email and pictures? Consider the HP Printing Mailbox. For \$149.99, plus a \$9.99 a month, anyone can send emails and pictures to this little device, which only requires a standard telephone line. The emails and pictures print out automatically.

Edward Zeidan is the owner of Nerd4Rent, a technical support company in Lafayette that specializes in helping individuals and small businesses with their technology needs. He can be reached at 925.283.5666 or ezeidan@nerd4rent.com

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HOLIDAY HAZARDS FOR PETS

By Dr. Mona S. Miller

As the holidays approach, with decorations, aromas and good food around, I would like to describe some hazards these may present to our furry friends...

DECORATIONS ~ As unlikely as it seems, non-edible decorations are commonly eaten by dogs and cats—tinsel, scented candles, Christmas lights and ornaments are among the most popular items. These can cause trauma to the mouth (especially electrical cords) or cause digestive upset, even intestinal obstruction.

PLANTS ~ When ingested, poinsettia sap, holly berries and most parts of mistletoe can cause direct irritation to the digestive system, resulting in drooling, loss of appetite, vomiting and diarrhea. Treatment is based on the signs seen in the pet, and includes fluid support, stomach protectants and anti-nausea medication.

FOODS ~ Chocolate, grapes and raisins, macadamia nuts and bread dough all present some potentially serious hazards to our pets, especially for the dogs who carefully check out the frenzy of baking activity that occurs this time of year!

Chocolate is a well-known stimulant toxin for dogs—the darkness of the chocolate (% cocoa), the size of the dog, and the amount consumed are important factors in whether toxicity will occur. I would definitely be worried if a Maltese ate a full block of dark baking chocolate! The signs are similar to caffeine overdose, since the active ingredient (theobromine) is the same as in tea. Increase in heart rate and body temperature, agitation and even muscle tremors and seizures can occur within 4-6 hours after consumption.

Grapes and raisins produce kidney dis-

nausea and/or vomiting.

Macadamia nuts produce a unique syndrome in dogs. Dogs can get sick within 12 hours—signs are weakness, wobbliness, increase in body temperature, vomiting and pale gums. Dogs can return to normal with symptomatic care in 48 hours or less.

Bread dough ingestion produces an interesting combination of problems. In addition to the discomfort of eating a large amount of dough that expands, the warm environment of the stomach allows for fermentation and release of ethanol. Ethanol toxicity is comparable to anti-freeze poisoning which causes kidney failure.

Signs can be seen between 30 minutes to 2 hours after ingestion. This would definitely be considered an emergency.

As with any issue relating to your pet's medical care, it is best to call your veterinarian when questions arise.

Dr. Mona S. Miller lives in Lafayette with her 3 year old son and her yellow Labrador Retriever. She has worked at Four Seasons Animal Hospital in Lafayette since moving here in 2001. She attended Cal as an undergrad, and received her DVM from U.C. Davis. She can be reached at Four Seasons, 938-7700, or by email to MonaSDVM@aol.com.



ease in some dogs, but not all. Signs would be non-specific and include lethargy, loss of appetite,

Season's Greetings Lamorinda

Have a wonderful holiday and
Happy new year!



Thank you Lamorinda families and businesses for your support throughout the year. My family and I would like to wish you a very happy holiday season!

Wishing you all the best in 2008, Cheers!



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Holiday Homes Tour Features Lavish Décor and Sustainable Vision

By Sophie Braccini



Owner Chris Avant and Veronika Rather inside the renovated "Barn" Photo Sophie Braccini

Great contrast this year in the choice of venues offered to the public's eye by the Moraga Women's Society 22nd Homes Tour. From the spectacular Collins home to the sustainably restored Moraga Barn, this tour had a lot to offer and ponder upon.

The Tour started at the home of Brad and Kelly Irving on Corte Yolanda. A general atmosphere of friendliness and warmth came from visiting this traditional family house. The "head crafter" here obviously has a passion for precious details and proudly displayed a collection of 3 different sets of "Villages" sprinkled with snow and bustling with miniature life. For visitors, the Tour is about enjoying the decorations and also checking out the remodeling that most of those houses have undergone.

Winnie Jasper and Jerry Chamberlain's home went through a serious remodeling as well. The standard ranch house has seen its ceiling significantly raised and skylights added access to natural light. 1200 sqf were added including a charming master bathroom. The home was "Christmassy" in every nook and cranny. Colors, plants and collectibles had all been set for the season.

Sue Olsen's home in the Country Club has undergone a serious remodeling as well. Here too, the rule is high ceilings and plenty of natural light. In a more modern style, every object and addition has been the result of research in the unique. For example, a checkerboard butcher block crafted with maple wood and African Wenge covers the kitchen center isle.

The next stop was quite unexpected in a home tour: the Moraga Barn is a historical building that was purchased by Canyon Construction and will become the headquarters of that company. When stepping inside, the reason for the Barn's inclusion in the tour became clearer. It was not for the homey festive feeling that the building was included, but to showcase the beautiful restoration work and the amazing range of innovative approaches that were applied to this site.

Canyon Construction researched the original look of the Barn, the oldest building still standing in Moraga. The original arches that define the façade look could be found and restored under the plaster that subsequent owners had added, and original balconies that had disappeared got redesigned. Looking at the original pictures that the Moraga Historical Society was displaying during the Tour, the Barn looks more like its original design now than it did during the past decades. This building is not only a piece of history, it is a showcase for Canyon Construction which specializes in sustainable building.

From the solar tiles that provide the electricity needed by the building, to the buried geothermal

system that provides heating and cooling, to the use of either renewable or recycled material, all in this building talks about the future in sustainable construction. The company is seeking the Platinum LEED certification, the highest level in green building, which only a handful of constructions have attained in California.

Here, too, attention is paid to detail. For example, at the ground level, the floor is covered in tiles that were previously set in Union Square in San Francisco; all of the redwood lumber has been reclaimed; the stair railings have been crafted by local artist Chuck Splyd out of steel that's 90% recycled (the standard is 60%); the upper floors are covered with High-Volume Fly-Ash concrete, a technology that improves the durability of concrete, its esthetics and eliminates the polluting effects of the standard production. Chris Avant the President/Owner of the company invites the whole community to an Open House on January 11th from 10am to 7pm.

The last visit stood in complete contrast to that of the Barn. Jim and Lynne Collins' home sits in an unincorporated area across from Rancho Laguna Park, overlooking the hills and trails of EBMUD land. The 7800 sq. ft.

home can see and be seen for miles around. Every room in the house has been designed to match the spectacular view they face. The ceilings are high, the windows are immense and the glorious outdoors is present in every room. All the materials, furniture, fabrics, apparel and accessories chosen for this house talk of quality and luxury. This outstanding home attracted a very large crowd during the tour and Moraga Women's Society volunteers took turns shuttling visitors from the Rancho Laguna Parking area. All through the day, other volunteers stood in every room of every home, directing visitors and giving out useful information. This event is one of the main fundraisers of the Moraga Women's Society.

Is It A Good Time To Buy Residential Real Estate?

By Tim Floyd, Sr. Loan Consultant, WaMu

We see articles in the paper everyday telling us how bad the housing market is. The evening news broadcast introduces us to yet another mortgage company that has gone out of business. The Stock Market is fluctuating wildly. Oil is at \$100 a barrel. The dollar is losing its value. How do we process all of this information so that we can determine whether or not this is a good time to buy real estate?

Let's start with what we know. Interest rates are still at historically low levels. There are still banks in business that have money to lend. Property values have dropped but are holding steady in desirable neighborhoods. Residential real estate has appreciated on average 11% per year over a 50 year period of time here in California while going through the S & L crisis, a major earthquake and a war. Is residential real estate still a good investment?

Clients call me everyday looking for reassurance that there investments in real estate are still sound. Those with money to invest ask if this is the "time to buy". Will they look back at this time and wish they bought a property today at 2003 and 2004 values? Will the market woes create more opportunities to acquire foreclosures, short sales or multiple price reductions? Should they move forward with their plans to build or

remodel their dream home?

In my opinion, today is a good time to buy or improve real estate! Interest rates are still at historic lows! There are multiple opportunities to acquire real estate in this market! Banks are still lending money to those that have adequate reserves, down payment and income. Construction loans are still available to finance up to 95% of the cost to build or 80% of future value. Consider joining or starting an investment group to "pool" your resources. You can find investment clubs on the internet to join or start your own. There may be homeowners who need to sell and are willing to carry part or all of the mortgage liability.



Tim Floyd specializes in custom construction lending at Washington Mutual. He can be reached at 348-4194

With underwriting guidelines changing dramatically it is important to know how this affects your current loans and how you should position yourself for future transactions. Even if it's not a good time for you to buy or sell real estate it's a good time to call your lender to review all your options.

Lamorinda Home Sales continued

LAFAYETTE Last reported: 11
 LOWEST AMOUNT: \$515,000
 HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,560,000

MORAGA Last reported: 6
 LOWEST AMOUNT: \$425,000
 HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,630,000

ORINDA Last reported: 7
 LOWEST AMOUNT: \$645,000
 HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,856,500

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**
- 1048 Brown Avenue, \$727,500, 1304 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 11-14-07
 - 3229 Burton Court, \$850,000, 3 Bdrms, 1818 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 11-21-07
 - 3247 Camino Colorados, \$706,000, 3 Bdrms, 1168 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 11-5-07
 - 376 Castello Road, \$975,000, 5 Bdrms, 2319 SqFt, 1961 YrBlt, 11-5-07
 - 20 Crest Road, \$1,560,000, 4 Bdrms, 2847 SqFt, 1936 YrBlt, 11-15-07
 - 929 Dana Highlands Ct, \$1,525,000, 4 Bdrms, 3538 SqFt, 1999 YrBlt, 11-17-07
 - 944 Janet Lane, \$800,000, 3 Bdrms, 1498 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 11-16-07
 - 841 Moraga Road, \$1,010,000, 3 Bdrms, 2004 SqFt, 1946 YrBlt, 11-15-07
 - 3810 Palo Alto Drive, \$1,349,000, 3 Bdrms, 2452 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 11-5-07
 - 1054 Roderick Court, \$850,000, 3 Bdrms, 1590 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 11-21-07
 - 3744 Sundale Road, \$515,000, 11-5-07
- MORAGA**
- 748 Augusta Drive, \$910,000, 2 Bdrms, 2079 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 11-17-07
 - 1355 Camino Peral #A, \$425,000, 2 Bdrms, 1035 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 11-21-07
 - 1415 Camino Peral, \$610,000, 3 Bdrms, 1444 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 11-16-07
 - 177 Miramonte Drive, \$560,000, 2 Bdrms, 1514 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 11-16-07
 - 77 Sanders Ranch Rd., \$1,630,000, 5 Bdrms, 3094 SqFt, 1989 YrBlt, 11-21-07
 - 397 Springfield Place, \$909,000, 4 Bdrms, 1680 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 11-20-07
- ORINDA**
- 37 Bear Ridge Road, \$1,856,500, 4 Bdrms, 2490 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 11-26-07
 - 106 Lombardy Lane, \$1,100,000, 3 Bdrms, 1832 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 11-16-07
 - 25 Longridge Road, \$645,000, 2 Bdrms, 600 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 11-15-07
 - 720 Miner Road, \$1,382,500, 4 Bdrms, 2030 SqFt, 1998 YrBlt, 11-5-07
 - 31 Parklane Drive, \$1,400,000, 3 Bdrms, 1892 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 11-5-07
 - 81 Sleepy Hollow Ln., \$1,240,000, 4 Bdrms, 2472 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 11-21-07
 - 508 the Glade, \$1,225,000, 3 Bdrms, 1533 SqFt, 1985 YrBlt, 11-5-07

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business briefs

Terzetto Cuisine Celebrates Your Birthday

1419 Moraga Way, Moraga
376-3832

www.terzettocuisine.com
For nine years, the Moraga restaurant has been sending birthday cards to its customers offering them a free entrée and a piece of Angel Birthday cake, once during their birthday month. Roos Pal, the gracious owner, now wishes to extend the invitation to the whole community: no more special card needed, just come with a proof of birth date and you'll be treated to the "Birthday Special." Go to the restaurant's web site to check the new menu.



Roos Pal, Terzetto Cuisine Photo Sophie Braccini

Rhythm Room Expands its Offerings

3330 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Suite 101, Lafayette
283.4801- www.rhythmroomdance.com/KidTeen_Jan-Jun08.pdf
The Rhythm Room is expanding its classes to accommodate demand. Four weekly Dance Fitness Classes are now offered; another AM class on Thursdays at 10:15 AM with Di Rowley has been added. A new Pre-Ballet Classes is now available for ages 4 and 5. By request the Rhythm Room has added four new Ballet options for young dancers.

A New Challenge for Keith Miller

Pacific Union GMAC Real Estate, www.pacunion.com
Keith Miller, current president of the Orinda Chamber of Commerce, has joined Pacific Union GMAC Real Estate as Vice President and Branch Manager of the company's Orinda office and virtual Danville offices. A realtor since 1998, Miller comes from Prudential California Realty where he managed their Orinda office for the past four years. "I have always held the Pacific Union GMAC brand in very high regard and am proud to join the management team," said Miller, who has lived in Lafayette for the past 27 years with his wife and two grown children. "There are abundant opportunities in Contra Costa County and I'm excited to be leading this esteemed group of real estate professionals as we move our business to the next level."

News from the Chambers of Commerce:

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce,
100 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette

- www.lafayettechamber.org • 925-284-7404
• Entrepreneur's Club, Thursday December 20th at 8:30 a.m.
Location: Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.
Season's Greetings from the "Friendly Chamber"

Barbara, Linda, Karen and Jay wish all of you a happy holiday season with family, friends a lot of LOCAL SHOPPING!
Here's something to think about. If every resident in Lafayette spent \$10,000 on gifts in December, by shopping in Lafayette, we would have enough sales tax revenue to repair all the failed roads in town. This is another great reason to do your holiday shopping right here in Lafayette.

Chamber of Commerce of Moraga

www.moragachamber.org
Jenny Boyd,
Chamber President,
sends her greetings:
"We're at an exciting juncture in Moraga. We're building a sense of 'community' and the cooperation and communication between the Town, Chamber, retail establishments and organizations in our town has never been better. Thanks so much, to everyone who has joined the Chamber, giving us your support. Thanks to each volunteer who has worked so hard on the many events we've held. All celebrations during this holiday season - Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, give us the opportunity to enrich our lives and give thanks for what we have. Bless you all."

Orinda Chamber of Commerce,

24 Orinda Way, Orinda
- www.orindachamber.org

Keith Miller, Chamber President, offers Season's Greetings:
"The Orinda Chamber of Commerce would like to extend our warmest wishes for a wonderful Holiday season to all citizens of our city. We'd also like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the overwhelming support that the City of Orinda and the business community have given to the chamber for our "Shop Orinda" campaign. May everyone enjoy a healthy and prosperous Holiday."

Locally Owned Onsite Computer Services in Lamorinda

By Sophie Braccini

Lamorinda is the home of many entrepreneurs; the technical field has given rise to a very diverse breed of entrepreneurs who are eager to service our personal and professional information tools. Stores have been struggling; nobody wants to bring their equipment to a store when a problem arises. Onsite services now get the work by going to clients' sites.

A One-Woman Show

The field is primarily masculine, although one company, Techmommy, is a one-woman operation. Alison Bouchard first got involved with computers for her personal use in the early 80's. The mother of two wanted a part time job she could manage from home.

"What sets me apart," says Bouchard, "is that I use both my left and right brain. I'm a technical and a people's person; a high-tech brain with the patience of a mother." She believes that her friendly and personable approach is the key to her success. She speaks in plain English and educates as she goes. Bouchard works with individuals and small businesses, families and seniors. She troubleshoots, repairs, and sets-up PCs. "There are discrepancies caused by older versions and brands when you shop. People have their own specific needs too, so I take them shopping and within an hour we can be done." Bouchard charges \$99 an hour.

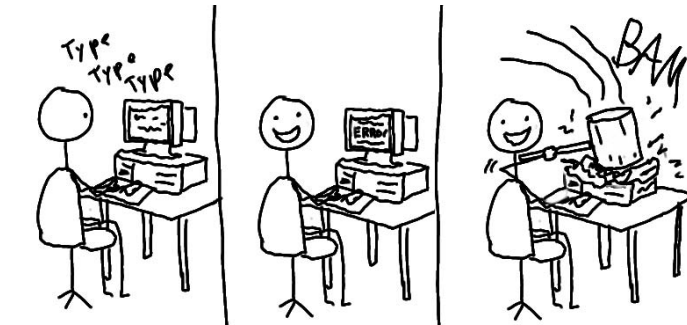
Lisa Connolly of Lafayette says, "Alison's services are very friendly and personable. She helped me become savvier about pre-teens' Internet use and their safety while online." Reach Techmommy at info@techmommy.com, 377-7711, or visit the website at http://www.techmommy.com.

A Company of Nerds?

Like Alison Bouchard, Edward Zeidan was not originally trained as a computer engineer. The founder of Nerd4Rent graduated in Political Science and holds an MBA. The name of the company was chosen carefully. "I wanted it to reflect our personality, we are technically savvy but very friendly, not intimidating," says Zeidan.

Nerd4Rent serves individuals and small businesses. A staff of eleven, six of whom are technicians, do setups and maintenance; they take care of malfunctions, network issues and viruses. The company charges \$149 an hour, with 15 minute increments after the first hour. Nerd4Rent will soon offer a fixed priced maintenance contract from \$9.99 to \$19.99 a month. Zeidan offers phone support and remote control support that's quicker and less expensive.

Jay Lifson, of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, has been working with Nerd4Rent for many years: "The gig is up!" says Lifson. "Ed wants us to think he's a nerd. No one is buying that



disguise anymore. Those who have used Nerd4Rent know that Ed and his team are dependable, efficient, and knowledgeable. Nerd4Rent was our 2006 Small Business of the Year. Training, technical support, repairs and web design are all in Ed's tool belt." Reach Nerd4Rent at Nerd@Nerd4Rent.com, 283-5666, or visit the website at http://www.nerd4rent.com/.

Teamwork

Specializing in the solving of difficult technical problems, DiabloLink Communications is a good example of how ingenuity and passion can lead to the creation of a sustainable business. Steve Angelides and Doug King started their cooperation when they jointly developed a non-profit religious news site, www.orthodoxnews.com, in the '90s. They decided to commercialize the Internet tools they had developed and built an integrated services company.

According to Angelides, what makes them efficient is the cooperation the two men have de-

veloped over the years. "We are complementary," says Angelides, "and our technological knowledge grows as we solve new issues." DiabloLink's approach to new technology includes not charging their customers for their learning curve. 30% of DiabloLink's customers are seniors, and the company offers ongoing tutoring at the rate of \$49 an hour.

"Fast response time is key in our business," explains Angelides, "we respond to phone calls twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Sometimes we can solve the issue over the phone, but often a physical intervention is necessary."

Dave Reynolds, owner of the Curves Fitness Center in Moraga, has been DiabloLink's client for the past couple of years. "I appreciate DiabloLink's fairness and reliability," says Reynolds, "most of the time, Steve or Doug will immediately know what the problem is." Reach DiabloLink at sales@DiabloLink.net, 465-9567, or visit the website at http://www.diablolink.net/.



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

Amoroma brings the Community Together at New Year's

By Linda U. Foley



Left to right: Rick Hattabaugh of Little Dogs, Hafiz Haidari and Dick Callahan toast the New Year
Photo Linda U. Foley

Where will you be as the old year packs its bags to make room for 2008? Watching television? In bed, eating peanut butter with your champagne? Anything to avoid battling traffic and craziness? How about doing it "right" and right in your own backyard so-to-speak, at the Rheem Theatre in Moraga.

It may not be Times Square but much of life's joy comes in small packages and is often right under our connoisseur-ish noses. Amoroma restaurateurs, Michele Lavecchia, Hafiz Haidari and Noe Castro (also the

chef), bring Rheem and the community together at their first annual New Year's Eve party.

The doors open at 9 p.m. and stay open until 2 a.m. The moderate price of \$50 each includes two cocktails and covers the cost of appetizers and desserts, dancing to the sound of local band Little Dogs and emceed by no other than the SMC Gael's voice, Dick Callahan. The newly refurbished facility will show New Year's celebrations across the world in three of its theatres while waiting for the champagne toast and balloon bouquets to

take flight. After a long night of good food, fun and festivities, some partygoers may wish to be taxied home by available town cars.

Within the past four-plus years of opening, Amoroma has put its indelible mark on this community. An atmosphere of conviviality, authentic and season-oriented Italian cuisine fills the golden-walled rooms night after night with diners and is a favorite of food critics.

In tune with the needs of this community, Amoroma expanded its confines to include Alimentari Amoroma a perfect venue for lunch and weekly wine tastings, and – having acquired the Rheem Theatre — introduced Tuesday movie nights alternating between French and Italian cinema, paired with appetizers and wines.

For some, Amoroma is still a well-kept secret, while for many others, it has become a favorite spot to congregate and celebrate various occasions.

Tickets are available at Amoroma (925-376-7662) and are going fast. However, doors will be kept open for late birds.

It's time to get glammed up and into the spirit! Come and celebrate with your friends and community at the Rheem Theatre and boogie together into the New Year. Bon Ano!

You can contact Linda Foley at linalfoley@sbcglobal.net.



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KEENAN HEINZ COMPANY

Great Food Fast

By Cathy Tyson

Not only does Diablo Foods have the legendary Ed Stokes and an extensive meat counter, but now the Lafayette landmark has expanded its convenience foods department. Busy professionals take note, after a long day of work, a delicious meal can be on the table in less time than you can say, "artery-clogging, greasy french fries."

"We had been wanting to do this for some time," says Deli Manager Karen Mastorakis, now in her 20th year with the store. "The idea was to come in and get a gourmet, reasonably priced meal. We have seven chefs who prepare all of our entrees and all but two of the salads right here in the store kitchen. The cheese bar has been remodeled, and we also have a variety of homemade soups and fresh sushi-to-go."

"It's been a huge success," notes Mastorakis. The Italian pot roast and polenta is a big hit as well as the chicken piccata and mini quiche. Even their sautéed brussels sprouts have been flying out the door. Fear not, picky eaters, there's also macaroni and cheese.



Diablo Foods Deli Manager Karen Mastorakis
Photo Cathy Tyson

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Holiday Specials

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LAMORINDA's Restaurants			
•• updated November 28, 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 cafe	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	
Hsiangs 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 Café	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	
La Piazza	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	
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	
Senika 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	
Nino's Bay	#2 Theater Square, Ste. 153, Ori	253-1327	
Oasis Cafe	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	19 Orinda Way # Ab, 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	283-0404	
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	
Subway	396 Park St., Mor	376-2959	
Subway	3322 Mt. Diablo Blvd #B, Laf	284-2627	
Subway	Theatre Square, Ori	258-0470	
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	
Tea Party by Appointment	107 Orinda Way, Ori	254-2206	
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.

Community Foundation Sums Up the Year

by Anne Grodin, Chair

We are pleased to announce the recent Excellence Grants to local non-profit groups. These grants, along with donor directed grants total 55 gifts of more than \$170,700 since inception. The Lafayette Community Foundation was formed in to raise money for a new library, and to help raise funds for local charitable groups. Now that the fundraising for the construction of the new library building is complete, we continue to need your support for local charities that depend on the Community Foundation for supplemental funding. Many of them do not have the budget to get the word out about their good work. Excellence grants have been used to leverage more funds by showing that they have local support.

The Lafayette Community Foundation has learned a lot about philanthropy over the years, and at this time we are graduating from under the wings of the East Bay Community Foundation. The Lafayette Community Foundation has always been a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, but also had the status as a supporting organization of the East Bay Community Foundation. With mutual respect and agreement, the Lafayette Community Foundation has now become independent from the EBCF, and has received official notification from the Internal

Revenue Service, which governs such entities.

We have reached a milestone! The community has shown an overwhelming support for the new library, with funds raised totaling over \$12.7 million. The Board of Directors of the Lafayette Community Foundation is now turning over these funds to the newly created Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation to concentrate its support solely on the new library. What a wonderful community that we live in -- to have such strong support for a local project.

In looking at our financial report it may look like we have a lot of money, but as of November 1, all the library funds were turned over to the new library foundation. Our first major project funded! Now the Community Foundation is looking to the future again.

Your support of the Lafayette Community Foundation has enabled us to grow in these few short years into an organization that has enabled many small local organizations to better serve the needs of our community, and to help build the library. We have been able to give away approximately \$20,000, locally to small organizations every year, and hope to increase this. We need your continued ongoing generous support, please give locally!

LCF Board of Directors:

Kathy Bowles | Phil Chernin | Sereta Churchill | Dean Coons | Ann Denny | Marechal Duncan
Teresa Geringer | Anne Grodin, Chair | Don Jenkins | Lois Laine | Kathy Merchant | Anne Mitchell
Cheryl Noll | Anita Rama | Jeff Rosenthal | Fran Sticha | Don Tatzin



Foundation Funds Report • July 2006 to June 2007

	LIBRARY BUILDING FUNDS								Total
	General Fund ¹	Building Fund	Children's Room	History Room	Learning Center	Friends Fund	Endowment Fund	Rotary Funds	
Beginning Balance (7/1/06)	37,415	11,656,037	29,293	199,479	101,635	32,158	150,555	11,832	12,218,404
Income									
Donations	22,740	126,215			16		16,000		164,971
In-Kind Donations	3,250	23,236							26,486
Event Income	10,160								10,160
Investment Activity	2,113	399,583	1,307	7,549	3,826	1,436	3,660	1,984	421,458
Total Income	38,263	549,034	1,307	7,549	3,842	1,436	19,660	1,984	623,075
Expenses									
Lafayette Excellence Grants	19,600								19,600
Donor Advised Grants	150								150
Library Project		78,230					49		78,279
Senior Project	77								77
Development & Donor Communications	15,186								15,186
Administrative Expenses ²	3,504								3,504
EBCF Charges ⁴	539	3,893					568	162	5,162
Investment Expenses								70	70
Total Expenses	39,056	82,123					617	232	122,028
Ending Balance (6/30/07)	\$36,622	\$12,122,948	\$30,600	\$207,028	\$105,477	\$33,594	\$169,598	\$13,584	\$12,719,451

Combined Library Building Funds are \$ 12,669,2453

(1) The General Fund includes Restricted Funds for Open Space: \$500, Parks and Creeks: \$100, Town Hall Building: \$1,722 and Step Up For Kids: \$350.
(2) Administrative Expenses include such items as accounting fees, bank fees, postage and telephone service.
(3) Of the Combined Library Funds \$3,244,683 are outstanding pledges. \$750,000 of the Building Fund is a pledge by the Friends of the Lafayette Library to the City of Lafayette. \$1,500,000 of the Building Fund has a number of contingencies that must be met prior to the release of funds. All contingencies have been met and funds received, but after June 30, 2007. To date, the library project expenses have been held to 5.3% of the combined library income.
(4) The Lafayette Community Foundation from its inception has maintained distinct and separate fund accounts within its balance sheets to protect designated funds by donor. The Lafayette Community Foundation is a nonprofit public benefit corporation that is a supporting organization of the East Bay Community Foundation (EBCF). Both the LCF and the EBCF are 501(c)(3) organizations. Neither is a private foundation within the meaning of Sections 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code. All donations are tax deductible, subject to provisions of the IRS Code Sections 170. Tax ID # 80-0022897.
FOUNDATION FUNDS REPORT - JULY 2006 to JUNE 2007

Excellence Grants for Fall 2007

Town Hall • Awarded \$7,500

Town Hall Theater will receive \$7,500 to help it meet a matching grant to renovate Town Hall. The funds will provide for new carpeting, new flooring for the restrooms, and other up-grades in the restrooms. A new drinking fountain, and new electrical work for the theater will be included. Most of the renovations will be for safety improvements and ADA compliance. Town Hall Theater promotes education in the arts for members of the local community and beyond. They provide innovative educational programs to over 600 young actors every year, ages 3 to 18.

Gold Coast Chamber Players, Phase III • Awarded \$2,500

The Gold Coast Chamber Players have developed a unique program that the Community Foundation has funded is several phases. Topic in Tempo uses classical music to awaken students to the arts and enhance their learning experience. These programs have been in Acalanes and Campolindo High Schools, and will now be in the elementary schools. There are teacher workshops to introduce music in context in history, English, and science classes as a combination curriculum enriched with music.

Excellence Grants for July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007

Gold Coast Chamber Players, Phase I • Awarded \$4,000

Lamorinda Petanque Club • Awarded \$1,000

Lamorinda Petanque Club was awarded \$1,000 for the completion of a reconstructed and relocated Petanque court at the Lafayette Community Center. Petanque is traditionally played with metallic balls on a dirt or gravel surface. The object of the game is to throw the balls so that they land closer to the small ball (cochonnet or jack) than those of your opponent. The club meets weekly at the Lafayette Community Center. All are welcome, visit www.lamorindapetanque.com.

Futures Explored Inc., Huckleberry Cafe • Awarded \$5,000

Futures Explored, Inc. was a winter 2006 recipient of a \$5,000 grant to assist in their expansion of Huckleberry Cafe, by purchasing commercial quality kitchen appliances. A vocational training and employment food service program for developmentally disabled adults to give them the skills to live independently and be financially self-sufficient. To learn more see www.futures-explored.org.

Gold Coast Chamber Players, Phase II • Awarded \$3,200

Assistance League of Diablo Valley • Awarded \$1,800

The Assistance League of Diablo Valley received a grant of \$1,800 for their Foresight Program, which provides vision and hearing screening for preschoolers.

Lafayette Library • Awarded \$2,000

Lafayette Library's new Lamorinda Reads is a program sponsored by the Libraries for the three cities of Lafayette, Orinda and Moraga. Over a six-week period this fall residents were encouraged to read the same book, Down to a Soundless Sea by Thomas Steinbeck. There were a variety of discussion and enrichment events in the three cities. Books were available free not only in the library, but coffee houses and around town, for everyone to read and then pass on. The grant of \$2,000 helped to purchase books.

Lafayette Senior Transportation Program • Awarded \$5,000

The Lafayette Senior Transportation Program, \$5,000 was awarded to help seniors with a helpful door-to-door transportation service that will enable many seniors to stay in their homes, after they have given up their cars. Some other programs only offer curb-to-curb service, but many frail seniors need that extra help to be able to make doctors appointments or other errands. The Lafayette Senior Transportation Program is in conjunction with the City of Lafayette and the other Lamorinda cities. For more information or a ride call 284-5546.

How to Apply for An Excellence Grant

Non-profit charitable groups can apply for an Excellence Grant from the Lafayette Community Foundation by sending a letter, no longer than 2 pages, stating the purpose for which you request funding, and filling out the form on our website at

www.lafayettecommunityfoundation.org. Include information about your organization and a copy of your tax-exempt status. Mail to Grants Coordinator, Lafayette Community Foundation, P.O. Box 221, Lafayette, CA 94549.

Application deadlines:

March 31st for Spring Excellence Grant awards, and **September 30** for Fall grants.

Year-end IRA donations

Over 70 1/2 and must take an IRA distribution? The IRS special tax-free distribution—if given to charity—expires this December 31, 2007. This rule enables you to donate all or part of your required distribution, up to \$100,000, without paying tax on the

distribution. You must have the check made directly to the charity from your IRA account, for example to the Lafayette Community Foundation. Please talk to your financial advisor for more details.

LCF Partners with Chamber of Commerce

The 5th Annual Taste of Lafayette -- Restaurant Walk held last May was a sold-out success for the Chamber of Commerce and the Lafayette Community Foundation.

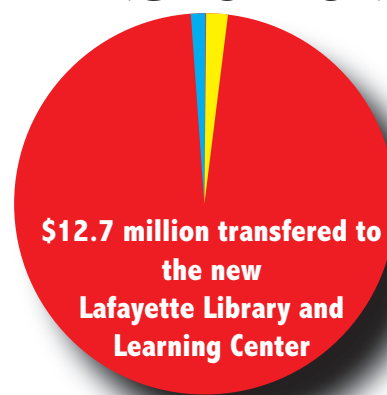
Ticket holders strolled down Restaurant-Row while sampling Lafayette's signature cuisine from 17 eateries. The evening starts with a silent auction and balloon pop held in Plaza Park with all proceeds going to LCF. Chamber of Commerce also shares a portion of ticket sales with the Community Foundation. C.E.M Development and Wine Thieves provided wine, and appetizers are served, also great music from Generations in Jazz. The evening concluded with everyone



Cal & Virginia Fox at the Taste of Lafayette 2007

returning to the Plaza Park for dessert. Save the date for next year's Taste of Lafayette -- Tuesday-- May 20, 2008.

BALANCE OF FUNDS



Library Fund General Fund Rotary Fund

This chart represents the assets of the Lafayette Community Foundation and the \$12.7 million that was transferred to the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation. The exact amount with interest calculations will be reported in the next annual report, as the transfer is taking place as we go to print. The Lafayette Community Foundation will continue to serve the needs of the community meeting new visions.

New Foundation created

– Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation

The Lafayette Community Foundation has formed a new foundation dedicated to the new Library and Learning Center. This past summer and fall new board members were recruited to provide leadership and stewardship to sustain the facility and deliver programs that offer an accessible, enriched learning environment for our community. As of November 1, 2007 the funds that were raised by the Lafayette Community Foundation were passed to the new board to implement the vision of the community to build and open the doors of the state of the art Library and Learning Center. A few board members from the Community Foundation will serve on the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation (LLLCF) board for a smooth transition, but most are new. They come from all areas of Lafayette, and have a variety of backgrounds and skills that are needed to sustain the new facility and programs.

LLLCF Board of Directors:

Kathy Merchant - President, Jim Cunha - Treasurer, Anne Grodin - Secretary, Kathy Bowles, Scott Elliott, Roger Falcone, Teresa Geringer, Lamont Gilbert, Mike Gilson, Bob Gotelli, Rita Lorfida, Jack Jenkins-Stark, Todd La Porte, Karen Mulvaney, Bret Peterson, Margaret Race, Janet Tittiger, Hugh Winig, Don Tatzin - City Council Member ex-officio

Senior Liaison Committee

by Anita Rama

After successful completion of fund raising and laying the foundation for the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, the Board of Directors of Lafayette Community Foundation began to look into future viable projects. The Board saw a need for services for the senior citizens of Lafayette, and a study committee was formed.

The committee invited 24 representatives of organizations that provide services to seniors in Lafayette to a workshop on May 18, 2007. This meeting served as an overview session and helped to learn about various services that are currently available, and various needs that are not met. The following are the members of the committee: LCF Board members Marechal Duncan (chair), Kathy Bowles, Kathy Merchant, Lois Lane, and Anita Rama; and from the Senior Services Commission Ruth Mc Cahan, Mary Miller, Barbara Schuh and Sandra Hahn.

A Directory for all the services that are currently available for Lafayette seniors, was identified as a need. Commissioner Barbara Schuh of Companion Care graciously accepted this task, produced and financed a directory through her agency. Over 3000 copies of this directory are now available for distribution at several Lafayette locations.

In addition members of the Liaison Committee attended numerous meetings of the Senior Housing Task Force, and supported the success-

ful proposal by the Senior Services Commission to the City Council to form a task force to implement a senior needs assessment for Lafayette.

On Nov. 13, 2007, 22 representatives of the community senior service organizations and members of the Liaison committee met for a brainstorming session led by Kathy Merchant and Kathy Bowles for senior needs. Future meetings will focus on a Symposium to be held early next year. The goal of the symposium is to attract the seniors to attend and participate voice their concerns.

Future meetings will focus on a Symposium to be held early next year. The goal of the symposium is to attract the seniors to attend and participate.

A sub-committee has been formed to discuss the details. The Senior Liaison Committee is energized and focused to achieve an outcome that will be meaningful for the senior citizens of Lafayette.

Senior Directory

The Lafayette Community Foundation's Senior Liaison committee has produced a Directory of service providers in partnership with the City of Lafayette's Senior Services Commission. Services covered range from assisted living facilities and nursing homes to legal assistance and geriatric care management, as well as senior activities and religious groups. If you would like to receive a copy, call 284-8214, or pick one up from the Chamber of Commerce or Senior Service Offices at 500 St. Mary's Road.

Invest in Lafayette

Contribute to the Lafayette Community Foundation!

The Lafayette Community Foundation (LCF) serves as a vital community resource, investing in programs and projects that promote and enhance the civic, cultural, educational and environmental health of Lafayette.

The Foundation provides donors the opportunity to build a legacy by investing in Lafayette and beyond, through identification and support of community needs and organizations.

LCF Supports

- Building a new library • Student arts & science programs • Senior citizen services • Expansion of children's sports facilities
- Development of parks & open spaces • Local arts—music, theater, visual

www.lafayettecommunityfoundation.org

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Thank you for your gift

SPORTS

LAMORINDAS LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

College Park Hands Campolindo First League Loss

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Campolindo men's soccer team has gotten off to a good start in league play, as they went 2-0 to start the regular season. On Wednesday, Dec. 5, they hosted a potent College Park team under the lights. Campolindo kept the score close in the first half, but allowed too many shots on goal in the second half, and lost this match, 4-1.

Two players, who also claim the same jersey number (#12), led their respective squads on the field in the first half. College Park's Kelly Lazzara was speedy with the ball in the first half. Campolindo forward Thibault Deichler was also very active, as he was able to push the ball up field and set up his teammates in the first half of play.

Neither team established a rhythm offensively early on. Midway through the first half each team only had two shots on goal. College Park gained a large advantage in time of possession, as they had control of the ball in

Cougar territory for much of the first half. However, it wasn't until the nine minute mark in the first half before either team recorded a goal. Midfielder Joe Hantos was able to kick the ball in the side of the net for the first College Park goal. Campolindo came close to keeping it a one goal game for the half, but College Park capitalized on a point blank penalty shot at the two minute mark that gave the Falcons a 2-0 lead going into the half.

Campolindo came out in the second half with the right mentality. They were aggressive, and were able to control the ball in College Park territory for most of the half. Unfortunately this didn't equate into goals, as Campo managed only one goal in the game. Georgio Tavecchio just missed a goal for the Cougars, as he turned out an impressive bicycle kick that wooed the crowd, yet missed up high by a few feet.

Campolindo goalkeeper Noel Raine had a good game for

the Cougars, as he made several diving saves at the goal. However, the law of averages caught up to Raine and the Cougars, as the Falcons were able to take too many shots on goal Wednesday night. College Park's Jose Villalobos scored the Falcon's third goal of the game with an assist from a teammate executing a corner kick. Donnie Beeler recorded the Falcons fourth goal of the night on another penalty kick that went up and over Raine's outstretched arms for a 4-0 lead.

Max Smith-Gee was the most active Cougar on the field Wednesday night, as he did his best to get his teammates involved throughout the course of the game. With just under seven minutes to play the Cougars were able to convert a goal. Deichler started it off with a pass to Smith-Gee, who then set up Ben Rudolph for a beautifully executed goal that took it to 4-1, which was the final score of the game.



The Blue Angels Youth Ski & Snowboard Program Offers Professional Coaching for Local Youth

Submitted by Heidi Emery

Boys and Girls (ages 7-16) can snowboard and ski the Sierras with friends and other snowsport enthusiasts during the five Blue Angel Youth Ski & Snowboard Saturday programs on Jan. 26, Feb. 2, 9, 23 and March 1. Open to all ability levels, from beginners to experts, the program includes five full days of professional ski or snowboard coaching at Sierra-at-Tahoe Resort, luxury bus transportation, adult supervision on and off the slopes, a ProTec snow helmet, lunch and a Bill-abong sponsor bag. For more information please call the Blue Angels at (925) 939-7669 or visit www.BlueAngelSnow.com.



When/Where: Program Dates: Five Saturdays 1/26-3/1 (excluding 2/16)
Bus Pick up Location: Lafayette BART Station
Bus Departure Time: 6:00 a.m.
Bus Return Time: 7:30 p.m.
Program Fee: \$799
Enrollment: www.blueangel-snow.com or call (925) 939-7669

Campo Falls Short of History

By Alex Crook



Photo Jamie Fox

Campo had their sights set on making team history as the first Cougar squad ever to win the NCS East Bay two weeks ago. The only team standing in their way was Las Lomas.

In a rematch from six weeks earlier, the Cougars and Knights went at it in Walnut Creek on Friday, Nov. 30, but host Las Lomas showed they still had some fight left in them in a nail-biting 21-17 victory.

Knights' running back Danny Ward played his all despite having a cast on his strong right arm. Still, Ward did everything to help his team to victory. As for the rest of the Knights, junior Max Yago practically threw his arm out throwing long to USC-bound standout Diante Jackson. Senior running back Corey Paclebar also did everything he could to help the Knights. But still, Campolindo led almost the entire game.

The Cougars got on the board first with a 30-yard field goal from Georgio Tavecchio with five minutes left in the first quarter. The Knights soon responded with an amazing 85-yard touchdown pass to

Paclebar, putting Las Lomas up 7-3, ending the first quarter.

In the second, Yago fumbled a snap picked up by Campo's Evan Peters. Three minutes later, Bo Richter took the ball one yard for the score. After a 22-yard gain from Tommy Stephens to Nick Mascheroni, Stephens threw the ball away to Diante Jackson, who ran the interception back for the long touchdown. But a late flag spotted the ball around Campo's 20, and the Knights could not capitalize. Both teams went to the break with Campolindo up by a field goal, 10-7.

After a disappointing drive to start the second half, Campolindo's defense completed an improbable goal line stand inside their own 5-yard line.

Early in the final quarter, Luke Crossley intercepted Yago's pass and ran it back for the touchdown. The following kickoff was a disaster. Corey Paclebar took the kick through about seven Cougars on his way to a 100-yard return for the touchdown. That cut Campo's lead to 17-14 with just over 11 minutes left. After forcing the Cougars to punt, Las Lomas

could not then convert on a critical 4th and 11 with 6:23 to play, giving Campo another chance. With 42 seconds left in the game, Max Yago finally broke Campo's heart with a 7-yard touchdown pass.

Winners of the NCS East Bay and still unblemished at a perfect 13-0, the Knights played for the 2A final last week. Campolindo just missed out on the ultimate dream, but already have their sights on next year. They say it's always hard to follow in the footsteps of greatness. We'll see if the 2008 Cougars can live up to the challenge.



Photo Jamie Fox

Lafayette Native Earns Spot on All-NESCAC Men's Soccer Team

Submitted by Kathy Castillo

Lafayette native Alex Bedig, who attended Head Royce School and is now a senior at Tufts University in Medford, Mass., was voted on to the 2007 All-New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC)

teams on Nov. 8. Bedig was the first Tufts defender to be honored by NESCAC since 2001, and played an integral role in the Tufts' defense during the 2007 season.

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SPORTS

LAMORINDAS LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Saint Mary's Rugby Dominates in Win over Sacramento State

By Kevin D. Shallat



Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's rugby club is back in action this year, and they are as good as ever — once again ranked as one of the top ten teams in the nation. The Gaels hosted Sacramento State Saturday, Dec. 1, in blustery conditions, yet were unfazed as they rolled over the Hornets 53-12.

The Saint Mary's men's rugby team has everything going for them right now. After making it to the quarterfinals of the national tournament last year with reigning coach of the year in Tim O'Brien and, they are currently ranked sixth in the nation.

The Gaels played the Hornets last year in Moraga as well, and beat that Sacramento State team by a similar score of 68-13. However, when the two teams squared up against each other in March, they played under sunny, ideal conditions. This was not the case Saturday, as the two teams played in near freezing

temperatures.

Saint Mary's captain Kevin Swiryn wasn't slowed by the cold weather, as he scored the first try of the game, and went on to score four tries in the match. Swiryn scored two of the three tries for the Gaels in the first half. His second try came off an impressive 20-yard run down the far sideline. Saint Mary's only hit one of their three conversion attempts in the first half. Sacramento State was able to keep the score close, as they scored a try down their sideline just before half, cutting the Gaels lead to 17-7 at halftime.

Swiryn, one of the last players to have been recruited to play football at Saint Mary's, has proven to be a real asset to the Gaels rugby program. In this game Swiryn excited the Saint Mary's fans as he was able to cut through the Sacramento State defense with ease. "He sees a gap

and can hit it pretty quickly," O'Brien said.

When Swiryn wasn't getting his teammates involved, he was active on the defensive end.

On one play he stole the ball away from an opposing player and tipped the ball to himself. Swiryn then calmly passed the ball to a teammate, stopping any chance of Sacramento State scoring on their drive.

It may have taken the Gaels a full half to warm up in the unusually cold weather in Moraga, but it was worth the wait, as Saint Mary's scored six more tries in the second half. The Gaels played a strong defensive game, which was largely due to the exceptional play of their interior, as they held the Hornets to only 12 points. However, the day belonged to the offense for the Gaels. Saint Mary's fly half Matt Crawford was everywhere Saturday, as his strong heads up play garnered him player of the match honors.



Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's Rolls Over Seton Hall with Balanced Attack

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Saint Mary's men's basketball team is on a roll in their undefeated streak, and the buzz around town is turning heads nationally. Saint Mary's was able to take their win streak to 6-0 on the season, thanks to their 85-70 win against Seton Hall on Saturday, Dec. 1.

Freshman Patrick Mills continues to take this team to new heights. The point guard is getting everybody involved, and his explosive offense is able to take pressure away from other players, which is giving them open shots. The Gaels found out Saturday night that their star point guard doesn't need to score 37 points every night to win, which was the case in this game, as four players scored in double digits for the Gaels. Mills finished the game with 19 points, six rebounds, and four assists in 39 minutes.

Saint Mary's jumped out to a 13-2 lead to start off the game. However, Seton Hall's Brian Laing did most of his damage against the Gaels in the first half, with 12 points and seven rebounds before the break. Laing went on to record a double-double, finishing with 22 points and 10 rebounds. The Gaels were able to limit Laing in the second half. The Pirates got to within three points of the



L-R: Omar Samhan (50), Patrick Mills (13), Diamon Simpson (20)

Photo Tod Fierner

Gaels, but Saint Mary's pulled away each time, ending the first half with a comfortable 44-30 lead.

The Gaels continued their dominance over a talented Seton Hall team in the second half. The Pirates got within nine points at the 15:43 mark, before a Diamon Simpson lay-up took the lead back to double digits. Seton Hall made it a ten point game with 4:06 left in the game, but Mills made a pair of free throws to ice the game.

The addition of the new players for the Gaels has ap-

peared to improve the performance of the veteran players on the team as well. Todd Golden continues to make good things happen for the Gaels with his hustle and three-point shooting.

Tron Smith came off the bench and led the Gaels with five assists in only 24 minutes of action. His ability to attack the basket is giving the Gaels a consistent scorer in pressure situations. Lucas Walker continues to make the most of his minutes as well, as he played only 13 minutes, but recorded five points, five rebounds, and

two steals.

Another player who continues to impress is Saint Mary's center Omar Samhan. The Gaels only have one true center, and they need him to play as many minutes as possible. So far, Samhan has been up to the challenge. In this game he set a career high with 16 rebounds. Samhan's determination and fearless rebounding helped secure a big win over Seton Hall, as Saint Mary's looks to keep their streak alive.



Todd Golden

Photo Tod Fierner



Tron Smith (23)

Photo Tod Fierner



Go Gaels!
Upcoming Sports Events at Saint Mary's College

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For information about upcoming season schedules, visit the official Saint Mary's athletics website at www.SMCGaels.com.

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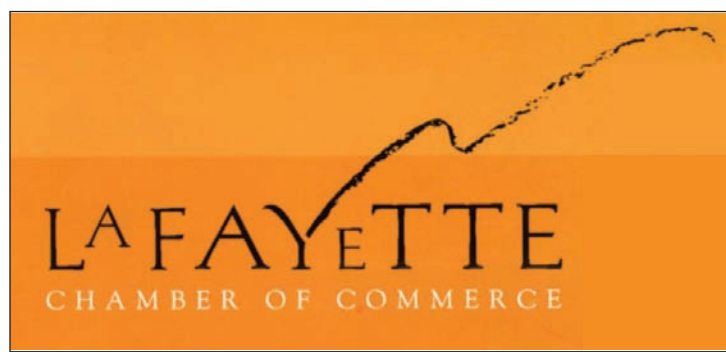
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