

Lafayette Downtown Strategy By Cathy Tyson ... update

RECENT SALES

this week

Profiles: Pages 2, 3, 4 Lamorinda's Finance Directors -These three women know what they're doing.

Town Hall Theater



Names Its Artistic Director -A new job for a familiar face.

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TOWN HALL THEATRE COMPANY of LAFAYETTE

Basketball Heroes



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eveloping a vision and strategy for the longterm future growth of Lafayette is the objective of Lafayette's ambitious Downtown Strategy that was initiated in May of 2007. Although limits on development are spelled out in the city's General Plan, the purpose of the Strategy is to guide development that will likely unfold over the next 20 years to enhance Lafayette's functionality and prioritize improvements like parks, circulation and parking making the downtown area more inviting and livable.

So far Wallace, Roberts & Todd, (WRT), a city and regional planning firm, with a substantial amount of community input, has: defined the issues and vision - while noting opportunities and constraints, explored alternatives, and outlined a preferred concept

of development, but stopped short of preparing the strategy and specific plan while the Advisory Committee clarifies draft goals.

Kicking off the Strategy process was a citywide mailing explaining the process, next came a survey sent to 11,000 homes and businesses. Representatives from WRT walked and mapped the downtown, examined parcel sizes, density and traffic. Three community workshops, scores of interviews with key stakeholders and public meetings followed.

Experts from WRT analyzed all of the data gleaned from their research and surveys and came up with a Preferred Plan in April of this year. The revised draft goals established at that time are now being revisited by the Advisory Committee.

All of this is easier said than done, when you have to take into account BART, higher density housing, walkability, parking, open spaces, height limits, mixed use projects, creek protection and more.

Having a substantial amount of money available from the Redevelopment Agency to invest in the city that can only be used toward public projects and toward stimulating affordable housing is what makes this strategy and its future execution possible.

A plan is critical to allocate funds of up to \$20 million over the next 20 years, with an additional \$30 million earmarked to stimulate affordable housing projects. Spending \$50 million in Lafayette over a number of years will certainly have an impact on the ... continued on page 10

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By Cathy Tyson



evin Abbott, a 17-year old entering senior at Acalanes High School, is the winner of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce's poster art contest for the Art and Wine Festival. Promotional materials for this September's Festival will bear Abbott's eye-catching design.

Abbott's inspiration was capturing the surrounding hills while featuring the focus of the festival - art and wine. His poster will be plastered all over town as the event draws

Abbott has taken art classes for two years at Acalanes, and enjoys drawing by hand and via the computer. Although he's currently attending summer camp at Stanford, taking a creative writing course, he wants to start a graphic arts club when school starts in the fall.

Making a Splash in Beijing

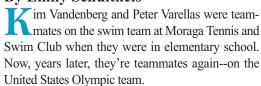
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By Emily Schultheis

New Price

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Representing their country in the Olympics is the dream of many young athletes. For Vandenberg and Varellas, both 2002 Campolindo grads, it will soon be a reality. Both will be part of the United States Olympic

team - Vandenberg for swimming, and Varellas for waterpolo – in Beijing this month. Vandenberg started swimming at MTSC when

she was eight years old. She swam recreationally for four years, and according to her dad, Rick Vandenberg, won trophies both through the Orinda-Moraga Pool Association and the county swim meet.

At age twelve, Vandenberg began swimming year-round with Orinda Aquatics, and continued to swim - and win awards - throughout her time at Campolindo. She graduated in 2002, and went on to swim at UCLA. ... continued on page 17



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Lamorinda Community

Calendar

City Council 7pm Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, August 11

Planning Comm. 7pm Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road

Thursday, August 21

Design Review 7pm Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road

Tuesday, August 12 Park, Trails, Rec. Community Center

500 St Mary's Road Wednesday, August 13

Senior Services 3:30pm Community Center, Alder Room 500 St Mary's Road

Thursday, August 28 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



Open container 7/26/08 At just before 2:00 a.m. on El Curtola at Green Place a driver was pulled over for having a tail light out. The operator of the vehicle happened to be driving on a suspended license and there was a half-full, ever the optimist, bottle of Jack Daniels under the seat of her pal riding shotgun. The 20-year-old white male passenger admitted the bottle was his. At least he was honest.

Car burglary, 7/22/08 A Ruth Court resident woke up and found someone had broken into her locked car during the night. An iPod and a camera that were left on the seat were taken. No suspects or leads.

Home burglary, 7/18/08 An unknown suspect entered a Sibert Court home through an unlocked front door and stole electronic items, jewelry and prescription during the day.

Garage burglary, 7/16/08 A dirt bike, tools, and miscellaneous equipment were taken from a Windsor Drive garage. A pair of bolt cutters and cable cutters were left behind. Does bad news come in three's? If so, perhaps this reporter can take the next edition off.

Calendar, Notes, News

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Tracy Robinson - Using Your Tax Dollars Wisely By Cathy Tyson



Tracy Robinson

and presentation of her work to a

panel of City Managers from

Lafayette, Orinda and Danville,

then another meeting with future

boss, Lafayette City Manager

Steven Falk. Who knew Tracy

Robinson, Molecular Biology

graduate of UC Berkeley would

use that as a springboard to mu-

nicipal finance. Perhaps it was

her MBA from UC Davis with an

emphasis in finance and account-

ing that sealed the deal on being

hired as Lafayette's Administra-

lyst for World Savings, now Wa-

chovia, for a dozen years in their

Oakland headquarters might have

helped too. Robinson rose to As-

sistant Vice President and joined

the Information Technology De-

With the City of

Working as a Budget Ana-

tive Services Director.

partment.

Lafayette since May of 2000, she t all started with a resume, then thought the requirements of man-Lcame a series of questions via agement and budget experience e-mail, an interview in front of coupled with technology expertfive department heads and a meetise would be a good match for her ing with the City Manager. Then skill set. "I am a nerd who loves some testing, a detailed financial spreadsheets, what can I say?" analysis of a theoretical scenario

Photo provided

Managing a \$50 million budget is no easy task. "Personally, I think that the budget is the most important document the City has. The budget is a tool that allows the City Council to function effectively and to set priorities. When I got this job, Steven told me that it was expected that I would 'strap on a keyboard' and input the budget myself. And I was thrilled. It's really the favorite part of my job. Stretching the dollars is always a challenge. I'm staffing the Lafayette Finance Review Committee whose mission to is independently review the City's finances to see if there are efficiencies we can take advantage of to squeeze every last drop out of the precious revenue we do get."

Like many positions within

city government, she wears many hats during her work day. "My job duties include Human Resources, Finance & Budgeting, Risk Management and Information Technology. In addition, I edit the city's quarterly newsletter, Vistas. So basically, I view my job as making sure that there are sufficient resources to implement the City Council's policies. That means that I ensure we hire and train the right people and give the staff the tools and resources they need to do their jobs efficiently. That can include everything from designing and maintaining the City's website, making sure the phone and computer systems function properly, analyzing budget proposals, issuing bonds for capital projects, conducting salary and benefit surveys, tracking expenses and revenues, recruiting for open positions, even making sure that we get all our office supplies at the best possible prices." In addition, when Falk is out of the office, Robinson fills in as Acting City Manager.

What's the one thing you want the public to grasp about city finances? "They are a lot more complex than people think," said Robinson. "We have regulations, mandates and statutory limitations on how we can spend the money we get. Probably the biggest thing that people don't realize is that out of every \$1,000 they pay in property tax, the City gets only \$65. That surprises most people."

Robinson lives in the Oakland hills with her husband, two daughters and cat. During her lunch break you might find her at Oakwood on a treadmill watching the Food Network or reading a trashy novel. At home Robinson manages the family budget. She confides that her talented, creative husband, who has an honors degree in Economics, still comes from the, "if we still have checks, we must have money" school of thought.

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No Increase in Sales Tax

By Cathy Tyson

The final decision to not place an additional sales tax measure on the November ballot was made at last week's City Council meeting. After cake, complimentary t-shirts, bumper stickers and the "happy birthday" song to celebrate Lafayette's fortieth year since incorporation, a substantial amount of public comment was heard.

Not surprisingly much of the comment was negative. Council members wondered aloud how a sales tax would pass without community support. Council Member Carol Federighi was concerned that yet another tax measure loss would leave the city in a bad position for future measures.

City Manager Steven Falk said, "59% of those polled said they want to tax themselves to pay for better roads, extra police patrols, and more open space in Lafayette, and so it's disappointing that the community couldn't find a way to come together and support this idea. However, with nobody stepping forth to run the campaign and with the

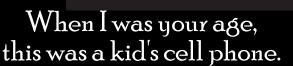
Steve Snyder

Chamber of Commerce opposed to the proposal, I completely understand and defend the City Council's action."

Voytek Konopk, owner of Novina Fine Jewelry said, "Why should merchants be punished to pay for the tax?" He feels an additional sales tax would encourage potential customers to buy over the internet, thus robbing the city of any sales tax at all.

Also mentioned at the meeting was unhappiness over the paving of a section of Mt. Diablo Boulevard. Residents didn't understand that the city leveraged a small investment, \$85,000., from gas tax revenue received from the State, and paid only a fraction of the total price tag, wisely garnering federal and regional grants for the balance. Although the street had gotten a slurry seal some years back, it hadn't been paved in fifteen years. Considering the project cost \$865,000, the City paid less than 10% of the total amount; that's a bargain any way you slice it.

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Lamorinda Community

Calendar, Notes, News

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Moraga

Calendar

City Council 7:30pm Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 1010 Camino Pablo Wednesday, August 27

Planning Comm. 7:30pm Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive

Monday, August 18 Design Review

7:30pm Hacienda, La Sala Room 2100 Donald Drive Monday, August 11

Park & Rec 7:30pm Hacienda, Mosaic Room 2100 Donald Drive

Tuesday, August 19 Liaison 8:00am

Fire Station 1280 Moraga Way

Friday, August 8

Town of Moraga online:

http://www.ci.moraga.ca.us for: • all meeting notes • calendar updates



Kids playing, 7/30/08 At 7:45 p.m. a Moraga resident who lives across the street from the Campolindo sports field heard subjects being loud while they played soccer, or in his view "illegally used the field." The reporting person said he would be willing to place the subjects under arrest for trespassing if they didn't have permission from school staff. Officers spoke to the eleven soccer players who admitted they didn't have permission to use the field. Everybody agreed to leave. No arrests were made.

Skatepark contraband 7/29/08 While on patrol an officer noticed a group of young people at the Skatepark, even though it was officially closed at the time. As he exited his patrol car, the juveniles scattered, leaving behind cans of beer, a small amount of marijuana and Aderall pills. Two female juveniles were contacted in the park, but possession of the contraband was unable to be determined. Officer had a serious chat with the kids and released them to their respective parents.

D.U.I. 7/27/08 A 19-year-old male driver of a Subaru was stopped at a green light for an extended period of time on Rheem Boulevard near the Theater. Objective signs of alcohol intoxication were noted. The drunk driver had a fake I.D. on him that indicated he was 21, wonder why?

Party and alleged drug sales, 7/17/08 At 10:45 p.m. Moraga police responded to a complaint of loud noise, not unusual for this Thune Avenue address, as well as possible drug sales. Officer arrived, contacted the reporting person and noticed what appeared to him to be a drug transaction occurring in the driveway. Numerous vehicles were observed coming and going during the day along with underage drinking. The owner was contacted but no evidence of illegal activity

Joan Streit - Taking a Firm Grip on Moraga Finance By Sophie Braccini



oraga's Finance Director

was raised in a rural area of Maine, a small town with farms, where the family's peaceful house overlooked a lake. "This was a very serene place," remembers Streit, "and it's nice to visit, but there isn't much that goes on there because it is a small town with less than 2000 people." Her family later moved to Los Angeles. Streit completed her undergraduate work at the University of California at Davis, earned a Master's at San Francisco State and a PhD at U.C. Berkeley.

After graduation Streit secured a position with U.C. Berkeley where she was the Budget Director for the Housing and Dining Department for many years before moving to U.C. Davis, where she was hired as the First Assistant Dean in the School of Education. But she wanted a faster paced environment and more self-determination. So

she applied for a position as a Director of Finance and Information Technology with the city of Albany.

"City government gives me more latitude to implement my own policies and procedures," says Streit, "the scope of operations is smaller than a large campus, but it requires a higher technical mastery; you do not have a whole range of experts at your fingertips." The position in Moraga represented what she was looking for, a place to make an impact and to wear many hats.

"Joan is a Finance Director who has a broad experience in finance and is very definitive in her actions and recommendations," says Jay Tashiro, Interim Town Manager, "I truly like working with her due to her dependability, professionalism and wealth of knowledge and experience in the area of finance."

... continued on page 6

Moraga Discusses MOSO 2008 Impact Report

By Sophie Braccini

n July 23 the Moraga Town Council received the 9212 impact report (under California Election Code Section 9212) on the MOSO 2008 open space initiative and ordered the initiative to the November ballot. Moraga voters will have a choice between two very different initiatives addressing land use.

The reports produced by staff assessing the potential impacts of the MOSO 2008 and MOSPRO initiatives on the town are important pieces of information for Moraga voters. The complete texts of the initiatives and the corresponding 9212 reports are available on the town's web site at

http://moraga.ca.us/production/

moraga ballot initiatives.php. The accuracy of the 9212 re-

ports has been fiercely debated by proponents and opponents of each initiative. During the Council meeting, speakers raised important issues including, but not limited to, the risk of litigation for the Town. Some members of the public, sensing too many uncertainties, called for both initiatives to be voted down.

MOSO 2008, the initiative proposed by the Friends of Moraga Open Space, aims at restricting development in the remaining undeveloped space in Moraga. The targeted areas are Bollinger Canyon, Indian Valley and Rheem Valley.

The first disagreement about the impact of the initiative was its potential to include more than the three designated areas specified in the text.

... continued on page 6

Moraga Specific Plan Continues To Raise Questions

By Sophie Braccini he comment period on the En-

vironmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Moraga Specific Plan will not be extended. Despite requests from the cities of Lafayette and Orinda, and David Loeke, urban planner for the Bruzzone family, the Moraga Town Council decided not to change the August 1st deadline.

A major factor in the decision was the realization that comments can be sent after the deadline, and that letters from the neighboring cities and the responses could be included in the EIR even if they are received late.

If the deadline had been moved to a later date, the final vote could not have taken place until after the November election. None of the Council members expressed a desire to adhere to the deadline just to make sure they could participate in the final vote, but as Planning Director Lori Salamack explained, if the plan is not approved before the end of the year, months could be

added to the process in order to bring possible new Council members up to speed.

Salamack keeps in mind the deadline of June 30, 2009, to present the Town's housing element to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). She was supported by Interim Town Manager Jay Tashiro, who has experienced firsthand the penalties a local government can face when defaulting on its housing obligation to the

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) is a state mandated process for determining how many housing units, including affordable units, each community must plan. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) determines the total housing need for a region, and it is the ABAG's responsibility to distribute this need to local governments. In Moraga, the number of reVery Low -73 47 Low-Moderate -52 Above Moderate -62 Total -234

Because Moraga did not have a state certified housing element during the previous cycle the Town also needs to plan for those required units, bringing the total number of needed units to 307. At the public hearing on July

22, many residents voiced concern that affordable housing would bring crime to town and change the nature of the place in which they have chosen to live. According to Salamack, however, the Town may opt to use the State's default density of 20 units/acre for a suburban location. By using the default standard, the Town is not required to prove affordability for low-income households. The Town's obiligation then is to define areas that have appropriate zoning to accomodate affordable housing. ... continued on page 6

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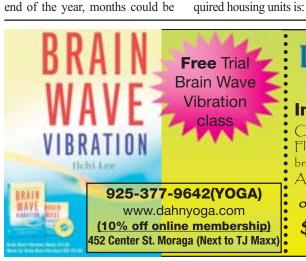
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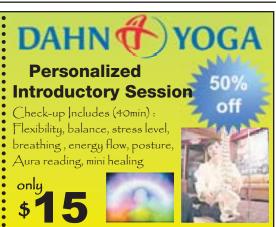
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Calendar, Notes, News

Orinda

Lamorinda Community Calendar

City Council 7pm Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, August 19

Planning Comm. 7:00pm Auditorium, Orinda Library 26 Orinda Way Tuesday, August 12

Traffic Safty Advisory Committee Sarge Littlehale Community Room 22 Orinda Way

Monday, August 18 Public Safety Comm. Community Room at City Hall 22 Orinda Way

Thursday, August 14 Mayor's Com. Liaison 9am Community Room at City Hall

22 Orinda Way Monday, September 8

(no Meeting in August) 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 • upcomming events

DRINDA



Drunk driving, 8/01/08 A twentysomething white female was stopped for going 60 m.p.h in a 35 m.p.h. zone, at just after midnight. The ever-alert OPD officer on duty noticed her bloodshot eyes and the smell of alcohol, and gave her a field sobriety test. She preformed poorly on the test, possibly due to her blood alcohol level being more than twice the legal limit.

Fake moneygram, 7/31/08 An unknown black male passed a fraudulent moneygram for \$500 at Hediyeh gift boutique at Theatre Square. He "purchased" clothing with the money and walked out of the store. Does anyone know what an authentic money gram looks like anyway?

Spouse smackdown, 7/28/08 The wife of an Orinda Way restaurant employee became angry after hearing a rumor that her husband had been unfaithful. Wife went to his place of business and attacked him, causing a minor injury. The beat up husband is only 5' 3" tall and has a slim build. No medical attention was necessary. A woman scorned?

Vandalism at Wagner Ranch, sometime between 7/25/08 and 7/28/08 An unknown suspect damaged the roof of Wagner Ranch Elementary School, damaging a number of composite roof shingles, and smashing a roof vent. It didn't appear that the unknown suspect(s) were trying to gain entry into the library building. Estimated damage, \$1,000.

Beverli Marshall—Keeping Track of Orinda's Money and Much More

By Andrea A. Firth



Beverli Marshall, Administrative/Financial Services Director for the City of Orinda Photo by Andrea A. Firth

s the Administrative/Financial A Services Director in Orinda, Beverli Marshall has a long title and a long list of responsibilities to go with it. To start, Marshall oversees the city budget and all things accounting related which includes accounts payable and receivable, payroll, and investments. To be sure, she has spent countless hours over the past few months working to finalize the city's budget for next fiscal year. This has required coordinating the needs and requests of the City Council and the new committees, commissions, and task forces that have been formed to help Orinda find financial solutions to their infrastructure woes.

But wait, there's more. Human resources, risk management, information and telecommunication systems, and general services are all part of Marshall's domain as well. Although she may not have to do everything herself, she does have to be sure it all gets done. "We contract out a lot to keep our agency size static," explains Marshall. "But the services still have to be delivered. It is a big job to manage."

A product of the state highereducation system, Marshall attended California State University Bakersfield and went on to obtain a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Alaska. Marshall moved to Anchorage seeking an experience different from her southern California roots. "It took three years to overcome the shock of the Alaskan winter on my system," recalls Marshall. "And I'm not sure that I ever really got used to the cold, and I still don't eat fish," she adds with a laugh.

Marshall came to Orinda about a year ago from a similar post at the Berkeley Public Library. She

also held other positions in Berkeley's city government. Having come from Berkeley, she is accustomed to "being under the microscope." She is comfortable with public scrutiny and feels community input provides an essential barometer for city government to know what is and is not working.

Although Marshall feels Orindans have high expectations for the level of city services, she finds their approach to city government refreshing. "People in Orinda take a balanced approach to how much government needs to be involved. There is a healthy barrier and it's a fine line—between community involvement and handing it over for the work to be done," she explains.

With the move from a larger, urban setting such as Berkeley to a smaller, semi-rural city like Orinda, Marshall has found that she prefers being a bigger fish in a smaller pond. "[In Orinda] I can really see the impact of what I'm doing. I like the immediate feedback," she states.

"Orinda is a new kid. It's really just reaching teenager status as far as cities go," explains Marshall. "It hasn't grown in size, but it's starting to formalize things." These structured processes are essential to good business practice according to Marshall. "You need to have systems in place to make sure things are being taken care of. You need a checklist."

Marshall would like to see Orinda's designation as the city with the best schools and worst roads change. "Fixing the roads is Orinda's biggest challenge," states Marshall. "It will take community involvement and support and really looking at the problem from different perspectives," she adds. "We have to find more revenue."

City of Orinda Launches New Website www.cityoforinda.org

By Andrea A. Firth



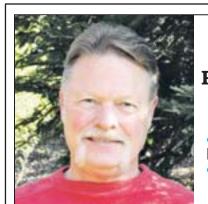
he city of Orinda's website has a new name and a new look. Go to www.cityoforinda.org and you will find a user-friendly website with a sophisticated design reflective of the community it supports. "Our website is the electronic face of the City, and we are pleased at the exceptional progress we are making to create a better link between our friends and neighbors in town as well as those who are making a virtual visit," states City Council Member Steve Glazer.

"The old site was not that user-friendly," says Monica Pacheco, Assistant to the City Manager, who spearheaded the development of the new website over the past year. "The City Council has established outreach to the community as a priority, and the new website will serve as an important tool for communicating with the residents and business community," she adds.

Throughout the year-long process, significant time and thought went into understanding what information Orindans need and how they go about looking for it. "We tried to put ourselves in the user's position in planning every aspect of the website," states Pacheco. "Information is accessible from

multiple links on the website. So you can get to the same place in several different ways," she explains.

... continued on page 12



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Town Hall Theater Names New Artistic Director—Clive Worsley Season Kicks Off with The Graduate

By Andrea A. Firth



Emily Garcia, Clive Worsley (in back), and Joel Roster at Town Hall Theater

Photo Andrea A. Firth

own Hall Theater (THT) will launch its 2008-2009 season with a new Artistic Director at the helm-Clive Worsley, an awardwinning Bay Area actor, director, and theater educator, will be steering the THT cast and crew. Worsley is a familiar face at Town Hall where he has acted and directed in the past. "This a good move for me," states Worsley. "I am a firm believer that theater enhances education and builds community. And, I am really impressed by the com-

mitment to community that is exemplified by Town Hall Theater."

Born in Glasgow, Scotland and raised in British Columbia, Worsley has spent the last thirty plus years in the Bay Area. Following stints with Armitage Shanks Theater and San Francisco's Viaduct Theater, Worsley became a core company member of Berkeley's acclaimed Shotgun Players. For the last six years he has turned much of his attention to theater education working as a Teaching

Artist in classrooms throughout Contra Costa County and as an Associate Artist with California Shakespeare Theater's educational and outreach programs.

One of the things that Worsley has learned from his teaching experience is that he likes it on this side of the tunnel. "I give credit to the parents and theater professionals in Contra Costa County. They embrace their community, and they commit to strengthening it—all while making some really good art," he states.

Worsley is already intimately familiar with the great main stage productions produced by Town Hall Theater, and he describes the educational program as the best in the East Bay. So what's left for him to do? "I want to reach our farther," sates Worsley. "I would like Town Hall Theater to be a household name in Lamorinda and beyond." To achieve that goal, he plans to keep the selection of plays fresh and varied while still accessible to the average theater-goer.

"I'm looking forward to my first season with Town Hall Theater and getting to know the patrons," states Worsley. "Town Hall is an active member of the community, and I want to increase the dialogue."

THT Season Kicks off with The Graduate.

Town Hall Theater's 2008-2009 season will kick off with The Graduate on September 11th. Based on the novel by Charles Webb, this new adaptation for the stage stays pretty true to the movie version from the sixties that many baby boomers will remember.

"While the show is set in the 1960's, it is no way limited to that time," states Joel Roster who will direct the Town Hall Theater (THT) play—an East Bay premier. "The themes of alcoholism, infidelity, and dysfunctional families persist and may be even more relevant today. It makes the comedic moments even funnier and the poignant moments hit harder," he adds. Roster says play-goers should be prepared for an evening of laughter and tears. "It's a startling moving show. It's brilliant."

The Graduate will play at Town Hall Theater from September 11th through October 11th. For tickets contact the box office at 925.283.1557.

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Page: 5



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Paws to Read in Lamorinda

By Sophie Braccini

s she comes in to the special library room, Melyssa, a 3rd grader, is told that today she will read to Trevin. The dog is waiting for her with his handler/owner, Carol. He is one of the three canines present that day at the Orinda Library to participate in "Paws to Read," a program where elementary school children come to read to

The program has been running in Orinda for three years. "It was started in Salt Lake City many years ago," says Lin Look, the librarian in charge of children's activities, "I heard about it at a conference and was immediately convinced of its value." Research shows that kids who are learning to read can become nervous about looking dumb around their friends. But with a dog, they start to relax and reading becomes easier.

The program will start in Moraga this August. Moraga iibrarian Linda Waldroup summarizes, "Children enjoy reading to noniudgmental canines."

"Dogs are not critical," says

Melyssa's mother, "they take the children for who they are." Paws to Read attracts children from the entire spectrum of reading levels. Martha, a 4th grader who was there that morning in Orinda, is a very avid reader, having completed the library summer program for her age

in triplicate. During the session she read three books to her dog. "She takes any opportunity to read," says her mother. The little girl commented, "I love to read to dogs, you can see they really understand what

The dogs involved in the pro-

gram are family pets of many different breeds and their owners, who volunteer their time, have been certified in pet therapy. In addition to reading improvement, "Paws" shows kids how to relate to dogs as

... continued on page 6





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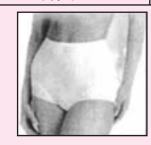
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Joan Streit – Taking a Firm Grip on Moraga Finance

... continued from page 3

Moraga is certainly a place where financial savvy is needed. When she arrived, Streit realized that the Town was lacking guidelines. "A city should have strong internal policies and procedures to control its operations," believes Streit. For example, she discovered that no written policies are in place to determine who should have a Town credit card nor are there any written policies on accepted use of the card. Although there have not been any problems or misuse of

the credit cards, and those who have them have been very responsible, a written policy helps to guard against misuse. So part of Streit's responsibility consists of protecting the Town's assets, defining standard procedures and establishing policies.

As far as the future is concerned, Streit believes that Moraga's sources of income are not controlled enough by the town. The sales tax fluctuates depending on the economy and most of it goes to the State; the property tax is fairly stable but the Town has no control on how much it can raise. A good example of the Town's dependency on State decisions is the gas tax money that municipalities should be receiving. The State has withheld allocations since March.

... continued from page 3

the density is 20 units per acre.

Council Member Rochelle Bird re-

minded the audience that the num-

ber of houses included in the

Specific Plan has not been deter-

present the responses to the com-

ments that have been received.

In October Salamack will

mined yet.

In Moraga, a suburban area,

The Town should be getting its share in September but the State could decide to hold it for a longer period of time.

A solution could be for Moraga to raise some local taxes, such as a business license tax, or process building permits "in house" rather than at the County as it is currently done. "The Town Council has a good understanding of the situation," says Streit, "but in an election year, no one wants to be the one who raises taxes." The Director does not see any of the rev-

Moraga Specific Plan Continues To Raise Questions

believes that this plan would so

change the character of the town

that a referendum would be needed.

Council Member Mike Metcalf

would like to better understand the

risk associated with not having a

housing plan. Bird believes that the

town shouldn't be dictating what

Council Member Ken Chew

emerged on the Council.

enue enhancement proposals being implemented earlier than the 2009-10 budget year.

Amidst all the challenges, Streit still has time for a rich cultural life. "We are blessed in the Bay Area with a wide variety of cultural offerings," she acknowledges. The mother of two grown children enjoys going to the symphony and repertory theater with her husband, and to fulfill her passion for otters she has a membership at the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

need to revitalize the existing center

and is concerned that the plan pre-

sented does not include a financial

feasibility analysis. Mayor De-

schambault is concerned by the ab-

sence of an evacuation plan, the viability of retail, the mitigation of

the CO2 impact of the plan and the

preservation of the riparian corridor

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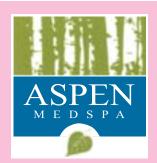
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After this presentation the Council the developer must do with the Residents may still appear will discuss, amend and vote on a before the Council and voice their property. Vice-Mayor Dave Trotter final version of the Specific Plan. asks which vision is the right one comments and recommendations Differences of opinion have already until the final vote. for the community, stressing the

Moraga Discusses MOSO 2008 Impact Report

... continued from page 3 Renata Sos, a Moraga resident who supports the initiative, asked that the 9212 report clarify the issue by indicating that MOSO 2008 would apply only to the areas designated in the text of the initia-

That position was challenged by David Bruzzone, a member of the family which owns much of the land in question, whose interpretation is that, "All the slopes of more than 20% and all the ridge lines above 800 feet would be submitted to the development restrictions, and that would include parts of Ascot Dr. and Birchwood among other areas."

Council Member Mike Metcalf asked the Town's attorney, Michelle Kenyon, for her opinion on the matter. She replied that she would interpret the initiative as only applying to the areas defined in the

A major concern raised during the meeting was the possibility of litigation and the extra costs that would result for the Town. Moraga resident Bob Reynolds asked, "What would happen if both initiatives pass?" Kenyon responded that if both initiatives have a majority of votes, and if they do not conflict, they would both stand.

The determination of whether or not the initiatives conflict would be made by the Town Council, based on legal advice. In that case, Kenyon would not exclude the possibility of a legal challenge.

Residents voiced their concern that the cost of litigation was not budgeted. "Vote both initiatives down," said Moraga resident Barbara Simpson, "we should know ahead of time if the initiatives conflict."

A larger element of discussion involved the financial impact of the initiative for the town. The fiscal analysis that was conducted by staff estimates that the town will undergo a reduction of net revenues in the range of \$410,700 a year due to the limitation of the number of houses that could be built. It concludes that the initiative would still

have a positive impact on the town, smaller than in a no initiative scenario, and would amount to a net municipal revenue of \$60,200.

Dick Loeke, urban planner for the Bruzzone family, said, "What's missing (in the 9212 report) is the long term effect on budget and housing." Loeke believes that the restriction on housing will generate a loss in sales tax revenue and will jeopardize the viability of the retailers in town.

In response to a question from Loeke on the impact of the initiative on Moraga schools and the Fire District, Moraga Planning Director Lori Salamack responded that both entities had declined to assess the financial impact of the ini-

Salamack indicated that Town staff is preparing a comparison of the two initiatives. This report could be presented to the Council at its next meeting on August 27, and would be available online with the meeting agenda.

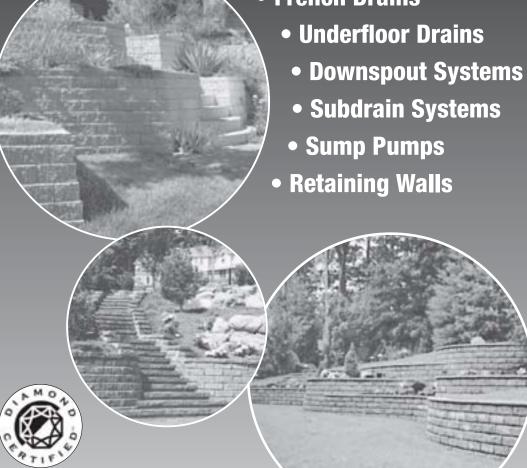
Paws to Read in Lamorinda ...continued from page 5



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"Children are sometimes unsure," says handler Ginger Wadsworth, "and within a few minutes of petting the dog they come closer and start reading." This is why Look removed some of the restrictions other libraries have put on the program, she will allow kids with minor allergies to come to the program, as well as kids who are not used to interacting with pets and might be a bit nervous at first.

Wadsworth is on the Friends Orinda Library board, and has two trained therapy dogs. She comes to "Paws" with her golden retriever -Willa - who is so excited about going to see kids. She's a big supporter of the program, and the Friends of the library have donated books, pillows, doggy treats, water for the handler and little certificates. "It is still a lot of work for the librarian," recognizes Wadsworth. "and Lin has done a fantastic job."

Waldroup confirmed that all the dogs in her program are certified therapy dogs as well. Most of the people who bring their dogs do other things with them, like going to hospitals and convalescent homes. There are therapy cats, too, and both Look and Waldroup would like to find some of these for their programs. They both want to connect with the local schools and reading specialists. The program is over for the summer in Orinda and will start again in the fall. After the August trial in Moraga, the program will be evaluated and is also expected to return in the fall.



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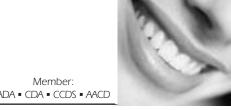
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Dochterman Receives "Service Above Self" Award Moraga Rotary Named "Club of the Year"

By Sophie Braccini



Mary Elena Dochterman and Colin Barnard

Photo courtesy of Moraga Rotary

ary Elena Dochterman, past President of the Rotary Club of Moraga, was given the prestigious "Service Above Self" award from Rotary International, and the Club was awarded as the "Medium-Sized Club of the Year" in Rotary District 5160 at the District Conference in Sacramento recently.

The Rotary International "Service Above Self" Award is given to individual Rotarians who have rendered exemplary humanitarian Rotary service that embodies Rotary's motto Service Above Self. The award recognizes outstanding efforts in the promotion of Rotary's objectives of serving youth, international humanitarian causes, and meeting community needs. The Award is considered Rotary's highest honor. Recipients are selected from among the 1.2 million members of Rotary International in 180 nations of the world. Only 135 awards were given throughout the world this year.

Ms. Dochterman just completed serving as Assistant District Governor, responsible for eight clubs out of 67 in the District. which includes Rotary Clubs from San Ramon northward to the Oregon border.

"I have participated in volunteer activities since I was in high school in San Francisco over 50 years ago," says Dochterman, "all of the years I was working as a teacher, school administrator and in later years as a Benefits Analyst for Wells Fargo Bank, I always hoped that some day I would be retired and able to focus on volunteer activities."

Dochterman's worldwide humanitarian activities have included polio immunization in India, Ethiopia, Turkey and Philippines; assistance to AIDS orphans in South Africa; delivery of wheelchairs in China and Mexico; educational scholarships to orphaned Russian children; and securing playgrounds and educational supplies for Mexican children. She has also led the Moraga Rotary Club in a variety of educational activities for local children.

Way Side Inn Thrift Shop Celebrates 30 Years with Pearls

By Sophie Braccini

he building now called the Way Side Inn Thrift Shop was a hotel and a tavern at the turn of the century, in a time where Mt Diablo Blvd was a stagecoach road between Oakland and Walnut Creek. For the last 30 years it has been the home of the Assistance League of Diablo Valley thrift shop, a non profit group serving those in need in Contra Costa. The Lafayette store celebrates its 30th anniversary on Monday, August 11, with a "Pearl Extravaganza" from 3

to 7 p.m. at 3521 Golden Gate Way. The event will include refreshments, door prizes, information about the chapter's programs and merchandise for sale featuring pearl jewelry and accessories.

The store is stocked with high quality clothing and accessories that have been given to the League after being gently used. All personnel working there are volunteers and they strive to keep the place attractive to shoppers.

... continued on page 13



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During the same ceremony, Moraga was recognized as the "Medium-Sized Club of the Year" for its District. Past Club President Colin Barnard said, "The Rotary Club of Moraga was chartered about 41 years ago, and has provided Moraga many capital improvement projects as well as service projects that benefit the community. We have worked hard for the community, and are pleased to be recognized as the outstanding medium-sized club in the District. The new District Governor, Jim

Campbell, is a member of Moraga Rotary and we look forward to supporting his projects this year".

Moraga Rotary donates time

and money to many service projects in Moraga and the county, including giving a dictionary to every third grader in Moraga, buying and installing playground equipment, giving scholarships to St. Mary's College and Campolindo High School, sponsoring Interact Clubs at Miramonte and Campolindo High Schools, conducting a Field Day track meet for third, fourth, and fifth graders in Moraga schools and sending high school students to leadership and entrepreneurial camps. Moraga Rotary also donates to national and international project such as disaster relief, providing LN-4 prosthetic hands, providing wheelchairs and working towards eradication of polio in the world.

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MUSIC-THEATER Orinda Starlight Village Players' 2008 Outdoor Theater, Orinda Community Center Park. "I Hate Hamlet," by Paul Rudnick, through Aug. 16th. Regular admission: \$15; seniors/students - \$7.50 All 3 shows: \$35; seniors/students - \$21 Tickets at Box Office or call (925) 253-1191 or 255-3295 (after 7 pm)

Concerts at Moraga Commons Park Thursday evenings, 6:30pm – 8:30pm: The snack bar opens at 6:00 pm: August 7th, littledog2, Rock and Roll; Aug 14th, Madison Blues Band, Blues; Aug 21st, La Ventana, Latin.

Lafayette's summer music series: "Rock the Plaza" during the month of August at the corner of Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road. All shows start at 6pm and are presented free of charge. Food and beverages will be available or you can pack a picnic. This summer marks the 40th Birthday of Lafayette. For more information visit www.lafayettechamber.org or call 925-284-7404

Orinda Theatre Square Summer Music Series 2008. Start your weekends on Thursdays with FREE, live music at Theatre Square! The series will last all summer, evenings from 4 pm to 7 pm. Visit the website for details and updates: www.orindatheatresquare.com.

A Summer Afternoon of Jazz Song and Piano. Vocalist Libby McLaren, an east bay icon in the jazz (and Celtic) world teams up with the youthful exuberance of jazz pianist Maya Kronfeld, to bring you jazz standards from the 30's to the present. Light refreshments will be served. Fri. Aug. 15th, 1:30 – 2:30pm, Lafayette Community Center. For reservations call: 925-284-5050

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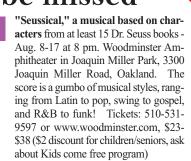
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Ease on down the road to see "The Wiz", a musical! Aug. 8 and 9 at 7:30pm, August 9 at 2pm DVC Performing Arts Centre, 321 Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill Contra Costa Christian Theatre. Tickets are available online, by mail or at the door. All seats are open seating. Doors open 1/2 hour prior to show time. http://www.ccchristiantheatre.org/ tickets/tickets.html

Auditions: The Starlight Circle Players in Berkeley are doing a Mummer's Play called "The Ring." First meeting/read through will be in October before Samhain. Auditions are very informal, room for musicians, singers, actors, Morris & Sword. We will perform at several locations through the Holidays and we plan to perform at Pantheacon in February. Please contact Lezlie at starlightcircleplayers-atyahoo.com for further details. http://starlightcircleplayers.com

ART

Art exhibit at the Moraga Librarythrough August 30th (during library hours)- featuring the art of Beryl Glen-Reiland.

Exhibition at the Lafayette Gallery -California Dreaming--through August 9th. The new exhibit "Hand and I, the Daily Eye," opens on August 12 The artists of the Lafayette Gallery are all California artists. The paintings, prints, watercolors, photographs, and ceramic works, all reflect the vibrant life of the artists who created them. Gallery Hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 11 am to 5 pm. 925-284-2788, www.lafayettegallery.net

"The Glover Group: Plein Air Painting Exhibition" - August 12th. For the past 25 years Glover has led her class of 25 intermediate to advanced level oil painters to Bay Area vineyards, ranches and waterways to capture the scenes on the spot. Orinda Library Gallery, 24 Orinda Way. For more information on the painting classes, phone the Orinda Community Center at (925) 254-2445.

"Fiesta Time" at the Moraga Art Gallery features the work of two artists who live in Moraga: Angelica Samamea, a 27 year resident, is a painter who generally works either with acrylics or watercolor in a fluid improvisational style. Connie Robertson has her own studio in Moraga for cutting, grinding and fusing glass. She has enjoyed experimenting in glass jewelry. Moraga Art Gallery, 570 Center St, Rheem Valley Shopping Center/next to Longs Drugs.

145 Years of Red Cross Photography: A Memory of Humanity A New Exhibition from the American Red Cross Bay Area and the Presidio Trust Serving as a powerful reminder of war's impact on

Not to be missed humanity, this free exhibition is a historfrom 145 years of armed conflict around

ical perspective showcasing photographs the world as seen through the eyes of the affected, journalists and the humanitarian workers of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Presidio Officers Club Exhibition Hall, 50 Moraga Avenue, San Francisco, California through Aug. 17, Wednesday - Sun., 11 a.m. 5 p.m. (415) 561-5500 www.redcrossbayarea.com/ photoexhibit www.presidio.gov

The Oakland Art Association presents a Group Show of all media: paintings, drawings, photography, collage, monoprints, and etchings created by local Bay Area artists at the Orinda Library Gallery in Orinda, from Aug. 17th - Sept. 17th, . You are cordially invited to join us for the Opening Reception, Sun., Aug. 24th, 2:30-4:30 pm. Gallery open: Mon-Fri, 10-6 pm, Sun. 1-5 pm. (925) 254-2184

LECTURES

Fast and Easy First Aid Class for the Home presented by Ron Vander Heiden, retired fire fighter - Wed, August 20th at 7 p.m. - Aegis of Moraga, 950 Country Club Drive, Moraga, Learn, what every family needs to know about home first aid, basic CPR, and how to use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). A 45 minute class with question and answer period. RSVP Required Candice Moses at 925-377-7900 or e-mail to Candice.moses@aegisliving.com

OTHER

Free family movie at the Pavilion-August 15- Water Horse - 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga. Enjoy the outdoor amphitheater. These movies are all free, but bring some extra money as the Parks and Recreation Department will be selling "outdoor movie snacks." Pre-register to secure your "spot on the lawn" by calling (925) 888-7045 or online at www.moraga.ca.us. Movie will be shown on a large inflatable screen and will start at 7:45pm or dark.

Tennis -Stead Open at Moraga Country Club August 5-10

The Lamorinda Cycling Club holds weekly group rides at 8:30am every Sunday morning. The ride starts in the back of Sharp Bicycle in Lafayette (969 Moraga Rd.) Routes change weekly. Getting back in shape? Inexperienced riding in groups? Regardless of your level, there is a place for you. We will help you remember the joy of riding. End of ride coffee gives you a chance to get to know other riders. To learn more or join the club, go to www.lamorindacycling.com, or call Ted Brooks (415-850-8090) or Debbie Levine (925-683-7869).

Safe from the Sun-a fundraising event created by Sonia Lamel, former LMYA and Acalanes swimmer-all proceeds go to the Melanoma International Foundation. Lafayette Community Park at 480 St. Mary's Road 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.Sat., Aug. 23rd. Advanced melanoma has a 5-year survival rate of less than 5%, but it's better than 99% with early detection and knowing your A-B-C's! Come learn sun safety from our UV experts! Try free samples of various sunscreens and check out parasols, hats and other items and win great prizes in our raffle! Live music from Star 101.3 - Moon Bounce-Face Painting-Tracy and his Animals. General Admission: \$20. Kids under 12: \$10*First 100 registrants get a free parasol! www.safefromthesun.org/events

"Dawn of the Space Age" is now showing daily in Chabot's full dome digital planetarium. Become immersed and overwhelmed with this accurate, historic reconstruction of Man's first steps into space. A planetarium show is FREE with general admission. Call, click or visit for show times- www.chabotspace.org, (510)

Chabot Sunday Family Hikes- Sundays:. Aug 10, and Aug 24 "9am - 11am: (8 years & up) 1:30pm - 2:30pm: (5 years & up) Hike the redwood-laced trails near Chabot to hidden, historic sites. Experience the ecosystem walking through the beautiful, shady paths of the Redwood Regional Park, led by a naturalist from the East Bay Regional Park District. Tickets are \$5 plus General Admission to Chabot Space & Science Center. To register, call the Chabot Box Office at 510.336.7373

Lafayette Hiking Group. August 9 -Steep Ravine, Mt. Tamalpais Moderately strenuous 3.5 miles - August 23 - Bear Valley Trail at Point Reyes Moderate 6 -7 miles. Meet at Lafayette BART at 8 a.m. Remember to bring lunch, water, layered clothing, good walking shoes, sun protection and money to contribute toward gas, bridge tolls and parking. Questions? Email LafayetteHiking@comcast.net

East Bay Mountain Bike Ride Day -Sat. Aug 9th Redwood/Joaquin Miller Park. Casual, social group ride. No one is every left behind and includes most levels for both men and women. Rides last 2-3 hours. See details and meeting location at www.btceb.org

Luau-Sat., August 23, 3 p.m -Beachcomber Singles would like to invite single readers to join us in our Annual Fundraising event for Juvenile Hall. \$30 for the Luau and an additional \$7 for an authentic flower Lei from Hawaii. Make checks payable to "Juvenile Hall Auxiliary." What to bring: a new gift applicable for ages between 10 and 18 years old. Your own beverage dress Hawaiian (optional) and bring your swim suit. There will be many door prizes and raffles start at 7:30 p.m. Music is provided by "Now Playing" from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Call Jerry for more information 510-799-2207.

Bi-Monthly Caregiver Support Group. Caring for frail older adults in the home often creates great stress and emotional anguish for spouses and family members. Licensed geriatric care manager Carol Shenson, M.A., CMC, offers a bi-monthly support group for family members who are considering or currently involved with the direct care of an older relative. To sign up, please call 284-5050. Drop-ins are also welcome. Monday August 18. 1:30 – 2:30 pm

Luk Tung Kwen every other Friday: Aug 8, Aug 22: 1:00 – 1:50 pm.

A health and strengthening discipline, Luk Tung Kwen helps practitioners to achieve body wellness with goals similar to western physical therapy. It also promises to combat some chronic conditions and build resistance to a host of illnesses. The program relies on the 36 body movements performed slowly and repeatedly. There is no charge although a donation at the door would be appreciated.

Seniors enjoy afternoon Tea Dancing and light refreshments every Wednesday from 12:30 - 3:00pm in the spacious Live Oak room. Come for the swell music and good company even if you prefer not to dance. \$2 fee covers refreshments. LCC Live Oak Room located at 500 Saint Mary's Rd, Lafayette. 925-284-5050

Senior Identity Theft and You. Learn from and ask our local panel of experts what you and your loved ones can do to thwart the ID theft criminals at your home (phone, mail boxes, garbage), in public (credit card use, ATMs), on your computer, and so on. Believe it or not, there are many simple strategies to keep the bad guys at bay, and feeling safe is a very good feeling. Friday, August 8th 10:30 - Noon. Lafayette Community Center.

Widowed persons support monthly Lunch Bunch-Saturday August 16th, at 1:00 pm at El Charro Mexican Restaurant. 3339 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Lafayette. Price is \$11.- for entrée, nonalcoholic beverages, tax and tip. OLE!! To make a reservation call Claire Shigley (925) 935-3145, or Mollie Runnion at (925)283-1119. Deadline for reservations is Thursday August 14.

Pain Management Friday August 22, 11:30-12:30. Learn the purpose of pain and the causes of chronic pain. Learn how improving posture and muscle strength can reduce or eliminate pain altogether. An Anne Randolph Workshop at the Lafayette Community Center. All workshops are free of charge. Please call (925)284-5050 to register. 500 Saint Mary's Rd, Lafayette

Not to be missed

Tree Planting to Honor Slain Lafayette Airman On Saturday, August 9, the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) District will sponsor a tree planting ceremony to honor the memory of Senior Airman Jonathan Antonio Vega Yelner, who was serving with the United States Air Force in Afghanistan on a community reconstruction mission when he was killed by a roadside bomb attack on April 29. He was 24 years old. Yelner's mother, Yolanda



Jonathan Antonio Vega Yelner

Vega, has worked for BART for many years. The public is invited to attend the event, which will begin at 1:00pm at the Lafayette BART station.

Yelner grew up in Lafayette and

attended St. Perpetua School. A dedicated Boy Scout, he obtained the rank of Eagle with Lafayette Troop 243. He graduated from De La Salle High School in 2002 and entered the Air Force in 2003.

Saint Mary's College

Campus Happenings

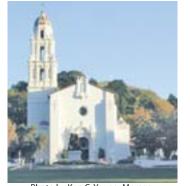


Photo by Ken C. Young, Moraga; www.kcvoungfineartimages.com

Art Exhibitions:

Forty-nine rarely seen oil paintings and thirty-eight pastels and drawings by Carl Sammons from a vast and extraordinary private collection will be featured in at the Hearst Art Galley of Saint Mary's College through Sept. 21. A talented and precise draftsman, Sammons painted a wide range of subjects, from the flowers and birds of Golden Gate Park to thundering ocean breakers to the rolling hills of the coastal ranges to the Southern California deserts. Exhibition Admission: \$3; Gallery Hours: Wed. -Sun., 11 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., 925.631.4379,

www.hearstartgallery.org.

Workshop:

Navigating Difficult Conversations Using Appreciative Inquiry

A workshop sponsored by the Master of Arts in Leadership program. It will explore "Appreciative Inquiry," an approach to human growth and development that focuses on what's possible rather than what's wrong. Instead of entering into the downward spiral of identifying problems and assigning blame, Appreciative Inquiry looks for what's working in a certain situation and how we can build on it.

Saturday, August 9, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saint Mary's College, Filippi Academic Hall 115

Cost: \$95 for the general public and \$75 for SMC alumni. To register: contact mling@stmarys-ca.edu or call 925 631-8681.

Summer Wine Festival

The annual Summer Wine Festival will feature wine-tasting, hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction. All proceeds will benefit the Lasallian Scholarship Fund, which awards scholarships to children and grandchildren of Saint Mary's College alumni. Event participants are also invited to purchase wines directly from more than 20 featured wineries.

Sunday, August 10, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saint Mary's College, Soda Center Cost: Before July 31, early-bird price of \$35. Tickets purchased after July 31 will be \$45 each. Tickets for designated drivers are \$20 each. Must be 21+.

To purchase tickets call the Alumni 925-631-4200 Office at or register on line at:

www.stmarys-ca.edu/alumni-andfriends/alumni-events/grandwinetasting

Other:

Vendor Fair - Thursday, August 28th - 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Held during Welcome Week for new Saint Mary's Students, vendors have the opportunity to rent a table on the De La Salle lawn to display their services. \$75 fee. Call 925-631-4707 for more information.

Exhibition hours: Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 am until 4:30 pm Admission: \$3 adult; children 12 and under free; free parking Web site: http://gallery.stmarys-ca.edu.

For more information about upcoming events at Saint Mary's College, visit the college website at http://www.stmarysca.edu/news-and-events/events.html.

Telephone: 925-631-4379

Please submit events to: calendar@lamorindaweekly.com



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Elderly Need to be Cautious When Seeking In-Home Care

By Jennifer Wake

hen a person's health deteriorates, the need for extra care can be immediate.

Lafayette resident Doris Johnson was faced with this decision two years ago, after her sister Rita suffered a second stroke, leaving her blind and needing 24-hour

"It all happened very fast," Johnson says. "She was getting ready to be released [from the hospital] and I needed to sign something before they would release her, showing the care she would receive."

Johnson was handed three pages listing nursing homes and full-service in-home care agencies to choose from. "I was shocked when I found out the cost," says Johnson, who owns her house together with her sister. "I never considered long-term care insurance. I worry about the cost, but as long as we can manage, I want her here. We've lived together most of our lives."

Johnson chose Companion Care in Lafayette mainly because it was close to their home. Caregivers who are each supervised by professional geriatric care managers who all have master's degrees come into the sisters' home six days a week from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. to do light housekeeping, laundry, cook meals and even do some ironing. Johnson is "on duty" during the nights and on Sundays. "That's our time to be alone," she says.

LYNN'S TOP FIVE

By Lynn Ballou, CFP, EA

omehow nothing in the finan-

cial planning field seems to be

straight forward these days! And

probably, nothing ever was, but it's

nice to pretend that it was all sim-

pler in the past, isn't it? The

longevity of the baby boomers and

their parents is creating a whole

new type of chats at cocktail parties,

around the pool, and hopefully in

offices with our respective financial

advisors. It seems that even at the

line in the grocery store I'm over-

hearing more and more conversa-

tions about how to help aging

relatives, and worries about how

Will you cancel? Will you keep?

unaffordable --- never having received a benefit (if needed).

Be sure to have your agent review them with you in detail.

Long - Term Care Insurance:

A complex policy, a complex decision

care insurance.

Typical cost for this type of care ranges from \$24 to \$30 per hour and \$250 to \$350 per shift rate - an out-of-pocket expense for Johnson, since this type of home care is not covered by Medicare insurance. (The cost of 24-hour care could reach \$9,000 per month.)

Johnson was lucky, however, since Companion Care does background checks and TB tests on all of its caregivers, and pays the workers compensation and liability insurance. But it adds to the overall cost of care.

In the past five years, Barbara Schuh, a geriatric care manager who founded Companion Care 11 years ago, has seen in-home care agencies grow from five in the area, to nearly 50 agencies today.

"Chateau in Lafayette now offers home care, and Marriott is even offering the service. People choosing home care need to be really cautious," she warns. "People open these companies with good hearts, but they don't always know what they're doing."

Because of the growing number of organizations offering home care, the National Private Duty Association says consumers are turning to companies that offer the cheapest price for care without understanding the implications of using a referral agency versus a fullservice agency. "Many consumers are hiring from registries that do not 'employ or supervise' their workers, but merely 'place' them in

our kids will be there to help us -

hah! So we are increasingly look-

ing to handle the situation on our

own terms. One important tool for

us to use in that quest is long-term

you afford it, and can you even

qualify for it? Since there is a lot of

information about these questions

already out there for you to digest,

I'm going to take a different tact, for

a variety of reasons (not the least of

which is space!), and say that these

questions are ones you should care-

fully and personally explore with

most important consideration in purchasing a long-term care (LTC) policy is affordability. You can design and purchase the most wonderful plan available today, but if you will cancel it before you ever collect benefits be-

security. Not often enough is it explained to us that premiums for long-term care insurance are not locked-in,

costs experienced by claims and inflation just like auto, homeowners, medical and other insurance plans. Be

sure you design a plan that you can afford to keep! It would be a great tragedy for you to pay for your LTC in-

erage is affordable for you. Similarly, you can lengthen the up-front elimination period and self insure, for ex-

ample, for a year with your own assets before having your policy become available to you. Most agents quote

the classic 90 day elimination period, but that is not necessarily your best personal choice. Quotes offered by

qualified agents will also include these other options and different viewpoints on coverage and affordability.

Length of benefits: One way to handle the affordability issue may be to buy fewer years of coverage by shortening up the length of time benefits will be paid out if a claim arises (or create a smaller pool of funds). Let's say that the life-time option would be your preference, but is too costly, whereas 5 years of cov-

What is it, do you need it, can

home care settings."

This gives the consumer and caregiver an "employee-employer" relationship in the home, making consumers responsible for payroll taxes (and interest and penalties from an estate, if taxes were never paid), and worker's compensation coverage for any medical costs and lost wages for "employees" who are injured in their home (many homeowners policies exclude "employees"). Also, many of these types of organizations are not required by the state to run background checks or administer TB tests on caregivers, and they may not follow minimum standards of care.

When researching in-home care, Schuh suggests people ask tough questions.

"Ask if they do background checks, ask to see a copy of their liability insurance, and ask if they pour medication," she says. "The last is a trick question. If they say 'yes', run. They obviously don't know what they're supposed to do."

Unlike home health care, which is covered by Medicare and MediCal, home care aide organizations are not licensed to administer medications or provide any healthrelated services. Schuh recommends starting by bringing in a geriatric care manager (found through the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers) for an assessment.

"Individuals will come out to the home to do an assessment of

your advisors and qualified long-

term care insurance agent specialist

(in California insurance agents who

care insurance).

long-term care policy

... continued on page 13

Aside from the safety of the insurance company, perhaps the

needs," Schuh says. "You may not need care right away, and could get by with Meals on Wheels or Caring Hands (a program run through John Muir Medical Center)."

Schuh sits on the board of the California Association for Health Services at Home (CAHSAH), a leading statewide home care association in the nation and the voice of home care for the Western United States. The organization is determined to provide standards of care for all home care aide organizations and is seeking legislation requiring state licensing in California.

Two years ago, CAHSAH put a bill before legislators at the Capital. "Senators had no clue there was no licensing for home

care. Unfortunately, no one wanted to take it on," Schuh says. "It jumped from the Labor Commission to Health Services."

Page: 9

In the end, the licensing fee they recommended for the bill to pass was too much to ask these companies to pay.

CAHSAH decided to start self-policing agencies as part of its Home Care Aide Organization Certification Program. Member organizations submit proof of liability and workers compensation insurance as well as their standards of practice to CAHSAH. "At least people will know if they are associated with CAHSAH, they have been screened," Schuh says.

For Johnson, although it's

been a big adjustment to have someone move into her house, she has a feeling of security knowing the caregivers are there. But the cost of care weighs heavy on her mind. She advises any young person to look into long-term care in-

"The routine in your life changes," Johnson says. "I don't think about the future. I probably should, but we just take it day-today, month-to-month. It's scary, it's really scary."

For more information about home care agencies and current legislation, visit CAHSAH's Web site (www.cahsah.org) or the National Duty Private Association (www.npda.org).



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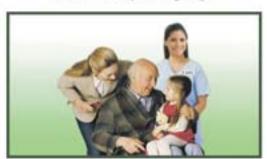
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Meet Sonal Basu Realtor

Sonal resides in Walnut Creek with her family. She graduated with honors in Business Administration from University of Houston. She was an executive member of several financial institutions for over 15 years before making the transition to Real Estate and joining Prudential CA Realty.

She is a certified e-PRO agent and is endorsed by the National Association of REALTORS®. Being a tech-savvy professional, she has the latest software and online tools at her fingertips to streamline information flow and help you close your deal in a speedy and efficient

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Update on Lafayette's Downtown Strategy

... continued from page 1



Downtown Parking

Older lots, often full Courtesy of the Lafayette Downtown Strategy available on the City's web site: www.lovelafayette.com

Newer lots

Potential new parking sites

Redevelopment is a tool created by state law to assist local governments to achieve the goals of development, reconstruction and rehabilitation of residential, commercial, industrial and retail districts. It can be used for public projects and for stimulating housing – affordable and otherwise - and economic development through public/private partnerships, according to Ann Merideth, Community Development Director. No Redevelopment

paving or police services. "Our charge is to define how

Agency money can be used for

we want the downtown to grow," said Ruth McCahan, at a recent Advisory Committee meeting. "When I moved here over 45 years ago, Lafayette looked very different from what it does today, I'm sure forty years into the future it'll look different from what it does today - it continues to evolve to meet the needs of the community without losing its small town environment and unique sense of place."

"The Advisory Committee is still going through the background information and talking about downtown generally. The preliminary preferred option from April is the latest plan, but the Committee won't be talking about that or any of the earlier alternatives until they finish this phase of their work. Sometime in the fall the work with the consultants will start again," said Merideth.

Another Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for August 20 at 7:00 at the City Offices at 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. To take a closer look at what's gone on to date, go to www.lovelafayette.com for agendas, notes, economic analysis, survey results and more.

"Mr. Housing Bubble?" - What's in Real Estate's future?

(925) 698-5752

By Mark Shaw

hat defines a "bubble?" Some say an 80% decline. If you're waiting for a \$1M home to fire sale at \$200K, don't hold your breath.

The media often paints a much bleaker Real Estate picture than is really the case. Why? It sells newspapers. First of all, there is no national real estate market. We know that there are "pockets" of Real Estate within every community. Values are based on many factors - schools, proximity to employment, quality of life and climate. As you will see, even in our own community, values are all over the board.

Let's look at some local statistics provided by DataQuick:





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May 2008 vs. May 2007 (median price of resale houses) Community May 2007 sq. ft May 2008 sq. ft Pct. Chg -11.9% Alamo \$536 \$472 Antioch 94509 \$282 \$143 -49.3% -41.0% Antioch 94531 \$258 \$152 Clayton \$334 \$289 -13.5% Concord 94518 \$374 \$286 -23.6% Danville 94506 \$418 \$386 - 7.6% El Cerrito \$480 \$538 12.2% Lafayette \$557 \$531 - 4.7% Martinez \$372 \$310 -16.6% Moraga \$514 \$510 - 0.8% Oakley \$298 -50.5% \$147 Orinda \$522 \$597 14.3% -20.1% \$459 \$367 Richmond 94801 \$210 -50.7% \$427 San Ramon 94582 \$399 \$345 -13.5% \$487 \$490 0.8% Walnut Creek 94596

Pleasant Hill





US was \$200. By 1936, it jumped to \$2000. In 1966, a home cost \$20,000.

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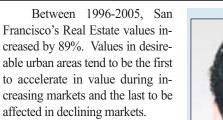
of Zero

In 1906, the average home price in the

By 1996, the same house was valued at approximately \$200,000.

What will home values be in 2026? Who knows.

Real Estate will always be a good investment...in the best of times or in the worst.



If we could peer into the future, we may see growth markets such as San Francisco, bouncing back by 2009. Softer markets such as Pleasant Hill, Concord & Martinez experiencing their stabilization by 2010. Declining markets may take longer, perhaps 2013 and cities like Fairfield and Vallejo to come back in 2015. Finally, severely declining markets, such as Las Vegas, Miami & Modesto CA will probably rebound by 2015.



Broker with ReMax Accord in Lafayette. He can be reached at 297-0332 or mark@markshawrealtor.com

Lamorinda Home Sales continued



LAFAYETTE LOWEST AMOUNT: \$422,500 HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$2,600,000 MORAGA Last reported: LOWEST AMOUNT: HIGHEST AMOUNT: \$1,490,000 ORINDA Last reported: LOWEST AMOUNT: \$385,000 HIGHEST AMOUNT: Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax info mation 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

46 Circle Creek Court, \$469,000, 2 Bdrms, 1248 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 7-10-08 949 Diablo Drive, \$1,645,000, 3 Bdrms, 2948 SqFt, 2004 YrBlt, 7-2-08 3 Gilmore Court, \$520,000, 3 Bdrms, 1767 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 7-9-08 3812 Happy Valley Road, \$650,000, 7-7-08

614 Lancaster Drive, \$1,139,000, 3 Bdrms, 1874 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 7-1-08 3237 Marlene Drive, \$422,500, 2 Bdrms, 1160 SqFt, 1972 YrBlt, 7-9-08 1074 Orchard Road, \$881,000, 7 Bdrms, 1242 SqFt, 1947 YrBlt, 7-2-08 827 Reliez Station Road, \$1,049,000, 3 Bdrms, 2190 SqFt, 1957 YrBlt, 7-10-08 3496 School Street, \$951,000, 3 Bdrms, 2068 SqFt, 1954 YrBlt, 7-2-08 531 Silverado Drive, \$995,000, 5 Bdrms, 2152 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 6-30-08 3954 South Peardale Drive, \$2,600,000, 4 Bdrms, 4033 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 7-1-08 3338 Sweet Drive, \$719,000, 3 Bdrms, 1556 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 7-11-08

48 Corte De Rosas, \$700,000, 4 Bdrms, 1725 SqFt, 1977 YrBlt, 7-1-08 13 Doral Drive, \$805,000, 2 Bdrms, 2142 SqFt, 1978 YrBlt, 7-11-08 1879 Joseph Drive, \$1,490,000, 4 Bdrms, 2744 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 7-11-08 1101 Larch Avenue, \$725,000, 4 Bdrms, 1745 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 7-2-08 651 Moraga Road #12, \$408,000, 3 Bdrms, 1418 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 7-1-08 817 Villa Lane #3, \$350,000, 2 Bdrms, 952 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 7-9-08 90 Warfield Drive, \$1,205,000, 4 Bdrms, 2216 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 7-2-08 **ORINDA**

165 Ardith Drive, \$929,000, 3 Bdrms, 1644 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 7-10-08 73 Brookwood Road #21, \$385,000, 1 Bdrms, 673 SqFt, 1962 YrBlt, 7-3-08 90 Claremont Avenue, \$1,075,000, 3 Bdrms, 3121 SqFt, 1988 YrBlt, 7-8-08 212 Crescent Drive, \$1,050,000, 7-3-08

3 Easton Court, \$1,150,000, 4 Bdrms, 1917 SqFt, 1956 YrBlt, 7-10-08 356 Glorietta Boulevard, \$735,000, 3 Bdrms, 1289 SqFt, 1952 YrBlt, 7-11-08 124 Moraga Way, \$665,000, 3 Bdrms, 2251 SqFt, 1936 YrBlt, 7-7-08 10 Nelson Lane, \$1,002,000, 4 Bdrms, 2422 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 7-3-08 33 Oak Road, \$625,000, 3 Bdrms, 373 SqFt, 1994 YrBlt, 7-10-08 11 Van Tassel Lane, \$1,800,000, 3 Bdrms, 2260 SqFt, 1959 YrBlt, 7-8-08

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business briefs

Decadent Ribbon Cutting, Anyone?

The French Bakery, 71 Lafayette Circle, 283-0224

The French Bakery will hold a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on August 28th at 4:40 p.m.

A place for afternoon tea, lunch and deserts, located in the charming white bungalow on Lafayette circle. Business hours are Tuesday to Friday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Cell Phones for Soldiers

Prudential California Realty, 999 Oak Hill Road, Lafayette, Contact: M'lissa Cassidy, 283-7000

The Lafayette office is proud to announce that they are an official dropoff location for the Cell Phones for Soldiers Program. With the combined efforts of the Bergquists, and ReCellular, every used cell phone donated will provide one hour of free talk time to soldiers serving abroad. Every 16 months, U.S. consumers retire an estimated 150 million cell phones and less than 10 percent of those phones are recycled. ReCellular pays Cell Phones for Soldiers enough to provide an hour of talk time per phone for soldiers abroad. Cell Phone for Soldiers was founded by teenagers Robbie and Brittany Bergquist from Norwell, Mass. Since the beginning, they have raised enough money to send 500,000 prepaid calling cards to soldiers serving overseas. ReCellular works with a recycling partner to reclaim materials from every component that is donated.



www.lamorindaweekly.com

In Lafayette, agent Barbara Harkins brought the flyer into the office and the group decided to collect phones at work. To participate, simply drop off your used phone to the Prudential Office any weekday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. or call M'lissa Cassidy to arrange for a pick up. "We just want to help our troops and their family," says Cassidy, "it's an easy thing to do, and we want to keep it going as long as possible.'

SZFM Design Studio Wins Awards

Sudhish Mohindroo and Eric Maltman are proud to announce that SZFM

has received three awards from the Pacific Coast Builders Conference 2008 Gold Nugget Awards Program: Grand Award for Shuey Podva Building in Danville; Award of Merit for Lafayette Mercantile; Award of Merit for Salvio Pacheco Square in Concord.

SZFM was the architect partnering with developer Steve Cortese to design the Lafayette Mercantile located on Mt. Diablo Blvd between Lafayette Circle and Dewing Ave. "Our primary focus was how the building would integrate within the framework of the public space," said Mohindroo, who has a wealth of experience in urban planning and esthetics. He believes that a timeless and elegant design is the key for a development to be successful and last. "The upper floors where the offices are provide the classical frame that supports the creativity and life brought by the retailers at the street level," adds the architect. The star theme that runs all over the buildings adds to its appeal and cohesion.

Garden Lights Landscape & Pool Development (254-4797) Wins 8 Awards at Annual CLCA Chapter Banquet Orinda business owner Steve Lambert of Garden Lights Landscape Development received eight top honors at this year's

"Beautification Awards" presented June 7th at the Pleasanton Hotel by the CLCA's (California Landscape Contractors Association) East Bay Chapter President. The awards include: Judges Award "Best of the Best" - Large Design/Build, Bluford Residence, Orinda; First Place -Medium Residential Installation, Shellenbeck Residence, Moraga; First Place - Small Design/Build Installation, Vega Residence, Moraga, First Place - Special Effects Lighting, Dunne Residence, Orinda. "It's really rewarding to have your work recognized by your peers in the industry," said Lambert.



"Best of the Best" – Large Design/Build, Bluford Residence, Orinda

Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

- No mixer in August
- Wednesday August 21st, Entrepreneur Club meeting, starting at 8:30 a.m. in the Chamber's office
- · Rock the Plaza continues at the corner of Mt Diablo Blvd and Moraga Rd. On August 8th come and hear Stagefrite, on the 15th the Ramblers and on the 22nd the Spazmatics. Concerts are free of charge, food sold by Lafayette Rotary Club.

Moraga Chamber of Commerce

- The August Chamber meeting day and time was changed. Chamber members and their spouses are invited to participate in a Barbeque on Tuesday, August 26th at the Moraga Commons Park from 6 to 7:30 p.m.
- Aug 28th the Chamber will be present at the St Mary's fair for new students from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. 600 to 800 new students will be present on campus with their parents. Anybody interested in participating needs to contact Edy Schwartz at Edy321@comcast.net before August 10th.

Orinda Chamber of Commerce

- Chamber Breakfast Meeting 8:00 a.m. August 28th at Shelby's Restaurant -Theater Square. Cost \$10.00 (paid at door). The guest Speaker will be Tom Chen of the Subcommittee for Emergency Preparedness. He will address the following topic: "Is Orinda Ready?"
 - 1. Major natural hazard impacting Orinda businesses
 - 2. Local and regional response capabilities and resources
 - 3. Structural and infrastructure vulnerabilities affecting Orinda business
 - 4. Mitigation alternatives and recommendations
 - 5. Getting Orinda businesses prepared

Lafayette Entrepreneurs Club Returns To Its Roots By Sophie Braccini

he July 17th session was as packed as usual. Thirty to forty local business owners filled up the meeting room of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce for the monthly meeting of the Entrepreneurs Club. The group, which is sponsored by the Chamber, has recently adopted a mission statement and decided to re-center on what members feel is the core mission: providing practical business advice to members. The networking part of the group is still present, in the same friendly and informal manner that's one of the attractive features of the group.

The new mission statement is: "A Chamber sponsored program where small business owners and managers can share ideas and solve problems that are specific to their business. Practical lessons and information are presented for personal development. Connections and alliances are made creating an ongoing learning community."

"We wanted to make sure that the members understood that this was not a networking group," says Jay Lifson, Lafayette Chamber Executive Director. "There were

some people showing up with the mission of trying to sell their service or product to the others in attendance. We needed to make clear that is not the purpose of the meet-

The room was filled that day with experienced professionals who were ready to help each other. Many business cards were exchanged as people thought of possible synergies. The next meeting will be on Thursday August 21st at 8:30 a.m. at the Lafayette Chamber offices, 100 Lafayette Circle.

If you have a business brief to share, please contact **Sophie Braccini** sophie@lamor-

indaweekly.com or call our office at

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Handlebar Toys Has New Owners

By Andrea A. Firth



Lance Ghulam and Sara Casey at work and at play at Handlebar Toys in Lafayette

ance Ghulam and Sara Casey ✓are continuing to mind the shop, the shop being Handlebar Toys in Lafayette, which is something that they have been doing together for many years. The difference now is that Ghulam and Casey recently became the new owners of Handlebar Toys having purchased the store from the family of longtime proprietor Freda Challis who passed away in the spring.

"It was really like a passing of the baton," explains Ghulam who started working at the toy store ten years ago as a temporary stint but

Photo Andrea A. Firth then never left. "We had talked about taking over the store for a while. It's really how it was meant to be," adds Casey, who started working at Handlebar 15 years ago while she was still in high school.

Lafayette natives and self-described best friends, Ghulam and Casey each bring a unique experience and perspective to their business venture. Ghulam's many years of retail experience with the Disney Store has proven invaluable as he has worked to update the look of Handlebar Toys. And, Casey, who has a family of four children between 6

months and ten years of age, provides a real-world testing ground for new toys. "If it doesn't work in Sara's family, it won't be in the store," states Ghulam.

This toy store duo has no plans to tinker with the successful formula that Handlebar Toys has followed for the past four decades. "One thing will always stay the same," states Ghulam, "We will always carry quality, hard-to-find toys. We will carry action figures and Barbie's, but the bulk of our inventory will be toys that you won't find at the [local discount retailer]."

However, Ghulam and Casey do plan to do more. They want to have special purchase days (where a percentage of sales receipts will be donated to local schools) and birthday clubs (that will help parents to buy the right gifts for the right kids). And, they continue to work on the store design and displays to create a more inviting shopping experience.

"We want to be more than just a toy store," states Casey. "We want the store to be a destination—a place where both a child and a grown up can have a good time," adds Ghulam finishing Casey's thought as these best friends often do.



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In the Back Yard

Digging Deep-Cynthia's Garden Vacation

By Cynthia Brian



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The main purpose of a garden is to give its owner the best and highest kind of earthly pleasure. "Gertrude Jekyll

Mid-Day Dog Walks

💣 Barb Pensky, Orinda owner

"Come on down for a glass of

champagne to help us christen our new outdoor kitchen," my neighbor emailed me this past weekend. What a beautiful addition to their already gorgeous garden! We sipped the bubbly and nibbled on appetizers while enjoying the sun setting over their luscious landscape, "I feel like I'm on holiday in your backyard!" I cheerfully exclaimed.

Today homeowners are realizing the value of creating inviting outdoor places. Living space is increased through the creation of outdoor rooms, especially with the beautiful weather we experience here in California. Changes in taste and technology have extended style and luxury to our outdoor furnishings. It's a way to bring our interiors outside while designing a leisurely sanctuary in the midst of a hectic life.

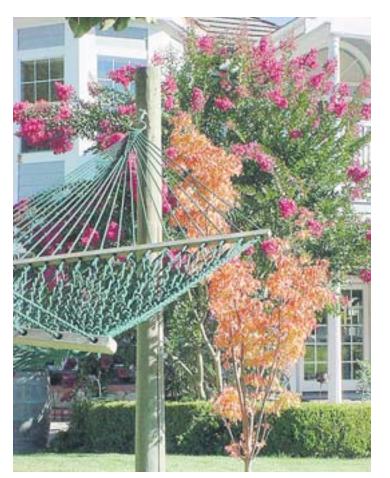
The building blocks for outdoor furnishings include woods, metals, rattan, wicker, stone, and fabric. The key is to utilize materials that are weather resistant, durable, and attractive. As with all design, you want your outdoor rooms to be functional, balanced, and easy to clean.

Over the years I've designed many outdoor spaces where I could have easily spent a vacation. Making sure that the fabrics, textures, and designs mimic and compliment the home and garden is essential for

the area to flow comfortably. In my own backyard, I've incorporated patios, terraces, paths, water features, bird baths, feeders, picnic areas, hammocks, and fanciful art into my garden schemes. Although I travel extensively lecturing around the world, my garden is always my very favorite vacation locale. Where else can I watch wildlife, swim, nap, barbecue, spa, read, write, play, weed, gather fresh vegetables, fruits, and flowers yet still dream from the comfort of my own bed?

This August as the world travels to a distant environment to get away from it all, I'm gong on vacation at home in my backyard where we have it all. The champagne is on ice. Salute!

Happy Gardening to you from the Ultimate Mom Gardener, Cynthia Brian. cynthia@starstyle.com, www.Gardeningwith-Cynthia.com



Cynthia's Digging Deep Garden Guide for August

"Gardeners, I think, dream bigger dreams than emperors." Mary Cantwell

Our warmest summer month and the time to enjoy the fruits of our labors. The vegetables are abundant. Plants are in their glory. Nothing tastes sweeter than home-grown tomatoes, corn, nectarines, peaches, and pears. Keep everything thoroughly watered so that vegetables and fruit mature properly, lawns are kept green and flowering plants bloom profusely. Lots of outdoor entertaining and lounging around the yard and pool are in order. The birds, bees, butterflies are in profusion if you have been maintaining a healthy garden! All of nature seems to be singing the praises of high summer.

- LAWN mower blades need to be set to the highest position so than grass roots are shaded from the hot August sunshine.
- WATER deeply, especially lawns. Short, frequent watering cyncles are not useful.
- PRUNE suckers that grow from trunks of trees and roses.
- They zap the strength of the mother plant and if not pruned will kill the rootstock.
- DEADHEAD summer annuals and perennials for a burst of fall color. Be careful to leave some foliage as photosynthesis is still in process to nourish the plant for the upcoming winter.
- CLIP roses for sprays of beauty and fragrance for both indoor and outdoor entertainment.
- HARVEST fruits and vegetables, especially beets, potatoes, strawberries, corn, tomatoes and zucchini.
- PICK herbs in the morning, use fresh or dry upside down in a cool dark room for later culinary needs.
- HUNT for snails and slugs by flashlight at night or drown them in left-over beer from your barbeque!
- BUY a golden finch sock, fill with thistle seed and enjoy the show!
- FIRE up your barbecue, invite your friends and neighbors, and grill some of your homegrown or farmer's market produce. Besides vegetables, peaches, pears, nectarines and plums are delicious hot from the coals drizzled with honey.
- SWING in your hammock, dream the dreams of kings and queens.

May the sun shine in your garden and the stars in your heart.



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City of Orinda Launches New Websitewww.cityoforinda.org

... continued from page 4

A photo banner of city landmarks-including the library, the theater, City Hall, a hillside view,

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the homepage reflecting Orinda's beauty and character. "We wanted the website to show what it is like to live in Orinda and how people feel when they come here," says Pacheco. The website's color scheme mirrors the look of Orinda's landscape employing the same earth tones; such as green, terra cotta, and brown, that are evident in the hills surrounding and buildings throughout the city.

and a school walkway—traverses

Providing meeting information is one of the key functions of the website notes Pacheco. The new website has a calendar of meeting events on the homepage and provides easier access to agendas and minutes. "We broke the government section into a few parts to separate the Council activities from the various committees and commissions that have grown in number and activity," she adds. And, to communicate (via email) with a Council member or city employee is as easy as point and click.

"The City Council and our numerous citizen commissions need residents' participation to be a truly representative government," notes Glazer. "With only a few clicks on your computer you can read the who, what, where and why on almost any matter coming to the City Council."

Although the new website has been updated, launched and is running smoothly, Pacheco believes that it will continue to evolve and grow. "It is my hope that the City's website can continue to be improved so that it can be the source of all things Orinda," adds Glazer. "I hope we can find ways to provide expanded links to civic organizations and businesses."

Pacheco explains that the website will be an important source of information during emergencies. "Phone lines get flooded quickly," she states. "The News and Updates section on the homepage will be on of the first places where information is posted during an emergency."

However, in this age of enews, email, and e-everything, Glazer points out, "The City Council and City Staff continue to provide written information to residents who don't have access to a computer. No one should be left out of the information loop if they don't have access to our website. Committee agendas, minutes, and city policies can still be requested by calling the City at 253-4200."

To check out the City of Orinda's website go to www.cityoforinda.org.



Way Side Inn Thrift Shop Celebrates 30 Years with Pearls

... continued from page 7



Louise Ferdun at the Way Side Inn

"This is one of my secret places," says a shopper who didn't care to be identified, "It's like going to a candy store, the prices

Photo Sophie Braccini

are so low, the clothes are so diverse, I can try on 20 items I wouldn't have thought of for myself and come out with three or

four great looking pieces of clothing for about \$20."

"The Way Side Inn Thrift Shop provides most of our funding, "explains Louise Ferdun, the Diablo Valley League's President and an Orinda resident, "Corporate and individual sponsors have sent financial contributions to our programs... As a team, we distributed \$500,000 through our philanthropic programs this year and have touched the lives of more than 13,000 local people." Ferdun is particularly proud to report that the Chapter was able to supply new clothes for 3000 children in central Contra Costa County through "Operation School Bell," a national program that provides clothing, shoes, backpacks, literacy programs, as well as health and hygiene kits to disadvantaged school children.

Merchandise is donated by many residents of the Lamorinda area, as well Walnut Creek, Alamo, and Danville. Donations are welcomed at the Way Side Inn Thrift Shop which is open from 10:00 to 4:00 Tuesday through Saturday. They accept gently used clothing (men's, women's children's), décor items, house wares, small furniture, books, toys, collectables and art.

The League always needs new members. Leadership is encouraged and service to the community is the focus. To find out more about the programs, come to the August 11th party or go to the League's web site: diablovalley.assistanceleague.org.





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LYNN'S TOP FIVE

... continued from page 9

Long - Term Care Insurance: A complex policy, a complex decision

3) 10 year pay option: Another way to confront affordability is to buy your insurance coverage while you are working, and then pay it up in full before you retire, or in your early retirement years. The most popular way is by purchasing a 10-pay rider on your plan. This is VERY costly: usually the annual premiums are 2.5 - 3 times higher than a more conventional life-time pay policy. However, if you budget this into your highest, peak earning years, you are paid up before you retire, and you are done! Using the highest quality insurance company for this type of product is key, however. Not a time to cut corners here!

4) Inflation protection — don't scrimp! A lot of riders and add-on features are available to you when designing your LTC policy. There are costs to these, so some are worth it, others not so much. Here's one to embrace: INFLATION PROTECTION! Consider buying at least 5%, buy it as a compounding benefit, be happy you have it!

It is very scary to think that if I were to need full-time care, my assets would need 5) Daily benefit: to produce let's say \$8000/month. But that doesn't mean I need to buy \$8000/month of coverage. If my assets were already projected to provide, let's say, \$5000/month of retirement income for me, maybe I only need to buy \$3000/month of coverage? You and your planning team can go through your own projected budget during your retirement years and figure out what you won't be doing if you were to be receiving long-term care (traveling and car payments, for example, might be substantially reduced if not just eliminated). You then can calculate how much your projected income shortfall will actually be, and just cover that. Again, this is a way to keep it real and keep it affordable. Don't forget the equity in your home in this calculation. How you will or will not use that as a potential long-term care funding source is a very personal question, but one that should not be ignored in your quest for affordable solutions.

On your journey you will find that even extremely knowledgeable agents find it tough to compare policies and insurers. Take care,

take time, ask questions. The policy you buy is most likely the policy you will be keeping. As you age and your medical situation changes,

you may not be able to switch policies. So be sure you do your homework up-front! It's an investment of time that you won't regret!



ynn Ballou is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and co-owner of La Ballou Plum Financial Advisors, LLC, a Registered Investment Advisory (RIA) firm in Lafayette. Lynn is also a Registered Principal and Branch Manager with LPL Financial (LPL). As such, she is required by securities regulations to add the following information to this column: The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and not intended to provide specific advice or recommendation for any individual. Securities offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA/SIPC.

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School Governing Board Meetings

Acalanes Union

High School District Board Room AUHSD Office 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette Wednesday, Aug. 20 at 7:30 pm

Lafayette School District LAFSD Office

3477 School Street, Lafayette Monday, Aug. 25 at 7:00 pm

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Moraga School District Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga Tuesday, Aug. 19 at 7:30 pm **Orinda Union School District**

OUSD Office 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda Monday, Aug. 25 at 4:00 pm

First Day of School, 2008

Acalanes Union High School District August 27 Lafayette School District August 26 Moraga School District August 26 Orinda Union School District August 27

Lamorinda 4H Youth Fair: A huge success!

Submitted by Alison Bodden



A few of the many 4-H award winners, L-R: Kinsey Hartong-Redden, Amanda Leong, Allison Kostecki, Jennifer Chan, Helen Compton, Tyler Tasker, Joanna Langner, Heather Chan, Madison Gibson, Tara Leong Photo provided

It was the hottest week of the summer and the temperatures soared around 110. The California Youth Fair took place at the Antioch Fairgrounds during the week of July 6 - 12, and despite the heat, Lamorinda 4-H had a group of 24 part and full-time participants, ranging from 5 to 16 years old, who stuck it out bravely and succeeded in having a great, exciting week. It was full of fun, camaraderie and friendly competition. Most of our 4-H kids camped out, to be close to

and care for their show animals, which ranged from the tiniest poultry to Ransom the horse, including lambs, goats, rabbits and many more. It was a very educational week for all as our Club members cared for their animals, showed and competed. We were very successful as a Club, winning an incredible 95 ribbons and trophies!

4-H is starting up again soon after summer vacation, and promises to be another great year! Come and check out our kick-off commu-

nity meeting on September 18, 2008, at 7PM in the Stanley Middle School Multi-Purpose Room (our meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of every month). We have many fun groups to join, including Dog, Horse, Sewing, Foods, Poultry, Swine, Woodworking, Shooting Sports, Photography and many more. If you have any questions, please visit our website at http://groups.ucanr.org/ccc4h/ or call Michelle Chan at (925) 283-

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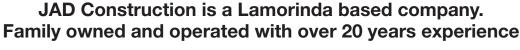
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Lamorinda Schools

A Girl Scout Gold Award To Help in The Basurero By Sophie Braccini

Jenna Pettegrew and Gaby Olufson with Guatemalan children

he Guatemala City Dump, or "basurero," covers 40 acres of land. It is the biggest land fill in Central America and the home to hundreds of families, poorest among the poor, who survive by scavenging what the trucks dump daily. That place is where two Campolindo students, Jenna Pettegrew and Gabby Olufson, decided to complete their Girl Scout Gold Award, building ovens and teaching kids basic fire safety in the Colonia del Recuerdo community next to the dump.

The two friends are part of the Lafayette/Orinda Presbyterian Church which helped in raising the necessary funds. "We knew we wanted to do something internationally and that would help children," says Pettegrew, "so we talked to our church's mission leader, John Weems, who gave us

the idea of the stoves."

Families that live by and off the basurero are cramped in small houses in which open cooking fires create hazards and smoke. The incidence of deadly pulmonary disease is staggering among children. The new ventilated safe stoves installed by the Scouts will also reduce burn related injuries, and firewood consumption by 50-70%.

was to find the financing for the stoves. They addressed the Women Senior group Lafayette/Orinda Presbyterian Church, who provided financial support for the purchase of the stoves and mission team volunteers to assist the girls in completing their project.

One of the girls' challenges

There was something else the girls wanted to do: fire safety training for children. With the help of

the Contra Costa Fire Department, that provided educational materials and training, they created an education session in Spanish for the Guatemalan children. "We had games to teach them the stop-dropand-roll rule, coloring papers and puzzles to learn to lay low when smoke is present." Fire safety is of great concern in the dump, since 2005 when the cloud of methane gas that hovers over the dump ignited and caused a massive fire.

The girls left for Guatemala with their families on June 22nd and came home on July 2nd. Since their return, they have been making presentations to thank all those who helped them. Their church has decided to pursue their effort and continue providing stoves to Colonia del Recuerdo.

The trip had a profound impact on the two. "I had never seen such a level of poverty," says Gaby, "they have so little and still the children are full of joy and love." She particularly remembers a very young little girl who wouldn't let go of her, who took her to her home and managed to find her again the next day to give her hugs. "I want to spend a year there in the future," says Olufson, "may be I will teach, all I know is that I want to help." Pettegrew adds, "I had a terrible culture shock, especially coming back to the Bay Area." The entering highschool juniors say they will definitely chose international study in college, "there is so much to do

School is Coming Up

There has to be a better way to prepare my kids By Dr. Harold Jules Hoyle Ph.D. last year. Remember your child

magine for a moment that were given 3 months off from work. And then someone told you, "Time for work to start again." What if you also had a new boss and a whole new team at work? This is what we ask our children to do this every year and often times with little thought or preparation. This is not just a simple transition. We can call it a big transition. When working with people, it becomes clear very quickly that transitions are hard. Most teachers have problems with students during transitions between activities. Most parents have difficulties when transitioning kids from one behavior to another. How many times have you heard a parent counting down, "5-4-3. . . ", when trying to get child to change activities or leave the park or turn off the TV? Leaving summer and returning to school is an important and significant transition time. This is a time when a little bit of planning will go a long way in reducing stress at the start of the school year.

Remind and revive some school

Sort out your schedule early. The worst time to remind a child they have a get-up time or a bed time is the weekend before it happens. Start the conversation when they are in a good mood. Work through the bed time, homework time, TV and media controls with them. Come up with the schedule by reflecting on what worked

is a year older. Help them with their new year by providing them with a new privilege and responsibility. If they get to stay up an extra half-hour, then they can keep their room clean. Privileges generally come with new responsibilities.

Tap into their friends.

Changing behavior can be hard. Having a friend to share it with can help. Plan a carpool or have your kids team up with a friend for their trip to school. They might not want to get up for school, but they might for their friend. We often have our kids isolated except for play times. Set up a homework club that rotates houses. It will provide a fixed time and draw on teamwork. Have them reconnect with their school friends and use the playgrounds before they go back to school. There are a lot of fun activities that happen at school, and kids most often see and make new friends at school.

Plan for reality.

Maybe you and your kids are morning people. Maybe you all love school and homework. Even if that is the case, when school starts things will change. Whether it is the un-cool backpack or the wrong lock, something will bring on the drama. Plan extra time for the first week's drama. Set up a special breakfast, or pack a favorite lunch. Pick the next day's outfit,

and put it out the night before. Think about the possible areas of conflict and attempt to reduce the potential for problems. Picture that first week as if you were planning for a family barbeque or a business retreat. Have realistic expectations, plan for the common issues, and provide yourself the time you will need to adjust to the unknown. With a little bit of planning, you might just miss the drama.



Harold is a licensed clinical psychologist and a lecturer and in the School of Counseling Psychology, Education, and Pastoral Ministries Santa Clara University.

With his wife and two children, he is a 13 year long resident of the Lamorinda area. He is a sought after speaker in the areas of parenting, education, and behavior with adolescents and children. He has a local private practice specializing in assessment and therapy.

He can be contacted by phone or email: 510-219-8660 or hjhoyle@mac.com



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Moraga Education Foundation Surpasses Fundraising Goal By Andrea A. Firth



ollowing a year marked by significant cuts to the State funding of public schools, parents of students who attend Moraga public schools have a little something to smile about, albeit if only briefly. The Moraga Education Foundation (MEF)—a non-profit, volunteer-run organization that raises funds to fill State-created budget gaps—surpassed its 2007-2008 goal to raise a total of \$1,245,000. MEF's fundraising success was in part due to a May letter campaign that raised \$119,000 in just 31 days.

"The Moraga parent community has consistently stepped up to the plate to support their children's education," stated Moraga School District Superintendent Rick Schafer, however even he was surprised by the magnitude of the support garnered so quickly through the May campaign.

More than 14% of contributors to the May campaign were giving for the second time and 18% of contributors were first time MEF donors. "We have had an unprecedented year," stated MEF President Shari Simon. "To preserve the type and range of programs that we have had in our schools, we had to raise more. The number of new donors was very exciting," she added.

According to Schafer, MEF's contributions will enable Moraga School District to reinstate programs that were to be eliminated due to the State funding cuts. Libraries across the District will be restored to full-time function, added classes at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School will keep the average class size from encroaching on 30 students per class, and popular grade-level enrichment programs will not be forgone. In addition, MEF will give a total of \$420,000 to Campolindo High School, which will help fund counseling programs, class size reduction, library services, and classroom technology—programs that would have been cut secondary to the State budget crunch.

"Unfortunately we are going into a bleak period and Sate funding may get even worse over the next three years," noted Simon. Superintendent Schafer concurred. "We are very concerned about the next three budget years... The State has shifted providing adequate school funding to the individual communities. Our community has been able to meet the challenge, but I question how long they will be able to continue," stated Schafer.

Although the money raised by MEF does not begin to approximate the State funding shortfall for the District, Simon remained hopeful. "I'm very optimistic about the commitment of our parents and the greater community. Education is valued and a priority here. I believe that the community will rise to the challenge."

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AUHSD to Place Bond on Next Ballot

By Andrea A. Firth

The Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD)
Board unanimously passed a resolution to place a bond measure on the November ballot asking voters to fund improvements to aging and obsolete facilities throughout the District along with establishing a ten-year technology fund.

"All of our facilities are aging and we need to plan for the next 20 years. The bond will provide the funding to do so," notes AUHSD Superintendent Jim Negri. "Additionally, the Classroom Technology Fund will allow the district to provide classroom technology and life cycle replacement to

provide students and staff with up-to-date technology to support learning and teaching," he adds.

The measure, if passed, will issue \$93 million in bonds without increasing current residential tax rates but extending

the current tax rate for several years. Other projects to be funded by the bond measure include the replacement of aging roofs, conversion of older facilities into classroom space, and upgrading energy management systems.



What's For Dinner?

By Jill McTaggart

Since the 1970's when women joined the workforce in droves the "What's for dinner?" question has confounded them. The conundrum is in part logistical – finding the time and energy to plan, shop, and cook meals. But, for me, as a parent I knew deep down, emotionally, there were some other more intuitive reasons why I wanted a shared family meal (and not because my own amazingly efficient working mother always managed it).

Through research, what I found was that many recent studies have quantified my gut feeling about the importance of dinnertime. Here are my top 5 reasons to eat meals together at home as a family culled from recent academic studies

- 1. Health. The Archive of Family Medicine study in 2000 showed that eating family dinner was associated with healthful dietary intake, including more fruits and vegetables and less fried food and soda.
- 2. Children will be better spoken and better read. A Harvard study found that complex and rich dinner conversations were more important than play, story time and other family events in the development of language and reading skills.
- **3.** Averts risky teen behavior. A Columbia University study cites that teens are 42% less likely to drink, 59% less likely to smoke

tobacco and 66% less likely to try marijuana.

- **4.** Adolescent girls will have less eating disorders according to a 2004 University of Minnesota study.
- **5.** Working parents are happier. Published in July 2008, Brigham Young University found that among both mothers and fathers who made it home regularly for dinner, they felt more personal success and felt "more kindly" about their workplace.

While researching this article I stumbled upon a link for a website called bringbackdinner.com. Cool, I thought, a motivated mom is providing information that will help. As I opened the link it was immediately apparent that this was not a mom's site, it is sponsored by the KFC Corporation, yes Colonel Sanders et al. This internet misfire was serendipitous in that it brought me to a study proclaiming that family dinners will cause adults to be less obese. This 2007 study in Public Health Nutrition found that families who ate fast food for dinner more than three times a week ate more junk food, less fruits and vegetables than families who ate fast food less than three times a week. Adults tended to be more obese and have a higher BMI than non fast food eating adults. "Fast food can be a convenient alternative to cooking for busy families," said Kerri Boutelle, Ph.D., lead author and assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Minnesota Medical School. "But, frequently making fast food a family meal can negatively affect food choices in the house and the overall health of the family."

It is important to note that shared meals are not only about the food, but about the few moments that families take to sit face to face away from media, cell phones and other modern distraction. In a recent NPR segment on the family dinner, a noted researcher wondered aloud if the social and emotional benefits of dinner were a result of the actual meal or if they were caused by the functionality of a family who can coordinate and provide frequently shared meals. This notion coincides with my intuition that it is not only the healthful food but a time to build relationships and show one another that you truly care about them and what happened in the course of the

day.

If this interaction is new to you and even a little awkward, an ice breaker that I like to use with my kids is the question: What was the best thing and what was the worst thing that happened today? This is a way to explore all the good that happens as well as the not so good that happens throughout the day. Hey, at this point any question is better than "What's for dinner?"—right?





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Dining

Dining Dining

Gigi Settles In as a Local Favorite **By Susie Iventosch**

ne step inside the front door of Gigi Restaurant in Lafayette had me dreaming of herbroasted chicken and caramelized vegetables. The aroma was heavenly and when I asked Jeff Amber, chef/owner what it was, he said, in fact, it was duck. Whatever the foul, I'm fairly positive I'll be ordering that dish next time I go in, because it smelled divine.

Amber opened Gigi, a sophisticated neighborhood restaurant, just about a year ago. He says they seem to be well-known for seasonally-driven dinners and very popular brunch items such as eggs Benedict and seasonal veggie and steak scramble.

"We select really fresh, locally-grown produce for our salads and our menu features handmade pastas, local fish and even great hamburgers," Amber said.

Many of the salads are made with seasonal fruit and greens, and the day I was there, the dinner menu included northwestern trout with Dungeness crabmeat; seared Tombo tuna with shitake mushrooms, bok choy and pea shoot salad; organic Cornish game hens – buttermilk fried; sautéed flank steak with summer squash, artichoke hearts, bacon and blue cheese; and

braised Sonoma lamb shanks with roasted corn, arugula and black olive vinaigrette.

Need I say more? Actually, yes, because the side dishes are also unusual and include warm olives, a bowl of local Brentwood cherries, baked organic broccoli and fries with whole-grain mustard aioli.

Prior to opening Gigi, Amber worked in the restaurant business for 15 years in San Francisco and says he learned his craft on the job. So far, he is very pleased with his first attempt at restaurant ownership.

"We'd like to thank the city of Lafayette for supporting us," he said. "We're off the beaten path, so we really appreciate our devout local following and are looking forward to our second year of business in this community."

When I asked Chef Amber if he'd be willing to share one of his recipes, he sent me a spinach-peach salad with champagne vinaigrette. Because we're right in the middle of the peach harvest, you'll have no trouble at all finding excellent ripe, but firm peaches for this dish. Be sure to use plenty of spinach, as it really shrinks down in size once dressed.



Dining

Gigi's Peach Salad

(Yields about 4 dinner salads)

Ingredients

8 cups baby spinach

3 ripe yellow peaches – sliced thin off the core

12 tablespoons toasted almonds* (approximately 3/4 cup)

2 ounces shaved ricotta salata (if unavailable, substitute feta)

5 ½ ounces champagne vinaigrette (see recipe below)

Directions

Place spinach and peaches in a large mixing bowl and gently toss with vinaigrette. Add salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle almonds and cheese over top as garnish.

*Place almonds on a baking sheet and spread out in a thin layer. Then bake in a 300-degree oven for about 5 minutes, or until golden brown.

Champagne vinaigrette

½ cup Champagne vinegar

1 shallot, chopped Juice of one-half lemon

4 tablespoons Dijon mustard

2 cups canola oil (I used 1 1/4 cups of oil and

it was slightly tart, but we liked it) Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all dressing ingredients in a blender. Blend until thoroughly combined.

Gigi Restaurant 1005 Brown Avenue Lafayette, CA. 94549 (925) 962-0882 www.gigirestaurant.com

Hours:

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Dining

11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for lunch and 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. for dinner Saturday

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10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for brunch and 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. for dinner **Closed Mondays**

Sunday Brunch

Roxanne Logan and Jeff Amber in the lobby of Gigi Restaurant in Lafayette

This recipe is available on our web site. Go to:

http://www.lamorindaweekly.com

Susie can be reached at

suziven@gmail.com

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3518D Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf

3616 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf

3614 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf

74 Moraga Way, Ori

504 Center St, Mor

1375 Moraga Rd, Mor

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3637 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf

1 Camino Sobrante # 4, Ori

19 Orinda Way # Ab, Ori

A's Cestaurants

••• updated August 6, 2008 •••

3287 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf

3201 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf

3651 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf

53 Lafayette Cir, Laf

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3339 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf

3563 Mt. Diablo Blvd, Laf











SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

LMYA 5TH-6TH Grade Boys **Summer Basketball League Champions**

Submitted Colleen Monasevitch



Bottom row: Nathan Edwards, Nathanial Sauerberg, Jack Brahney, Eric Monasevitch Back row: Grant Smith, Coach Edwards, Sterling Strothers

Making a Splash in Beijing

... continued from page 1



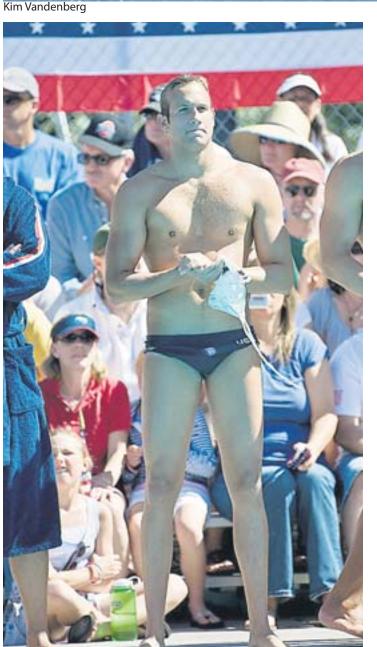


Photo Robert Johnson

And after an impressive career both at Campolindo and UCLA, Vandenberg placed fifth in the 200-meter freestyle event at the Olympic Trials. She didn't make the team in her first event, butterfly, but made it as a member of the

womens' freestyle relay team.

Her dad said he's excited to see her swim as a part of the US Olympic team. "It's encouraging as a parent to see your child achieve his or her goals," he said.

For Varellas, swimming at MTSC was just a warm-up for his real passion - waterpolo. He began playing when he started high school at Campolindo, and by the end of his sophomore year, he "kind of knew that's what I wanted to do," he said.

After graduating from Campolindo in 2002, he went on to play waterpolo at Stanford for four years. During his senior year at Stanford, he started playing for the U.S. National team, and has been a part of the team since.

When he graduated from Stanford, he traveled to Europe to play for a professional team in Italy during his months off from the U.S. national team. He just finished his second year with that team.

Varellas' mom, Robyn, said it's still a bit unreal to know that her son is going to the Olympics. "I think it will really hit us when we stand there and see him march out at the first game with the team," she said. "We are so proud and so appreciative of all the support our friends, family, his coaches, and the community have given him."

Varellas is excited to represent the United States in the Olympics, but said making it is only the first step - now, he and his team have to prove themselves in Beijing.

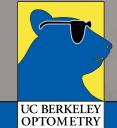
"Making it was a goal of mine, but the true goal for the team has yet to be accomplished," he said.

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Local Beijing Bound Athletes Prepare for Olympics By Jack Fernbacher

leff Stevens Joining Varellas and Vandenberg, Stevens is one of three

graduates of Campolindo from the class of 2002. Stevens, a right handed pitcher from Berkeley, is a part of the historic USA baseball team. Currently, baseball is not scheduled for the 2012 Olympics so Stevens could be a part of the last Olympic USA baseball team. Stevens has been playing Triple-A ball in Buffalo for the Cleveland Indians this season.

Grace Upshaw

Upshaw is the lone Acalanes graduate competing in Beijing. She qualified for the long jump competition at the Olympic trials in Oregon. Jumping 6.88 m, Upshaw placed second in the trials to make it to her second Olympics. Upshaw went to the 2004 Olympic Games where she placed 10th. Upgraduated from Acalanes in 1993 and Cal-Berkeley in 1979.

Nicole Branagh

Branagh, a Miramonte graduate from the class of 1997, finished strong at the end of the Beach Volleyball qualifying to capture her first Olympic bid. Joined by her partner Youngs, the numberfive ranked duo in the World are aiming for a medal.

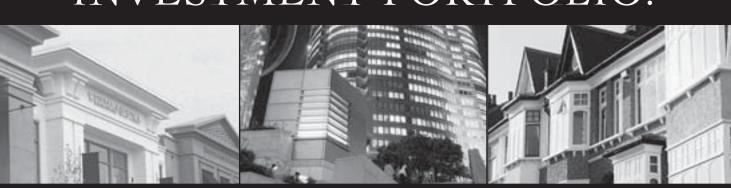
Heather Petri

Petri is competing in her third Olympics with the Women's Water Polo team. Graduating from the class of 1996 from Miramonte, she has helped the US receive the World's number one ranking. She is aiming for her first gold medal in Olympic competi-

Natalie Coughlin

World record holder (100 yard backstroke) Natalie Coughlin grew up in Lafayette and graduated from Carondelet High in Concord in 2000. This will be the Cal grad's second Olympic appearance. Coughlin came home from Athens in 2004 with two Gold medals, two Silver and one Bronze.

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SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS















Sleepy Hollow Hosts "B" Invitational Swim Meet

Submitted by Ali Minden



Photo provided



n Sunday July 27, Sleepy Hollow Swim and Tennis Club held its 22nd Annual "B" Invitational swim meet. There were approximately 750 swimmers from 9 swim clubs from the Orinda-Moraga Pool Association competing in this fun meet.

Here are the results of the meet:

High Point Winners:

6 and under women - Ella Drury - Sleepy Hollow 6 and under men - Matt Lyons - Sleepy Hollow

7-8 women - Avery Hansen - Sleepy Hollow

7-8 men - Jack Lewis - Sleepy Hollow

9-10 women - Kristine Stanners - OCC and Mary Noal - Meadow (Tie)

9-10 men - Taarig Saffouri - Campo Cabana Club

11-12 women - Claire Marvin - OCC 11-12 men - Grayson Judge - OCC

13-14 women - Cynthia Brzezinski - Sleepy Hollow

13-14 men - Michael Hori - Miramonte

15-18 women - Kelly Katsura - Sleepy Hollow

15-18 men - Pierce Haley - Sleepy Hollow

More on the Lafayette City Meet



Sean McKenna and Brady Aiello with 9-10 High Point Trophies at Lafayette City Swim Meet 2008 Photo submitted by Colin McKenna

you read some of the highlights of the Lafayette City Swim Meet. When we listed the high point winners, we failed to note that 9 year old Sean McKenna, swimming for Sun Valley, tied with Brady Aiello (31 points each) in the Boys 9-10 category. Coming off last season's victories as high point winner in the 7-8 group at the both the City and Conference meets, McKenna dropped several seconds off his previous best time to win the 50 yard backstroke and also took the high point award for his age group at this year's Battle of the Ages.

Send sports stories and ideas to:

sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com or call 925-377-0977

| OCC Swim-a-thon Benefits Nicholas Colby Fund

By Jill Tarkoff, OCC

www.lamorindaweekly.com



Dustin Montero, Allie Edwards, & Erin Collier Photo Allie Edwards

Steve Haufler, OCC Head Swim Coach with swimmers Photo Allie Edwards

Tlove swimming as a sport, but it makes me even happier to swim for children who are less fortunate. I feel special that I was part of this," said Kyle, an Orinda Country Club swimmer. On July 21st the Orinda Country Club Sharks swimming team, coached by Steve Haufler, held their annual Swim-a-thon. This year the team swam laps to raise money for The Nicholas Colby Fund in Walnut Creek. Swimmers age four to eighteen donated \$5,000 to help children with cancer, degenerative conditions or other life threatening illnesses and their families.

The Nicholas Colby Fund

reaches out to children through collaborative relationships set up with Children's Hospital Oakland, Stanford-Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, The University of California San Francisco Children's Hospital and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Their motto is "Helping Children Be Children." They accomplish this goal through partnerships with area businesses to provide breaks from treatment through ticket donations to Warriors basketball games, Oakland A's baseball games, Oakland Ice Arena events, Harlem Globetrotters basketball games and the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus.

Holidays are another time that the Nicholas Colby Fund reaches out. At Thanksgiving the fund also provides thanksgiving dinners for parents and their children in the hospital. At Christmas they collected donated toys for patients to give to their siblings. At New Year's, baskets are delivered to patients, parents and medical staff to help ring in the new year of possibilities and hope.

When a child is diagnosed with a life threatening illness, a family may struggle for moments to smile. The Nicholas Colby Fund tries to provide not only nutritional treat packs to parents of children in Pediatric Intensive

Care Units and backpacks filled with fun things to do for newly diagnosed children, but also a moment to treasure. A night away from treatment, seeing the sparkle in your child's eyes and laughing together can make all the difference and a lifetime of memories.

OCC is proud to help the Nicholas Colby Fund in their pursuit of helping children be children. Just as we clap and cheer for our swimmers as they reach their individual goals we know that our small contribution will help other families and children in the Bay Area reach theirs.

Doing the Dive!

Information submitted by Steve Sherman

n Saturday, August 2, young divers from Lamorinda and beyond gathered at the Sherman Swim Club in Lafayette to compete in the 2008 Sherman Invitational Diving Meet.

"This meet caters to novice divers, but it has become a springboard for a lot of great divers starting their careers," said coach Steve Sherman. "We had national level divers competing this year as well."

Carley Roberts of Orinda was the winner of the Novice Girls High Point Dive Award, earning the single highest score among all the novice girls.

Meet Results for Lamorinda Participants:

11 & Under Boys (Novice)

1st place: Sunil Aneja, Lafayette

13 & Under Girls (Novice)

1st place: Alyssa Parsons, Moraga

2nd place: Claire Svedberg,

Lafayette

3rd place: Carley Roberts, Orinda

13 & Under Girls (JC) 3rd place: Mikaela Moore,

Moraga

16-18 Girls (JO)

9th place: Eliza Galligigan, Moraga

11th place: Heather Finerte, Moraga

19 & Over Women

1st place: Katie Copenhagen, Orinda





Photo Robert Johnson

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Moraga's Basketball Superheroes—Katie Batlin and Jack Trotter By Andrea A. Firth

t seems quite remarkable that Katie Batlin and Jack Trotter two of the best basketball players graduating from Lamorinda high schools this past year—grew up less than a block apart, in the same neighborhood, on a bedrock bluff in Moraga. One might speculate that there was something strange in the water that fed the bluff about 18 1/2 years ago to yield two basketball prodigies in such close proximity. But the Batlin family did not arrive in Moraga until Katie was three years old, so that theory is dashed.

Yet similarities between Batlin and Trotter exist and can not be discounted. First the obvious-they are tall. Batlin stands 5'11" and Trotter towers at 6'9". Second, they have good genes. Batlin's uncle was an all-American basketball player, and Trotter's father played college ball.

But what they share that is most important to their athletic success is the quiet confidence, fierce competitive nature, and passion for the game that is evident when both of these young talents take to the court. These traits, coupled with the limitless family support they each receive, helped Batlin and Trotter to lead their high school teams to North Coast Section Championship wins and to position themselves for careers in Division I College Basketball.

Katie Batlin

As a youngster, Batlin and her father would slip in the side door of the McKeon Pavilion at Saint Mary's College (SMC) and shoot around on the stadium-style court when the gymnasium was empty. "Back then I would tell my dad how great it would be to get to play for a college team on a court like that," says Batlin with a smile. And that is exactly what Batlin will be doing in a few weeks having accepted a full-ride scholarship to play basketball at Saint Mary's.

Batlin played on the Varsity Girls Basketball Team at Miramonte High School for the past four years under Coach Darrell Hirashima, and her accomplishments at Miramonte are endless. She was named Rookie of the Year as a freshman, Most Valuable Player in her sophomore and junior years, and selected to the Hall of Fame in her senior year. "She is one of the strongest players to have ever played for Miramonte High School," states Hirashima without hesitation. "She was the fiercest competitor that I have ever coached. For girls playing against her, it was nearly impossible to beat her," he adds.

Bolstered by parents who have attended every school and

Clark Thompson, Ignacio Vega, Ann H. Ward, Dan Weil, Margaret Weil Zucker

club basketball game that she has played in since ninth grade (which numbered roughly in the thousands according to mom Judy), Batlin is looking forward to having her family close by when she heads off to college. "My friends tease me about the fact that I can walk to the College from my house," says Batlin who plans to live on the SMC campus. "I think it will be great to stop back at home to do laundry or have a home-cooked meal. Plus, I don't think I'll have any problem with getting homesick," she adds. Batlin's mom describes her daughter's choice to attend Saint Mary's as a dream come true. "Katie felt connected to the coaching staff and her teammates from day one, and she is ecstatic to continue being a part of the local community," says Judy Batlin.

It will also be helpful for Batlin to have mom and dad nearby so that she can continue her pregame ritual. "Our whole family is superstitious," explains Batlin who before each and every game gets a piece of gum from mom, a kiss and words of encouragement from mom and dad, and their final bit of advice—to have fun. "My goal each game is to have fun. I like to have a good time, and that is what I want for everyone else."

"It's going to be a challenge to balance school, basketball, and a social life," states Batlin who plans to study elementary education and hopes to eventually work with special needs students. But with her easy-going, mature, and responsible nature, Batlin seems more than ready for this new experience and the next level of

"I think the last chapter of Katie Batlin's basketball career has yet to written," says her former coach Hirashima. "The best may be yet to come, and we will have the advantage to be able to watch her do it."

Jack Trotter

If you google Jack Trotter, you will find his ESPN high school boys basketball ranking and a flattering description of the power forward which includes phrases such as 'smooth shooting touch, 'solid pivot work' and 'excellent hands.' This is quite impressive for a lefty from Moraga who never made the A1 CYO team while in middle school.

As the center of Campolindo's championship-winning Boys Varsity Basketball Team, Trotter was the go-to guy. "He was a leader," states Chris Whirlow who coached Trotter for the past two years at Campolindo. "Other teams game-planned against him.

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Our players looked to him for leadership. He led the way to the title."

Averaging 24 points and 14 rebounds per game, Trotter was named co-MVP of the DFAL League and Campolindo's team last season. The only thing that seems to have paralleled Trotter's success on the court has been his exponential growth off the court. Trotter started freshman year standing six feet short and grew in annual increments of three inches to reach his current height of 6'9", and he may not be done yet.

Trotter, who carried a heavy schedule of AP classes and maintained a 4.2 GPA while at Campolindo, will be attending Stanford University in September where he is a preferred walk-on for the Men's Basketball Team. "I wanted to go to Stanford before I knew basketball could open doors for me," states Trotter. Although he received offers to play basketball elsewhere, Trotter is confident with his choice to join a three-generation family tradition, following mom, dad, and siblings Andy, and Emma, to the hallowed halls of Stanford U.

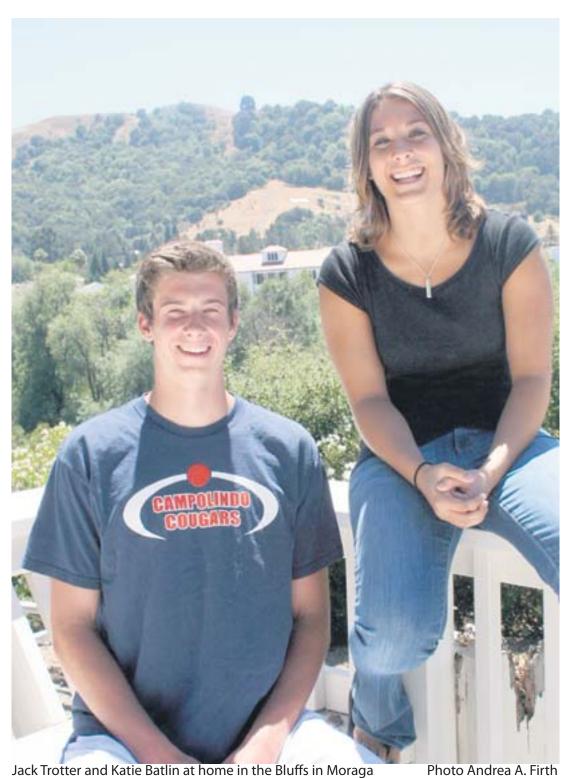
Modest in nature, Trotter credits Coach Whirlow with his success last season. "He re-engineered the offense and defense which opened the way for me to score," states Trotter "It's really thanks to him that I'm going any-

"Over the past few years Jack has shown a knack for working hard to take advantage of opportunities on the basketball court. Those opportunities have included really superb coaching Jack has received at Campolindo," adds Trotter's father Dave.

Trotter's dad, who coached him in the early days, has missed only a handful of his son's games over the past four years. "I really enjoyed coaching Jack and his LMYA and CYO teammates. From the start, I found Jack to be extremely coachable. He absorbs constructive criticism and has continued to work hard, both during and out of season, on improving his physical strength and basketball skills."

Trotter's passion for the game is clear. "Basketball made high school better. It was almost essential," he states in his characteristically judicious style.

"I think Stanford is a great choice for Jack," says Coach Whirlow. "Given some recent changes in their line up, I think he'll have the opportunity to play," he adds. "Jack hasn't come close to realizing his full potential on the basketball court. Stanford got a sleeper, and they will benefit from Jack being a part of the team."



Lafayette Little League All-Stars Take First **Submitted by Fran Miller**



Pictured from left to right,

front row: Middle row:

Casey Harrington, Matthew Stanners, Matthew Jorgensen, Charlie Ziolkowski. Jesse Longchamps, Will Brueckner, John O'Malley, Ryan Donat, Alexie Shurtz, Andrew Schatz, Ben Miller.

Back row:

Assistant Coach Joe Ziolkowski, Head Coach Bob Brueckner, Assistant Coach Dan Harrington. (not pictured: Trevor Martinho)

he Lafayette Little League 11 year-old All Stars recently took first place in the 22nd Annual Granada Invitational in Livermore, in which 17 East Bay teams participated.

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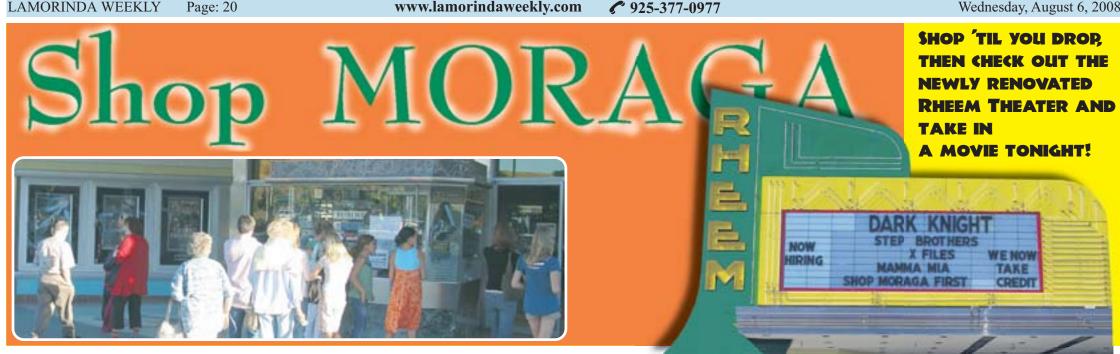
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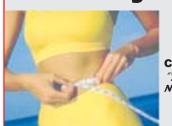
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