

Lamorinda Community Calendar, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, Feb 19	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, Feb 12	
Public Safety Comm.	7pm
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Thursday, Feb 14	
Planning Process Review	3:30pm
Planning Conference Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Residential Subcommittee Wednesday, Feb 13	
Mayor's Com. Liaison	9am
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Monday, Mar 7	
check online: Town of Orinda: http://www.ci.orinda.ca.us/ • all meeting notes • calendar updates	
Chamber of Commerce: http://www.orindachamber.org/ • local businesses • upcoming events	



Identity theft, 1/29/08 A female suspect used a Tiger Tail Court resident's information to obtain two credit cards through the mail. The suspect put a hold on mail delivery from 1/25 - 2/1, perhaps to retrieve cards without the victim's knowledge. The victim picked up his mail at the Orinda Post Office and indeed discovered two credit cards with the suspect's name as a secondary holder of the accounts.

Booze burglary, 1/27/08 A 42-year old male suspect entered Safeway and removed merchandise, mostly alcohol valued at over \$500 without attempting to pay for it. Orinda Police stopped him shortly after leaving the store. In addition, the suspect was on parole for another violation. He was arrested and his car was towed.

Purse pilfered, 1/25/08 A Hawthorne Lane resident parked her car at OIS, and locked the doors. Someone forced entry into the vehicle by smashing the driver and passenger windows. An unknown suspect took her purse, which contained her wallet filled with cash, credit cards and her driver's license.

Pot stop 1/23/08 Near the intersection of Camino Pablo and Claremont officers stopped a car for a minor violation and smelled marijuana in the vehicle. The responding officer asked driver if he had any pot in the car. Indeed, the white, male 21-year old had pot in his pocket, and a collapsible baton in the center console.

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

Meet Planning Director Emmanuel Ursu

By David Anderson



Emmanuel Ursu, Orinda Planning Director Photo David Anderson

It is widely regarded that if you want to know what's going on in Orinda you ask Emmanuel Ursu, Planning Director for the City of Orinda. When it comes to planning or skiing or fine dining, Emmanuel knows what he is talking about and he is the man to ask.

Growing up in Vancouver, British Columbia, Emmanuel developed an interest in building at an early age while visiting his father, who was a contractor, at his construction sites. As a child he says he was "always interested in how things were built and how things were put together." These visits planted the seed that led to his desire to first pursue Architecture and later a career in planning.

Ursu attended Cal Poly Pomona where he turned his interest to Urban and Regional Planning. Upon graduation, he

took a job in 1989 as a Planning Technician with Willdan, a planning and development firm in Southern California. It was there that he learned the ropes and began his career in planning. While at Willdan, he worked on projects in Santa Monica, Calabasas, Malibu and Rancho Palos Verdes. Ursu worked his way up to Senior Planner at Willdan before moving to the Bay Area in 2000 to become Planning Director for Orinda.

Although he misses life in Southern California, Ursu now resides in Orinda and enjoys one of the Bay Area's easiest commutes as he lives only two miles from the new city office building. When not at work making Orinda a better place to live for its residents, Ursu enjoys downhill skiing, running and fine dining. Squaw Valley, Alpine and Kirkwood are his favorite places

to Ski in the Tahoe area. His favorite restaurants are Gary Denko on special occasions, Bix for its martinis, Boulevard, Limon for Peruvian food and Absinthe which he enjoys when making visits to the City Attorney's office in San Francisco.

Now in his eighth year as Planning Director for Orinda, Ursu still has a vision for Orinda's future but recognizes the Wilder development (formerly Orinda Gateway) near the Caldecott Tunnel as one of his proudest accomplishments. He says "It is the single most significant project we have had in Orinda probably since development first started here." The project, which started the planning process in the early nineties, received immediate opposition locally and from environmental groups. When Ursu first started in Orinda, the city had just resubmitted development permit applications to the various resource agencies. Along with the City Council and the developer, Ursu was able to help get the project on track again. According to Ursu, "It was a team effort on both the city side and the developer's side." Those efforts led to the Wilder development groundbreaking last summer.

What Ursu likes most about Orinda is that the City Council and the Planning Commission "really take interest in



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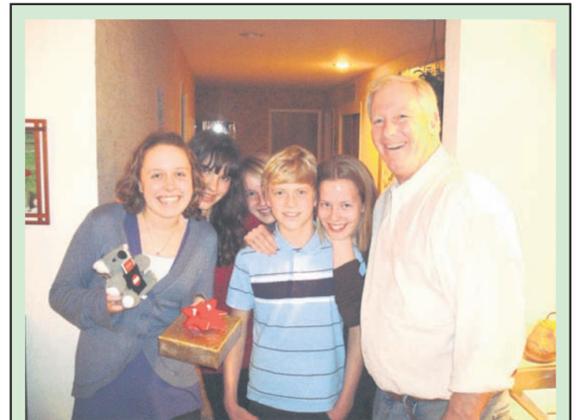
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issues residents care about," adding, "it's not just lip service." He believes that the Council listens to all sides of an issue and works to make decisions that are in the best interest of Orinda's citizens.

Ursu envisions that within ten years Orinda will have Pine Grove and Wilder developed and they will begin to feel part of the community. Four to five properties in downtown includ-

ing the former Phairs location will be redeveloped, San Pablo Creek will be restored and the Orinda Theater will be community-owned and operated featuring film as well as live theater. Some homes in Orinda that are older than fifty years will likely get a reconstruction and "hopefully we'll have a solution to our infrastructure problem with our roads."



The Orinda Christmas Tree Lot would like to thank everyone who participated in the iPod Nano drawing that we held on Christmas Day, 2007. We are happy to announce that the proud new owner of the iPod Nano is John Sommerville and family (pictured above).

Congratulations and Thank You! --
From Mike Kang and Barbara Cabellon

Jazzy Fundraiser at the Orinda House

By Cathy Tyson



The Grant Fine Jazz Quartet playing at the Orinda House Photo courtesy of Joyce Fine

The Grant Fine Jazz Quartet was in the House, the Orinda House that is. They weren't alone; the place was packed with Wagner Ranch families there to enjoy a "Dine Out Night" to benefit the Parents' Club. "Orinda House will donate a portion of the proceeds directly to the Parents Club. We really appreciate the support," said Principal Janice Arnerich.

A steady stream of families came in, and by 7:00 all the tables were filled. One parent waiting to be seated noted that Grant Fine, "is famous within the Wagner Ranch Dad

community." Marc Evans said the fundraiser evening helps the school, and as he was waiting for margaritas at the bar shared a tidbit about the featured musician, "Grant got a law degree from Harvard and went to school with Barack Obama."

Playing what the Orinda House describes as, "a soulful blend of blues and straight-ahead jazz," Fine was joined by pianist, David Udolf, bassist David Ewell and Darrell Green on drums. Many a toe was tapping to the swinging music, which lent a festive air to the evening.

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