

# Lamorinda Community, Calendar, Agendas, Notes, News

# Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way TBT	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Thursday, Jan 10	
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



**You Can Run, 12/06/07** ...but you can't hide from the long arm of the law. A white male 41-year old resident of San Francisco was pulled over going west bound on Highway 24. He was identified via computer as the driver in a non-injury collision. The officer advised him not to continue driving because of his lack of a driver's license, registration and insurance. The naughty driver would have none of this and in the officer's presence fled the scene and refuse to yield to the lights and siren of the police car. Criminal charges will be pursued.

**Downspouts Disappear, 12/1/07** An infamous Miner Road resident had 12 copper downspouts removed from the exterior of her residence. The victim no longer lives there. The downspouts were simply cut away from the gutters surrounding the home. Estimated damage of \$20,000.

**Burglary, 12/07/07** Someone entered a Stanton Court home via an unlocked door and took electronic equipment and a pair of running shoes. No suspects or leads at this time, but this reporter doesn't believe it was the work of Santa.

**12/02/07** The daughter of a Bobolinks Drive resident is missing her Apple iPhone. The young lady attended a party on Normandy Lane, with approximately 50 other students in attendance. The phone fell out of her pocket sometime between 9:00 and 11:00 p.m. The family requested a police report for insurance purposes to replace the phone.

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

## Orinda Historical Society Honors Members

By Andrea A. Firth



(Left to right) Award winners John Holmgren, Helen Vurek, and Charles Blue with Orinda Historical Society President Lucy Hupp Williams. Photo Kent Long

Over one hundred individuals attended the Orinda Historical Society's holiday dinner where residents Charles Blue, John Holmgren, and Helen Vurek were honored for their contributions to the history of Orinda. Blue, Holmgren, and Vurek were the first recipients of the Orinda Historical Society Award which recognized their ongoing support of the Society and its goals. "All of these people have been a great help to me personally," noted His-

torical Society President Lucy Hupp Williams, "and I know their presence and mentorship has been of great help to other members of the Board."

Charles Blue was a charter member of the Orinda Historical Society and worked to establish the organization over 38 years ago. He is a past President and current board member. "Charles has been a tremendous mentor to me," said Williams, "and he continues to be someone I can call

with questions." Blue also served Orinda as a volunteer fireman and Chairman of the Fire District for over 20 years.

"John Holmgren has extensive knowledge of the history and geography of California," noted Williams. As the longtime editor of the California State Automobile Association's monthly magazine Motorland (now Via) and host of a daily travel show on CBS radio, John spent his career helping Californians experience the state's rich history and extraordinary travel opportunities. Holmgren moved to Orinda in 1950 and quickly got involved with the Historical Society. "He's done a lot to educate Orindans," noted Williams. "He has led tours to historic sites. He has given travel talks. And, he's always willing to stuff envelopes," she added with a laugh.

An Orinda resident since 1939, Helen Vurek has made her own mark on Orinda's history. Now 97 years old, Vurek has been dubbed "the pioneer" within Historical Society circles. She has been a tireless volunteer for the Historical Society and several

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other organizations and helped to advance the evolution of Orinda as a community. She worked to establish the Orinda Dramateurs, the Democratic Club, and helped to found a childcare program at the Orinda Park Pool. "She always has helped with Historical Society events," said Williams. "She has just always volunteered. She just knew there was a need."

"All three of these individuals are willing to roll up their sleeves

and do the work that needs to be done," explained Williams. "They have all helped to fold and stuff newsletters, identify and sort photos and papers, and much more." The award winners were feted in the Fellowship Hall at the Orinda Community Church with a catered meal. Local artist and longtime Orinda resident John Cleary entertained the guests with a presentation about his work in sculpture.

## The Spirit of the Holidays Alive at Royal Ground

By David Anderson

**F**un. Friends. Care. Love. These are all words that we hope will resonate throughout the community this holiday season. They are also the words Annie Janes, owner of Royal Ground in Orinda, uses to describe the tree customers put up in her coffee shop. This tree is very unique and not like any other Christmas tree you may see during this Holiday season.

In fact, it is best described as a "Holiday tree, not just a Christmas tree", as there is something special in its message. Annie adds, it's "more than just a Christ-

mas tree" because it represents the entire community, not just those who celebrate Christmas.

Everything on the tree (including the tree itself) has been donated by customers who frequent the coffee shop. The tree is decorated with a variety of ornaments that people in the community have either made or brought from home. These include carvings of bears and horses, a wooden cutout of Charlie Brown, Christmas lights and clusters of little bells. Nearly anything and everything is accepted as an ornament. There is even a coffee cup

lid and a few decorations made from old coffee cups. People of various faiths have also added to the tree in the spirit of community and the holidays. One such example is the six pointed Star of David that sits at the top of the tree.

According to Annie, the tree has helped bring people together. "Everyone is so busy [during the holidays] but they bring something [to put on the tree]" she says, adding that the customers who pitched in are "all from many different religions and many different countries with different beliefs. I'm very

touched by all this." With the chaos of the season, it is refreshing to know there is a place in the community where people are willing to take a moment to stop, rest and come together in the spirit of the season.



Ornaments hanging on the Royal Ground's Christmastree



Photo David Anderson

## Orinda City Council Reviews Affordable Housing Projects ... continued from page 1

Councilmember Amy Worth suggested that eligibility for the homes should not be based on income alone, adding that an "asset test" should be put in place to decide eligibility. She offered the example that those applicants with "lower paying jobs and a trust fund" should not be considered eligible.

The major discussion topic on this issue dealt with who gets preference to live in the homes. Planning Director Emmanuil Ursu stated to the Council that they cannot (for legal reasons) give preference "to someone who's worked or lived in Orinda a longer period." The City Council, however, did agree that preference should be given to those who live or work in Orinda and have salaries that qualify. Preference for the housing will likely be given to teachers, police, fire and municipal employees.

An affordable housing facility for seniors at the site of the former Orinda Library was also discussed Tuesday night. The first of seven steps to select a developer for the project is now under way. The City Council took the first step December 18th by reviewing a draft of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ), which is a document for developers to display their qualifications during the application process. If the timeframe for each step adheres to schedule the Council will be choosing a developer in early May, 2008.

The Council decided Tuesday night to form a selection committee made up of two Council members, the Planning Director and two members of the community (one with expertise in affordable housing). The committee will be selected by Mayor Smith.

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