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Volume 01; Issue 28

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Wednesday, March 5, 2008



Wired on Technology

By Jennifer Wake

LAMORINDA WEEKLY
this week

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Blue-ing of Moraga**

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**Three High School Musicals
Hit the Stage** Page 15

**For St. Patrick's Day:
Lamorinda Limericks!** Page 16

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Advances in technology have changed the face of our world and how we live in it. With information accessible at the click of a button and wireless networks popping up everywhere, how we work and how we interact has changed.

Because of his job, Moraga resident Mark Edelstone says he is always accessible. As the Head of Global Semiconductor Investment Banking for JP Morgan Securities, Inc., Edelstone needs to be available to respond immediately to market changes, but he likes it that way.

"I am completely 24/7 always accessible with the exception of five to six hours of sleep each night (and even that can get interrupted)," he

said. "I just believe in instant reply and I have that expectation of others."

Since Edelstone receives approximately 150 e-mails a day, he says instant access makes him far more productive. "I don't like being disconnected. I'm comfortable being reachable and I rarely go anywhere without my cell phone or RIMM."

Both of his children, Steven, 17, and Emily, 14, as well as his wife, Lori, have their own cell phones with texting capability. "Lori prefers e-mail, but Steven and Emily seldom use e-mail, and rely on instant messaging instead. They text more than talk on the phone," he said.

When Campolindo took on Acalanes at the

recent NCS semi-final boys basketball game last week, neither Steven nor Emily could attend because of their own conflicting events, yet they did not miss the action. "Each of them had friends at the game giving them a steady stream of what was happening," Edelstone said.

But can use of this technology go too far? When does it shift from a great form of communication to a source of addiction?

According to Lafayette marriage and family therapist (MFT) Dominic D'Ambrosio, some indicators that there might be a problem are if the person has a preoccupation about gaming, texting or using the Internet.

... continued on page 9

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Mats Win NCS Championship

By Darrell Hirashima, Jr.

Tied 6-6 midway through the first quarter of their third meeting this year with league rival Dublin on Feb. 27, the Miramonte girls basketball team found their shooting touch and never looked back, defeating the Gaels 67-46 and earning their fourth straight trip to the NCS championship game.

The Mats received solid play from junior forward Katie Reid, who came off the bench to post a double-double with 10 points and 12 rebounds. Ashlee Burns continued her post-season shooting streak, draining four 3-pointers and finishing with 14 points to go with four steals and five assists.

Miramonte headed into the title game against a young and talented team from Hercules High School.

In the final seconds of the North Coast Section Division III Championship game, onlookers viewed a familiar site, as Miramonte guard Katie Batlin touched her heart, stroked two game-sealing free throws and drove the proverbial dagger into the heart of Hercules High School and their aspirations for a North Coast title.

... continued on page 20



2008 Miramonte Varsity Team Championship picture: DJ Hirashima, Trish Hirashima, Darrell Hirashima, Kate Reid, Ashlee Burns, Katie Evans, Stacy Rosenzweig, Lauren Kimball, Kristine Miller, Chelsey Christenson, Katie Batlin, Stephanie Golden, Frances Moreau
Photo Kim Miller

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Lamorinda Community

Calendar, Notes, News

Lafayette

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Monday, March 10	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Thursday, March 6	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Tuesday, March 11	
Park, Trails, Rec.	7pm
Community Center 500 St Mary's Road	
Wednesday, March 12	
Circulation	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Monday, March 17	
Emergency Prep.	9:15am
City Offices 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. Suite 265	
Wednesday, March 12	
Senior Services	3:30pm
Community Center, Alder Room 500 St Mary's Road	
Thursday, March 27	
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	



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Let There Be Cheaper Light

By Cathy Tyson



Workers installing more energy efficient lights Photo courtesy of Jennifer Russell

Lafayette recently received a lighting audit of the aging Lafayette Community Center. Kate Merrill, Technology Services Lead of Energy Solutions explained that this was just phase one of a two-phase project. Phase one dealt exclusively with lighting, phase two, which is still under investigation, addresses heating and cooling systems as well as the building envelope. ABAG, the Association of Bay Area Governments, is working in partnership with P G & E in this free program for municipalities to improve efficiency. Energy Solutions provides comprehensive strategic design, technical and marketing expertise for this and other types of energy programs.

According to City Manager Steven Falk, "Analysts from P G & E checked out every single room and, as you might imagine given the age of the building, found lots of opportunities to save money. In fact the

audit recommended that 290 light fixtures be replaced with new energy efficient ballasts and lamps."

Merrill explained, in a linear florescent lamp the ballast delivers energy to the bulb, it's half the equation of energy efficiency.

"What's particularly good news is that through a joint ABAG/ P G & E conservation program, the utility will pick up more than \$7,000 of the \$11,000 total retrofit cost. It's a project that, once done, will save the City \$9,974 per year – and the project will thus pay for itself in only six months," continued Falk.

Jennifer Russell, Parks and Recreation Director, whose office is in the Community Center, is pleased with the results so far. "They've used half as many light bulbs and it's so much brighter. It's an amazing program."

Dust Up at Fields Meeting

By Cathy Tyson

"It's not safe, not usable, and doesn't meet the needs of this community," said Vince Lattanzio of Carducci & Associates, the firm hired to do the Lafayette School District Outdoor Athletic Facilities Master Plan. The purpose of both recent meetings was to share

information on proposed field design plans and hear comments from the community. Clearly concerned residents weren't shy about sharing their opinions. "We invite public comment and feedback," encouraged Lattanzio, adding that there is a link on the school district website to

The Second Annual Run for Kieran Will be Held on March 8, 2008 Sign up Now!

By Jean Follmer

Kieran Rohan Quinn was a special boy. He was his family's "Little Prince." The Quinn family says, "The Little Prince was eight years old when a degenerative genetic disorder took him away from his friends and our family." That was two years ago on March 8, 2006. In response to the question, "Who is Kieran?" his sister Molly wrote, "Kieran is the brightest star you see when you look up into the night sky, he's the rainbow after every storm, and he is the angel shining down on you helping you get through each day." She went on to write, "Kieran was never able to walk or talk due to his disease but the effect he had on my own life and so many others is indescribable."

The Run for Kieran started out as a small way to get together and share memories of Kieran. "Many family members and friends joined together for informal runs throughout his first year of passing. The first annual Run for Kieran was held on March 8, 2007 on his first birthday in Heaven." The Second Annual Run for Kieran will start on March 8, 2008 at Stanley Middle School at 9:00 in the morning.

Jay Lifson, of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, was touched by Kieran's mother, Bridget Quinn, whom he describes as having "a wonderful, warm personality." Quinn told him about the Run for Kieran. "What makes this run special is that many kids and families knew Kieran," explains Lifson, "by running, they have a chance to remember him and honor him. Because Kieran was able to attend regular school, (his mother) said that Kieran was able to share memories with his friends and the people around him; they all learned from Kieran."

The Run will include a Fun

Run (2 miles) for all ages and baby-joggers are welcome. A 7-mile run is also being offered this year. The Fun Run will end at the Tot Lot at the Lafayette Community Center for play and treats and the 7-mile course will continue past the Lafayette Community Center and turn around at Rheem Boulevard. There will be energy treats available at the Tot Lot and the run will end back at Stanley Middle School. A participation fee of \$15/participant will include a cool tie-dye t-shirt and a raffle ticket for prizes. Additional raffle tickets can be purchased for \$1/each, 6/\$5 or 12/\$10.

The Run for Kieran is held in love and memory of Kieran and proceeds will be donated to the Lucille Packard's Children's Hos-



First Annual Run for Kieran, March 8, 2007 Photo The Quinn Family

pital at Stanford (Genetics Department) and the Springhill Elementary Instructional Support Program. Bridget Quinn teaches kindergarten at Springhill Elementary School.

Please join the friends and family of Kieran for a fun morning of celebrating Kieran's life! If you'd like to participate in the Run for Kieran, please contact the Quinn family at quinnsix@sbcglobal.net as soon as possible.

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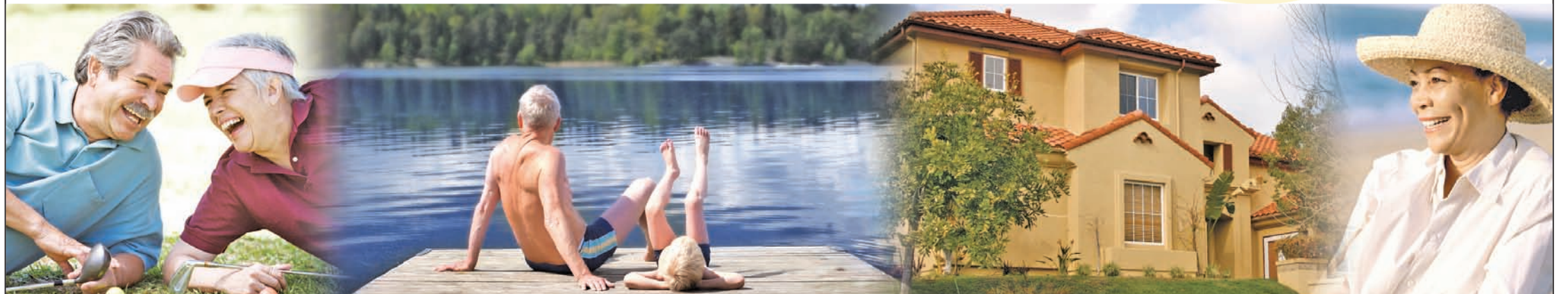
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Lamorinda Community

Calendar, Notes, News

Moraga

Calendar	
City Council	7:30pm
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo Wednesday, March 12	
Planning Comm.	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive Monday, March 17	
Design Review	7:30pm
Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive Monday, March 10	
Park & Rec	7:30pm
Hacienda, Mosaic Room 2100 Donald Drive Tuesday, March 18	
Liaison	8:00am
Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way Friday, March 14	
Town of Moraga online: http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us for: • all meeting notes • calendar updates	



Jewelry gone at J.M., 2/25/08 A concerned mom called in to report her daughter's brand new Tiffany bracelet and necklace were stolen out of her P.E. locker. Daughter had just received the items for her birthday the week before.

Danger to self, 2/24/08 Officers responded to Ascot Drive to contact a 19-year old female who ingested an overdose of over the counter medication due to depression. It was determined that she was a danger to herself. She was taken to Contra Costa Regional Medical Center where she was placed on a mental health hold.

Nearly naked jogger, 2/23/08 At approximately 5:15 in the morning a motorist observed a 25-year-old male running on St. Mary's Road just north of Moraga Road wearing only boxer shorts. He appeared to wave at cars as he ran by. On this particular day the temperature was 37 at that hour in the morning. Subject ran away before officers could locate him.

Paintball attack, 2/23/08 A Warfield Drive resident called police to complain about an unknown suspect driving a dark colored sedan who peppered his driveway with paint balls. The newly painted homeowner has no idea who would do this.

Disposition of Evidence
Moraga Police Dept. no longer needs property related to case 07-1203 for evidentiary purposes. All evidence is going to be disposed of. If you are involved in the case and have ownership of items involved please contact the Moraga Police Dept. Property Officer Heather Pomeroy at 925-888-7055 Ext. 7173. All Evidence will be destroyed after March 30, 2008.

Developer's Initiative Will Wait For November Ballot

By Sophie Braccini

On February 27th, the Moraga Town Council decided in a 4 to 1 vote not to put the initiative known as MOSPRO on the June ballot, postponing it until the General Election in November. The decision was based on the Councils' intent to deliver a clear, accurate and meaningful summary of the initiative to the Moraga electorate. Supporters of the initiative said the deferral was driven purely by political reasons.

The initiative, commonly known as MOSPRO or the Bruzzone Initiative, was re-titled by Town of Moraga staff as the "Moraga Initiative Expanding Open Space and Residential Land Use Designations and Adopting a Development Agreement." The County Clerk certified the signatures that make the initiative eligible. The Council had the choice to either order the Initiative to a June ballot by the March 7th deadline, or wait the 30 days allowed by the Election Code to receive an impact report from staff.

The first option wouldn't have prevented the Council from ordering a full report, however staff brought up other deadlines that caused concerns. The ballot documents that will be mailed to all voters will include an impartial 500 words analysis from the Town's attorney. The deadline for submitting that study for a June ballot is March 14th. Doubts were raised as to whether twelve working days would be sufficient time for staff to develop a full report on all of the requested items.

Supporters of the initiative didn't share that concern, arguing that one quarter of the Town's electorate had signed to have it on the June ballot. Councilmember Bird supported that view point, "Staff can provide a factual study that would be ready in time to be included in the voter pamphlet," urged Bird. "The people of Moraga are highly educated. We need to trust them to think for themselves and make an informed decision," she continued.

About two-thirds of the forty or so citizens who spoke that night had a different perspective. "I've never seen such a complex initiative," said Leland Nelson, who sat on Moraga's first Planning Commission.

"The initiative contains a contract that will freeze many things for twenty five years," stated another resident, "there is

no rush putting it on the ballot right now without due consideration."

The complexity of the matter was illustrated by the battle between the lawyers for the opposing sides. As the Town's Legal Council summarized it, "I have a lot of respect for both parties, but when one tells me there is no problem and the other one says the document is illegal, I suspect it will take a very serious study to form an impartial opinion."

Some supporters of the Initiative resorted to a personal attack against Mayor Deschambault. She was challenged about a declaration she made in December supporting the MOSO 2008 initiative.

"Yes, I supported that measure last year," responded Deschambault, "it was at a time when there was no indication that another initiative would be submitted to voters." She supported postponing the inclusion of the initiative to November in order to make sure that voters would get an accurate and complete set of information, "with a full and meaningful report, the electorate will be better informed. It's unfortunate that this initiative was not submitted in time for the complete process to take place before the deadline."

Vice-Mayor Dave Trotter had made his position very clear since the beginning of the debate: "We need to provide leadership," stated Trotter, "which means to act in the best interest of the Town as a whole. There is no need to rush, true democracy happens when people make informed decisions."

Councilmember Ken Chew saw no compelling reason to put this initiative on the fast track. "Council needs to make sure that the voters are thoroughly informed," he said. "Voters should be given the opportunity to contrast the two initiatives and decide which one to vote for on Election Day," added Chew, referring to the other potential initiative, MOSO 2008.

That was something Councilmember Bird couldn't agree with, insisting, "It is not our job to level the playing field for some other potential initiative that has yet to be submitted."

The Future of the Hacienda Still Uncertain

By Sophie Braccini



The Hacienda De Las Flores is Moraga's most picturesque public building. A popular place for weddings, it also houses classes organized by the Parks and Recreation Department and group meetings. Until recently, most of Town's staff had their offices there. But the building is old, it needs repair

and refurbishing, and carries an operational deficit of a quarter of a million dollars per year. The task at hand is dual: raise revenue for better balancing the budget and find capital for repairs and restoration.

The Town Council appointed a Hacienda Committee in 2005 to propose solutions. On

February 27th, that Committee presented its report to the Council, along with a consultant who worked on a business plan to develop the Hacienda's revenue. During its operations, the Committee had recommended the creation of a Foundation to raise some of the \$1.2 million that is needed to repair the Hacienda.

The Foundation is now incorporated and has begun its fundraising efforts. Margaret DePriester, who is a member of the Committee and the Foundation, addressed the Council: "We need more guidance from the Town," she said. "We recommend a general survey of the population to understand what the people want from this building. Some of our residents don't even know it exists."

... continued on page 12

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Lamorinda Community Calendar, Notes, News

Orinda

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, March 18	
Planning Comm.	7:00pm
Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, March 11	
Planning Process Review 3:30pm Planning Conference Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Residential Subcommittee: Friday, March 7	
Parks & Recreation Comm.	7pm
Orinda Community Center Room 7 28 Orinda Way Wednesday, March 12	
Public Safety Comm.	7pm
Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way Thursday, March 13	
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	



Bev Mo Burglary, 2/12/08 Three adults entered Bev Mo and spent some time in the store without making a purchase. A short time later the suspect, one of the original Bev Mo three, entered the store, where an employee saw her put two champagne bottles in a large purse. She and her pals drove away in a red Ford Taurus.

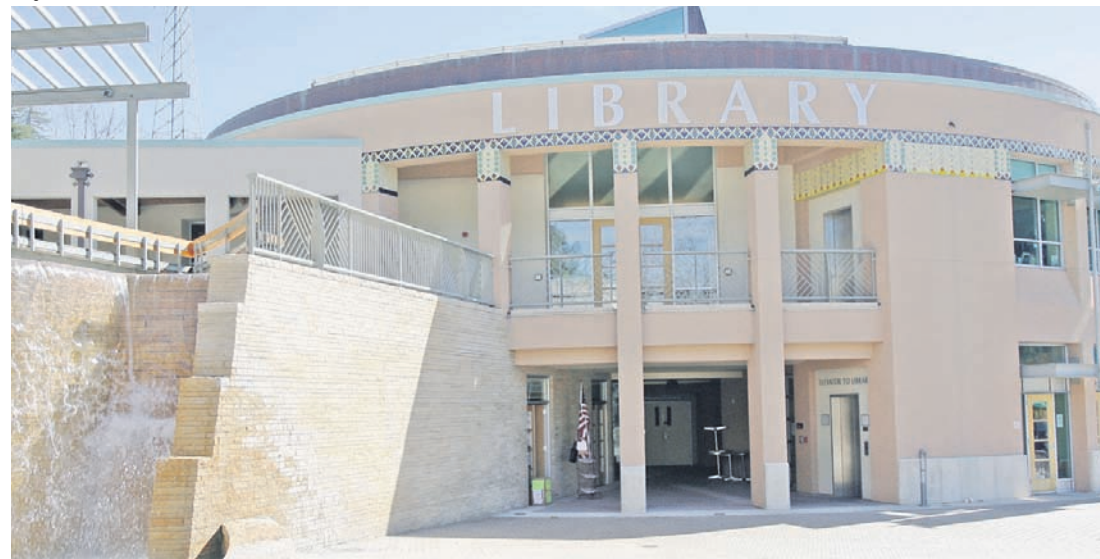
House Burglary 2/10/08 A vacant Miner Road residence was seemingly burgled. Officers found the front door unlocked and large amounts of garbage and miscellaneous items everywhere. The home was extremely dilapidated. The elderly owner of the home, who lives on Valley View Drive said it was burglarized but couldn't provide a list of missing items before the police report was completed.

D.U.I., 2/09/08 A young man was riding a dirt bike and collided into a pole on Bates Boulevard. The victim had a strong odor of alcohol and showed signs of intoxication. To seal the deal, he flunked the field sobriety test and had a blood alcohol level of .11.

Shoplifting, 2/09/08 A suspect was stopped after leaving Rite Aid with items on his person. He admitted the theft and showed the officer where he stowed the goods. To make matters worse, the 32-year-old suspect was on parole.

Orinda Library Parcel Tax—A Question for the June 3rd Ballot

By Andrea A Firth



Orinda Library

Photo Tod Fierner

Following many meetings, much analysis, and some vigorous debate, the Orinda City Council unanimously passed a resolution to place a measure on the June 3rd special election ballot regarding the Orinda Library parcel tax. The current library parcel tax sunsets in midsummer of 2009 and requires a voter approved ballot measure to renew. Voters will be asked to authorize the continuation of the existing parcel tax with an upward adjustment from \$27 to \$39 per parcel per year for the purpose of maintaining library hours and services. "I am hopeful that the people of Orinda will recognize that this is something important to maintain," stated Council member Tom McCormick, "I fully support it." Mayor Pro Tem, Sue Severson concurred, "I whole heartedly support this effort. It truly benefits all citizens in our community."

In 2001, Orinda residents originally approved the library parcel tax—known as Measure H—with 75% of voters in support. "The County provides funding to keep the library open 27 hours per week," according to Pat Rudebusch a member of the Board of the Friends of the Orinda Library. "Thanks to the parcel tax we are

able to keep the library open 60 hours per week, an additional 33 hours—more than double." With the parcel tax due to expire next summer, the Friends of the Orinda Library identified the need to secure continued funding to maintain library hours and services at the current level. "[The Friends'] primary goal is to keep the library open 60 hours per week," explained Nancy Kaible, a member of the Friends of the Orinda Library and long-time library supporter.

The City of Orinda and the Friends of the Orinda Library joined forces to hire the firm of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates to conduct a feasibility study of the community's interest in keeping the library open 60 hours per week and to test their support of various funding scenarios. Telephone poll results of 301 Orinda residents revealed a very positive attitude toward the library and its services. Over 90% of those interviewed had used the library facility in the past year and 92% approved of the performance of the library.

Council members Amy Worth and Steve Glaser worked with City staff and members of the Friends of the Orinda Library to determine an annual parcel tax

amount that would address the effect of inflation and cover the library operating costs (associated with the additional hours) through the next decade. This led to the recommendation of \$39 per residential parcel tax with no sunset. "I think the \$39 number is fair and reasonable," stated Nancy Kaible when she addressed the Council. "The library will be there when you need it and provide what you expect...I think the citizens will support this."

The relationship between the Friends of the Orinda Library and City has a long and complex history. The Orinda Library sits on land owned by the City while the Friends of the Orinda Library own the Library building and maintain a lease to purchase agreement with the City. The City maintains responsibility for insurance, maintenance, and utilities and has the option to purchase the Library building for \$1 in 2051. Library operating expenses are covered by the County subsidy and the current parcel tax, and the Friends pay for materials and programs through books sales. "It's always been a very successful partnership," noted Council Member Amy Worth.

Bike-Trail-Walk Plan in the Works in Orinda

By Andrea A. Firth

It should get easier to walk, hike, and bike through the hills and rough roads in Orinda—it may not be soon, but at least that's the plan. Orinda City Council recently approved the appointment of Alta Planning from Berkeley to develop the Orinda Bicycle, Trails, and Walkways (OBTW) Master Plan. Noting that Orinda residents have expressed concerns about safety when walking their children to school or biking through downtown, Mayor Pro Tem Sue Severson described the development of the Master Plan as a very positive and exciting venture that is sensitive to the needs of the community.

The OBTW Master Plan will guide the planning, development and management of the existing and future bicycle and walking trails and support the pedestrian infrastructure

of the City according to City Engineer Janice Carey. The goal of the plan is to create an arrangement of paths, trails, and walkways that safely connect residential areas to public transportation, schools, parks, regional trail systems, and the downtown areas.

In addition, Carey noted that Alta would identify potential funding sources for the implementation of the Master Plan over the next twenty years. City Council Member Amy Worth described the OBTW Master Plan as an investment. "It's seed money. It will come back to us. Projects of this sort are supported by grants much more if the projects are part of a well-developed plan," she stated.

The OBTW Master Plan project is the joint effort between the Traffic Safety Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and the City. Development of the Master Plan will be funded through park fees, traffic impact fees, and the City General Fund. The City Council approved the awarding of the service contract with a vote of four to one. Council Member Tom McCormick dissented and commented that although he agreed with the development of the plan in concept, he opposed the use of General Fund monies for the project.



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Programs in Orinda Offer Teens Something To Do

By David Anderson



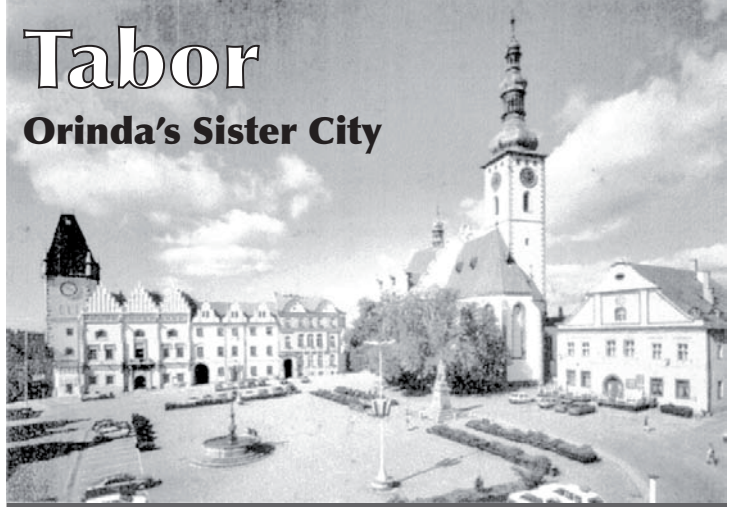
Orinda Teen Advisory Council Coordinator Jenny Hudson Photo Tod Fierner

If you're a teen in Orinda looking for activities to participate in, you're not alone. Orinda has never had the reputation for being a particularly teen friendly city. Recently, however, there have been attempts made within the community to change that stigma.

The Orinda Teen Advisory Council (OTAC) is currently working with teens to develop programs that will satisfy the need for teen activities in Orinda. Jenny Hudson, Coordinator for OTAC, is at the foreground of this effort, meeting with teenagers to help carry out their ideas. Accord-

ing to Hudson, the main goal of OTAC is to "provide something for teens to do and somewhere to go in Orinda. That's what the teens are mostly concerned about." It is not, however, just about finding activities for teens. Hudson would add, "With OTAC it's not just something to do but something healthy to do, something that's not alcohol or drug related" adding that community service and community involvement is the other main goal of both the teen participants and the council.

... continued on page 11



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Life in LAMORINDA

Grassroots Efforts Key to Political Success

By Jennifer Wake



Precinct Coordinator Carol MacNulty and Precinct Outreach Worker Dick Immel turn in "Turn Moraga Blue" door hangers to Lamorinda Democratic Club Town Co-coordinator Karen Couric. Photo Jennifer Wake

Former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis spoke to more than 200 attendees on Feb. 25 at Saint Mary's College, describing presidential elections on a whole as "becoming like a movie – a bad one."

"We sit on our cans and only half of us go out to vote," Dukakis said. He believes the answer to who will win the democratic nomination and ultimately who wins the presidency will depend upon grassroots efforts. "My party has forgotten how to do precinct-based grassroots organizing."

But he likely had not met the members of the Lamorinda Democratic Club.

Since last fall, The Lamorinda Democratic Club's precinct outreach program, the first of its

kind in Lamorinda, has spent countless hours reaching out to Moraga Democrats and Independents with a goal to "turn Moraga blue."

Moraga residents Marie Kahn and Karen Couric, along with John Hall and Laura Winslow of Lafayette began a steering committee in early 2007 to get outreach workers in every precinct in Moraga, and recently began outreach efforts in Lafayette and Orinda as well.

"We started in Moraga because it was more of a Republican town and we wanted to get over the stigma in Moraga that it was almost impolite to talk about politics," Kahn said. "A lot of progressive voters in the area had the mistaken impression that they were the only ones."

Since the program started, the membership has built to 131

volunteers who spend nights and weekends knocking on doors of registered Democratic voters in Moraga to discuss issues like International relations and healthcare. And their outreach is working. Just prior to Super Tuesday, on Feb. 5, the Contra Costa County list of registered voters showed 60 more Democrats than Republicans in the former Republican bastion, with 4,019 Democrats (39.24%) and 3,959 Republicans (38.65%) among Moraga's approximately 10,200 registered voters, according to the club.

"We went about it to build community: To have one-on-one talks about politics on the doorstep," Kahn said.

In addition to the precinct volunteers in Moraga, the program has expanded to 64 volunteers in Lafayette (with a goal to have 300 by the fall), and 15 volunteers in Orinda (with a goal to expand their circle to 250).

So far, Kahn said the response from residents has been one of polite interest. "We've been surprised at how pleased people are to talk openly about political issues," she said. "They know they are talking to kindred spirits."

Governor Dukakis said that if we go out ringing doorbells, once we get involved in the process, we stay involved. "If anybody does this kind of work, they win elections," he said.

When a Saint Mary's stu-

dent asked why more campaigns don't do more grassroots organizing, he explained, "Most campaign consultants have never rung a doorbell in their lives. Obama lost New Hampshire because he had a lousy grassroots organization, and [Senator Clinton] out-organized him. If the Democratic party doesn't get involved, it's going to lose again."

Kahn is happy with the precinct program's success. "We've shown people that they can become involved in the political process, and what we do at the grassroots level does matter," she said. "The stakes are so high we need to make our voices heard in as many ways as we can."

The Lamorinda Democratic Club plans to expand its outreach program through November to further increase registration. Volunteers can join the effort on the Club website: www.lamorindademoclub.org.

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"Moonlight" Delivers Laughs

Moonlight and Magnolias Plays at the Lafayette Town Hall Theatre

By Cathy Tyson



Michael Patrick Gaffney playing legendary producer David O. Selznick in Town Hall's Moonlight and Magnolias. Photo provided

"Moonlight and Magnolias" is a hilarious look at the backstage story of *Gone With the Wind* (GWTW). As the curtain rises, the audience sees the interior of David O. Selznick's office circa 1939. Michael Patrick Gaffney, who plays Mr. Selznick in all of his agitated glory, reveals a complex character, part megalomaniac, part persuasive charmer. Having recently fired George Cukor as director and unhappy with the latest of many versions of the

complex script, Selznick is desperate to get the picture back on track, or risk financial ruin.

That's where the fun begins. Although the play by Ron Hutchinson borrows heavily from real life, GWTW actually was put on hold for two weeks; he took some dramatic liberties to pump up the story. The play takes place entirely in the movie mogul's inner sanctum where our three main characters, Selznick, Director Victor Fleming - pulled off of the soon to

wrap *The Wizard of Oz* and Screenplay Writer Ben Hecht, are locked-in for five long days to save the movie. In real life, they were allowed to leave, and didn't have only bananas and peanuts for sustenance.

Highlights include the characters portraying GWTW scenes in order to hash out the hopefully new and improved script. Victor Fleming, played by Patrick Edwards, had the audience in stitches as he portrayed Melanie giving birth on the sofa. Gaffney as Selznick, alternating between Scarlett O'Hara, Ashley Wilkes and Prissy, brought the house down. Elias Escobedo as Ben Hecht notes that he hasn't read the book, and keeps reminding us that no Civil War movie ever made money. The trio gave new meaning to slapstick as they "practiced" Scarlett slapping Prissy from a number of angles, while wrestling with the dilemma of a white woman abusing her African American underage maid.

... continued on page 9

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Life in LAMORINDA

Lamorinda Schools Face Tough Budget Decisions

By Andrea A. Firth

Since Governor Schwarzenegger announced his proposed cuts to education funding back in January, administrators, educators, and parents throughout Lamorinda have spent countless hours in meetings and discussion trying to determine the best way to manage through the current school budget crisis. "Obviously budgeting is on everyone's front burner," explained Superintendent Jim Negri when he addressed the Acalanes Union High School District Governing Board at their most recent meeting. The Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD), which encompasses three high schools in Lamorinda (Acalanes, Campolindo, and Miramonte), and the kindergarten through 8th grade school districts in Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda each presented preliminary budget scenarios to their Boards and stakeholders over the past two weeks.

AUHSD
The Acalanes Union High School District faces a loss of \$3.3

million in State revenue for the next school year. This revenue deficit includes \$2.75 million less in revenue limit dollars—the Districts main source of funding—and about \$550,000 less in categorical program funding which includes monies for class-size reduction, special education, instructional materials, and professional development. At the School Board meeting held on February 20th, Assistant Superintendent Chris Learned outlined a "worst case scenario" budget that included the elimination of 46 positions across the District. Although many of the positions at risk are not full-time, the staffing cuts would affect certificated teachers, special education staff, and classified and administrative employees.

Some of the budget shortfall will be offset by a \$1 million donation commitment from the District's Parent Clubs and Education Foundations. "This will help to cover counseling, libraries, and some categorical program reduc-

tions," stated Learned. The additional non-personnel reductions proposed included cuts to the District office, curriculum development, fiscal services, human resources, and the popular Summer Institute—a continuing education program for teachers. "This is painful," stated Board member Vanessa Crews as the budget presentation concluded. At the next School Board meeting, budget adjustments and staff reductions will be presented for the Board to vote upon.

Lafayette School District

The financial impact of the State revenue cuts will leave Lafayette School District \$1.74 million short for the 2008-2009 school year. By freezing spending and budget planning that includes program reductions and staff cuts, Superintendent Frank Tom hopes to keep Lafayette's budget balanced. The District held two budget study sessions in January and February to solicit community input regarding the budget dilemma and to help set spending priorities.

Lafayette's School District is also actively exploring ways to boost revenues. "Two [School] Board representatives and I have met with the Presidents of the parent groups to ask them for financial support in preserving many of our exemplary educational programs that are at risk of being reduced or cut," stated Dr. Tom. "Board representatives and I will

also be attending parent group meetings at each school site to talk about the State budget crisis, its negative impact on the District's programs, and asking them for financial support. A Board representative and I have also met with LASF [Lafayette Arts & Science Foundation] to request financial support from them. Over the next couple of weeks, our collective goal is to develop a coordinated and focused fundraising plan with our parent groups and LASF to preserve our programs and to minimize lay-offs."

Moraga School District

Moraga School District's budget reduction target for the 2008-2009 school year is \$937,000. To that end, Superintendent Rick Schafer presented the Moraga School District Governing Board with a laundry list of potential budget cuts last week. Schafer had recently held a Budget Advisory Meeting with representatives from the District's Teachers and Classified Employee Associations, PTAs, and Education Foundation to review and prioritize the list of possible cuts. Regarding this process, Schafer noted, "We are working from the outside then moving inward. We are employing a model that starts as far away from the classroom as possible." The list ranged from reductions for nonacademic expenditures such as cleaning and groundskeeping to the elimina-

tion of administrative positions, classroom aides, counseling services, and classroom teachers. Through attrition and job shares, Schafer hoped to be able to avoid eliminating some teaching jobs.

Although the exact amount of the education funding reduction has yet to be finalized by the State, Districts are required to announce any potential cuts to staffing for the next school year well in advance. "Release notices have to go out by the 15th [of March] establishing the legal process that positions may or will be eliminated," explained Schafer the Moraga's Governing Board.

"I do believe that the District will make every effort to keep the cuts as far away from the classroom as possible," stated Mary Ellen Viboch, President of the Moraga Teachers Association. "But we won't really know until May or even over the summer what some of those true cuts are going to look like," she added. "[My] colleagues are worried. They're frustrated. We just don't know anymore. We are working on a wait and see basis at this point."

Orinda Union School District

Despite the fact that the Orinda Union School District (OUSD) faces a \$1 million loss in State funds next year, staff reductions are not expected. "Through cost-savings and [staff] attrition we are trying to keep whatever cuts we make as far away from the

classroom as we can," stated OUSD Governing Board President Pat Rudebusch. "We really want to preserve the programs that we have in place and avoid doing layoffs." Cost savings and staff attrition are projected to cover almost half of OUSD's revenue deficit. "In addition, we have gone to the Parent Clubs and the Education Foundation (EFO) and asked them to contribute to help make up the budget shortfall," stated Rudebusch. The Parent Clubs and EFO have been asked to increase their financial support by \$400,000 to \$600,000 for the next school year.

Although the budget crisis has consumed and at times overwhelmed the local Districts, there still seems to be some hope among administrators that the State cuts will not go quite as deep as originally outlined. "I still anticipate that the Governor's budget will change dramatically over the next few months and additional funding will become available," stated Superintendent Schafer. Chris Learned noted that Legislative Analyst Liz Hill recently presented the Governor with an alternative budget that would limit the education funding deficit and cuts to special education. "My feeling is the cuts will not be any deeper [by May], and I hope that the Governor and the Legislature seriously consider Liz Hill's suggestions," stated Learned.

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Christi Costa Brings Her Talents to Acalanes

Submitted by the Lafayette Arts & Science Foundation



Lafayette Arts & Science Foundation is fortunate to work with and support talented and exceptional teachers and their programs. One example of this is Acalanes High School's new dance instructor, Christi Costa.

Christi comes by her expertise naturally. She began dancing at the age of four in her grandmother's studio, Doreen's School of Dance located in Antioch. Her mother now runs the studio and is president of Dance Masters of America Inc. Christi honed her skills at San Francisco where she earned a double degree in Dance and History. She earned her teaching creden-

tial at California State University Hayward.

Immediately upon graduating, Ms Costa was offered a position at Deer Valley High School where she developed a dance program and remained for two years. The urge to dance took Christi to Los Angeles where she performed in parades, magic music days and was stage manager and organizer of special events for Disney.

Ms. Costa developed a successful dance program at Eagle Rock High School in Los Angeles where she built both the cheer and dance program in just one year. She was in charge of

200 students at Milliken Middle School in Sherman Oaks, a performing arts magnet academy catering to children of movie stars and actively performing young television actors.

Romance brought Christi back to the Bay Area where she received many offers to teach. Acalanes' excellent reputation for attention to the arts drew her to take her current position. Christi says "the enthusiasm of the kids and the genuine support from the administration make coming to work here a joy."

The students in this program aren't just learning the Two Step. They are schooled in the techniques of jazz, ballet, modern dance, hip hop, swing and salsa. They complete fitness circuits which include Pilates and yoga to ensure safety and proper muscle development. Understanding and designing

choreography are important aspects of the class.

Christi incorporates academia into the program by having the kids contrast and compare the histories of the different dance genres. They are also required to produce a musical theater timeline.

To round out their education, the students are asked to create a Dream Life Journal. In this they put their aspirations for the future and how, practically, they intend to make their dreams come true. This exercise is always a favorite as it encourages the kids to look within themselves to recognize and express what really makes them happy and the possibilities of where their lives can take them.

Christi's philosophy is one of team building. Through her innate ability to connect with her students she helps them to see that each and every one of them is equally important. This realization allows them to see themselves in a positive light that transcends into all other aspects of their lives. Self esteem and the ability to carry themselves proudly with poise and dignity are lifelong gifts. Acalanes High School is truly lucky to have Christi Costa as part of their staff. LASF, with the help of generous donors, is very proud to financially support her program.

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Life in LAMORINDA

Interior Design in Lamorinda—What Color to Choose?

By Andrea A. Firth



Mari Tischenko and Jana Rains

Photo: Andrea Firth

Color consultants Mari Tischenko and Jana Rains talk about paint colors the way some women reminisce over childhood friends. With names like Timothy Straw, Saybrook Sage, Jalapeno Pepper, and Dill Pickle among their favorites, these colors sound like they could be old friends. Mari and Jana came to work together as colorists establishing a business based in Orinda about five years ago after their sons, who are also friends, graduated from Miramonte High School.

“Color should make everything in the room look great,” explains Jana. “The function of color is to wrap its arms around the rest of the things that are happening in the room and support those things

rather than be the focal point itself.” Although they describe seeing a variety of approaches to color in the homes they work in through out Lamorinda, Mari notes, “Many people are using color now. We have moved away from the all beige or white house of the previous decade.” But Jana is quick to add (as these partners often finish one another’s thoughts), “White is a color that should be used deliberately. It should be treated as a color not a default.”

Mari and Jana avoid trends when it comes to color. “Every year there is a new color trend, and you will see this new color grouping in the goods of many of the large home furnishings retailers,” explains Mari. “We try to focus

on what’s really right for the client’s home. Color trends come and go from year to year, but you often keep your furniture and your home for twenty years or more.”

Mari and Jana regularly deal with the unique aspects of Lamorinda homes when recommending color choices. “We approach each house as a composition. We consider the connection between the inside and the outside as well as how the house flows,” states Mari. Choosing color for homes in Lamorinda requires balancing all the natural beauty and color in the foliage and landscape that surrounds the home and is reflected inward she explains. She also notes that the open floor plan found in many area homes necessitates assigning

color in a more architectural manner rather than a decorative manner. “It’s a big factor. You can weaken or confuse spaces with the improper placement no matter how beautiful the color may be.”

After several attempts to pin these color gurus down to what colors work best in Lamorinda homes, Jana explains. “There is a trend to color that is a little more organic. The colors are often all part of the same family, so it all flows. And it’s not just earth tones like browns and greens. You can have organic yellows and organic blues. Every color can be an earth tone.”

So what is that perfect color for you? “Everyone has an inner palette that they respond to,” explains Jana. “The function of your house is to serve as a nest that makes you feel warm, comfortable, and secure. If you have a color around you that supports you then it works for you.” Mari Tischenko and Jana Rains can be reached for color consulting at 253-9744.

“Moonlight” Delivers Laughs

Moonlight and Magnolias Plays at the Lafayette Town Hall Theatre

... continued from page 5

“Yes Mr. Selznick,” is the common refrain of stylish Meghann May, who plays Miss Poppenghul, the very efficient assistant to the man in charge. At one point, as delirium sets in on day five, she appears in a dream as Scarlett to our three amigos.

Artistic Director Kevin Morales not only does a great job with the cast, but he also has a link to Victor Fleming; he’s his great nephew. Playwrite Ron Hutchinson gave him special permission to produce the play.

The second act loses a little momentum as the campy comedy gives way to serious political topics like acceptance of successful Jews along with straight man Hecht worrying about moral obligations and parallels between the Civil War and Nazi Germany. Valid points to be sure, but frankly my dear, they feel a little out of place in this rollicking farce.

On the whole, a wonderful production right in our own backyard. Moonlight and Magnolias runs through March 15 at the

Town Hall Theatre 3535 School Street, Lafayette, for more information, go to www.thtc.org.

Wired on Technology

... continued from page 1

“If on the way home from Tahoe, you can’t wait to get home to play a video game, or other areas of your life are being neglected, like you’re not in sports with friends or school is suffering, there might be a problem,” D’Ambrosio said.

A recent letter to parents from Joaquin Moraga Intermediate principal Bruce Burns said that although the school has a strict policy against using cell phones on campus, students are “often thinking about and waiting for their next text message instead of attending to their school work.”

Burns suggested parents check their monthly phone bill to see how many text messages a child is sending or has received.

D’Ambrosio and colleague Steven Freemire, MFT, held a conference for parents on Feb. 21 entitled “Living in the World of iPhone, Wii, and My Space: Tools of Addiction or Means of Communication” to address these concerns. Although there are benefits to these new technologies, such as building relationships and a sense of community with friends, and getting news of social gatherings, D’Ambrosio and Freemire explained that users can fall victim to cyber bullying, can have private or hurtful information disseminated to hundreds of people with a click, or can become vulnerable to predators.

“I suggest parents talk to other parents to see how long their kids spend on the Internet or gaming,” D’Ambrosio said. “Get a frame of reference, limit access to types of things kids have access to, or get professional help.”

The main reason D’Ambrosio believes some kids (and adults) get into trouble is an inability to deal with boredom. “Boredom means discomfort with yourself,” he said. “Play board games, cards, or learn to day-dream. Help our children learn how to deal with down time. The world is making it very hard for us – kids will always be around computers, cell phones.”

New technological advances, however, are not a bad thing. For many, like Edelstone, the world is a better place thanks to wireless technologies.

“About eight years ago, I went on a cruise (and that was before cruise ships had Internet access),” he said. “The cruise was great, but I came back to 1,000 e-mails. It took all the fun out of the cruise. All the good feelings were gone.”

Now, the world is open to him. While sitting in the bleachers watching a Cal game last week, Edelstone sent me an e-mail update: “Cal is losing 21-15 to Washington State, with seven minutes remaining in the first half.”

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email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; **Regular mail:** Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Dear Editor,
Moraga citizens should send a big thank you to our Town Council for agreeing Wednesday night to provide voters access to complete information about the Bruzzone development initiative before we vote on it. Instead of rushing it to the June ballot as the developer wanted, the Council decided to make a thorough analysis before placing it on the ballot. That way, voters will have the time and information needed to fully understand what the initiative would do prior to voting on it in November.

The open space left in Moraga is precious and decisions made now will determine the quality of life in our town for generations to come. When a developer writes an initiative, hires outside signature gatherers to collect names and sends out intimidating hit pieces to the residents, elected officials should make a special effort to ensure the public has solid information on which to base its decision. Thankfully, we have Council members who have done so.

Jon Leuteneker, Moraga

Dear Editor,
The Town Council members of Moraga displayed great discipline and open-mindedness at their Wednesday night hearing. All sides were given a chance to comment on the Bruzzone ballot measure which the developer wanted rushed to the June election. Even though Wednesday's meeting lasted past midnight, everyone had their say and a vote was taken that was fully informed by public comment. I was proud to see representative democracy in action in our little town.

The development initiative put forth by the Bruzzone family is complex, confusing and open to legal interpretation. The Council's decision to give it sufficient study before putting it on the ballot serves the voters' interest. Many thanks to the Council for ordering a thorough study that will enable the voters to learn what they need to know about this measure before they vote.

Susan Sperry, Moraga

Shop locally whenever you can. Only your support of our local businesses will keep them open!

Movers Take the Snow Train

Submitted by Ted and Dawn Schlink

A group of enthusiastic Moraga Movers boarded the Snow Train in Martinez on February 12 bound for Reno. They rode in a beautiful, refurbished Santa Fe Car with Navajo decor through mountain passes and tunnels among unbelievable

drifts of snow. The Movers marveled at the magnificent scenery from spacious and very comfortable seats on the Dome Car, the Piano Car, and the Dance Floor Car. Great entertainment included a banjo player, a guitar playing comedian, and a fantas-

tic "card shark." Snacks and beverages were served and very much enjoyed. All participants had wonderful accommodations at Harrah's, where not only gambling was offered but great shows as well. One lady on the train was dealt a royal flush - a

rarity to say the least!
Many other fun-filled trips are being planned this year. The Moraga Movers welcomes all active Lamorinda residents age 55+. For more information call 376-6622.

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Commonwealth Club Brings Willie Brown to Lafayette

Submitted by Joan Stevenson

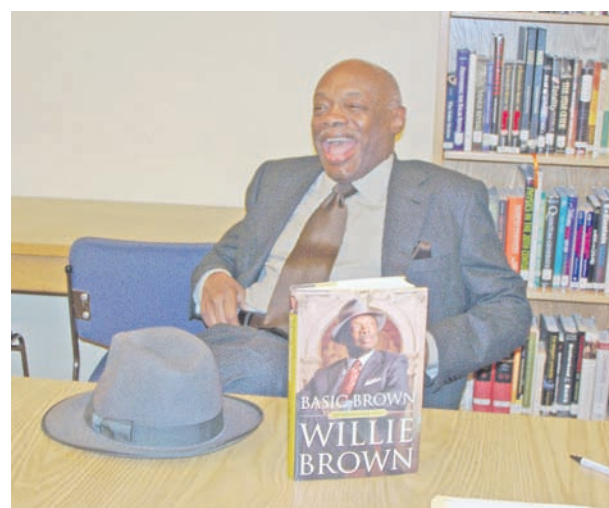
Former two-term Mayor Willie Brown of San Francisco, one of the most powerful politicians in the country, spoke before a capacity house in Lafayette on Monday, February 25th. He was the guest speaker for the Commonwealth Club which met at the Bentley School while the new library is under construction. In his recently published autobiography, "Basic Brown: My Life and Our Time," Brown shares anecdotes from his

life and career, which began in 1961 when he conducted his first sit-in demonstration. That was when he fell in love with politics and he never looked back. Known for his flamboyantly honest assessments of the world of politics, he spun stories for his audience that included anecdotes about the current stable of players.

His book is the awe-inspiring tale of how an African-American boy born in segregated Texas

rose to be the center of California and national politics for an astonishing four decades.

The Commonwealth Club is a member of the Glenn Seaborg Learning Consortium, a resource of the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center. The Consortium, the first of its kind at any American public library, will bring together twelve educational and cultural institutions to create an exciting learning community.



Willie Brown at the Commonwealth Club. Photo by Penny Porter

- Glenn Seaborg Learning Consortium Consortium Members
- UC Lawrence Hall of Science
 - Oakland Museum of California
 - Chabot Space and Science Center
 - Commonwealth Club of California
 - The Oakland Zoo in Knowland Park
 - John Muir/Mt. Diablo Health System
 - Lindsay Wildlife Museum
 - California Shakespeare Theater
 - Greenbelt Alliance
 - John F. Kennedy University
 - Saint Marry's College
 - UC Institute of Governmental Studies

Theft from Cars, Parking Lots More Common in Orinda

By Chris Lavin

Riffling through a car for valuables has been a common occurrence ever since there were cars and petty thieves, but Orinda police are seeing what they perceive to be an increase in such crimes, as well as the theft of a common device, the catalytic converter.

"If people would simply lock their car doors, we wouldn't have so many problems. And people still leave their keys in the ignition if they are just running into a store for a minute," said Detective Nate McCormack, head of community policing at the Orinda Police Department. When McCormack was told that quite a few people still held onto those habits, he simply rolled his eyes and shook his head.

Locking doors, however, will not protect the catalytic converter, installed below the chassis in all cars and trucks to filter poisons out of the gas that runs our vehicles. According to the police and local mechanics, the converters are being stolen from driveways and the BART parking lots at night.

"Oh, yeah," said Brian Mun, of Orinda Motors. "We've seen this."

While no firm statistics are available, McCormack said that outright car thefts seem to remain somewhat steady, with one or two cars stolen each month, but that thefts to cars' contents seem to be on the increase. And the one coveted item that isn't found in the glove compartment, he said, is the catalytic converter, which has become a common stolen item on official police reports - and locking



Brian Mun of Orinda Motors holds a catalytic converter - the object of recent thievery. Photo Chris Lavin

your car won't do much to deter that crime.

"There's not a lot you can do," he said. A thief will crawl beneath the car, usually at night, with a wrench or more handily a battery-powered saws-all tool, and in a couple of minutes, viola, he's off with the catalytic converter, a part of the exhaust system that cycles poisons out of the car's emissions. "Some of them (catalytic converters) are held on with only a couple of bolts," McCormack said.

"We've seen a couple of these (thefts)," said Mun, of Orinda Motors. "One of our customers had his stolen from his truck at the BART station parking lot."

McCormack said officers are not exactly sure what the thieves do with the converters, but recycling centers are a likely destination, because the rather heavy converters contain precious metals such as platinum and rhodium. There may

well as a second-hand market for the converters "because they're so expensive," McCormack said.

Catalytic converters vary in price, from several hundred dollars to more than \$1,000 - and often need to be replaced when a car or SUV will not pass a smog test, making it a need-to-replace part.

"The only thing the driver knows is that the car is making a whole lot of noise in the morning when it starts up," McCormack said. "So they drive to a mechanic who tells them that their catalytic converter is gone - it's been stolen."

McCormack said the best preventative for petty crimes is to lock the house, lock the car, and don't leave the keys in the ignition. For the converter, one might consider a garage. "One that isn't left open," McCormack emphasized. "A lot of people leave their garage doors open."



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Dr. Angela Bayat

Life in LAMORINDA

Mooo-ving Away!

Hunter Holding Moves His Cows Out of Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini



Black Angus cows, typical in Lamorinda Photo Andy Scheck

After years of ranching in Lafayette, the Holding Farm is headed north in search of greener pastures. Holding is the only local rancher currently selling grass fed beef at the Farmers' Markets. Wanting to grow their

herd, the Holdings decided they would have a better opportunity 280 miles north, in Montague, California.

"Land availability in the Bay Area is limited," explains Holding, "our herd grazes on

leased properties most of the time, it is scattered, hilly and not green enough in summer for the type of raising we are doing." Holding Farm beef is not only grass fed, it is "grass finished," meaning that the cows spend their entire life in the fields, are never sent to feed farms and never get the hormones and antibiotics that are typical of beef cattle ranches.

The cows will board trailers in May to move to the new Holding estate. Their new home comprises 500 acres of irrigated land. The town of Montague is close to Lake Shastina, in an irrigation district. In summer the canals fed by the lake are opened to flood the fields, so they stay green.

Holding owns 50 head at this time, but he and his wife Anne plan to grow the herd to 150-200. His practices will not change; his

cows will continue to roam the fields, and Holding "will continue to have the animals butchered at the same small facility, in the most humane way possible," he says.

Holding promises that the Orinda and Moraga Farmers' Markets will continue to be supplied with his meat, although the familiar faces of Anne and Hunter Holding themselves may be replaced by others at the Holding booth. The larger farm will allow Holding to pursue other distribution channels as well, such as specialty stores, mail order and restaurants.

The Holdings will not forget the Bay Area, saying, "We lived for more than 17 years in Lafayette, we raised both our kids here and we have many friends. We're optimistic. This is a new exciting phase in our lives."

There's a New Cat in Town

By Chris Lavin



Ginger, adopted by Orinda Books Photo Tod Fierner

For 16 years, Orinda Books – one of the few independent book sellers still operating today – had a store cat. "Fish" was a fixture who lived at the store full-time, purring to old customers and winning over new ones with her mild-mannered feline nature. She died of old age last year.

For months, customers asked, "When are you going to get a new cat?" said Kathy Coad (pronounced Co-add), who besides selling books is the official cat administrator at Orinda Books. But plans were not firm. How, after all, could they ever replace Fish?

Then, one night last fall, as

the bookstore's CD buyer Dennis Forfa made his way through the BART parking lot in Orinda, he heard a tiny mew. Then another mew. Focusing in on the trouble, Forfa scaled a fence to find a tiny, wailing, scrawny kitten with a collar. She was part tortoise-shell, part calico ... and well, part other stuff. No one knows for sure. He cupped her up, tucked her in and took her to the store.

"That's when the search for her home started," said Coad. The staff put signs at the BART station and in nearby neighborhoods. They put an ad in local newspapers trying to find the kitten's owners. They called all

the veterinarians in the area. They had her scanned for a microchip that might have identified her, but no microchip. They sent an e-mail to all of their customers, asking for help to find the kitten's owners.

Nothing happened.

"We tried for more than a month," Coad said. "We really tried everything."

In the meantime, the wayward kitten harbored her own plan, and began winning over customers, old and new. The staff exhausted all their known options. So they did the only thing left to do: They adopted her.

The first mission was to find her a title. She became the meet-greeter, public relations czar, and all-around roaming ambassador from the children's books to the new fiction and elsewhere. The next mission was to find her a name, so another e-mail went out: What did customers think Orinda Books should name the new cat?

"We got more than 300 e-mails back, and at least 150 different names," Coad said. "Because the old cat was Fish, some people thought she should be Fish II, or some variation of that. But nothing really resonated." Lots of customers voted for Ginger, Coad said, and lots

voted for Virginia, after the writer Virginia Wolfe. Ginger – or Ginga' for Wolfe fans – stuck.

Now, Ginger never leaves the store. Her litter box is upstairs, and on the rare day that the store is closed, a staff member comes in to feed her. Ginger's current favorite activity seems to be spending much of her day on a rolling office chair with her good friend Gunnar, bookseller Sandy Barnett's terrier, attached to it with his leash. If he feels like going somewhere he pulls her along. If she doesn't feel like going anywhere, she bats him with her paw from above to tell him to knock it off.

"They're great together," said Coad. "And the customers love her."

Staff members taped signs to the store's door, both inside and out, warning customers not to let the cat out. So far, Ginger has remained put, without a single escape or whim for the great wild world of the Bank of America parking lot. After all, she has seen the BART parking lot, and she's not stupid. She now has all her shots and was recently spayed.

"We like to say that she's the only employee who has health insurance," Coad said, with a smile, and a hug to the policy recipient.

Programs in Orinda Offer Teens Something To Do

... continued from page 4

OTAC is essentially "a teen run program" according to Hudson. The teens involved create the ideas for the programs that are available. The ideas that the participants come up with are often times community service oriented, although these activities are balanced with activities designed to give teens an outlet.

"In December we worked with the food bank. In January we started a program with yoga and relaxation at Mira-

monte High School and in February we held a blood drive here at the Community Center" explains Hudson. Activities such as tutoring Orinda youth and working with Orinda seniors are scheduled to take place in the next couple of months. Currently, OTAC is working to establish a teen movie night that will hopefully begin this summer, and a possible game day with Orinda seniors.

OTAC also offers a significant number of ski and

snowboarding trips throughout the winter. These trips run to various Tahoe area resorts via bus and occur roughly on a weekly basis through April 19th. Upcoming trips are scheduled for March 8th, 15th, 22nd, 23rd, 27th and 29th.

For more information on the Orinda Teen Advisory Council call (925) 253- 4206. The Council meets the first Monday of each month at 4pm at the Orinda Community Center.

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Economic Stimulus Package

By Tammy Cryer, Senior Loan Officer

The Economic Stimulus Package just passed on February 13, 2008 included a temporary increase in the conforming and FHA home loan limits for high cost areas. While the new loan limits have not yet been finalized, it looks likely that the Lamorinda area will receive the new maximum of \$729,750. The hope is that by making it possible for more people to get a conforming home loan rather than a jumbo loan, it will increase the purchasing power of some buyers and help some existing homeowners refinance into loans better suited for their situation. This long-awaited change is welcome and exciting, but has also created some confusion and questions. Here's an idea of how this change may benefit residents of Lamorinda. Why would it be beneficial to have a conforming rather than jumbo loan?

Usually the interest rates on conforming loans are lower and lower rates obviously mean lower payments. Using interest rates available today, the difference in the monthly payment on a \$650,000 loan is about \$500 per month. Exact savings will need to be determined once the interest rate models for the larger loans are available, but it could represent a significant savings for many.

Conforming loans may require less of a down payment for a purchase or less equity in the property to refinance their loans. Buyers may be able to purchase with a smaller down payment and current homeowners may be able to get a larger loan compared to the current value than you could with a jumbo loan.

In some cases, another benefit is more flexibility in qualifying for a new loan. For example, there are no minimum credit scores or cash reserves required for FHA loans and FHA offers even lower down payment or equity options than standard conforming loans. When will we be able to get these new loans?

HUD has until March 13, 2008 to publish the new loan amounts for the high cost areas. In addition, the government and bank systems used to approve and manage home loans need to be updated to handle the new limits. We don't yet know how long the changes will take, but these organizations are motivated and working aggressively to make these loans available. As the bill is setup now these new higher loan amounts are available only through the end of 2008 so it's a short window of opportunity for homeowners to take advantage of this change. We hope these

changes may be extended into future years, but there is no information available at this time indicating that is under consideration.

What do I do next? Details of the new legislation are still coming and it's crucial to work with your mortgage and real estate professionals who are committed, qualified, and equipped to give you timely information and expert advice every step of the way. They can help determine how these changes may benefit you whether you are purchasing a home or refinancing one you already own.



Tammy Cryer is a Senior Loan Officer and Certified Mortgage Planning Specialist with The Home Loan Group. She has offices in Lafayette and Orinda. Tammy can be reached at (866) 465-8588 x701 or Tammy.L.Cryer@chase.com

Dust Up at Fields Meeting

... continued from page 2



One of two proposed design changes for Stanley Intermediate School by Carducci & Associates.

"The district is in the first stages of looking at what to do with our fields. We will look at all options, but given our limited resources, I don't expect any dramatic changes to our fields. Our first priority is to make them safe for children to use."

Lattanzio outlined possible design changes at all of the elementary schools as well as Stanley Intermediate. A number of factors were considered in the independent analysis: drainage, soil type, analysis of use, types of grass, restrooms, and more. Carducci's job, as school board member Silva was quick to point out was just to make an assessment of the current condition of the fields, to guide the process as the district grapples with what to do with the aging fields.

Differences in using natural vs. synthetic turf got the audience all riled up. While synthetic turf can provide significantly more hours of use and has considerably lower maintenance costs, attendees voiced their displeasure with the option.

Some neighborhood groups that were already at odds with athletic events were con-

cerned over the possibility of lighted fields allowing sporting events possibly late into the night.

"I think it's important that you really hear from the neighbors. When it's in the District's hands it's not in the community's hands," said one Topper Lane community organizer. Lattanzio made a special point of offering to attend neighborhood meetings, and reiterated that the District and Carducci & Associates listen to comments and concerns.

Another neighbor said, "I bought a house near a school, I didn't plan on moving next to a sport complex - there's a big difference."

Upon hearing when potential closures for field refurbishment might take place, Judy McNeil of LMYA commented that, "We have 2,000 soccer kids with LMYA - we need use of all the fields, all the time."

For more information, go to the Lafayette School District website at www.lafsd.k12.ca.us.

The Future of the Hacienda Still Uncertain

... continued from page 3

Councilmember Mike Metcalf wondered if a survey was a good idea at this time. "We've had enough surveys in this town," he said, in his usual direct style, "What we need is a clear vision and mission statement for the next ten years." As the members of the Committee

asked for a Councilmember to volunteer to be their liaison, Metcalf walked the talk and stepped forward.

A representative from consultants Moore Iacofano Goltsman presented a three-step business plan to increase the Hacienda's revenue. Step 1: Mini-

mal Physical Change, this step emphasizes changes in marketing efforts and promotes the idea of two weddings a day. Step 2: Minor Site and Building Improvements, this step adds a small amount of additional meeting space in the La Sala Building. Step 3: Major Building Improvements, the addition of approximately 5,000 square feet of indoor space for medium-sized group gatherings. This facility would provide the needed space to accommodate indoor events throughout the year. The 5,000 square foot building would replace the Casita.

All members of the Council approved Step 1, but 2 and especially 3 raised many eyebrows. "We have too many balls in the air," said Metcalf, "it is not prudent management to invest before we have a vision for the Hacienda."

Mayor Deschambault added two more layers of concern: "We have a serious problem of parking at the Hacienda," she commented, "and we have not discussed as a community where we want a Community Center to be." Council member Bird agreed, "We have to answer first what the Town wants." Steps 2 and 3 were not approved.

Parks and Recreation Director Jay Ingram plays key role as revenue provider for the Hacienda. "Mike (Metcalf) being the liaison is a great positive step," commented the Director. As far as increasing the revenue, he is confident: "I think we need to program this place like a real Community Center. We will prove to the Town and the Council that we can reduce the deficit. It will take two years, but we will do it."

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Lamorinda Home Sales continued

SOLD	LAFAYETTE Last reported: 1
HOME SALES presented by LAMORINDA	LOWEST AMOUNT: \$1,405,000
	HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,405,000
LAFAYETTE	MORAGA Last reported: 1
	LOWEST AMOUNT: \$525,000
LAFAYETTE	HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$525,000
	ORINDA Last reported: 3
LAFAYETTE	LOWEST AMOUNT: \$989,000
	HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$3,000,000
<small>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.</small>	
LAFAYETTE	
68 Silverwood Drive, \$1,405,000, 4 Bdrms, 2965 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 2-5-08	
MORAGA	
162 Valley Hill Drive, \$525,000, 1918 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 2-7-08	
ORINDA	
38 Crestview Drive, \$989,000, 3 Bdrms, 1875 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 2-14-08	
253 Ivy Place, \$1,400,000, 4 Bdrms, 2246 SqFt, 1966 YrBlt, 2-8-08	
1 Tappan Way, \$3,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 1889 SqFt, 2006 YrBlt, 2-5-08	

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LAMORINDA Business

business briefs

Union Bank Meets Moraga

Union Bank, 1460 Moraga Road, Suite A, 631-1800, www.unionbank.com
Dimitry Bokman, the Branch Manager, opened the new office with his team on January 22nd in the Moraga Center, next to Asia Palace. "We have clients in the area," says the Manager, "some had to go to Walnut Creek to bank with us." Union Bank is a small size bank in the United States. It is a private establishment owned by Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi. Its first branch opened in San Francisco in 1953. The bank has now 322 offices in California, other offices in Washington State and one office in Oregon. "We have a personal, small bank approach" explains Bokman, "We want to serve the community and are part the Chamber of Commerce." The bank has no sub-prime lending, and is viewed as a very strict bank catering to small businesses and individuals.

Blodgett's Floor Coverings Celebrates

3291 Mt. Diablo Court, Lafayette, 925-284-4807, www.blodgetts.com
Join Blodgett's as the celebrate 50 years as a member of the Lafayette Chamber of commerce on Thursday March 13, starting at 4:30 pm, 3291 Mt. Diablo Court.

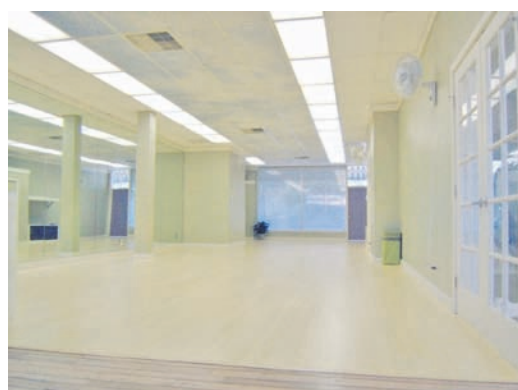
Correction:

The correct phone number for Techmommy is 377-7711; she is offering 10% discount to seniors in 2008.

Fitness Expansion

Informa – Integral Fitness, blending Eastern and Western philosophy
23A Orinda Way, Orinda, 254-6877, www.informadorinda.com

The 13 year old Orinda fitness center is celebrating its 1200 sf expansion. The new space has been developed as a Yoga studio and has allowed the addition of a store for yoga and fitness products. While adding a studio Andrea, the Director of the center, has added new equipment to the fitness side of Informa. The new facility will allow for their offer to include extra yoga classes, mid-morning and evening and special yoga workshops including teen and athlete yoga special. The Pilates classes are extended as well with a mat-Pilates addition. The remodeling has been conceived with sustainability in mind, with the use of renewable wood (cork and bamboo), low VOC paints, high efficiency appliance, etc. Drop-in fee for yoga and membership for integral fitness.



The new In Forma Studio Photo Andrea Colombu

Small Business Emergency Preparedness Workshop

Be sure to sign up for the Business CERT seminar on Wednesday March 26th. We know there will be a major emergency in the San Francisco Bay area; we just don't know when. This 2 1/2 hour seminar could save your business. There will be important information on emergency services and what to do to keep your business in operation at the time of a catastrophe. Be prepared. Come and be part of the solution. Featuring both a morning program with light breakfast at 7:30 a.m. and an evening program to include dinner beginning at 6:30 p.m. These workshops will take place on at the Holy Trinity Cultural Center, 1700 School Street in Moraga. Lamorinda Community Emergency Response Team Administrator Ken Tom will conduct an informative workshop focusing on how to prepare your small business to continue smooth operations in the event of a major disaster. The Orinda, Moraga, Lafayette and Pleasant Hill Chambers of Commerce jointly sponsor these workshops. A small admission fee covers food & beverages supplied by Terzetto Cuisine. To register, call Ken Tom at 376-0533

New from the three Chambers of Commerce

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, 100 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette

925-284-7404, www.lafayettechamber.org

- Lafayette Jazz Festival, Thursday to Sunday March 6 to 9. At Bentley School, 1000 Upper Happy Valley Road. See the full program on the Calendar page.
- Joint Mixer with Pleasant Hill Chamber Wednesday, March 12: Paul Mitchell School 100 Crescent Drive, Suite D, Pleasant Hill starting at 5:30 pm
- The GREEN Committee will hold its Open Meeting on Wednesday March 19-at 12 noon in the Lafayette Chamber Conference Room. Bring your lunch and ideas to help Lafayette business community thrive in a sustainable way.

Moraga Chamber of Commerce

www.moragachamber.org

- Kimco Realty Corporation met with the Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Moraga to discuss revitalization of the Rheem Shopping Center. The economic state of the Center has been of concern for sometimes. The property owner bought Rheem some years ago at the same time as 138 other centers. They claim having invested in refurbishing the Center and confirmed that Rheem was an asset for their company.
- The Chamber is proposing a "Lease Workshop" to all tenants, retail and other businesses, to learn the best practices to use when negotiating their lease. Learn how to negotiate a rent increase, what are the roles of an attorney and of a leasing agent. Learn how to build a win-win scenario with your landlord. The workshop will be held mid-March. To inquire, contact Larry Tessler at larryt39@earthlink.net

Orinda Chamber of Commerce, 24 Orinda Way, Orinda

925-254-3909, www.orindachamber.org

- Orinda's new "Planning Task Force" is a city committee working with the City Council to improve the residential and commercial planning review processes. It is also helping to plan for future commercial development in town. The Chamber needs a representative to this committee to look after business interests and to expressly work with its commercial sub committee. The role requires approximately 5 hours a month. You'll be working with council members, prominent citizens, the City Manager and the Planning Director. You'll report back to the Orinda Chamber Board from time to time. If you have an interest, live in Orinda, and you can bring skills to the table, call the Chamber office at 925-254-3909 or respond by email to our address at info@orindachamber.org.
- Chamber Hosts Mayor's Reception: The Chamber will host a welcoming reception for Orinda's new Mayor, Victoria Smith, on March 11, 2008 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Garden Room of the Orinda Library at 26 Orinda Way. Mayor Smith will be giving her State of the City address. Please join us in welcoming our new Mayor.
- March Chamber Luncheon March 28th: Noon - 1:30 p.m. Orinda Country Club 315 Camino Sobrante, Orinda, CA Speakers from Pulte Homes & Wilder/Gateway Development Cost: \$30.00 per person Call 925-254-3909 for your reservation

If you have a business brief to share, please contact

Sophie Braccini at sophie@lamorindaweekly.com

or contact

Lamorinda Weekly at 925-377-0977.



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Healthy Eating On the Go

Living Lean Works Out Business Partnerships

By Sophie Braccini

When Kristin Rasmussen went to order a sandwich at Caffe Teatro in Orinda a few weeks ago, it was not only because she knew it would be delicious, but also because that was just what her nutritionist from Orinda's Living Lean had ordered. "I did get a Living Lean Turkey Sandwich at Caffe Teatro the other day and it was wonderful," she said. "They are always so friendly and helpful there and the veggies they put on the sandwich were very fresh. I think the partnership [between Living Lean and Caffe Teatro] is such a natural and makes it easier for all of Sheena Lakhotia's clients to eat healthier on the go."

Lakhotia, the owner of Living Lean and creator of customized nutrition and exercise programs, is trying to make her clients' lives easier. "I assess my clients' weight profile, including their muscle to fat ratio and design a customized nutrition and exercise program for each of them," she explains. "Many of my clients told me that cooking for breakfast or dinner was quite alright, but that meals on the go were really problematic." That's what sent Lakhotia on the road, looking for partners that would make it convenient for her clients to live lean.

Lakhotia has started working with Rising Loafer, Quenchers, Caffe Teatro and Gepetto. She asks them to create specific products that correspond to the dietary needs of her program. "Everyone needs proteins for muscles, carbs for energy and fat for normal body functioning," explains Lakhotia, "all the



Sheena holding the first "Living Lean" breads out of Ahmed's oven at Rising Loafer in Lafayette

Photo Sophie Braccini
offer a snack size and a meal size shakes for our "Living Lean" customers," explains Debbie Yang, Quenchers' Principal. "The shakes are made with fresh fruits, nonfat frozen yogurt, plus a vanilla protein powder, called Syntrex." Customers can choose whatever combination of one or two fruits offered in the store. "You need protein all day long," says Lakhotia, "and snacking rarely incorporates it."

Joe, who owns the Caffe Teatro near the library, is quite happy with the partnership, "We offer a living lean sandwich, with unprocessed meat, chicken or turkey and lettuce, tomatoes, onion, avocados, to order. We use the Milton multi-grain bread that Sheena recommended." Since its appearance on the menu, regular customers too have asked for a "Living Lean" sandwich. "We offer fresh leaving lean salads as well," says Joe "and the price is reasonable."

... continued on page 17

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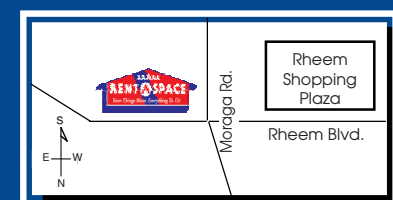
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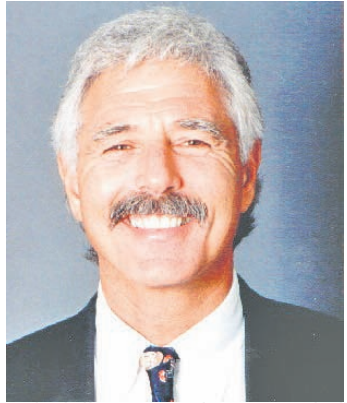
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Rick Phillips – Empowering Teens to Make Healthy Decisions

By Sophie Braccini



Rick Phillips Photo provided

On March 8th, Rick Phillips will be the keynote speaker at the parenting conference "Living With Your Teenager" organized by the Acalanes High School District. Phillips is the Founder and Executive Director of "Community Matters", a Sonoma County based non-profit that has offered help to more than 500 schools around the nation. On the 8th, Phillips will discuss practical tools with parents who want their young people to make healthy decisions.

"Students today are constantly bombarded with all kinds of challenging messages and have to make daily decisions about where to go in their lives," says Phillips, "they are under increased pressure at a younger age, while their support system is getting thinner." Phillips re-

members his younger years, "My neighborhood raised me. There always was a neighbor who would see us getting into trouble and wouldn't be afraid to step in, or there were grandparents or other relatives close by to lend an ear. Nowadays, we live in a culture of bystanders who do not want to mix in. Families are scattered and parents who are themselves under socio-economic pressures, have not enough sit-down time with their kids."

Phillips is big on explaining the debilitating impact of the bystanders' culture. We mind our own business; we don't want to get involved. But Phillips believes the best way to bring up healthy children is to create a community circle around them, which will support them and empower them to make good decisions. "I remember one of the scariest moments in my life as a father," Phillips recalls, "when I handed my car keys to my oldest child, praying he would make the right decisions and not put himself or others at risk."

During the morning conference, Phillips will share the tools he teaches to parents who want to empower their offspring. He will share communication tools such as how to encourage young people to talk by inviting a conversation but not inter-

rogate and explain how to develop communication strategies for each situation, gender and age group. He will discuss the kind of skills the kids need to say no, while maintaining their status; how to teach them to stop and think under pressure, in situation where alcohol, drugs or sexual pressure might be involved.

In the afternoon, Phillips will address the issue of bullying and violence in schools. "There have been five shootings in our schools in February, this is unbelievable," says a devastated Phillips, "in most cases other students had information about the shooter's desire or plan, but had not reported it. In most cases as well, the violent student had been harassed and bullied prior to the incident, sometimes for years, without the necessary adult support." Here again, Phillips battles the bystander culture. His non-profit group has intervened in more than 500 schools to enact the "School Ambassadors" program. The strategy is to identify student-leaders who are trained to speak up and intervene in situations that usually go under adults' radar.

"The power to create a safe and nurturing school is in the hands of our children," explains Phillips, "we identify the leaders in each social circle and teach them the language of non-violence, and give them the competence to speak up. They begin to be role models for the whole school. It takes time to change, but we've shown that a school can become a community where students care for each other." The program, costing about \$4,000, has been implemented all over the nation.

The conference will include a teen panel moderated by Phillips in the morning and other parenting workshops for parents of children grade 6 to 12. To register, go to: <http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/parents/TeenConference2008.pdf>

Family Focus

The Dangers of Gossip in Our Schools

By Margie Ryerson

"It's just harmless gossip!" But is it really? There is a vast difference between sharing information that is helpful or newsworthy ("Pete is in the hospital," or "Kristen got engaged") and gossiping, ("Did you hear that Gina is having an affair?") Often gossip is not based on factual information, and like the game "telephone," it can easily be distorted when it is passed on to others. And it can be very hurtful.

In our community, school gossip is a serious issue that flares up at times. As we know all too well, gossip and rumors at school or online can cause its intended victims much despair. Suicide is the chief concern, and symptoms such as depression, cutting, drug use, and eating disorders can arise in response to emotional pain.

Middle schools are particularly fertile grounds for rumor and innuendo. Children at this stage tend to be impulsive, naïve, and suggestible. They are in the developmental phase of forming their identities in relation to their peers, and it is a self-conscious and self-absorbed time. And because they are so preoccupied with what their peers think of them, they are extremely vulnerable to the malicious effects of gossip.

Typically, people gossip in order to relieve boredom and create excitement, or to feel more powerful and to align themselves with others in power. Gossip spreads quickly because it only takes a moment of indiscretion or poor judgment to participate. While adults usually have control over their impulses and can censor themselves, young adolescents are especially susceptible to the lure of gossip as they compete for social standing among their peers.

Many parents feel helpless if their child becomes the object of nasty rumors. It is especially difficult to combat this type of viciousness when the perpetrators are anonymous. School personnel can help and need to be notified. Your child can learn to speak up for herself, briefly and unemotionally, if she is confronted with hurtful accusations. A few possible responses are: "That's ridiculous," "Why would someone say such garbage?" or "You don't actually believe that, do you?" Then she can change the subject or walk away. By maintaining control, she will deny others the payoff from their gossip and help dispel it more quickly. Trying to ignore

There is so much good in the worst of us And so much bad in the best of us, That it hardly behooves any of us To talk about the rest of us.
Edward Wallis Hoch,
newspaper editor & former governor of Kansas (1849 - 1925)

hurtful words is also a possibility, but students' body language often gives them away when they flinch or look sad or angry.

Children need to learn from an early age that gossiping is wrong and harmful, and that they will experience strict consequences for engaging in it. Of course we also need to "do as we say." If our children hear us participating in gossip, they will learn to do it as well. Even if you think you are speaking in private, children have a way of listening the most attentively when you least want them to.

It is especially important that we avoid encouraging or repeating gossip that our children may bring home from school or elsewhere. It's not easy being a role model, but it serves our kids well if we show them it is important to avoid the temptation to gossip about others.

Margie Ryerson, MFT, is a marriage and family therapist in Orinda and Walnut Creek. Contact her at 925-376-9323 or www.margieryersson.com

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Saklan Gets Ready for Winter Concert

By Andrea A. Firth



Caption: Saklan first-graders rehearse for the Winter Concert

Photo Andrea Firth

Circles are the theme of Saklan Valley School's upcoming Winter Concert entitled Circles Around Saklan. "The circle of life, circles in communities, circles as physical shapes, circles in a broad sense," explains Margot Casey, Music Specialist at Saklan and the concert coordinator, as she describes how the theme will tie in with the performance. About 140 students spanning preschool through 8th grade will perform in the concert that is a long time tradition at the school.

"The concert brings a lot of excitement and spirit to the school," notes Casey. "And it also serves as a way for kids to show-

case their talents." Casey who teaches music to all the grade schoolers and preschoolers at Saklan started working with her songbirds on the concert tunes back in October. The younger students will also play instruments such as xylophones, recorders and metalophones (like a xylophone but made with metal versus wood) during the concert while some of the older students will provide accompaniment with clarinets, and electric guitars and drums.

Casey composes or arranges the songs to be performed and often rewrites the lyrics to fit the theme. "The language teachers also play a big part in Saklan's concerts" notes Casey. Language

teachers Amy Sullivan, Carmen Ryken, and Diana Kong have worked long and hard with the students who will sing songs in French and Spanish in addition to English—there is even a Swahili chant.

Given the theme, the hour and a half concert will, of course, include a rendition of The Circle of Life from the musical The Lion King, along with a humorous number called Nuts by some of Casey's favorite composers John Jacobson and John Higgins, and an all-school number that is choreographed with a square dance. The concert will be held at 4:30 on March 12th at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek.

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Teen Scene column

By Sarah Henningsen Campolindo

100 million.
It's a pretty big number. I struggle to believe that 100 million children around the globe lack access to books and libraries, yet the statistics rings true.

Most statistics are irreversible: the number of deaths in a war, the number of homicides in a given year. The upside to illiteracy however is that, over time, it's something that we can CHANGE. The problem is far from permanent.

Thanks to a local organization called Room to Read, steps are being made to eradicate child illiteracy. The charity, based in San Francisco, has built over 5,000 libraries in developing countries like Nepal, South Africa, and Laos since its inception eight years ago.

After reading about Room to Read in John Wood's book, *Leaving Microsoft to Change the World*, I felt inspired to contribute to such a great cause because of my own passion for reading that I've fostered since childhood.

Since a young age, books have been the gateway to the world for me, illustrating places and cultures that I can't experience first-hand. I've developed many dreams of travel that I can attribute almost entirely to books that gave me insight into the world and the people who share it.

Unfortunately, over 100 million children don't have that same magical access to books that you and I have been blessed with. It's not

their fault or lack of desire to learn, but the lack of resources in such impoverished communities. In Nepal, where most families earn less than \$2 a day, children don't have the opportunity to jump on opportunity because it simply doesn't exist.

I want to continue sharing my love of reading with the world; Room to Read seems like the perfect avenue to do so. My goal for this project is \$20,000, which is definitely lofty. But with that money, an entire school can be built in Nepal for a rural community. When I meet with CEO John Wood next month, my hope is to present him with a substantial check that can be immediately directed towards the building of a spanking-new Nepalese school room.

To contribute to this project, please send a check made out to Room to Read to 2180 Sky View Court, Moraga 94556. If we reach the \$20,000 goal, I'll be able to share information in the Lamorinda Weekly about the new school once production starts—in turn, a piece of you will be invested in the project, not just your money.

We've all had our room to read throughout childhood and adult life. It's time to pass the gift of education along to hundreds of Nepalese children who want, and deserve, that gateway to the world. A world of hope and opportunities, not of poverty and illiteracy.

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Acalanes Choir Puts on a Hilarious Musical The Mystery of Edwin Drood

By Andrea A. Firth



Acalanes students perform The Mystery of Edwin Drood

Photo Chris Wickman

Over the past weekend, the Acalanes High School Concert Choir had sold-out audiences laughing, shouting, clapping, and voting during their performance of The Mystery of Edwin Drood. Audiences voting?—Well that does not seem to make sense. However, in this wacky musical almost anything goes (or maybe that was last year's show). Based on an unfinished novel by Charles Dickens, this musical (created for Broadway by Rupert Holmes) has the ending determined by audience vote. Allowing this level of spectator participation required the actors to be spontaneous versus rehearsed and to often improvise more than memorize.

Bruce Lengacher, the Director of Choral Activities at Acalanes and the show's Producer, led a cast of 70 with musical support provided by members of the Acalanes Orchestra and Symphonic Band in a show that employs the British pantomime and music hall traditions popular in the late 19th century. "One of the great things about this show is that there is no fourth wall," explained Lengacher. "From the moment that you walk into the lobby, the actors

are interacting with you. It's kind of a circus atmosphere. It's really fun."

The story of Edwin Drood is written as a play within a play—that is the actors are playing actors—which has each lead playing dual or triple roles. The music is drawn from multiple styles and includes big full-cast numbers alongside poignant solo and duet pieces. The student-designed and constructed set for the Acalanes production was comprised of several plywood periactoids. That's theater speak for multi-sided, painted props that are easily moved to create different backdrops.

In addition to an ensemble that could act, dance, and sing, the depth of talent among the Acalanes lead performers for Drood was remarkable. Vinnie Urdea gave stand-out performances as The Chairman (a sort of Master of Ceremonies) and the ditsy Mayor Sapsea entertaining the crowd with his comical delivery of written and impromptu jokes. Emily Radosevich, who spent much of the evening mustachioed or bearded as the cross-dressing Edwin Drood, belted out her songs and in character hammed it up for the audience. With his swarthy complex-

ion, long sideburns, and sinister grin Cameron Gordon looked and played believably evil John Jasper. And the sweet ingenue Rosa Bud (who was voted the murderess in the show I saw) played by Yvette Dickson probably had the best vocals of the evening.

Alex Frankel was so realistic as the Reverend Chisparkle that he could lead a congregation tomorrow, but a real Anglican minister probably is not that funny. Janette Wallen combined her terrific comedic sensibility and tremendous vocal talent to deliver scenes both funny and moving in her part as Princess Puffer. Tyson Moore was a crowd favorite in his hilarious portrayal of the thespian-wannabe Bazzard. While Sara Garewal and Maxwell Cazanov as the Landless siblings used their best Indian accents to a humorous end. Jason Long who played Durdles and Andrew Bon-temps as his sidekick added more laughs as did the high-kicking Jessica Bruns who played Flo. Student Producer Gina Connolly pulled the show together with the assistance of Student Directors Bruns and Bon-temps.

Campo Musical Goes to the Prairie with Oklahoma!

By Andrea A. Firth



Lauren Zampa as Laurey Williams and Harry Thomas as Curly McLain

Oh what a beautiful morning—not the typical first words from a teenager when they awaken, but Campolindo High School students will soon be singing this phrase as they perform in the school's upcoming Spring Musical Oklahoma! Always a popular event, the Campo musical has morphed to become an institution at the High School. Dave Pinkham will once again stage direct the production that will include close to 80 cast members, with the principal roles double cast, and an orchestra of about 25 musicians.

When choosing the musical for Campo's production, Dave has to find a show that can support a large cast and Oklahoma! fits the bill

"I find it very difficult to do a show [at Campo] with this much talent floating around unless I can have a cast of 60 or 70 people." He adds, "We haven't gone back to the 40's or done Rodgers and Hammerstein in the 11 years that I have been involved. So it just seemed time to do a real classic." Influenced by the London revival of Oklahoma! in the late 1990's, Dave has tried to present a realistic portrayal of the Midwestern prairie in 1906 by employing an earthy color palette and simplicity in the set and costumes.

Senior Susan Brinckerhoff landed the leading role of Laurey in the Territory cast. Although she has been a member of the school choir for four years, her previous experi-

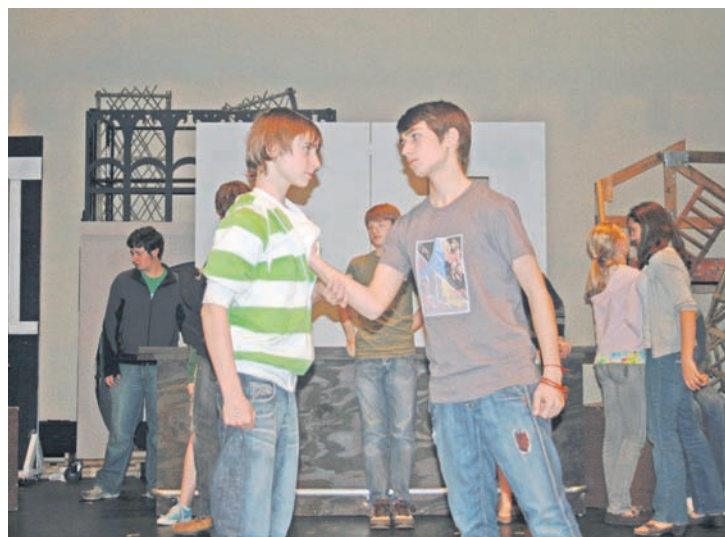
ence with performing in a musical consisted singing in the ensemble for only one year. "It was kind of a surprise for me, but it has been really amazing working with people who are a lot more experienced," says Susan. "Everyone has been really nice and supportive." Probably like many students at Campo, Susan had never seen the musical Oklahoma!, and like a teen of the 21st century she fixed that by renting the DVD version of Shirley Jones and friends singing on the plains. And although she is a little nervous for opening night, Susan feels all the rehearsal will leave her well prepared.

Ryan Chiles, who has performed in the musical in all four years of high school, will play the part of Curley in the production. "What I like about the story is that it feels real. It's grounded in good morals," states Ryan. Although he is looking forward to putting all the practice and rehearsal behind him as opening night approaches, Ryan notes, "You develop an attachment to [the show], so it's kind of bitter sweet when it ends."

Oklahoma! will be performed at the Campolindo Performing Arts Center over two weekends in March. Evening performances start at 7:30 pm on Thursdays (3/13/ and 3/20), Fridays (3/14 and 3/21) and Saturdays (3/15 and 3/22) and matinees start at 2:00 pm on Saturdays (3/15 and 3/22). Tickets can be order through the Campolindo Choir website www.campochoir.com.

Miramonte Performs Les Mis

By Andrea A. Firth



Max and Daniel Coleman rehearsing for Les Miserables at Miramonte

Photo provided

Tackling a musical that portrays the struggle of a downtrodden man trying to redeem himself in the face of social injustice while set in France as the Napoleonic Wars rage is pretty heady stuff for a high school production. When the musical is the legendary Les Miserables based on the book by Victor Hugo, it is even more remarkable. "I couldn't have imagined in my wildest dreams that such an epic show could ever be performed at a high school," states Miramonte drama teacher and acting coach Heather Cousins. A school edition of the musical (almost identical to the Broadway version) released with amateur

royalties and "the immense talent of the Miramonte students" makes this possible according to Cousins.

To master this larger-than-life show, the cast (with the female leads double cast) has been working on the production since December with rehearsals lasting up to six hours or more. In addition to the grueling rehearsal schedule, sophomore Max Coleman has found that playing the lead role of Jean Valjean has presented some other challenges. "The major difficulty with the role is demonstrating my age," says Max. "The age difference between my character and me is about 50 years! Another difficulty

is that I have to show that I am dying of consumption (tuberculosis) throughout the entire play."

Max and his fraternal twin brother Daniel, who plays Thenardiers the corrupt innkeeper in the play, have been performing in musical theater since they were in grade school, and mom Ellie Schwartzman could not be prouder of her singing thespian offspring. Asked if he could relate to the story of the wretched ones, Max responded, "One of the main themes of Les Miserables is the peasants' rebellion against the cruel and unjust monarchy, and I definitely sympathize with that belief." He clarified his answer to state that the monarchy in this instance did not represent his parents—but he does believe that the cruelties found in the show in some ways parallel current events of today.

Les Miserables will be performed at the Miramonte High School Theater (750 Moraga Way in Orinda) on March 13, 14, and 15 at 7:30 pm; March 20, 21, and 22 at 7:30 pm; and March 16 and 22 at noon. Advance tickets can be purchased through the Miramonte High School website www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/miramonte or at the door.

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LOVE LIMERICKS?

We couldn't resist some silliness as St. Patrick's Day draws near. If you've got a limerick in you that's bursting to get out, please send it to us (lee@lamorindaweekly.com)!

Jennifer Wake Takes the Cake: Lamorinda is short for three towns, where community spirit abounds. Acronyms we do best, LMYA, OIS . . . We who live here are family, we've found. Lamorindans give much of our hearts, whether supporting our sports or the arts. Dons, Cougars, Gaels, Mats, early Kiwanis meeting chats, the community is a whole of its parts. A love of this place gives us pride: A home that we carry inside. We clean parks, save our creeks, cheer at OMPA meets. We're a neighborhood three cities wide

Jean Follmer's Men: The Lafayette Man The Lafayette man went to town To claim his stool and sit down. The bar at the Roundup Was where the man drank up Green beer and then fell on his crown. The Man from Moraga There once was a man from Moraga Who couldn't say much more than "Gaga" A stay at home dad, He found his life had, Become quite a bit of a saga. The Man from Orinda There was a new man in Orinda Who said to his dear wife Melinda "I'm scared of earthquakes And don't know why Cal Shakes Are so cheered throughout Lamorinda."

Sophie Braccini Bares All: My veggie garden is neat and is bright Whether rain or shine it's a source of delight You will find me there All dressed or bare That is where I spent my whole wedding night

Cathy Tyson Tells It Like It Is: They said it couldn't be done Start a newspaper for fun Reporters were found Attractive newshounds The result is way better than the Sun

Andrea Firth's First Editorials: In Moraga there s a measure called MOSO And Bruzzone s have another called MOSPRO Open space is the topic But I may be myopic Which to vote for I really just don't know. Our state budget is in a fine mess Schwarzenegger wants us to spend less Our schools will suffer He says get tougher But he can afford private I d guess.

Wendy Scheck's Crystal Ball: In Lamorinda the schools are the best To that, the home prices attest But town coffers are bare And we have become quite aware That bad roads will soon be our test

J-Dog's people fries

By Susie Iventosch

One of our good friends recently told me that she's had breakfast at the Village Inn Café in Orinda pretty well every morning for over 15 years! When I heard this, I remembered that owners Kathy and Kurt Bellows are the parents of my daughter's very best friend from kindergarten, Kimberly.

We'd moved away from the area sometime during their first grade year, so I'd kind of forgotten that they owned the restaurant. Whenever Courtney and Kimbers (as my daughter used to call her) wanted to have a play date, I'd bring my two little boys (who are now 18 and 20) in tow. This year, the girls will both graduate from college.

My, how time flies ... but I digress.

The Village Inn, serving breakfast and lunch, is famous for its breakfast potatoes, according to my friend. When I phoned the restaurant to see how they're made, Kathy said, "They're not like regular hash browns. Kurt slices them and cooks them on the grill and people really do seem to love them."

This all brings me back to my youngest son Joel, who as a toddler always loved chatting with Kathy when we visited the Bellows' house. And now, he makes amazing potatoes, too. Hmm ... I wonder if he learned this trick at their house when I wasn't watching!

J-Dog's people fries

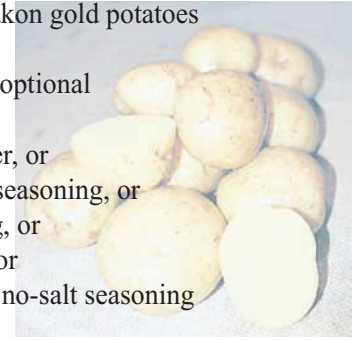
Try as we may to raise civilized children, they still end up with names like "J-dog" or just plain "Dog." While I don't pretend to understand the "dog" thing, it's actually kind of funny.

With a little good grooming, this generation of "dogs" can be inspired to prepare some excellent people treats, like these homemade, oven-baked fries that Joel (dog), conjured up.

This recipe calls for approximately one medium-large potato, per person. If your family really loves fries, you may want to consider preparing two potatoes per person.

Ingredients for six servings

- 6 medium to large russet or Yukon gold potatoes
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard *optional
1 teaspoon each salt and pepper, or
2-4 teaspoons Montreal steak seasoning, or
2-4 teaspoons Cajun seasoning, or
2-4 teaspoons Lemon pepper, or
2-4 teaspoons of your favorite no-salt seasoning



**Seasoning options - according to your own taste - use any or all of those listed, or come up with your own favorite seasoning, and adjust seasoning quantities by experimenting to suit your taste.

Directions

Clean and slice unpeeled potatoes into strips 1/2 inch wide by 1/8-1/4 inch deep and the full length of the potato. Place potato strips into a gallon-size Ziplock baggie. (You may need two Ziplocks depending upon how many potatoes you prepare.) Drizzle oil (and Dijon if you choose) over potatoes in baggie and zip bag shut. Knead bag to distribute oil and mustard over potato slices. Open baggie to add seasonings, re-zip and again knead baggie to spread seasonings over potatoes.

Spread potatoes onto a greased baking sheet, (we use PAM) making sure that potatoes are just a single layer deep. You may need a second baking sheet.

Bake in a 400-degree oven for 20-30 minutes, or until potatoes are easily pierced, but beginning to get a bit crunchy on the outside. You should turn potatoes with a spatula at least once or twice during baking to make sure all edges get a little crispy. Serve immediately, piping hot.



Susie Iventosch Susie can be reached at susizven@gmail.com

The recipe is available on our web site. Go to: http://www.lamorindaweekly.com

See our Advertising rates online: www.lamorindaweekly.com or call 925.377.0977

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LAMORINDA's Restaurants • updated January 23, 2008 • Table listing various restaurants, their addresses, and phone numbers. Categories include American, BBQ, Burger Joint, Chinese, Italian, Mexican, etc.

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.

PC Computer Maintenance

By Edward Zeidan



Edward Zeidan is the president of Nerd4Rent, Inc., a Lafayette-based technical support company that offers computer maintenance plans starting at only \$5.99 per month, remote support, help desk and training classes. Nerd4Rent can be reached at 925-283-5666 or www.Nerd4Rent.com.



Every computer needs periodic maintenance in order to perform at its best, and to keep running without problems. The vast majority of people-well over 90% in my experience-do not perform routine maintenance on their computers. Consequently, they

experience many avoidable problems with their computers. This article describes what steps you need to take to maintain your computer, and provides some practical computer usage tips.



Update your antivirus/antispayware software

This is critical! Your computers' security suite updates daily, sometimes more frequently. Don't allow it to get out of date, or let your subscription expire. Since there are something like 16 viruses released every day, not having

up-to-date protection can be as bad as having no protection. Most of the time, you can just right-click on the icon in the lower-right part of your screen, and click "update" or "check for updates". Our favorites are AVG, Bit-Defender, and TrendMicro.



Make sure your firewall is working

A firewall is designed to protect your computer from certain Internet threats. You need a firewall in additions to antivirus/antispayware software. If you have a home

network, your router is probably acting as a firewall. If not, make sure Windows or your security software is providing a firewall.



Backup your data!

I know I sound like a broken record on this issue, but we're constantly seeing clients who lose irreplaceable pictures, documents, etc. and are in a panic. This would not be an issue if they had current backups.

You can use a thumbdrive, external hard drive or online backup service. For online backup services, we like idrive or carbonite.



Change passwords frequently

Many people store highly sensitive information on their computer, such as online banking and investment passwords, income tax returns, business

information, etc. With identity theft increasing rapidly, it's important to change your computer and online passwords periodically. We recommend at least once per year.

Keep all your program CDs & passwords handy

You need ready access to your program CDs in case there's a problem with your computer, or an upgrade is required. A large Ziplock bag or a small box makes a handy storage container for your CDs. Keep your software license codes with the CDs. Passwords for your

email, router, wireless network, etc. are frequently needed when troubleshooting computer problems or making changes to your system. We have created a password list document that is available for download on our website at www.Nerd4Rent.com under the freestuff link.



Stay away from file-sharing and other questionable websites

Websites that offer free music and video downloads often install programs on your computer that will make

it run worse, or could give you a virus. Many websites that offer some sort of free product or service make money by selling your personal information, or by installing rogue programs on your computer. Approach with caution.



Watch what files/programs you download or open

When you receive an email with either a link to a website, or an attached file, use extra caution. Clicking a link or opening an attachment can install malicious software or a virus. Just because an email comes from a friend or

family member, do not automatically trust it. There are many viruses that will send themselves to everyone in your address book. A frequent ruse is to have people click a link in an email to see a joke. Once you click that link, you could get an infection.



Defragment your hard drive

Your computer's hard drive is like a great big filing cabinet. As you create or edit files, your computer may store the file in several pieces. This causes your computer to slow down over time, as the pieces must be reassembled every time you want

to open the file. When you de-fragment your hard drive, the computer finds the pieces and reassembles them into one file. As a bonus, it even moves all files to the front of the hard drive, where they can be accessed more quickly. Disk defragmenter can be found under **All Programs | Accessories | System Tools**.



Run Disk Cleanup

Disk Cleanup is a little utility that empties your recycle bin, clears out temporary files, and a few other niceties.

Run this utility at least monthly to clear out unneeded files. Disk Cleanup can be found under **All Programs | Accessories | System Tools**.



Blow out the dust

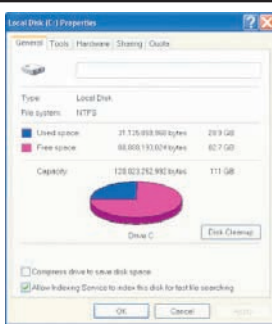
Your computer is a dust magnet. Dust gets pulled into your computer's case and into the ventilation holes by the cooling fans. When dust builds up on internal components and covers ventilation holes, cooling air cannot flow over the

components and they heat up. Heat is the enemy of your computer. It's a good idea to vacuum or blow the dust out of the ventilation holes and the inside of your computer periodically. A note of caution: be careful if you open your computer's case. You can get a nasty shock or you can damage sensitive electronics inside.



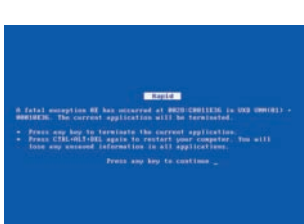
Run Microsoft Update/Windows Update

Microsoft is constantly updating Windows and Office to enhance performance and fix bugs and security issues. Make sure your computer has Microsoft Update and that it's set to automatically download critical updates.



Check your hard drive space

You always want to maintain at least 15-20% free hard drive space. Your hard drive needs the free space for temporary storage space, while it figures out where to put your 500 page autobiography. Move little-used files to an external hard drive, or archive to CDs/DVDs.



My computer suddenly stopped working, what should I do?

Windows XP comes with a great utility called System Restore that periodically takes a snapshot of your computer's settings. If you experience a problem, you can always try System Restore to see if that fixes the problem. When you run System Restore, any new software or hardware that you've

added since the system restore date will be lost. You will not lose your data files, they are unaffected by System Restore. A note of caution-some manufacturers have similarly named programs, which may cause you to lose all your data and programs. Make sure you know which System Restore you are using. System Restore is found under **All Programs | Accessories | System Tools**.



Repair vs. replace

When does it make sense to replace your computer, rather than repairing it? Since computer prices have dropped so much over the past few years, we recommend that if your computer is over 3 years old, consider replacing it rather than performing repairs that

cost more than \$200-300. If the computer is more than 5 years old, then you should replace it when it needs service. You may be surprised to find you can purchase an excellent new computer for between \$400-700.



Windows XP vs. Windows Vista

Last year, Microsoft released Windows Vista, their latest operating system. Unfortunately, Vista has been plagued by hardware and software incompatibilities, slowness, and instability. We strongly recommend that you purchase Windows XP with your new computer. Please note that you can only

find Windows XP online. Dell sells computers with XP on the business side of its website. If you're thinking of buying a new computer soon, be aware that Windows XP is supposed to be unavailable after June 30 (this deadline has already been extended once, and may be extended again).

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Dinnertime and DNA

By Theresa Tsingis, D.C., M.S.

We've heard the saying "You are what you eat". Scientists are now discovering that your DNA unwinds and expresses itself according to what you eat also. The Genome Project, which has decoded human DNA, and the field of epigenetics (the science of what influences DNA), reveal that eating patterns may determine the health of not only yourself, but of future generations.

Nutrition is a lifestyle decision, but the genes that have been passed down to us may seem like an unalterable inheritance. Yet nutrigenomics (the study of nutrition and DNA) is showing that nutrients surrounding a cell's nucleus can influence which part of a gene unwinds. If the nutrient is compatible with health, optimal parts of the code can unwind to reproduce. If the nutrient is harmful, it may cause an expression of the genetic code that allows a familial-inherited disease to express itself. For example, if several men in a family have had heart attacks in their mid-forties, an active, positive lifestyle can be what spares some from that fate.

Genomic testing, if used responsibly and discriminately, can provide very interesting clues to how family patterns of disease are passed from one generation to another. Take high blood pressure, for instance. Several genetic tests can check for the presence of DNA alterations which may predispose (not absolutely predetermine) someone to hypertension. One can run those tests with a goal of making specific changes to avoid getting hypertension or prolong its manifestation. This knowledge can help in the employment of therapies which have a better chance of working. For example, a 47 year old female patient of ours with a history of hypertension on her mother's side, tested positive for an enzyme defect which can lead to a decreased ability to lower blood pressure. The good news is that her positive lifestyle steps can help her avoid going down that road. Another unexpected benefit was that in knowing a bit of her daughter's genetic code, her mother changed her medication to one that addressed that enzyme defect, and

more effectively lowered her blood pressure.

Another patient of ours, a 52 year old woman with a strong history of osteoporosis, had a simple genomics test done that revealed she was deficient in Vitamin D and calcitonin receptors. Vitamin D promotes calcium deposition into bone. Calcitonin is a hormone that signals calcium to enter the bone. The good news about this information is that she became informed enough to compensate for the genetic deficiency by taking more vitamin D supplements and D-rich foods. Also, there are calcitonin nasal sprays available to assist in raising available calcitonin levels. Her genetic inheritance is not a doomsday sentence. Along with appropriate medications to influence bone deposition, she's improving her chance of staving off osteoporosis.

There are thousands of genomic test results one could attain, and many new facilities that conduct these tests, but only about a dozen or two results are backed by research and shown to be alterable by lifestyle changes. At Lamorinda Nutrition, we only test for genomics factors that can be improved by diet and lifestyle.

In the next article, we will describe how nutrition, as a big part of lifestyle, can influence future generations by affecting our amazing genetic code.

*(Nutrients can cause a cascade of cell signals which)
(This suggests that even with a strong family history of disease, one can positively alter that inheritance.)*



Dr. Theresa Tsingis, D.C., M.S., practices at Lamorinda Nutrition, 89 Davis Road, Orinda. She can be reached at drtsingis@comcast.net or (925) 360-2729.

Healthy Eating On the Go Living Lean Works Out Business Partnerships ... continued from page 13

Lakhotia does not take commission on the Living Lean menu items.

Gepetto in Orinda is just starting to offer Living Lean sandwiches and salads as well. Sue, from Gepetto details her menu, "the sandwiches are made with high fiber bread (Milton's), oven roasted turkey breast, mustard, lettuce, tomato, red onion. The salad is composed of Spring mix, chicken breast, tomatoes, mushrooms, red bell peppers, red onion, cucumber. The dressing made of 2 tablespoons of olive

oil mixed with balsamic vinegar is on the side, and it is served with Milton's bread."

Diablo Foods in Lafayette is interested in joining this business alliance. The staff will be working on recipes with Lakhotia in the coming weeks. "My next step will be restaurants," says the young businesswoman. "there are many places where you can eat high protein, quality meals in our cities."

Lakhotia's brochures can be found in all the stores of her "partners."



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SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



Miramonte Falls to Dublin in First NCS Game

By Jack Fernbacher



Chris Hatfield (14)

Photo Jordan Fong

At halftime in the second round of NCS on Friday, Feb. 22, the three-seeded Miramonte men's basketball team led by nine points, but when it was all said and done it was the six-seeded Dublin Gaels who won the game.

The Mats led 27-18 at halftime with their tough perimeter defense. In the second half, turnovers and low-offensive production for the Matadors allowed Dublin to get back in the game and eventually rout the Mats 61-50.

"I came into the game thinking we would win," said Miramonte's senior captain Peter Briskey. "Dublin has a good team, but thought we were better than them. The problem was we had a lead and let up at halftime."

Briskey, who averaged 13.8 points per game in the season, was held to only two points and fouled out in his final game as a Matador. Miramonte's leading scorer of the game was senior shooting guard Zac Akin, who finished the game with 13 points including a pair of 3-pointers.

Miramonte had beaten Dublin twice this season before the NCS game, which was Miramonte's first game in NCS after its bye in the first round.

"It's hard to beat any team three times," said Jerry Montgomery, a long time Miramonte basketball fan and golf coach. "In every sport,

the losing team will be playing its hardest to win."

Dublin's senior K.J. Scott with an unorthodox over-the-head-shot led Dublin in scoring with 21 points including three shots made from beyond the arc. Dublin had to travel to Miramonte for the game, which should have given home court advantage to the Mats

"At our home gym, we had less fans than our opponents did," said Briskey about the fact that Dublin's student section was bigger than Miramonte's student section.

Miramonte was flourishing with the addition of a foreigner from Montenegro named Petar Madarevic during league play. Madarevic, a senior guard, brought tenacious defense and creative passes to every game, but went home before NCS started.

"The main thing Petar brought was his desire to win," said Briskey. "He cared about basketball and understood that winning was the most important. A lot of people lost the willingness to care, and just assumed that they would win without hard work."

Head Coach Dave Brown led the Matadors, who finished the season 20-7 (10-4 DFAL). During the season, the Mats were streaky. The team had a nine-game winning streak in preseason and an eight-game winning streak



Davis Louie (1)

Photo Jordan Fong

at the beginning of league play.

"I thought the season overall went well," said Akin. "It was disappointing we lost

NCS in the second round. No one passed the ball and everyone was more concerned about his stats than winning the game."

Joaquin Moraga Student Goes For the Gold In Karate

Submitted by Thomas Westernoff

The Karate and Fitness Place USA will send an athlete to the World Championships for the second year in a row. Chris Wellbrook, an 8th-grader at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, has

qualified for the team that will travel to Osaka, Japan in mid-March. Last year, Miramonte alum Nick Fleischman made trip.

Wellbrook earned the honor by placing in the top

three at the 2007 Amateur Athletic Union National Karate Championships after many hours of hard work and training.

Other Highlights:

Seven members of The Karate & Fitness Place USA brought back 13 medals from the West Coast Championships held in Yuba City, CA on February 17th.

The events were in Kata (Forms), Kumite (sparring) and Kobudo (weapons). Among the winners were: Jessica Wynblatt 3rd place kata, Orion Wynblatt 3rd place kata and kumite, Haze Mach 2nd place kata and kumite, Chris Wellbrook 1st kata, 2nd kobudo, 3rd kumite, John Krawkowski 2nd kata and kumite, Brandon Tokuyama 3rd kata, 2nd kumite, and Jodi Wynblatt 3rd kata.

Matadors defeat Dublin in NCS semi-finals

... continued from page 1



Katie Batlin (21)

Photo Jordan Fong

Miramonte got ahead early, up 13-10 at the end of the first period relying on the inside play of sophomore center Stephanie Golden who had seven points in the period. Three 3-pointers from Ashlee Burns in the second quarter pushed the lead to 30-20 by halftime. Hercules fought back valiantly behind 19 points from freshman guard Brittany Boyd, but trailing in the fourth quarter with time winding down the Titans were forced to foul Miramonte to stop the clock. Like seasoned veterans, the Matadors made them pay every time by stepping to the line and collecting two points on each trip.

Championships are won and lost at the free-throw line. It was no exception Saturday night at Saint Mary's College, as Miramonte made 19 out of 23 free throw attempts including 10 for 10 in the fourth quarter on their way to a 61-53 win and their third NCS championship in four years. The Mats were led by Batlin's 20 points and flawless 14 of 14 free throw shooting, as well as Burns, who joined in the fun by hitting five 3-pointers in a row and delivering an emotional lift as she laid herself out at midcourt, diving out of bounds for a loose ball in the second half.

Miramonte forward Chelsey Christensen gave her own Herculean effort on the boards, limiting the opponent's second shot opportunities by fighting tooth and nail for rebounding position on every defensive play. Christensen also found a way to bring more than just scrapping in the paint, flying out to the perimeter to block a Hercules 3-point try in the waning moments and sinking a pair of clutch free throws in the final minute.

Miramonte Women Show Dominance in NCS Quarterfinals

By David Anderson

The shots did not stop falling Friday night in Orinda as the Miramonte Women pounded San Marin 80-37 in the Division III Quarterfinals of the NCS playoffs. The Matadors tallied eleven three pointers over the course of the contest including a perfect six for six from senior point guard Ashlee Burns, who finished with eleven field goals for twenty eight points.

The Matadors (24-3) took immediate control of the game with a 24-7 first quarter lead making quick work of the Mustangs (18-12). San Marin quickly realized the caliber of the top seeded Mats as they fell on the short side of a 19-2 run to start the game.

The Mustangs of San Marin played their best during the second quarter in which they were able to outscore the Matadors by a point. The strength and resilience of the Matadors, however, proved to be too much for the visitors. Miramonte, up by sixteen at halftime, quickly began to increase upon their lead after the break. With help from Burns, who recorded four three point field goals in the third quarter, the Mats continued their dominance, eventually increasing the margin to thirty points by the end of the period.

The theme was much of the same in the fourth quarter with the Matadors adding to their already substantial advantage.

Along with Burns, who totaled twenty eight points, the Mats had two other players reach the double digit mark. Katie Evans finished with fifteen points while Katie Batlin added fifteen more to the forty three point victory.

The Mats took the momentum and resulting confidence from this victory into the NCS semifinal game against Dublin on Wednesday, Feb. 27, where they topped the Gaels, 67-46. They went on to the finals at Saint Mary's College last Saturday, beating Hercules 61-53 to win the NCS title.

Rodents Invade Oregon

By Chris Roberts

The Lamorinda Rodents rugby team participated in the weekend-long PrezFest Rugby Tournament Feb. 16 and 17 hosted by the Beaverton RFC. The tournament was held at the Tualatin Hills Recreation Facility at the Rock Creek Campus of Portland Community College. The fields were terrific and the weather was cool, but dry. It was an excellent venue with terrific organization by the hosting club. In all, six boys' sides and four girls' sides participated in the tournament.

On day one, Lamorinda played West Linn, Oregon. The tries came early and often for the Rodents. From the opening start, Jimmy "White-Shoes" Giles snuck underneath Bo Richter's kick to take possession. From that point on, the scoring came in wave after wave of offense. West Linn played courageously, but had a difficult time keeping the

ball out of Lamo's hands. Final Score: Lamo 105-0.

On day two, Lamorinda played Beaverton, Oregon: The Rodents once again played with the same speed and skill demonstrated the day before. Putting the host side on the back foot from the onset, the Rodents were able to score seven unanswered tries before the break. Beaverton fought back with three tries in the second half; with four more tries for the Rodents. Final Score: Lamo 68-15.

To end day two, Lamorinda played Liberty (Seattle/Tacoma). With only 20 minutes rest, after completion of the Beaverton game, the Rodents agreed to take on a well rested Liberty side. In a tough and physical contest, the Rodents showed their ability to compete and prevail against a team that plays the more punishing style of rugby. In this shorter match, Lamo struck

early and held onto a well-earned win. Final Score: Lamo 20-12.

The PrezFest Tournament organizer had this to say about Lamorinda RFC. "As I noted to your coaches, without exception, every 'Barbarian' family that billeted Lamo players had nothing but great things to say. You have not only a good team on the field, but you have one off it too. They are not only athletes -- but gentlemen. You have earned not only our thanks for participating, but you have earned our respect."

Lamorinda RFC is composed of local high school athletes from Miramonte, Campolindo, Acalanes, San Ramon Valley, Mt Diablo and Antioch. Their winter - spring season continues March 1 against Hayward at Miramonte, and March 8 against San Francisco/Golden Gate on Treasure Island. The full season calendar is available at www.lamorugby.com

Get Ready for Swim Team!

Join the CAL Women's Swim Team in a clinic that will prepare you for a successful summer season of swimming! The Golden Bears will be hosting a **three week clinic** from April 14th through May 1st at Sun Valley Pool, 1000 Leland Drive, Lafayette. Let athletes at the top of their sport help you fine tune your starts, turns, stroke technique and racing strategy! The Bears are coming off one of their most successful seasons. In 2007, the Bears marched to a third place finish at the NCAA's, breaking 3 American Records along the way. **Take advantage of this unique experience** of having American Record Holders, Olympians, NCAA All-Americans, and some of the finest student-athletes in the country be your coach. Proceeds will aid the training cost of the Golden Bears as they set their hungry eyes on Beijing.

For details please visit
www.swimsunvalley.com

Swim team registration is **Sunday, March 9th - 12-2pm**
at Sun Valley Pool (1000 Leland Drive, Lafayette)
www.SwimSunValley.com



SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Cougars Take NCS Title with Double Digit Win

By Conrad Bassett



Back on January 22, the Dublin Gaels boys basketball team came to Moraga for a DFAL game and were crushed by Campolindo 91-49. This time the location was across town at Saint Mary's College for all of the marbles and the NCS Division 3 championship on Saturday night but the results were essentially the same...a double-digit Cougar win. Campolindo (22-7) scored first and were never headed as they captured their third NCS championship in four years by defeating Dublin (23-7) 69-51 before a capacity crowd of nearly 3,500 raucous fans. The win assured the Cougars of a first round home game in the CIF Northern California championships.

The Cougars jumped off to a 7-0 lead with Jack Trotter scoring all of the points including a ferocious dunk. Dublin's Tyler Murphy and KJ Scott scored baskets to cut the lead to three. The teams traded baskets before Trotter got inside and dunked again.

Chris Dyer hit a three and following a Tyler Worthley three, the Cougars went on a 11-2 run to end the period and a 25-13 advantage. Dyer, Will Shields and Miles Macy hit threes for Campo.

In the second period the Gaels outscored Campo by 11-10. The teams essentially traded baskets but as close as Dublin would get was 33-24. Trotter scored eight in the period despite being double-teamed and was the recipient of several good passes.

In the third, Campo scored a couple of times to each score for Dublin and continued to increase the margin. Adam Mancebo started the scoring hitting a basket and Trotter added ten in the period. Tom Wraith assisted Dyer on two threes and Bryan Reinke and Brian Sanders also scored. Brent McHone tried singlehandedly to keep the Gaels in the game by scoring nine in the period but it was too little and too late and heading into the last eight minutes it was 58-37 Campolindo.

In the fourth period with the outcome not in doubt, each team made frequent substitutions and the lead stayed around 20 before the final horn when the Campo faithful stormed the court to congratulate their classmates.

Trotter again led all scorers with 33 points and was a force inside on offense and on defense blocked and altered several Gael shots. Dyer finished with 14 points. Tim and KJ Scott both finished in double figures for the Gaels who also advanced to the CIF NorCals.

Cougars, Dons Greet Packed House at NCS Semi-Finals

By Conrad Bassett

One of the Acalanes boys' basketball team's goals on Feb. 27 was to shorten the game and not allow Campolindo to run the court or to have many possessions. Following the opening tip that Jack Trotter sent to Chris Dyer for a layup and a 2-0 lead, that is exactly what they did.

However, by the time it was done, Campolindo (21-7) did get enough opportunities and capitalized often enough to win the NCS semi-final at home, 49-39.

The Dons (19-9) scored the next two points of the game at 5:39 of the first on a Joey Anderson basket and played tight defense throughout the night, keeping the Cougars close until the final couple of minutes.

Campo led 11-8 after one with Trotter scoring four points and Anderson with six of his team high 16 in the period. In the second, the teams traded baskets and following baskets by Trotter and Adam Mancebo, the Dons came back behind Brian Perkins and a nifty reverse layup in traffic by Anderson. At the half it was 20-16 Campo.

The third period was highlighted by a couple of runs by each team. Reshaad Flowers scored first and following a Trotter basket after Dyer made a steal and the assist, Perkins followed a Don miss and Acalanes was within two. Then Trotter went to work hitting two free throws and following a Tom Wraith pass while flying along the ground nailed a three and Campo led 27-20. The Cougars went cold for the next four minutes as Anderson scored two more times, Perkins and Brooks Baker added baskets and Acalanes had their first and only lead of the game 28-27. Campo was un-phased as Dyer assisted Trotter again, then stole the ball and scored himself. Trotter added two free throws to close the third with Campo back up 33-28.

In the fourth, Campo scored first as Wraith buried a three and Campo led by eight. The streaky Dons kept Campo within sight as Hunter Hewitt was



Adam Mancebo Photo Gavin Schissel

credited with a basket on a goal tending call, Anderson made a steal and layup, Perkins hit a two and Anderson converted two free throws and it was tied at 38 with 5:23 to go. Then the Cougars went to work. Mancebo took a Dyer pass and made a layup and Miles Macy stole the ball and made his own lay-in. Flowers cut the lead to two and Baker added a free throw and with three minutes to go it was a one point game. With 2:48 to go, Wraith found Dyer and he drained a long three and Campo led by 43-39.

The rest of the game was played at the free throw line. Dyer hit the first of a one and one and Trotter hit both ends of his and Campo led by seven. Following an Acalanes miss at the line, Dyer converted his one and one and Macy sealed it with 19 seconds left with another from the charity stripe.

Trotter led all scorers with 24 and he had 14 rebounds and Dyer added ten for the Cougars to go with five assists. Anderson was all over the court for the Dons with seven rebounds, three assists and three steals.

A Case of Mistaken Identity

By Jennifer Wake

Since the season began, Lamorinda Weekly's coverage of Acalanes girls soccer has applauded senior goalie Erica Rush for her valiant efforts. We have now learned that due to a long-term injury, Rush has not played all season, yet since the roster was unchanged we continued to give lauds to Rush while it was, in fact, sophomore Angela LaScala-Gruenewald who gave the needed saves to help launch Acalanes to the NCS semi-finals. We express our sincere apologies to LaScala-Gruenewald and offer our hearty congratulations to the Dons!

Name correction

In the photo caption and text of our story: "Long-Time Miramonte Fans Keep Cheering Over the Years" the name of Jim Stockholm was incorrectly spelled as Jim Stockton.

Download "Your" story from www.lamorindaweekly.com



Miramonte Girls, Campo Boys Advance to CIF NorCal Championships

By Conrad Bassett

Two Lamorinda high school basketball teams qualified for the CIF Northern California championships by virtue of winning their NCS Division III championship games at Saint Mary's College last Saturday.

The third seeded Campolindo boys team earned the right to host Sacramento High on Tuesday night. Campolindo has played Sacramento twice in the last three years at the NorCals,

winning in 2005 in Sacramento on their way to the championship game and losing at home in 2006. The Miramonte girls team also garnered the third seed and a home game against St. Ignatius High School on Tuesday.

The 2007-2008 finals will be played Saturday, March 8 at the Arco Arena for those that advance in the single-elimination tournament.



Jack Trotter (34) Photo Gavin Schissel



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SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Gaels Suffer Setback Versus Kent State

By Kevin D. Shallat



Carlin Hughes (3), Patrick Mills (13)

Photo Tod Fierner

The Gaels were riding a high from both their success on the court, and from all of the national and international media coverage this season. That high would quickly fade, as Kent State came into town to play in the ESPN Bracketbuster game on Saturday, Feb. 23. The Golden Flashes flexed their muscles and powered their way to an impressive 65-57 win over Saint Mary's in a raucous McKeon Pavilion.

Kent State held on to their first place standing in the Mid-American Conference, but needed the win against the Gaels to solidify their chances of making the NCAA tournament. With the win, the Golden Flashes were able to

make it to the top 25, with the Gaels holding the 23rd spot in the ESPN/USA Today poll, and the 25th spot in the AP poll.

Kent State won their last five games before coming to Moraga, and they are just one of five teams to win 20 games in each of the past 10 seasons. However, the Golden Flashes have a couple of bad losses this year as well. They lost to a Detroit Titans squad that is struggling, and also lost to Ohio, a team the Gaels beat in Hawaii.

Samhan and Ian O'Leary had the first few points of the game, as the Gaels tried to force the ball down low, due to a strong perimeter defense by Kent State. Diamon Simpson was a beast for Saint Mary's,

as he and O'Leary single handedly kept the Gaels in the game. Simpson had a double-double in the first half alone, but the wheels appeared to come off for the Gaels after Samhan dislocated his shoulder with 6:16 to go in the first half. Despite Kent State's lockdown perimeter defense, Saint Mary's would hang on to a two-point lead at half, leading the Golden Flashes 28-26.

The Gaels led the Flashes in second chance points in the first half, but Saint Mary's would run out of second chances in this contest, as injuries, turnovers, and poor free-throw shooting would eventually doom the Gaels. Lucas Walker came into the game to replace Samhan, but as luck would have it, Walker would also suffer a shoulder injury. Simpson recorded a monster game with 24 points, 15 rebounds, four assists, three steals, and three blocks, but was the only Gael to finish in double figures. O'Leary was the only other player to come close, as he finished with eight points and nine rebounds. Kent State was able to boast a nine point second half comeback, thanks to their defense, which gave up only five points to Patrick Mills on the night. Saint Mary's was able to cling to a one-point lead with four minutes to go, but Kent State's defense proved too much for the Gaels down the stretch, as the Golden Flashes secured an 8-point victory.



Diamon Simpson

Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's Falls To Gonzaga: Prepares For WCC Tournament

By Kevin D. Shallat



Players left to right: Serena Benavente (20) and Lauren Shaughnessy (11)

Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's women's basketball team hosted the Gonzaga Bulldogs for their final game of the season Saturday, March 1. After falling behind Gonzaga big in the first half, the Gaels were able to put together an impressive second half to give Gonzaga a scare, but ultimately lost this game, 79-63.

Gonzaga claimed the regular season WCC title, with a 13-1 record, and the Gaels finished fourth, with a record of 6-8. However, the season is not over for the Gaels, as they have a good shot to do some damage in the West Coast Conference tournament.

Saturday marked the annual senior day, which honors the players who compete in the last home game of their collegiate careers. Saint Mary's honored Lauren Shaughnessy and Serena Benavente in a pre-game ceremony.

The two guards will be missed next year, but the Gaels received some good news in regards to one of their veteran players. Maija Lahde has decided to return next year to play another year for the Gaels, as she only participated in 23 percent of the games this year. The NCAA allows players to play another year by taking a medical red-shirt if a player participates in less than 30 percent of the total games in a season, due to injury.

It was fitting that the two seniors recorded the first two

points of the game for the Gaels. Unfortunately, shots would be hard to come by for the Gaels. Saint Mary's shot 20 percent from the field, and 16 percent from three-point range in the first half. Benavente did all she could in the first half, scoring 10 points in 13 minutes, but Gonzaga would always answer right back. The Bulldogs seemed to score on every possession, and the Gaels looked to merely survive, as they trailed the Bulldogs 51-23 at halftime.

The Gaels came out in the second half looking like a different team. Saint Mary's improved their shooting and their defense in the second half. Their field goal percentage shot up to 37 percent, and their three-point shooting soared to 38 percent. On defense, the Gaels blocked three shots and recorded five steals in the second period as well. They also allowed 23 points less in the second half, as the Bulldogs only scored 28 total points in the second half. Benavente was the game high scorer for the Gaels, finishing with 16 points in 24 minutes. Shaughnessy finished the game

with six assists and four steals. Saint Mary's went on to lose this match, but not before a few records were set by the Gaels.

Louella Tomlinson added to her block total, as she finished with four blocks in 18 minutes. Tomlinson has broken every Saint Mary's block record in one season. Jontelle Smith also set a record in this game, as she tied the record for three-pointers in a season for Saint Mary's, finishing the season with 91. The Gaels will play Loyola Marymount next in the WCC tournament, which begins on March 6.



Serena Benavente (20)

Photo Tod Fierner



Go Gaels!

Upcoming Sports Events at Saint Mary's College

Baseball vs. Stanford
Wednesday, March 5 at 2 p.m.
Louis Guisto Field

Softball vs. North Dakota State
Wednesday, March 5 at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.
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Women's Lacrosse vs. Fairfield
Wednesday, March 5 at 3:30 p.m.
Saint Mary's Stadium

Men's Tennis vs. Sacramento State
Saturday, March 8 at noon
SMC

Men's Tennis vs. Penn
Monday, March 10 at 3 p.m.
SMC

Women's Lacrosse vs. Temple
Tuesday, March 11 at 3:30 p.m.
Saint Mary's Stadium

Men's Tennis vs. Texas-San Antonio
Friday, March 14 at 3 p.m.
SMC

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

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SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Campo Overtakes Mirmamonte at Semi-Finals

By Steven Johns



Ryan Kimura (18), Jason Kimura (19), Ryan Schori (15), Doug French (5), Parker Wells (30) Photo Jordan Fong

On a cold Wednesday night beneath a lunar eclipse, the Campolindo Cougars and the Miramonte Matadors took the pitch in a NCS semi-final matchup. The first two times these two boys soccer teams met ended in 1-1 ties. This time, however, the Cougars dominated the game and won 2-0.

The game started with the Matadors getting two early scoring chances. Both shots were stopped by Campolindo's junior goalkeeper Noel Raine. The Cougars rushed down the field, but could not get a shot off.

A few minutes later Campolindo got its first chance at a goal when senior Thibault Deichler had a break away. Deichler ran down the field, past Miramonte defenders, and took a shot. The ball sailed left of the net, and the game remained 0-0.

The Cougars continued to pressure the Miramonte defense,

getting two more good chances. They finally took advantage of those chances with 27:32 left in the half. Sophomore Ben Rudolf threw the ball in from the left side-line right to senior Parker Wells, who booted the ball past goalie Stephen Church to make the game 1-0 Cougars.

The Cougars gained all of the momentum after a controversial foul call on Wells. The foul occurred in the goalie box, thus giving the Matadors a penalty kick. Senior Phil DaSilva wound up and kicked the ball towards the bottom right corner of the net. Raine dove to his left and blocked the shot, keeping the score 1-0 Cougars.

After this blocked penalty kick, the Cougars would not let the Matadors have any chances for the rest of the half.

The second half started with a bang. Deichler had yet another break away, but fell down, on what

appeared to be similar to the foul that gave Miramonte a penalty kick, and missed the goal.

The Cougars appeared to take a 2-0 lead when Rudolf threw the ball towards the net from the sideline. The ball bounced into the net, but without being touched, thus keeping the game 1-0 Campolindo.

Miramonte's hopes of coming back were destroyed when Wells tipped in a shot from Rudolf to give the Cougars a 2-0 win. This goal gave Wells his second of the day. "My teammates set me up perfectly and I was able to get my foot on the ball" stated Wells.

Campolindo was able to keep the pressure on the Matadors and did not allow many shots to reach Raine. "We knew [Miramonte's] strategies and we were able to shut them down" explained Wells. Campolindo's great execution of their game plan put them in the finals.

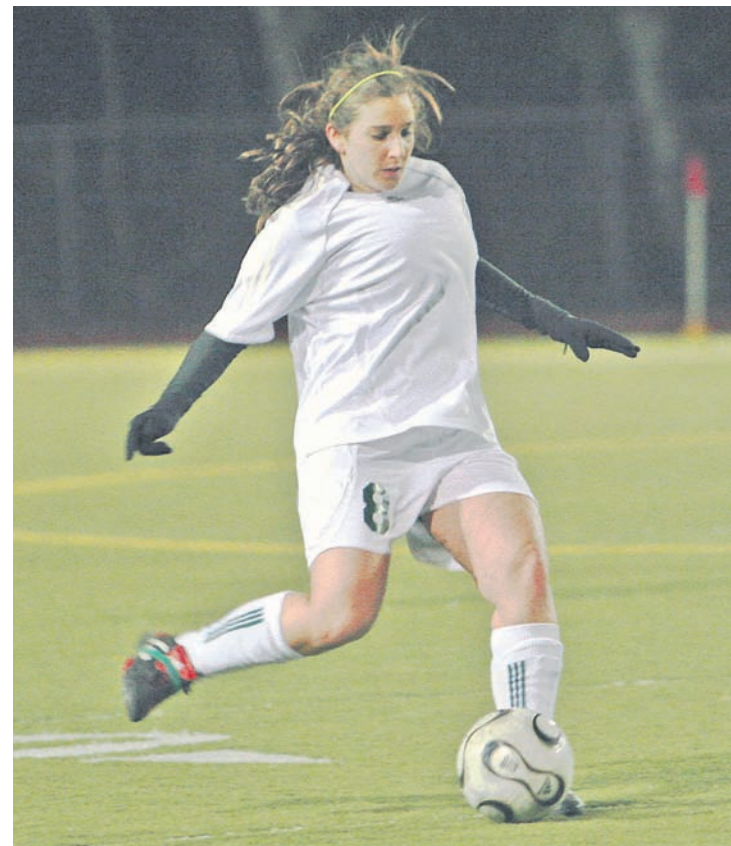
Mats Make it to NCS Soccer Finals, Clinch Title

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Miramonte women's soccer team hosted the NCS match against Bishop O'Dowd on Wednesday, Feb. 20, on the night of a total lunar eclipse. The moon may have been obscured Wednesday, but there was no disguising the talent of the Matadors' soccer team. The Mats may have preferred to record more goals in this match, but they were able to dominate the Dragons in this game in almost every statistical category. The one first half goal in this game was enough to secure another NCS victory, as the 1-0 win allowed Miramonte to continue on to the NCS finals.

Miramonte got off to a slow start in this game, as they controlled the ball, but remained on their own side of the field for a good portion of the opening minutes. Bonnie Zeiger and Marisa Rowland were very active for the Mats in the opening period, but were unable to turn some nice passes into goals. In the twelfth minute of play, the Mats had a breakdown on their defense, which set up a point blank shot for O'Dowd. Luckily, the O'Dowd player missed her shot high, as the ball bounced up and over the field goal cross bar. Shortly thereafter the Mats kicked it into gear, and were able to respond with a goal. Rowland set up a beautiful pass to Kendall Pegan, who took a shot on goal that was partially blocked by the O'Dowd goalkeeper. Pegan kept her cool and stayed with the play, as the ball leaked out from under the goalie's grasp. Pegan calmly kicked the loose ball into the net for the go ahead goal.

Despite scoring a goal in the first half, the Mats were lucky that O'Dowd could not take advantage of some Miramonte miss-cues. On one play, Miramonte tried to play it safe by kicking the ball back to the goalie. The play almost backfired, as Miramonte was just able to secure the loose ball. Seconds later an O'Dowd player



Julia Hurwitz (8)

Photo Jordan Fong

had the easiest shot of the game, and again, the point-blank shot was missed, as it sailed wide right.

The second half was a much cleaner period for the Mats. The whole second half appeared to be played in Dragon territory, as Miramonte applied the pressure. Conversely, the Dragons were hard pressed to get a shot on goal against the Mats.

Rowland was everywhere for Miramonte Wednesday night. If there was a shot on the Dragon's goal, chances are Rowland had something to do with the shot, or the set-up. However, Rowland

was not alone, as she had plenty of help. Elaine Tanski had a solid game for the Mats, as she was active on the offensive and defensive ends of the ball. Miramonte's Alex Seclow also did a nice job of setting up her teammates in this match with a number of nice passes down the line.

"It's nice to finally get through the semi-finals to go to the finals, because I think we really deserve it," said Pegan.

The Mats went on to beat Piedmont (21-1-1) at the finals on Saturday, Feb. 23 at Acalanes High School, clinching the NCS title.

Cougars Boys' Soccer Land NCS Title

By Steven Johns



Parker Wells (30), Ryan Kimura (18) Photo Jordan Fong

On Saturday, Feb. 23, the Campolindo Cougars battled the Piedmont Highlanders in the NCS Championship game.

Despite beating Campolindo 1-0 earlier in the year, Piedmont was no match for the Cougars in the Championship game. On a stormy night the Cougars dominated the Highlanders in a 6-1 win to give them the NCS Championship.

The game started out with Piedmont getting many chances at scoring. In the first five minutes they were able to get four shots off at Campolindo goal-keeper Noel Raine. Great goal tending and good defense prevented the

Highlanders from scoring.

When the Cougars settled down they began their domination. After a close call on a free kick Campolindo started its scoring barrage. With 22:20 left in the half junior Arika Okamitsu had a free kick from mid-field. He launched a shot towards the net where senior captain Max Smith-Gee headed the ball past the Piedmont goalie to put the Cougars up 1-0.

A few minutes later the Cougars had another free-kick. This time Smith-Gee shot the ball towards the net where sophomore Ben Rudolf put the ball in the back of the net to put the Cougars

on top 2-0.

After seven minutes of back and forth the Cougars again showed their dominance. Rudolf threw the ball in from the left side-line to senior Parker Wells, who booted the ball for the Cougars third goal of the game. This goal gave Wells his third goal in two games. With a 3-0 lead in favor of the Cougars, the championship game was all but over.

Campolindo came out in the second half like the game was still 0-0. The Cougars were getting shot after shot against the Highlanders.

With 26:10 left in the game Campolindo got yet another goal. Senior Thibault Deichler raced after a ball for a chance at a break away, when the Piedmont goalie came out and tried to clear the ball. He kicked the ball towards mid-field and right to Campolindo senior Georgio Tavecchio, who launched a 40 yard shot into the back of an empty net to give Campolindo a 4-0 lead.

The goals kept coming for Campolindo with 23:12 left in the game. Freshman Jason Kimura kicked the ball from 30 yards away towards the net. After a high bounce the Piedmont keeper tried to stop the ball, but caught it inside the net. Kimura's goal gave the cougars a 5-0 lead.

The Cougars final goal came when junior Andrew Choi shot a rebound into the back of the net.

The Highlanders added a goal late, but Piedmont's deficit was too large to overcome.

As the final second ticked off the clock, the Campolindo fans stormed the field to celebrate an historic season. After beating Las Lomas and Miramonte in the quarterfinals and the semifinals respectively, the Cougars took the NCS title with a dominating 6-1 victory over Piedmont.

After a long season, the 2007-2008 Campolindo Cougars are the NCS Champions for the first time in their long history.

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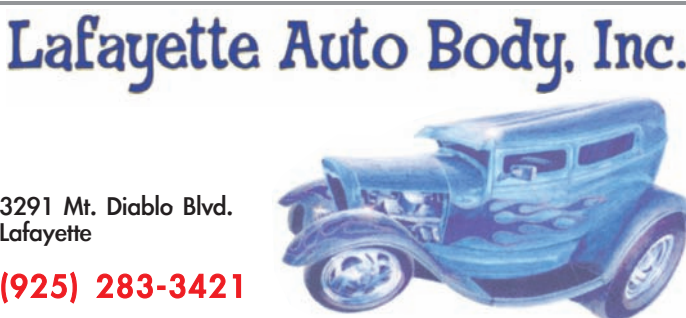
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