

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



Check Theft, 12/11/07 A personal check was stolen from an elderly gentleman, at his place of employment, Better Homes Realty on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Later it was cashed at the Orinda branch of Bank of the West. Thief was somewhat conservative, filling it out for \$120.

Stick-up, 12/10/07 A gunman entered Bank of the West in Lafayette, handed the teller a note and pointed a gun at her. The teller gave him \$3,336 from her drawer, after which the suspect fled the scene. An extensive search followed with unfortunately negative results. The FBI took possession of the surveillance tape.

He Said, She Said 12/07/07 Two Carol Lane residents have not been particularly friendly in the past. The male neighbor said he was almost hit by the SUV of his female neighbor. Female neighbor denies the accusation. There were no witnesses to verify either story.

Car Theft, 12/6/07 Keep an eye out for a 2001 white 4-door Volvo V60, as it was stolen from in front of its owner's home on Broadmoor Court. The car may have been unlocked with a spare key inside.

Lafayette Native Angelo Rossi Tells of Life in Reliez Valley
By Jean Follmer



Angelo & Gloria Rossi Photo Jean Follmer

Angelo Rossi was born in Lafayette in 1920 to Serafino and Mary Rossi. Both were from the Savona Province of Liguria, Italy. At 17, Serafino came to Lafayette to work in Upper Happy Valley. In 1907 the Serafino Rossis moved to Green Valley Road in the Reliez Valley. In 1918, they built a house further down Reliez Valley Road. The youngest of three brothers, Angelo grew up in Reliez Valley and resides there today. Angelo's first house had no running water or electricity. A windmill pumped water to a tank which was connected to a pipe that ran down the hill across the street and brought water to the house.

The Rossi family business was farming. Their crops included pears, peaches, tomatoes and grapes. Ed Rowland gave Serafino the initial seed and kept 50% of the profits. In time, Serafino bought 158 acres in Reliez Valley. Angelo said his father "took his produce to the 2nd & Franklin Market in Oakland by horse drawn carriage." There was no tunnel, so he would take Fish Ranch Road. It was a 5 hour trip and there was a trough on top of the hill where they'd stop to water the horses. The Rossi's eventually bought a truck and Angelo often accompanied his father to market.

Angelo said, "Lafayette pears were full of sugar." Trucks started coming to Lafayette to get them at the current site of Stanley Middle School. "The trucks would pick them up and bring them to the cannery in Gilroy," but they still had to take the peaches to market. They grew strawberry peaches, now called white peaches. Serafino taught the boys to pick the peaches at a certain firmness. They couldn't squeeze them because their fingerprints would show as brown spots. Angelo said "you can't get a good peach today unless it's from a tree. Now they pick them too green." The brothers walked to school at Lafayette Elementary. Brothers Frank and Serafino went to the old school (now the Lafayette United Methodist Church) and Angelo attended the new (current) school. Angelo was part of the first graduating class of 1941 at Acalanes High School. Prior

to that, he attended Diablo Valley High School.

Angelo met his wife, Gloria, at a wedding reception in Lafayette. He asked for her phone number and she obliged by writing it with a match stick on a match book. He put her number in his pocket, but it was lost because his mother washed the shirt the next day. He finally saw Gloria 1 1/2 years later at a Frank Sinatra show at Sweets Ballroom in Oakland. She was a senior in high school and he'd just received his draft notice for World War II. They courted for 15 days before he left for the War. As part of the 27th Infantry Division, he was sent to Schofield Barracks in Oahu. He received a Bronze Star for bravery and 2 Purple Hearts for wounds he sustained in Saipan and Okinawa.

Angelo and Gloria corresponded during his 3 1/2 year deployment and were married upon his return. Gloria says "It was meant to be" and they've been married for 62 years. They have a son, Jim, and 2 grandchildren and have lived in the same house 56 years. During his deployment, Angelo's mother was very upset and she refused to make her famous Italian raviolis. Upon his return, she made the raviolis and Angelo wonders if his brothers were happier to see him or to eat the raviolis again!

After his marriage, Angelo worked for his father-in-law in the produce business in San Leandro. Serafino eventually stopped farming and opened Rossi Brothers Furniture Store in Lafayette for his sons. For almost 30 years, they built and refinished furniture. In the 1950s, Serafino gradually started selling the family land to developers. The Rossi home on Reliez Valley Road and a subsequent one on Hilltop are still occupied, though no longer by the Rossi family. Nearby, you'll find Angelo and Rossi streets.

ABAG Low-Income Housing Allocations for Lamorinda

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The weighted allocation method was adopted by ABAG's Executive Board on January 18, 2007: household growth (45%), existing employment (22.5%), employment growth (22.5%), household growth near existing transit (5%) and employment growth near existing transit (5%). ABAG says the factors are "the mathematical variables that partly determine how the RHNA is allocated to local jurisdictions." A further explanation can be found at www.abag.ca.gov. ABAG states "The four objectives of RHNA include increasing housing supply, affordability, and housing types; encouraging efficient development and infill; promoting jobs-housing balance; and reducing concentrations of poverty."

According to Niroop Srivatsa, Lafayette Planning and Building Services Manager,

there is "no requirement the units be in a certain place." At this point, Lafayette is unsure where the additional units would be located. Lafayette mailed three letters to the ABAG Board citing concerns about their allocation and has yet to receive a response. Some of the concerns include topography, congestion and economic impacts. Lafayette's letter dated November 15, 2006 states "The steep topography to the north of the BART station restricts the City's ability to permit higher densities north of the freeway and the transit station." On congestion, it says "Our key arterials (already) serve as thoroughfares for the traffic from other jurisdictions to access the freeway." It goes on to say, "If Lafayette is required to accommodate more growth than that envisioned in the City's General Plan, there will be gridlock in the downtown and intersections operating

at failed levels of service."

At the Lafayette City Council meeting on December 12, 2007, there was discussion of a possible appeal to ABAG. However, Ms. Srivatsa indicated that numbers removed from Lafayette will be assigned to another jurisdiction in Contra Costa County. Further, she said that there needs to be a "technical reason" to appeal and staff does not believe there is a technical reason that would cause ABAG to change its opinion. After some back and forth between Mayor Mike Anderson, Vice Mayor Donald Tatzin, Council Member Brandt Anderson and Council Member Carl Anduri, they asked staff to discover if other jurisdictions were planning to appeal and how much an appeal may cost. The subject was continued to the next City Council meeting on January 14, 2008, two days prior to the ABAG appeal deadline.

Lafayette Police Staffing Update

By Cathy Tyson

On November 7th of 2006, voters failed to pass the Lafayette Police Services Act, Measure P, a local tax to increase funding for police. It would have levied an annual parcel tax of \$64 per parcel on all single-family residential properties in Lafayette for five years. Larger apartment complexes and business parcels would have paid significantly more. Although 60.6% voted yes, it needed 66%, a 2/3 majority to pass.

More than a year later, the most obvious fallout is the limited police presence around town. At times there are only two officers patrolling Lafayette, one north of Mt. Diablo Boulevard, and one south of Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Back in October, the department received over 1,000 calls for service during the month for everything from false alarms, to traffic issues to noise complaints. All those calls require some kind of follow-up; lean staffing means longer response times and prioritizing calls.

"We want to address citizens concerns. Please call us about things you're concerned about, like suspicious people or vehicles," said Chief Mike Hubbard. He added that residents can help the department by being vigilant, the eyes and ears of the community.

In referring to patrol officers, he noted that, "The more cars you stop, the more bad guys you find."

Lafayette has the smallest police force per resident of any city in the County. While most communities have 2 officers/1,000 residents, Lafayette

and Orinda have .06 officers per 1,000 residents. By comparison, nearby Brentwood has 2.5 officers/1,000 residents.

Currently the department is staffed with 15 Sworn Offi-

cers, 5 Reserve Officers, 1 police dog, "Doc", and 4 Non-Sworn Officers. They are all working hard, but stretched thin due to the current budget.

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