

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

Local Sports
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Wednesday, January 9, 2008

Mike Anderson



City of Lafayette



Lynda Deschambault

Town of Moraga

Victoria Smith



City of Orinda

Lamorinda's New Mayors

Read their stories inside

LAMORINDA WEEKLY

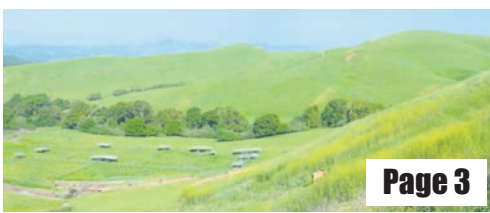
this week

The Party Was at Amoroma!



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First MOSO, Now MOSPRO



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Cougars Hang Tough at Holiday Classic



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Wood Burning, a Dirty Business

By Sophie Braccini

A wet, chilly night with the family gathered in front of the fireplace...the comforting smell, the crackling of the wood; maybe you're trying to finish that 5000-piece jigsaw puzzle you received for Christmas from the uncle who's still chuckling at the thought. It's a perfect winter's eve. But Max Sherman, Senior Scientist and Group Leader at the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, says burning wood in the fireplace is not a good idea.

"It is an inefficient way to heat a house and it sends soot and ashes in the air. Winter air pollution is mainly caused by small particle pollution, or particulate matter (PM). The two major winter sources of PM in the Bay Area are resi-

dential wood burning and motor vehicles." The Moraga resident still burns occasionally for parties, but as a specialist of indoor air quality he makes sure that the chimney draws well and that unhealthy particles do not enter the house.

Wood burning in the Bay Area is responsible for about 30% of the pollutant particles in the atmosphere, according to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). Much has been published that correlates rising PM levels with serious health effects, such as asthma symptoms, decreased lung function, increased hospital admissions and even premature death. Dr. Jeff Ritterman, cardiologist at Richmond Kaiser Hos-

pital, adds to the bleak picture: "PM emissions are probably worst for the lungs but they are bad for the heart as well. Increased rates of heart failure are linked to higher rates of PM in the atmosphere. There is no doubt it's bad for us." The health threat is considered so certain that BAAQMD is in the process of crafting a new policy to address this issue.

Karin Schkolnick, spokesperson for BAAQMD, explains: "The Bay Area has the best urban air quality in California. In 2006 we experienced only twenty days of unhealthy air quality as recorded by our thirty stations."

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Saint Mary's Topples Fullerton: Back in National Rankings

By Kevin D. Shallat

After returning from their recent road trip to Honolulu, Hawaii, the Saint Mary's men's basketball team had just enough time to place their Outrigger Rainbow Classic championship trophy up on the shelf before three other teams came into town to play in the annual Shamrock Classic. The tournament took place on December 28 and 29, in Moraga. The Gaels went on to win their second tournament of the year, and were able to climb back into the national rankings after they cruised to a victory over Howard, 97-48, and edged out the Cal State Fullerton Titans, 69-59.

After beating Howard the night before by nearly fifty points, the Gaels struggled against Cal State Fullerton. Saint Mary's, arguably, had their worst first half of the season. The Gaels committed 10 turnovers, had eight personal fouls, and shot 3-13 from 3-point range. However, after trailing by two points at halftime, they found a way to win.

The Gaels went into halftime trailing 37-35, after a long 3-point shot by Fullerton's Josh Akognon. Saint Mary's had a hard time stopping Marcus Crenshaw and Akognon. The two

players had 9 and 14 points respectively in the first half of play.

In the second half Saint Mary's cut down on their turnovers, and hustled for points. The Gaels realized that their jump shots were not falling, so they adjusted, and drove the ball to the basket. They finished the game with 29 points in the paint, as opposed to only 16 for the Titans. The Gaels also had seven fast break points, and the Titans had none. Fullerton was not able to continue their hot shooting from 3-point range, as the Titans were 50 percent from long range in the first half. As Fullerton struggled to keep up with the Gaels in the second

half, they began to throw up 3-point shots in desperation, and wound up shooting 9 percent from down town in the second half.

The usual stars for Saint Mary's were not on the top of their game, but that opened up opportunities for other players to step up. Yusef Smith was able to shoulder some of the load with his efficient play. Smith had 10 points and four rebounds in 13 minutes, as he was two for two from 3-point range. Smith has not only shot the ball well this year, but his above the rim style of play has Gael fans yearning for more of his high flying dunks.

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